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Exploring roles of social networks in influencing levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, South Africa

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EXPLORING ROLES OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN INFLUENCING LEVELS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL, COPING STRATEGIES AND RESILILIENCE AMONG DISPLACED PERSONS AFFECTED BY FLOODING IN IVORY PARK, SOUTH AFRICA.

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Thesis submitted to the African Centre for Migration Society, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Migration and Displacement.

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17 March 2024

DECLARATION:

I, Mpho Jeanett Bokhatsi, hereby declare that the dissertation I have submitted to the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand for a Master's degree in Migration and Displacement is entirely my original work and has not previously been included in any application for a degree at this university or any other.

Signature Mpho Jeanett Bokhatsi……..

Date 5 June 2024….

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ABSTRACT

Flooding is a recurring catastrophe that puts people's lives and communities in danger around the world. In Ivory Park, a deprived township and informal settlement outside of Johannesburg, South Africa, people have been repeatedly displaced due to flooding. This study explored roles of social networks and social capital in shaping coping strategies and resilience among these displaced persons. By addressing the empirical knowledge gap in this study that there is insufficient data on the assessment of the levels of social capital and underlying factors that influence variations in these levels in Ivory Park, there is a need to assess these capacities of social capital that the Ivory Park community has collectively. The study found out that there are different types of social networks like familial and friendship networks within this community however, there is scarcity of communal networks that are specifically suitable for assisting people collectively during climate induced disasters.

Drawing on qualitative approach where semi structured interviews were utilised to collect data, the study provides valuable insights that due to weak social ties in this community, it is a challenge for community members to utilize their connections to access resources and construct solutions to environmental threat challenges. As a matter of fact, levels of social capital needed to build resilient systems are low. While other forms of social networks exist, the study's findings challenge the romantic idea that poor communities build strong and resilient communities.

Key Words: Social Networks, Social Capital, Resilience, Coping Strategies, Displaced Persons, and Flooding

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the background, problem statement, the research objectives, and questions. It also highlights conceptualization of the keywords and purpose of the study. The main research question is: How does social networks among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park influence the levels of social capital, resilience, and coping strategies during and after flooding?

1.2 Background

Every year, floods have a significant negative impact on society resulting in fatalities, property damage, ecological losses, and the destruction of cultural assets (Bubeck et al. 2023). Few (2003) describes floods as a period of varying magnitudes resulting from many causes. River overflow caused by extended seasonal rainfall, rainstorms, snowmelt, dam collapses, and the formation of rainwater in low-lying places with elevated water levels or sufficient storm drainage and seawater on land during cyclonic rise can all be categorized as flooding (ibid). Based on the existing literature, it appears that Southern Africa had natural disasters like droughts and floods in the early 1900s (Kamara et al, 2018). However, their severity and frequency increased in the 1980s (ibid). To date, flooding is an on-going natural disaster that poses challenges to communities globally. Displaced persons living in flood prone areas experience acute impacts when they are compelled to leave their homes for safety. This is seen in Ivory Park, a township that recently experienced floods. Seane (2022) posits that Ivory Park was hit by heavy rains on Friday evening, February 18, 2022, which resulted in flooding and high-water levels in various places, causing fatalities, property damage, and displacement.

Ivory Park is a township located in Midrand, where most residents live in shacks and lack many basic amenities (Mahon, 2010). There is poor access to formal housing and essential amenities, together with the high unemployment rate in this area (Nethavhakone, 2010). Again, it is made up of resilient and strong residents whom when challenged with inadequate support services, they rely on one another and their own abilities to build a support network and community connections (ibid). It emerged in 1990 to serve as a temporary home for inhabitants of Tembisa while their neighbourhood was being upgraded (ibid). When Tembisa inhabitants returned to Tembisa following the development, individuals from other regions continued to live in that temporary

home that was established for Tembisa inhabitants, expanding the area into what is today known as Ivory Park (ibid).

Flooding is generally negative in the short run but on the other side it necessitates changes to survive, these innovations will undoubtedly have winners and losers because it is a way of life for other people while it makes other people's lives hard. It is harmful in that, it endangers lives while, on the other hand, it opens up possibilities for individuals. In the view of Svetlanaa (2015), past floods had numerous beneficial effects on humanity, such as ensuring the population's way of life along the Nile 2 in ancient Egypt. They did not pose a severe threat to humanity until they started to endanger the lives, property, and economic activities of the populace (ibid).

1.3 Purpose of the study

The goal of this study is to explore how social networks influence the levels of social capital, resilience building and coping strategies among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, South Africa.

1.4 Problem statement

South African informal settlers experience quite challenges when it comes to accessing resources, social support and other opportunities to sustain their livelihoods and wellbeing. For example, Nethavhakone (2010) posits that there is poor access to formal housing and essential amenities in Ivory Park. Additionally, marginalized, and isolated settings like informal settlements are mostly occupied by economically deprived and socially vulnerable groups (ibid). In addition to Nethavhakone's assertion on description of Ivory Park, the study found out that Ivory Park is an informal settlement comprising of vulnerable population, mostly unemployed and hardly can afford to build proper houses, walls to cover up their yards and paving their outdoor grounds to mitigate water caused by flash floods from getting into their houses. These populations are more susceptible to flooding due to several elements, such as their environmental degradation, and a lack of awareness about flood hazards (APFM 2017). Having said that, while social capital is often associated with positive outcomes, marginalised individuals and minority groups lack the same resources, putting them at a disadvantage (Kenton, 2022). The knowledge gap identified is the need to assess the levels of social capital through empirical research within this marginalised and fragmented community. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the specific

roles of social networks among displaced individuals in Ivory Park, aiming to understand its impacts on the levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience building.

1.5 Research Question

How do social networks among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park influence the levels of social capital, resilience, and coping strategies during and after flooding?

1.6 Research Objectives

-Evaluate levels of social capital among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels

-Investigate the essence of social networks among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and how these networks contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during climate change events (Flooding)

- Examine the influence social networks have on the effectiveness of social capital among displaced populations in Ivory Park in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms

1.7 Research Questions

-How are levels of social capital among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and what factors influence variation in these levels?

-What is the essence of social networks among displaced persons in Ivory Park, and how do these networks contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during climate change events (Flooding)?

-How do social networks influence the effectiveness of social capital among displaced populations in Ivory Park in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms?

1.8 Justification of the study

This study provides an essential chance to comprehend how social networks influence the levels of social capital, resilience building and coping strategies among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park. Furthermore, addressing the empirical knowledge gap in this study, which is assessing the levels of social capital in marginalised and fragmented communities during environmental threads (flooding) contributed to providing more comprehensive understanding of the complex social networking processes within this community during and

after flooding, how they impact the levels of social capital and how they contribute to resilience building and coping strategies within this community.

1.9 Conceptualization of the key words

Social Networks: Social networks are a type of interpersonal or organizational structure that connects actors (LibreTexts Social Sciences, no year). Additionally, it shows the ways in which individuals and groups are linked by a variety of social familiarities, from intimate family ties to casual acquaintanceship. (ibid).

Social Capital: is a notion involving people's capacity to use social network participation to obtain advantages and create solutions to challenges (Poteyeva, 2024). Social capital is made up of three components: the trust that defines the interrelated connections of relationships between individuals and groups; the resources intended and passed on because of social involvement and social connections; and social participation (ibid).

Resilience: it is defined as a person's capacity to recover from, adapt to and remain strong in the face of adversity (Samutachak et al, 2022). Furthermore, Kamara et al (2018: 2) clarifies that resilience lacks a general definition. In this study, it is the capacity to utilize environment to anticipate, tolerate, recover from, and adjust to distress caused by disasters. (Kamara et al , 2018:2).

Coping Strategies: it is defined as actions individuals employ in dealing with difficult situations (Spence 2007). In this study coping strategies refers to approaches flooding victims adapt to assist their recovery and manage well during and after climate induced disasters.

Displaced Persons: : An individual who has been forced to leave their country of origin or place of habitual residence due to the outbreak of conflict, the effects of oppression, or other circumstances (Merriam-Webster,2024).

Flooding: is the accumulation of rainwater in low-lying locations with high water tables or sufficient storm drainage, rainstorms, snowmelt, dam breakdowns, and seawater on land during cyclonic surges that causes rivers to overflow (Few, 2003).

1.10 Chapter Summary

In summary, the purpose of this paper is to present research on exploring the roles of social networks in influencing levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, South Africa. In this chapter, the study discusses background information on floods both globally and in South Africa, and how flooding contributes to difficulties faced by communities. Given the historical background of humans, floods are regarded as both good for people's lives and simultaneously unfavorable to their livelihoods. Moreover, the chapter also discusses the history of the Ivory Park township and the socioeconomic circumstances of the people who live there. The problem statement, research objectives, research question, study justification, and conceptualization of keywords were all outlined in this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the literature review relevant to the study. It begins by outlining the debates around the issue of flooding and environmental displacement locally and globally. Apart from that, it also focused on the dual nature of social capital, unpacking that it is not in all the cases that social capital benefits everyone. It benefits individuals with strong social connections while sidelining those with weak social ties. Subsequently, this chapter went on to discuss social networks and community dynamics, and social networks and social support, social networks as coping strategies and resilience builders. Lastly, it placed focus on discussing the theoretical framework (Resilience theory and social capital theory) that was employed in this study.

2.2 Flooding and Environmental Displacement

When individuals are compelled to leave their communities because of environmental problems, this is known as environmental displacement. According to Dun (2010), there is an open debate on the relationship between migration and environmental change. The main point of the debate is whether or not environmental factors influence people's agency to leave their homes. In the debate outlined by Dun above, many contend that environmental refugees will soon outnumber any other group of displaced people as the world's largest class. On the other side of the debate, others argue that singling out migration decisions by pointing the finger at environmental factors is oversimplifying the complex topic of refugee flight and migration decisions (ibid). Flooding can act as a migration trigger when livelihoods are negatively affected. In these situations, the direct cause of migration threatens livelihoods, while environmental conditions serve as a trigger for migration (ibid). Therefore, Yigzaw (2019) concludes that understanding how environmental changes takes place and how they may influence decisions about migration and resettlement is crucial.

Dun's discussion above is supported by the idea that environmental change is not the main reason for human migration (Yigzaw, 2019). For instance, Yigzaw talks about Ethiopia, stating that their research revealed that conflict, climatic factors such as flooding, the country's policy of resettlement and relocation, and the country's poor governing capacity are major contributing factors which aggravate the internal displacement in the country.

Displacement results from a variety of issues, including conflict, drought, flooding, and other tragedies, and it can affect people's lives in both good and negative ways (Downing (1996). Forced population displacement can result in eight different types of impoverishments, including social disintegration, food insecurity, marginalization, homelessness, and loss of access to common property (ibid). On this note, involuntary population displacement causes the kind of social and cultural poverty (ibid). Downing outlined above that it is irreversible in the sense that it may have long-term effects such as a lack of homes, long-term property, post-traumatic stress disorders and loss of social assets.

Flooding is a global crisis that does not only affect certain areas in Africa and to emphasize this, Bird (2016) asserts that, among other natural disasters globally, flooding occurs more frequently. Furthermore, for the last ten years in Europe, river coastal flooding caused huge socio-economic costs, affecting 3.4 million individuals (ibid). As a matter of fact, intensity and frequency of flooding events are predicted to rise because of climate change (ibid).

Populations that experience flooding and end up in displacement are impacted differently depending on where they are located in relation to the flood risk, such as lowlands, as opposed to highlands, which are less at risk of flooding. According to Svetlanaan et al. (2015), nations that are more prone to flooding face a range of flood challenges and have varying capacities to deal with these concerns. These countries may be located in regions with similar temperatures and monsoon patterns, or they may have mountainous or flat floodplain-like characteristics (ibid). For instance, Svetlanaa compares Bangladesh to Netherlands and argues that Bangladesh has major flooding every year, whereas the last time that happened in the Netherlands was between 1926 and 1953.

Looking at environmental displacement, social networks also contribute to either facilitating or hampering successful resettlement and adaptation processes for displaced persons. Drawing from the work of Bird (2016) to support this argument, emotional resilience for people, families, social connections, and communities living in cities is challenging . Living in a metropolitan location poses hazards for some people especially in the event of floods (ibid). For example, family and acquaintances who can provide the most emotional and practical help may be staying far away (ibid). Additionally, neighbors could not be familiar with each other and hence unwilling to help. Moreover, persons in need may not be aware of opportunities from

organizations or municipalities because they are not a part of their regular networks or communities (ibid). Having said that, the intensity and frequency of social networks in urban areas is low, resulting in social networking hindering successful resettlement. Bird's assertion above resonates with the study conducted in Ivory Park which observed that certain factors, such as diversity, weaken social connections because they foster a lack of trust among community members. Because they are immigrants from various areas, there is a lack of trust, which lowers reciprocity and trust and impedes their social closeness.

2.3 Dual nature of social capital

Social capital can have both advantages and disadvantages .In most cases is associated with development for instance, it enables a team of individuals to collaborate well to accomplish a shared objective (Kenton, 2022) . While social capital has many benefits, not all of them are directed towards the betterment of others (ibid). Even when used for productive purposes, marginalised people and those in minority groups lack the same social capital resources as others in society, which puts them at a disadvantage (ibid). As Kenton puts it, due to lack of strong social ties, these marginalised groups are shut out of opportunities or even be introduced to powerful people. Kenton's idea was observed by this study. It explored that social capital can be of negative impact to marginalised communities like Ivory Park. Looking at the bonding social capital in Ivory Park, it is a challenge for people to have close connections and collaborate during climate induced disasters and reciprocate mutual benefits due to their low levels of social capital.

To further emphasis the dual nature of social capital, during climate related events, in some communities, social capital is observed to favour those in calamity. As asserted by Behera (2023), in a catastrophe, social capital supports communities with rescue efforts, evacuation planning, and providing both short-term and long-term relief and recovery measures. Therefore, strengthening social capital through networking and relationship-building based on local norms and beliefs aids in activities for disaster preparedness (Wulandari 2019). Furthermore, in order to improve survival, social capital building may promote action and lessen the effects of floods (ibid).

In addition to the notion that social networks and social capital are not always helpful to some societies as asserted by (Kenton, 2022) above , they can exacerbate existing inequalities and tensions by favouring certain groups over the others, reinforcing divisions, and leading to further social strife particularly in environmental disasters. For example, looking at the stark inequality present in South Africa, race plays a significant role with 10% of the population possessing over 80% of the wealth (Aljazeera, 2022). This context highlights the complex interplay between social networks, social capital and social disparities necessitating a deeper understanding of their impacts and dynamics (ibid). Kenton's assertion above aligns with the study's findings that discrimination among the other factors that influence variations in the levels of social capital hampers smooth interaction and strengthening of strong social networks among community members of Ivory Park. Moreover, it worsens inequality especially when it comes to accessing resources and services during climate induced disasters like flooding. Because this community comprises of cross border and internal migrants, some of the cross-border migrants reported that they experience exclusion when it comes to resource allocation, as a matter of fact, that weakens their community connectedness.

Looking at the dynamics of social connections and social capital, within developing countries, social connections are primarily centred on family and identity (Junea ,no date). However, there is limited or no creation of social capital between different families and castes (ibid). This lack of social capital stems from a deep mistrust between two families or social strata, which undermines the concept of social capital itself (ibid). Surprisingly, when examined, the negative aspects of social capital impose burdens to the society (ibid).

2.4 Social networks and community dynamics

Community dynamics differ from one community to the other, some communities work collectively during trying times while in some, like Ivory Park, the community members do not support each other. Indeed, flooding is a catastrophe that impacts people's livelihoods negatively however on the other hand it can reinforce collaboration among community members through cohesive networks, which can be determined by strength of connections between individuals (Samaddar and Tattano, 2012). In this case, when people experience environmental change, they tend to work together by assisting each other like the Bangkok community which collaborated during flooding event as outlined by (Aldrich,2017:357-58). Their mutual trust enabled them to

collaborate to establish a resident's committee for speedy decision-making over mitigation efforts (ibid)**.** Even though a person may have a variety of direct and indirect social connections with others in a network or community, people with whom they interact with the most make up their cohesive group (Samaddar and Tattano, 2012). As a result, through a disaster some communities build strong bonds and information is better shared when cohesive members interact frequently, intensely, than when non-cohesive members do (ibid).

In addition to the above idea that communities can work together to mitigate impacts of climate induced disasters, strong social connections mitigate challenges faced by affected people, for example, Samaddar and Tattano (2012) discusses a study that was conducted in a Mumbai slum that was affected by flooding. In their observation tight knit social connections within this community had a big influence on how well the community coped during climate induced disasters (ibid). Considering this, strong social connections strengthen cohesiveness and as a result, it gets easier for the affected communities to cope better and build resilience during and after disasters. If there is oneness in a community and the members advice each other on the importance of preparedness for upcoming disasters, then other members will be influenced by this idea and will be pressured to get ready and prepared for potential flooding.

Equally important, looking at gender differences and their contribution to resilience building and coping strategies during and after environmental threads, women are seen to contribute more than men. As stated by APFM (2017), women identify as more resilient than men due to their nature and the roles they play in community-based networks. They are frequently regarded as important risk communicators due to their large social networks throughout the community and their primary function in the household (ibid). These connections give them a wealth of knowledge about people in the community who are in crisis (ibid). Additionally, women possess informal knowledge and expertise in physical and mental health care, which is crucial for disaster planning, response, and recovery (ibid).

2.5 Social networks and social support

Social networks play a significant part in giving emotional support in times of environmental threads. In the aftermath of climate induced disasters, majority of individuals can cope without assistance from beyond their immediate community like humanitarian organizations

because they can recover with the help of their communal, family, friendships and other social networks (Bird, 2016). Some of the victims of disasters get assisted by psychosocial support provided by the community, while minority would require transfer to professional therapy. (ibid).

Additionally, the idea of emotional resilience recognizes that people encounter seasons of temporary hardship (Bird,2016). By recognizing the strengths that individuals, families, and community social networks possess, the resilience approach strives to strengthen people's ability to survive the impacts of adversity (ibid). When faced with a catastrophe, these kinds of social connections exhibit amazing psychosocial resilience; most of them heal psychosocially with the help of their communities and family members rather than with the assistance of professionals (ibid).

Nakagawa and Shaw (2004) discuss the incident of earthquake in their work as one of the natural disasters and state that, following the earthquakes in Japan and India, affected communities with stronger social ties demonstrated efficient response and plans for recovery. On that same note, Dynes (2005) shares the same sentiments with Nakagawa and Shaw on their research findings where they observed that social relationships, reciprocity, and shared values are the foundations for recovering from the negative effects of disasters because they provide support services like the exchange of relevant information and life-saving supplies during times of crisis. This highlights Nakagawa and Shaw's theory that societies with solid social networks demonstrate efficient reaction and restoration (Behera, 2021).

In addition to the above, looking at the external agencies and governmental organisations as extended networks under linking social capital, they influence resilience and recovery in climate induced disasters. In the view of Nieman (2006), linking social capital is the link that is made by interacting with organisations that are not in the immediate neighbourhood. (Woolcock in Levitt, 2004:46) in (Nieman,2006). In order to work towards constructing this kind of social capital, public institutions need to collaborate and establish ties with local role players as an attempt to solve issues of underdevelopment and inadequate resources (ibid) .

According to Szreter (2002), Szreter and Woolcook (2004), cited in Nieman (2006), linking social capital makes it possible for easier access to powerful stakeholders, such as legislators, law enforcement, social workers, healthcare providers, representatives of NGOs, and the public

administration as a whole. Furthermore, Nieman emphasises that the nature of social capital and its components of linkage is essential to development because poverty is exacerbated by a persistent lack of access to those in positions of power (ibid).

These external actors or governmental agencies can act as part of the extended networks which influence resilience. In support to this, Jordan (2015) in Claridge (2018) posits that linking social capital is clearly essential to wellbeing, particularly in underdeveloped nations and communities where bankers frequently charge exorbitant interest rates, the police are dishonest, and professionals frequently missing work. it creates possibilities for economic advancement to members of marginalised or weaker groups (ibid).

2.6 Social networks as coping strategies and resilience builders

Coping strategies are defined as actions individuals employ in dealing with difficult situations (Spence 2007). Given that flooding events impact people differently depending on their age, gender, and where they live (Nasir 2007), they have common reactions like fear, anxiety, sensitivity, and anger (Mason2010), however due to their differences; they employ different coping mechanisms to handle their stress levels (ibid). In this case, some coping methods employed by these affected individuals are more useful while others are less useful, for instance, blame or anger which tends to have the most harmful influence on psychological outcome (ibid).

Flooding event is seen as a catastrophe that disrupts people's comfort that they use as resilience during climate induced calamities. This is echoed by Bird (2016) in their arguments that individuals, families, social networks, and communities suffer physical, psychological, and social trauma when their houses and common areas are damaged by flooding; their grieving process is similar to that of mourning a death (ibid). Grieving over their places puts a pressure on their psychosocial wellbeing. Moreover, they no longer have that foundation to fall back on for the much-needed resilience, relaxation, and comfort due to the loss of home (ibid).

During climate related events like flooding, Seebauer (2018) asserts that some people are strong enough to manage and build resilience on their own without assistance from their social networks, while some depend on social networks and find it hard to function without them. To support Seebauer's assertion, social networks act as a source of resilience and coping during environmental

disasters. However, these tightly knit social ties and neighbour interactions are hampered by displacement driven by flooding (Seebauer, 2018). For example, families that migrate due to the fear of flooding, the location of their new homes is influenced by the social network (ibid). They relocate to close proximity so as to maintain their strong social ties (ibid). To strengthen Seebauer's claim, Zaldy (2019) demonstrates how social support networks are a useful coping technique. Flood victims rely on relatives and friends who are not impacted by the flooding for food and cash for survival (ibid). For instance, among displaced persons in Zaldy's work, some show that relying on family members or acquaintances that were unaffected by disasters or even on other displaced people becomes a common coping mechanism (ibid).

On the other hand, social networks portray a dual nature as they are not useful to other people in resilience building and influencing of coping strategies during displacement caused by climate related disasters. To support this argument, Contrary to Zaldy (2019)'s discussion that social networks are a useful coping technique, Seebauer (2018) states that, despite these flood victims having good neighbourhood relationships at their previous residence prior displacement, many households find it easy to adapt to displacement because they do hardly depend on neighbours. Again, they are unconcerned about their neighbours, primarily because it can be easy to replace them.

Another coping strategy that is employed by the flooding victims is getting strong social support from persons who are well-versed on treatment of depression, tension, and other mental health issues (Mason 2010). Same as women, apart from turning to prayer and engage in social activities to keep themselves destructed, they seek social support as a way of their coping strategy (Thoits,1995).

Communal social networks seem to work well in some communities. In the view of Foudi et al (2017), there are influences at individual and community levels in the development of mental resilience skills. Some resilience mechanisms that an individual possesses are inborn while some come from external impacts from their community or society (ibid). In this manner, the development of psychological resilience by a society strengthens human resilience (ibid). Resilience is therefore characterized as the mechanism that connects adaptive capacities, individual or group to adaptation of psychological suffering that results from flooding (ibid).

Looking at how some people adapt to coping and resilience building during environmental threads, most survivors of disasters recover without any long-term consequences to their mental well-being (Nasir, 2007). Nevertheless, some disaster victims experience prolonged suffering while others do not (ibid). Apart from that, as community is comprised of people with different social levels, the impacted community cope differently in climate change calamities depending on their economic and social position, life experiences, problem-solving and responsibility-taking abilities (ibid). Each of those elements plays a crucial part in defining how resilient and strong a person will be in the face of adversity (ibid).

For some disaster victims as asserted by Nasir (2007) above, it is difficult to cope and build resilience in adversity. They experience higher levels of tension and anxiety, particularly when the weather changes (ibid). To them, weather change is a sign of impending disasters, which could expose them to greater calamities (ibid). Again, they also lack the emotional and physical power to cope with the flooding circumstance and exhibit signs of being overwhelmed by emotions due to their inability to control the situation and their susceptibility to environmental hazards (ibid). Therefore, they frequently struggle to concentrate on anything in particular because they feel pressure to be strong and self-sufficient.

Mason (2010) argues that the relationship between communal resilience and individual resilience can help to mitigate the psychological effects of a traumatic incident. Individual resilience is the capacity of an individual to sustain stable, high levels of physical and mental wellbeing, whereas community resilience associates with the process of establishing a connection between a network of adaptable capabilities and a good way of functionality and adaptability in a population following problems (ibid).

2. 7 Theoretical Framework

The study employed the Social Capital Theory and Resilience Theory. Resilience theory, in the work of Southwick et al. (2014), discusses the process of successfully adjusting to adversity, trauma, tragedy, danger, and even large sources of stress. Furthermore, resilience aids people in overcoming hardship, unfortunate events, or frustration (Moore, 2019). As people are born with different traits, resilience is seen as a non-inherent trait because It is develops over time as individuals enhance their cognitive abilities, self-management skills, and accumulate knowledge

(IOM, 2018). To add on that, as resiliencies an acquired trait that develops overtime, it is further fostered through supportive relationships with parents, peers, and others, alongside cultural beliefs and traditions that assist individuals in navigating life's inevitable challenges (ibid). As the society comprises of people with different characters, resilient individuals often possess strong and beneficial social support systems, showing a willingness to open up about their difficulties and emotions. Conversely, those with lower resilience may lean towards social withdrawal, maintaining few social connections and being hesitant to share their thoughts, worries, and concerns (ibid). The study adopted this theory because it comprehends how people adapt, recover, and cope under stressful circumstances. Moreover, it assisted in providing insights on the adaptive measures and coping mechanisms that enable displaced persons of Ivory Park to bounce back and adapt during and in the aftermath of flooding events.

Apart from that, the study also adopted social capital theory, which in the view of Samutachak et al (2022) is defined as the ability to mobilize resources from various socioeconomic levels and connections within community. The idea involves social groups that allow people in the community to support one another, enhancing community involvement and lowering dependency on the state (ibid). It is defined by the extent to which people can use community resources to overcome resilience gaps in their lives (ibid). The study adopted these two theories because they interconnect, and this is emphasized by Samutachak et al (2022) that the idea of social capital has been extensively used to study resilience in a variety of situations . To further add on Samutachak and colleagues' assertion, Dynes (2002) highlights that, unlike human capital, social capital is not found in the actors themselves. Rather, it is found in the personnel networks and interactions that exist between and among social actors (ibid).

Reflecting on the knowledge gap which points out the need to determine the degree of social capital in marginalised communities, it was crucial to investigate the specific roles of social networks among displaced individuals in Ivory Park, aiming to understand its influence on levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience building during environmental threads. The social capital theory assisted this study in exploring how social connections influences operation and effectiveness of social capital in the community of Ivory Park. Additionally, resilience theory assisted this study in exploring how social networks contribute to enhancing resilience by providing emotional support and resource mobilization.

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the relevant literature on flooding and environmental displacement. It drew attention to the controversy around the connection between environmental change and migration. Furthermore, it examined social capital's dual essence, the role of social networks in providing emotional support during environmental threads, social networks as coping strategies and resilience builders. Lastly it outlined the theoretical framework employed by this study which includes social capital and resilience theory.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

To successfully address the study's research question, the primary tasks were to evaluate levels of social capital among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels, to investigate the nature of social networks among these community members and how these networks contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during climate change events (Flooding). Again, another task was to examine how the nature of social networks influence effectiveness of social capital among themselves in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms. The study adopted case study design and since it could not adopt participant observation due to the limited time frame to collect data, informants were interviewed to get different narratives of their experiences regarding how their social networks influence their social capital, resilience building and coping strategies during flooding events.

3.2 The Study Area



Fig.1 Ivory Park map

The study was conducted in Ivory Park, South Africa where several community members were severely affected by flash floods to a point where some had to be displaced in February 2022 . The study was conducted at this location because it is a marginalised community and suitable to give valuable insights regarding the stereotype that marginalised societies collaborate during adversity. Given that marginalised communities are confined to the lower or peripheral edge of the society (Matsika et al, 2022), Ivory Park was the perfect site for conducting this study to address the knowledge gap of assessing the levels of social capital in marginalised communities.

3.3 Methods of data collection

3.3.1 Research approach and Design

This study employed qualitative research approach utilizing in-depth semi structured interviews. Creswell (2009) defines qualitative research as a way to investigate and comprehend the meaning that people or groups assign to a social or human issue. The goal of qualitative research is to have a comprehensive understanding of human behaviors and the factors that influence them. In addition, it investigates the how and why of the phenomenon rather than just the what, when, and where, that is why smaller, more targeted samples are utilized more frequently than larger one.

The case study research design has been a perfect fit for this study because it allowed the researcher to meaningfully interact with the affected communities of Ivory Park, enabling communication and involvement from the informants. Although there were other alternatives of getting in touch with the community for interviews like contacting them via WhatsApp, being in contact with them in person was more convenient as the conversation would flow and the researcher would be able to probe. This allowed the impacted community in expressing their problems and experiences, goals, and desires to create more inclusive and long-lasting solutions. One benefit of examining individual in-depth cases is that it uncovers facts that were not initially expected to be found (Krusenvik, 2016). As a result, case study research is an excellent strategy for developing hypothesis (ibid). Case studies are crucial to expanding the scope of knowledge in a topic since these hypotheses serve to organize future study (ibid).

While being an ideal fit for the topic, this research design has certain shortcomings. While conducting research, there was bias because the researcher's personal preferences and opinions mostly influence the findings. Apart from that, another drawback of this research design is that

findings take a lot of time and mostly eliminate scientific methods and lack thoroughness to ensure the accuracy of the data collected.

3.3.2 Interviews

For data collection semi structured interviews were utilized in this study because it allowed the researcher to have in-depth conversations with respondents and use probe questions to get highly personalised and rich data. The study's objectives, which were broken down into three components, served as the direction for the interview.

3.3.3 Study Population

The population for the study was the residents of Ivory Park who were displaced due to flooding event. This population consisted of 20 participants who were all affected by climate induced disaster (flooding). The study revealed that 9 were woman while 11 were men. 5 of the study participants' ages ranged from 20-30 years of age, 5 ranged from 20-40, 3 ranged from 40-50, 4 ranged from 50-60 and 3 ranged from 60-70. This indicates that most respondents were between the age range 20-30 and 30-40. About 17 of the participants experienced flooding twice and the rest 3 experienced flooding only once their stay in Ivory Park. Furthermore, 2 of the respondents stayed at Ivory Park for 7 years, 1 stayed for 8 years, 8 of them stayed for 3 years,2 stayed for 5 years and 7 of them stayed for 4years. Apart from that, all these respondents are not native born of Ivory Park. . 7 of them are cross border migrants (4 from Mozambique,1 from Botswana, 1 from Lesotho, and 1 from Zimbabwe). Additionally, 13 of them are internal migrants (4 from Limpopo,3 from Kwazulu-Natal,4 from Free-State and 2 from Venda).

3.3.4 Sampling

The issue of flooding on people's livelihoods is traumatizing on its own and getting access to such affected population was difficult to sample, therefore the study adopted snowball and purposive sampling techniques. With utilizing snowball, the researcher approached the community leaders since they are always ahead of time and knows everything that is taking place within their community. They were able to refer the researcher to potential subjects. According to Jacobsen & Landau (2003), snowballing is the technique of asking a first subject to recommend the researcher

to others, which builds up a sample of respondents. As the study was aware of snowball sampling drawbacks like building samples a through referrals, respondents may feel compelled to participate and, in that sense, they may not engage fully. Apart from that, this sampling technique limits the researcher's control to select their own sample. To mitigate limitations associated with snowball sampling technique, the study incorporated purposive sampling after identifying the potential subjects through the ward councillor. According to Palinkas et al (2015), purposive sampling is a strategy that is mostly employed in qualitative research to define and choose cases with rich data for the best possible use of scarce resources. Furthermore, Patton (2015) states that Purposive sampling is one thorough technique of sampling that offers a profound comprehension of the topic, innovative ideas, and unique, notable significance. The study acknowledges that snowballing was ideal for this study because it was the only way to get to flooding victims as it was hard to identify them, however, purposive sampling had to be incorporated to overcome limitations associated with snowballing sampling. With purposive sampling subjects were selected intentionally to enhance the sample diversity.

3.3.5 Sampling frame

The sampling frame was men and women from 18years of age upwards. The study selected from 18years because it is regarded as the legal adulthood and such subjects have the capacity to provide informed consent to take part in the study. In terms of gender, the study focused on both men and women. The reason for considering these gender differences was that; they have different experiences and perspectives in response to how social networks influence social capital, coping strategies and resilience building during climate change induced disasters. The sample size was a smaller number of 20 participants which allowed the researcher to dedicate more time to each participant and have more in-depth conversations to get highly personalised and rich data. Moreover, given this small sample size the study ensured that data quality was prioritized. Furthermore, the researcher conducted pilot study to strengthen methodology further. The interviews were conducted carefully with the help of probing questions to get more information from the respondents and, member checks were also incorporated to enhance data validity.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

For data analysis the study employed thematic analysis because it assisted the researcher in interpreting themes and meanings within the collected data. According to Alhojalian (2012), thematic analysis is an approach employed to examine categories and display themes, or patterns, that are connected to data. In addition, Guest et al (2012) states that in qualitative research, thematic analysis is the most frequently employed method and still the most effective in capturing the complexity of meaning found in textual data sets. The researcher's initial step in applying theme analysis technique in this study was to manually code the data systematically, which entails finding relevant segments of text and assigning them codes that describe them. Second, the researcher looked for patterns, similarities, and connections between codes after creating a collection of initial codes and began organizing them into possible themes. Thirdly, the researcher proceeded to examine and refine the themes that were identified. They ensured that every theme was distinct, sensible, and connected to the study's question. First, the researcher reflected on whether any themes ought to be combined, split apart, or refined based on data.

Thematic analysis technique was effective for this study. As the researcher worked through the analysis, they were free to edit and amend their analytic framework. However, there were limitations encountered by the researcher for employing this analysis method. Firstly, it was difficult to manage huge amounts of data, such as transcribing recorded data into notes. To make the thematic analysis procedure easier, the researcher had to properly organize and classify data. Furthermore, this technique needed a lot of time because it was carried out manually without the use of software. More time and effort had to be put into the researcher's familiarization with the data, coding, theme identification, and analysis.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the Wits Research Ethics Committee and due to the sensitivity of this study, distress protocol was well planned for participants should any of them during the interview process seem to show distress. Fortunately, none of the subjects showed distress, therefore distress protocol was not utilised. Moreover, the study adhered to ethical considerations and were told that, given that the researcher could identify one person’s response, confidentiality was guaranteed (Barbie, 2010) and their responses would be kept private. Again, subjects were informed prior the interviews about the potential lack of anonymity

due to the snowball sample that was employed. They were informed that to get in touch with the flooding victims, local authorities had to be approached to help in locating potential subjects, so in that case, they knew that Ivory Park flooding victims were interviewed for this study. Indeed, there were ethical dilemmas during data collection as some of the respondents did not want to read and sign the consent form, some did not want to engage in interviews because they thought the researcher was from home affairs and wanted to invade their privacy regarding the validity of their documents. As the researcher was addressing these concerns, informed consent was obtained.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The investigator unpacked the research methodology employed in this investigation, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses**.** The study was successfully able to break down the research objectives to develop interview questions**.** By adhering to ethical principles throughout the investigation, the researcher was able to minimize participant harm and the possibility of gathering biased data. The study's use of thematic analysis aided in the interpretation and presentation of research data into insightful themes. To avoid subjectivity and prejudice, the researcher continuously considered their positionality during the investigation.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of data presentation, analyses, and interprets data from the study interviews that took place at Ivory Park, South Africa. The study found interesting themes that speak to the main knowledge gap identified. Firstly, the discussion was on the levels of social capital among displaced persons in Ivory Park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels. Secondly, the essence of social networks among these community members, and how they contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during and in the aftermath of flooding. Lastly, how the essence of the social networks influence the effectiveness of social capital among them in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms. Given the qualitative design nature of this research, all the responses are narrated the informants' own words, and some that are in other African languages are translated in English. To protect participant's identity as per the ethics section in chapter 3, names used in this section are pseudonyms. Additionally, data presented in this section incorporates the literature review in chapter 4 and concludes with a summary of the themes that emerged from the interviews.

4.2. This section shows the levels of social capital among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels.

4.2.1 The essence of their relationships with other community members in Ivory Park since the displacement

Respondents were asked about the essence of their relationships with other community members in Ivory Park since the displacement. Most of them emphasised that within their community, their social connections are poor because everyone is focusing on their own lives. The views shared by Isaac represent most of the sentiments from the interview participants:

> "*Lana omunye no munye u beke indaba zakhe, it is every man for himself. Siya bulisana kuphelela lapho". (Here everyone is focusing on themselves and as a result, it is every man for himself. We only greet each other daily, and it ends there)*. (Isaac, aged 60-70, Participant interview 18/12/2023)

This perspective was also echoed by Mavis and Pauline who are of the view that:

"*Ever since I stayed here, we have not been so close with other community members. During the times of funerals, we only assist by contributing R50s per household. Other than that, we do things on our own therefore, our social connections are not strong".* (Mavis, aged 60-70, participant interview 22/11/2023)

"Everyone here is on their own, even if you get attacked by robbers you will deal with them alone". (Pauline, aged 50-60, participants interview 18/12/2023)

Therefore, it can be concluded that the essence of the relationships among the Ivory Park community members are weak. This observation is supported by the interview results where 20 participants confirmed that their relationships with other community members are poor. Durin the interviews, Edward, a street committee at the Lindokuhle section in Ivory Park who is originally from Mozambique reported that:

"*The only person you have is your neighbour in this community. If you do not get along with your neighbour, then you are on your own because as the community our social network is poor, everyone is focusing on their lives".* (Edward, aged 40-50, participant interview 22/11/2023)

The above responses reflect on Clark (2007)'s idea that just because people live in the same geographic area does not imply that they are connected to one other or to that area; proximity does not equate to social communality.

4.2.2 Characterization of the level of reciprocity within their immediate community (bonding social capital)

Respondents in this study were asked how they can characterize their levels of reciprocity within their immediate community in relation to bonding social capital based on their location. Social capital is the potential of individuals to obtain privileges and assistance through their involvement in social groupings (Madhavan and Landau, 2011:475). In addition to this definition, bonding social capital is present among those who usually have tight, solid relationships such as close companions, relatives, and neighbors (Claridge, 2001). Communities with high levels of social capital are those in which links across the social, political, and economic spheres are connected by reciprocity (Leonard, 2004:934).

In addition to bonding social capital, Madhavan and Landau (2011:475) asserts that trust is frequently seen as a prerequisite for the development of social capital, which can be obtained through social networks. It also entails reciprocity in closed networks and facilitates day-to-day survival (Coffe and Geys, 2007:124-125). Furthermore, a united, homogenous group that an individual shares certain unique trait with, such kinship, nationality, or ethnicity, is also referred to as having bonding capital (Madhavan and Landau, 2011:475). These kinds of groups are typically distinguished by high levels of thick trust and frequent connection (ibid). Besides the acknowledged views of Madhavan and Landau, Claridge, Leonard, Coffe and Geys, the study revealed that the levels of bonding social capital in terms of reciprocity are low amongst the community members of Ivory Park . The discussion develops from the notion that there is lack of solidarity and trust among the community members as some respondents highlighted that they have migrated from different regions to Ivory Park, therefore the fact that they do not know each other on in-depth level makes their level of reciprocity very low. One respondent argued that the community is made up of diverse tribes and migrants; internal migrants and cross-border migrants which makes it hard for them to have frequent interactions, trust and reciprocate benefits amongst themselves.

> *"Our levels of reciprocity here are very low. You know there has been xenophobia for the longest time in south Africa. That state of being a foreigner brings challenges when it comes to reciprocity because most of the community members, South Africans to be precise, do not trust cross border migrants. Additionally, we do not speak the same language and we are also of different tribes and cultures. I for one, am from Mozambique and I still experience discrimination when it comes to accessing some resources or getting help from my neighbours. Sometimes if I have problems or there are food parcels being allocated, they mostly pass my shack because they would say I am not a South African citizen. They prioritize their fellow South Africans. The moment we do not experience exclusion is when one has lost a loved one. It is then that they contribute money per household for assistance. Other than that, we do not help each other here".* (David, aged 30-40, participant interview 25/11/2023

As Madhavan and Landau (2011: 476) asserts, people that have similar cultural traits, language, or place of origin are deemed to have strong trust. In consequence, these qualities serve as the

foundation for these networks' high bonding capital levels. From Madhavan and Landaus sentiments, given the nature of Ivory Park community, that is made up of diverse people, David's proposition shows that the characteristics they have within the community (speak different languages, different cultures, different places of origin) affects the levels of bonding social capital. Indeed, it is believed that trust is strongest among individuals who have a shared origin because such people feel they have shared norms hence it is easier to interact than with people they do not share the same norms. Furthermore, as Ivory Park is mostly made up of migrants from different regions, trust is weak amongst these community members and as a matter of fact, it is not easy to exchanges benefits for mutual benefit, which ultimately leads to low levels of bonding social capital.

The same ideas were share by Refilwe and Charles from Kuvukiland who stated that the only time they lend a helping hand is when one has lost a loved one only.

"In terms of reciprocity, despite the weak bond among us in this community, when people have lost their loved ones, every household contributes money to assist that particular person or household, that is the only time we reciprocate the benefits. Other than that, I have not experienced any form of reciprocity here. During flooding, neighbours who were not severely affected by these floods were spectators without landing a helping hand. Therefore, I also feel like should they be in such tragedy as well I am going to be a spectator too, because they did not help me". (Refilwe, aged 60-70, participant interview 22/11/2023)

> *"I can say the level of reciprocity in this community is not strong, the only time we lend a helping hand is when someone has lost their loved one then we contribute money. But still, in my own perspective, contributing money only when one has lost their loved one without frequent interactions, without emotional support and other forms of assistance is just not enough and it is the same as doing little to nothing. Money alone is never enough, and the worst part is, they only contribute during funerals. For me it would be better if these contributions are done any time when people are in tragedy. For instance, there are plenty of people who were not displaced during flooding, they were left without any help, that was the time whereby, same as when we contribute for funerals, we were also supposed to contribute and at least fix those flooding victims' shacks".* (Charles, aged 50-60, participant interview 25/11/2023)

Comparing Ivory Park to communities of Bangkok who experienced the worst flooding in its recorded history in October 2011 (Aldrich,2017:357-58), levels of bonding social capital in terms of reciprocity amongst the community members is low. To further clarify these differences between Ivory Park and Bangkok communities, because majority of the people living in Sai Noi were migrants from northern Thailand, the community's members were able to cooperate due to similar customs (Aldrich, 2017:357-58). Their mutual trust enabled them to collaborate to establish a resident's committee for speedy decision-making over mitigation efforts and subsequently a five-person security committee to safeguard the evacuated area against potential looters (ibid). This demonstrates the power of social connections prior to, during, and following a crisis. Before the floods, Bangkok citizens used their social capital to get past obstacles and to lessen the severity of the upcoming catastrophe (ibid). Then, when the waters increased, they utilized their networks of reciprocity and trust to ensure their own lives and safety by sharing resources and preventing looters (ibid). In Ivory Park, unlike in the Bangkok community where the nature of their social networks if thick, the levels of trust and reciprocity are weak. They do not assist each other in adverse times therefore, that lowers their levels of bonding social capital.

4.2.3 Ability to access external resources beyond their immediate community (linking social capital)

The concept of accessing external resources beyond one's immediate community happens frequently. In this study accessing external resources includes getting food parcels and other essentials that assist during the flooding event. Data collected during the interviews aimed at measuring the levels of linking social capital between the Ivory Park community and the externals agencies by finding out if they were able to access resources beyond their immediate community. According to Claridge (2001), the concept of linking social capital pertains to the social norms and networks of mutual trust that exist among individuals interacting across formal authority hierarchies in society. An example could be the interactions between a government agency or other donors and a community-based organization (ibid). The study revealed that only 1 respondent out of 19 was able to access resources beyond their immediate community, all other 19 claimed that they did not receive any form of assistance from any non-governmental organisation or from government organisation, instead they received some food parcels from their churches. In addition, they highlighted that it is in rare cases where.

organisations intervene when they have problems within their community. This same belief was shared by Eddie and Charles who remarked that:

> "*We did not receive any resources beyond our immediate community. Not even from the government. What happened is that people from the government agency were moving around this area where we were affected by flooding. We registered our names and were told that help is coming. Up until today we did not get anything including the food parcels that we were promised. Some of us like me, were assisted by our church within the community as it was giving out food parcels however it offered only to its congregation. Other than that, we have not gotten any assistance beyond our immediate community. We heard that food parcels were allocated to people, but I did not receive any and did not see anyone receive them". (Eddie, male aged 30-40, participant interviews 10/12/2023)*

> "*Ntle le sedikadikweng sena sa motse wa rona, ha hona nqa engwe moo re fumanang di thuso. Mohlala, hore ebe rena le dipompo tsena tseo odi bonang le ona motlakase ona ke rona ka hara motse ka mona ba iketseditseng, ha reya fumana dithuso hohang mabapi le tseo. Ka tsela e tshwanang, ha rene re wetswe ke koduwa ena ya morwallo wa metsi ha rekaba ra fumana thuso hotswa ka ntle. Babang ba ile ba thuswa keba malapa a bona, babang ke dikereke. Nna ke thusitswe ke mora waka ya dulang hona mona empa onasa angwe ka tsietsi ena. Ola mphallela ka dijo le dikobo. (In terms of accessing assistance from outside our community, there is no any other place where we get help from. For instance, for us to have these water taps you see here, we did them on our own. And electricity, it is us within this community who have done these on our own, we did not get any external assistance. Similarly, when we were in this flooding tragedy, we never got external assistance. I was assisted by my son who stays in the same community who was not affected by these floods. He assisted with food and blankets)."* (Charles, aged 50-60, participant interview 25/11/2023)

The study also reported that 1 out of 19 of these flooding victims got the opportunity to go to nearest hall (Thuthukani Centre) to receive food parcels, however a large number was still left without assistance. The only help they got was from their families. These ideas were shared by Rose and Margaret from Kuvukuland and Fikile Mbalula section within Ivory Park.

"*I was assisted by my mother who came here during the flooding event and took away my children for safety. I could not leave my shack I asked her to take only the kids. She brought me blankets and food. Apart from that, we never got assistance outside our immediate community except from our nearest family members who stay within the same community*." (Rose, aged 20-30, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

"Yes, we went to Thuthukani centre to get food parcels from Gift of the givers organisation". (Margarett. Aged 50-60, participant interviews, 25/11/2023)

Rose and Margaret's perspectives resonates with Coffee and Geys (2007:121-122)'s argument that social capital is both positive and negative. A large portion of empirical research on social capital highlights the benefits that come from having strong social networks and interpersonal trust. (ibid). Because of the plethora of positive outcomes, there is a perception that social capital has normative advantages (ibid). However, theoretical contributions have long realized that social capital does not always result in beneficial outcomes for society (ibid).

Unlike bonding social capital which comes from close relationships and unity among similar people, which can lead to cooperation and bridging social capital; which comes from connections between people of different backgrounds, helping them to interact more, support tolerance, and avoid becoming isolated from others (Hunt et al, 2015), linking social capital involves relationships that go beyond local community ties, extending to interactions with formal and institutional authorities (Poortinga,2006). To support this argument, this study acknowledges Claridge (2001)'s assertion that linking social capital entails forming connections with people in positions of authority that can be leveraged to gain access to resources or authority. It offers numerous unanticipated community benefits, such as facilitating the interaction between public servants and those who offer the expertise they need to carry out their duties. However, in a case of Ivory Park community, there are low levels of linking social capital between the community and the government officials. The same view was shared by Mxolisi who argued that:

"Some of us did not receive any form of assistance outside our immediate community. Even if the government gives out food parcels, the street committees already have their own people they grant food parcels to and leave us out. I still believe the government gives out some resources to be allocated to the community but due to favouritism and us

> *having weak connections with the government, we suffer because our representatives care about their families and themselves only. Apart from that, in some instances the government hardly intervenes because we mostly do things for ourselves. For instance, the taps you see here in my yard, I did it by myself. For one to access most of the resources from outside our community, they should have strong connections with the ward councillor and the street committees for favours, if not, one will suffer. It is about who knows who kind of a situation".* (Mxolisi, aged 40-50, participant interview, 10/12/2023)

Another interesting perspective that David and George shed light on was the idea that as much as majority of the affected community members did not access resources beyond their immediate community, those that had connections with the street committees could access things like food parcels but for the rest of the other flooding victims, they could not get assistance outside their community.

> *"Some people got food parcels from gift of the givers while some like me did not. I got food from the street committees because some of them are my friends so they, assisted me. If you are not well connected with these people you will not have access to anything".* (David, aged 30-40, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

> *"As you can see that most of us who were affected by the floods are those that are located by the riverbanks, some of my neighbours were displaced and moved close proximity from where they were before however that assistance was not rendered by any external organizations, it was the street committee's decision to shift them from that area because they are their friends. But as for us from Mozambique and my other friend from Malawi, we could not be displaced. Instead, they promised to assist us but in vain".* (George, aged 20-30, participant interview, 04/01/2024)

In support of David and George's argument that they hardly accessed resources from outside their immediate community during and after the flooding event because of their nationality, it is not always the case that social capital benefits everyone within the community. George's argument has shed light on the perspective that linking social capital is weaker to cross border migrants than internal migrants as they face discrimination because of their nationality. This is supported by Coffe and Geys (2007:121-122)'s example on their work on bridging and bonding

social capital. They posited that although closely knit societies offer its members a variety of advantages, they may also exclude others especially the ones they regard not part of them, depriving them of these benefits. This explicit recognition that social capital is not necessarily beneficial has led several scholars to distinguish between different types of social capital (ibid) Additionally, the study revealed that some of these flooding victims were internally displaced within their community, not far from their initial homes. They were shifted in close proximity to their initial homes yet where there were no floods, however South Africans were given priority in terms of being displaced while some cross-border migrants were not.



Figure 4.2.3.1. Shacks of affected flooding victims (cross border migrants) along the of Ivory Park, Kuvukiland section riverbanks who were not displaced while their neighbours were internally displaced at close proximity where the land was dry. (Source: Fieldwork photos by Mpho Bokhatsi, 25/11/2023).

From all the responses, it may be said that there is thin linking social capital when it comes to accessing resources from outside the Ivory Park community. It is true that few of the respondents were able to get food parcels, blankets, and other essentials beyond their immediate community

during the flooding event however a large number of informants highlighted that they did not receive any support or could access resources beyond their immediate community. The few that were able to get food parcels, blankets and other essentials it was through favouritism. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are low levels of linking social capital in Ivory Park community.

4.2.4 Factors they believe influence the levels of social capital within the displaced population in Ivory Park

Another interesting theme that was researched on was to find out the factors that informants believed influence the levels of social capital within their community. In the view of (Osgood and Ong (2001:208) social capital refers to resources that account for the majority of people's daily lives, such as friendship, goodwill, sympathy, and social interactions between the individuals and families that comprise a social unit. In relation to what Osgood and Ong have alluded, the study revealed that due to poor social intercourse within the Ivory Park community, it is difficult for community members to have strong social capital. This is illustrated by a quotation from Edward who stated that:

> *"I am a street committee however I will not hide this, due to corruption, there is uneven distribution of resources. Sometimes the government does assign area representatives some tasks, but they decided to do things their own ways. For instance, during this flooding event that took place in April 2022, the street committees and ward councillors were given food parcels to distribute to the community but instead they distributed them among those that they favour, some sold the food parcels that were to be distributed to those affected for free".* (Edward, aged 40-50, participant interviews,22/11/2023)

Edward's argument on the quoting above is not an isolated case as other respondents echoed it. In addition to his argument, Baerenholdt and Aarsaether (2002: 154) supports this argument on their work on coping strategies , social capital, and space. In their view, it is not in all the cases that social capital is advantageous. Positive social capital features implications include trust, cooperation, and mutual aid while negative social capital implications include corruption, prejudice, and ethnocentrism. In addition to this assertion, Mavis, a Mozambiquan woman argued that:

> *"People from the government agency came here and captured everyone's names who were affected by the floods however the street committees did not give everyone the food parcels per the register we filled up. They assisted those who favoured them. Therefore, I can say corruption is a common denominator here".* (Margaret, aged 50-60, participants interviews, 25/11/2023)

Apart from that, Precious, a Mosotho woman from Free-State and Constance, a Pedi woman from Limpopo who were interviewed during the study indicated that diversity is a factor that influences the levels of social capital.

> *"Coming from different locations and being of different tribes are among factors that affect the levels of social capitals. I am from Free State, I have 2 friends and neighbours here who are from Mozambique, every time when they have crisis, they struggle to get any form of help because they are sidelined because they are referred to as foreigners".* (Precious, aged 20-30, participants interview, 04/01/2024)

> *"We are from different locations, some are from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Botswana and many more. Therefore, it is hard to have strong connections because there is less trust and solidarity. There is still that element of segregation of tribes, nationalities and xenophobic attitudes therefore, some residents within our community blame these people from Mozambique and other neighbouring countries for the high crime rates in the country. As a matter of fact, diversity contributes to low levels of social capital".* (Constance, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

To support what Constance and Precious have discussed in their quotation above, the study acknowledges Igarashi et al (2008:88)'s argument that trust is a psychological lubricant that facilitates smoother operations because it fosters collaboration. However, it is difficult for the Ivory Park community to collaborate because there is thin trust among them as Constance had highlighted above that due to diversity, there is less trust as they are from different regions. Therefore, like Igarashi and colleagues have stated above that trust enhances corporation, there is little cooperation in Ivory Park because of lack of trust which leads to low levels of social capital.

The study also found out that favouritism contributes to factors that influence their levels of social capital.

> *"Favouritism is a factor that I can say influence these levels of social capital. By this I mean, the street committees mainly use favouritism by prioritizing their friends and families when it comes to allocation of resources. So, in that sense, we do not have strong social capital unlike their friends who have strong social networks with them which thickens their social capital".* (Refilwe, aged 60-70, participants interview, 22/11/2023)

One other interesting response from Precious shed light on how social networks can gradually decline from generation to generation.

> *"Life is no longer the same with how primitive societies lived and interacted. In my perspective, because of globalization and modernization, we are a generation with no shared norms, no solidarity. everyone is just minding their lives that's all".* (Precious, aged 20-30, participant interview, 04/01/2024)

Based on the discussion above, the study concludes that within the Ivory Park community, levels of social capital are low due to corruption, lack of solidarity, discrimination, and favouritism. In the view of Claridge (2003), low social capital can be caused by a deficiency of norms, connections, trust, and practices that work against antisocial behavior and low levels of cooperation. As Ivory Park is a community of diverse groups of internal and external migrants who have come together in one place to form a community, their social capital is very low given that they have poor social network.

4.3 This section shows the essence of social networks among displaced persons affected by flooding in Ivory Park, and how they contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during and in the aftermath of flooding.

4.3.1 Description of social networks they are part of since the displacement.

One other observation from the data collected is investigating the social networks that flooding victims of Ivory Park are a part of. In the view of Clark (2007), there are two ways in which the term "social network" is presently employed. The first is to simply describe the quantity of individuals one knows, independent of the connections among them. Another formal usage describes how the number of people many people a person is in contact with as well as the

degree to which these various individuals know one another. In the interviews conducted, all the informants stated that they have social networks they belong to. 1 respondent out of 19 said she is a priest at her own church, one man said he is a street committee, the other two women highlighted that they are church leaders, and the rest are a part of familial networks, and some showed that they have friends which they have both weak and strong connections with. However, Seraj and Toker (2012) highlights that. It is not in all the cases that connections can always be strong. these connections between people who are used to sharing information, knowledge, emotions, and experiences might be latent, strong, or weak depending on the volume of interactions and degree of exchanges and interaction between two nodes (ibid). This point of view was shared by Simphiwe and Precious

> *"Since almost everyone in my family had passed on including my parents, I felt lonely and decided to make friends who have now become more of a family to me. So far, I can say the social network that I am a part of is friendship social network. Even though the levels we connect differ. I have best friends with strong bonds with whom I share everything with. On the other hand, I have those other friends who are just distant friends, our ties are weak because I do not share much of my personal affairs with them." (*Simphiwe, aged 20-30, participant interview, 10/12/2023)

> "*I am part of the familial social networks. I have siblings, grandparents, and parents as well, but I am not that close with them. I always prefer to be in my solitude and keeping some things to myself, that is how I am created. Even asking for help from them it is difficult. Yes, we are one blood however our ties are not strong". (*Precious, aged 20-30, participant interview, 04/01/2024)

> In addition to the social networks these informants are a part of, most of them highlighted that they are part of familial and friendship networks while quite a few of them were part of other networks apart from these two.

> *"I have my own church here at home as you can see, I have extra shacks to accommodate those who need spiritual assistance This is the social network I am part of. I have my own congregation".* (Mavis, aged 60-70, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

One of the interesting social networks that one of the informants said they are part of is a street committee. It is important to have information from both the community members as well as those that are the elected body under the control of civic and carrying out tasks of the local government. As much as they are part of the community as well because they live together with other residents to form one community, they perhaps have a different perspective when it comes to the issues of community, service delivery and the government.

> "*I am a member of the street committee. That is the social network I am part of"*. (Edward, age 40-50, participant interview,22/11/2023)

The investigation showed that relationism contributes to enhancing individual's social connections. The more people share the same characteristics, the more they become comfortable in each other and maintain their connections.

> *"I am part of the "Sisters in Christ" social network. This is a group we have formed at church where we hold prayer sessions and bible study on weekends and once during the weekdays. This is by far the best social network I have ever been part of because it brings me closer to God. I do not see myself being part of any other social network apart from this one. During and after the flooding event we assisted affected people mostly with prayer sessions as some of them were emotionally drained and traumatised. What I can say is: for those who believed in Christ they healed with time as they attended more of our prayer sessions*". (Joyce, Aged 30-40, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

Joyce's response blends well with Igarashi et al (2008:98)'s argument that relationism relies on the notion that individuals are related to known individuals. Individuals who possess a high relationism orientation may take steps to sustain social connections once they are established (ibid). As a result, while relationism may serve to reinforce people's commitment to their current social networks, it might not inspire them to look for and create new social opportunities (ibid). As Joyce from the quoting above had stated that she is part of the social network at church where they assist people with prayer sessions, this implies that she connects more with the church members because they share the same sentiments, which is praying and praising God within the church arena. Besides that, she doesn't see herself in any other social group except the one at church as she finds comfort and relationism with her fellow church members.

4.3.2 How these social networks provided emotional support during and after flooding.

During the interviews, the study found out that several participants see familial connections as stronger and provided more emotional support in comparison to other social networks. This is further supported by Igarashi (2008:88) in their discussion that individuals that belong to the same group are seen as trustworthy, and they tend to act more trustingly towards other members of their own group than those in other groups. In this regard, they trust and received more assistance from their families more than their community members. This was echoed by John from Fikile Mbalula and Mavis from Themba Khoza sections within Ivory Park:

> *"My Friends and family assisted me, not the community or government. My cousins and grandparents would seat me down and told me that things like these happen, this too shall come to pass. As much as words alone cannot help you heal from the trauma and damage flooding has caused to your belongings, they tried their level best to ensure that I was emotionally better".* (John, aged 30-40, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

> *"I, as the church leader did not offer any support to anyone, and I also did not receive any emotional support from someone else except from my family and kids." (*Mavis, aged 60-70, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

According to Clark (2007), each person has a number of close relationships, which are mostly composed of tight, dense connections like those between best friends, and weaker ties, which are less dense and comprise more informal connections like those between associates. Strength of a social connection is determined by a combination of factors like time, depth of emotion, and reciprocal acts (ibid). In the case of Edward, the street committee in the quoting below, his ties are less dense with his acquaintances. He stated that:

> *"I, as one of the street committees, since I was affected by this flooding as well, I never received any emotional support from my networks. As much as I am a civil servant, we still get sidelined as well by the government depending on how our social ties are with those superior to us. Being a street committee is more like just occupying a security position as compared to being a police man. As a street committee and a representative of the Lundokuhle section in Ivory Park, we were given food parcels as well however to*

*me food parcels are not enough or just someone saying things will be ok because my properties will not be replaced. So, the social networks we have within this community like the "Bambanani Isandla Society" was not helpful to me and is still not helpful. Therefore, no social networks assisted me in coping strategies and building my resilience in those trying times". (*Edward, aged 40-50, participants interview 22/11/2023)

Furthermore, in the view of (Baison, 2021), churches play a crucial part of the social networks This is further confirmed by Joyce's quotation below:

*"That same night of flooding, some of us did not have places to stay and had to wait at an open dry space for the morning to come. We were accommodated at universal church, not so far from here. Even though it is not a big church, but they accommodated us for 2 days and offered prayer sessions to assist us with coping and enhancing our resilience." (*Mandla, aged 30-40, participant interview, 10/12/2023)

It is not in all the cases that social networks offer support. This is echoed by George and Rose:

*"Our family members and other neighbours who were not affected by these floods tried talk to me and shared food and other necessities with us. However, that did not help because, I got retrenched from work in 2021 due to covid. So whatever household accessories I had, I bought them while I was still working. Now I cannot afford to buy new ones. As a result, being given emotional support is not enough and according to me it is pointless because I will not be able to replace my household accessories." (*George, aged 20-30, 04/01/2024)

*"During flooding we were just spectators we did not assist each other. Even after flooding we did not check up on each other here in our community. From my end the only person who was supportive was my mother (she stays not so far from here and was not affected by flooding). As for the rest of the community, everyone was just distant". (*Rose, aged 20-30, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

The study also unveiled that there are also people, like Chantelle on the quotation below, who are not part of any social networks. Those that have social networks do not maintain their connections. They do not see the need to maintain or strengthen them even more. In that sense,

during adverse times like these ones of flooding events, they struggle to get assistance because they do not have social connections therefore, they have no one to reach out to. This perception is further supported by Mutopo and Landau (2014:27)'s observation that maintaining social networks and one's status within them is essential to one's social life and resilience (after all, who else can assist when situations become difficult?).

On the other side of the coin, it should be acknowledged that there are some informants like Charles and Constance that received emotional support from their social networks, and it did work for them.

> *"My close relatives that were not affected by flooding accommodated me and offered food while I was waiting for the water to recede inside my shack. everything was floating in water, the bed and other valuable household accessories."* (Charles, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

> *"My family offered support and accommodated me while i was waiting for the floods to ease up. They would call me just to check in".* Constance, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

4.3.3 Ways in which social networks facilitate in giving strategies on how to cope during flooding?

According to Igarashi et al (2008:88), sociologists asserts that social networks control the distribution of information. The study revealed that strong social networks like familial networks that quite a few numbers of respondents claimed to have assisted them in regulating information and giving out ways on how to tackle stress to cope better and strengthen resilience are crucial. This was done through calling their loved ones during this tragedy and checking up on them to ease their stress, it was done by keeping them company and as well as giving them home counselling sessions.

> *"My friends assisted me with coping strategies every time I looked emotionally drained and as for my family, they assisted me with shelter and food; I would eat and bath there every day. As for the community social connections, like I keep saying that here it is every man for himself, it is by luck and in rare cases that you can find supportive neighbours. People here are just minding their own affairs. So in other words I can say our*

*community connections did not assist in any exchange of information regarding how we can cope during adverse times. Only our friends who live close by and our relatives assisted." (*Margaret, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

"In this case I can say familial networks did offer some support and told me to move away from the area till I heal from the trauma that the event caused. as for the community they could not assist with anything, not even with sharing information on the coping strategies." (Rose, aged 20-30, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

Margaret and Rose share the same views with Leonard (2004:933) in their study, where the participants were questioned about whether they could trust their neighbors for assistance, and if so, they could provide an example of assistance they had received. 86% of them said they depended on their neighbors for support. Daily assistance consisted of lending money, clothing, and other necessities, whereas additional assistance was provided at emergencies like illness or death (ibid). Instead, a lot of homes opted to build up favors that might be relied upon on in future (ibid). Where the research participants were questioned about whether they could . The study is on board with Leonard's point of view, and this is further echoed by Margaret's idea that she sees familial and neighbourhood social connections as reliable and assistive as compared to community social networks. This implies that, in terms of community connections, there are no close-knit social connections among the community members of Ivory Park.

Furthermore, Mavis and Constance shared the same point of view that their community social networks have not been any helpful. They got assisted by their families.

*"As much as I have stated before that I did not offer any emotional support to anyone affected as I was also affected, I did not get any emotional support as well however as the church leader, I included giving out words of encouragement in my Sunday teachings while I preach h in church. I would offer strategies to my congregation that prayer is the only aspect that can keep us sane and going in this situation." (*Mavis, aged 60-70, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

"They kept telling me that it will be ok and should there be flooding again i should go back to staying with them." Constance, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

4.3.4 Perceiving the role of social networks in enhancing their resilience and coping mechanisms.

From data collected, the study found out that within Ivory Park, there are different types of social networks namely familial networks, neighbourhood networks, friendship networks and the community networks. The existence of these networks proved that it does not necessarily mean this community does not have any institutions they are part of, they do have however they do not assist members in collective calamities. As a result ,collective or communal networks in Ivory Park do not contribute to resilience building and coping strategies as compared to other social networks listed above. Magaret remarked,

> *"When there is water there is nothing you can do even if you can wish to assist those in tragedy, you cannot because you also have fear of losing your life. After flooding, since we all struggle here, it was hard to share food or space with someone who was affected or even offer emotional support because I would also be burdened with mixed emotions. So, in that regard I do not perceive community networks as helpful because everyone would be minding their own life"* (Margaret, aged 50-60, participant interviews 25/11/2023)

These thoughts were further supported by Mavis and Constance who argued that community networks in their perspective are not useful at all because their connections are weak.

> *"Since in this community it is every man for himself, to me on the level of community connections I don't see their role impacting my life positively because there is no solidarity. The social bond is weak, then that means it is of less importance."* (Mavis, female aged 60-70, participants interview, 22/11/2023)

"Familial connections are helpful as compared to community connections. For me I do not see the community connections useful. Everyone is focusing on their own personal lives."
(Constance, aged 50-60, participants interview, 25/11/2023)

However, as much as the community networks are less helpful, it must be noted that some participants like Joyce and Simphiwe, Charles and Rose acknowledged that their social networks were very assistive and enhanced their coping mechanisms and resilience.

"For me, I can say my networks from church are stronger than those from the community at large because here to be honest, it is every man for himself. It is by chance that one can get assisted. Therefore, my social connections from church did enhance my resilience especially when we pray, I feel recharged". (Joyce, aged 30-40, participants interview 22/11/2023)

*"Like I have said, to me it is true my social networks were supportive during those tying times however at some point you end up feeling like they are doing little to nothing because they cannot assist you on recovering what you have lost". (*Pauline, aged 50-60, participants interview 18/12/2023)

*"To me having solid connections with my relatives and family has played a big role in enhancing my coping strategies because they would keep me company, sometimes take me out to refresh or meet with other friends to have fun to avoid stressing up. I f it was not for them, it could have been very difficult for me to cope. With community networks, our connections are not tight". (*Simphiwe, aged 20-30, participant interviews 10/12/2023)

*"In my outlook, familial networks play a better role as compared to the community connections. If it was not for my mother, I would have lost my life because I was stuck inside the shack and no one would assist, until my mother came by with her male neighbours to come rescue me from drowning. People were standing there just watching and making remarks that I should come out, but they could not even throw a rope for me to hold on to while I was struggling to get out of the shack. Community connections here are very weak and I see them as a waste of time". (*Rose, aged 20-30, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

The above views from different informants support the perceptions that familial and friendship social networks enhanced their coping and resilience as compared to community social connections. This implies that, they perceive community social networks as less helpful. The study is on board with Aldrich (2017:357-358)'s argument that social connections improve aiding of communities, locals, and the country at large to recover from disasters. Considering this, it is essential that planners and other decision makers work with communities to develop social capital prior to catastrophe (ibid). However, within the Ivory Park community, their

community social networks did not improve their recovery as they did not offer any emotional support, or they did not enhance their resilience and coping strategies. What seemed to be working is the familial connections even though only a few numbers of informants had strong connections with their families. As much as 16 informants out of 20 claimed in the first section that it was not their first time to witness floods but those that took place in April 2022 were extreme, they did not learn from the past flooding disasters to strengthen their social networks to enhance their social capital. Instead, their connections are still weak.

4.4 This section shows how the essence of social networks influence the effectiveness of their social capital among displaced population affected by flooding in ivory park in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms.

4.4.1 How the relationships they have with other people in their community make their overall connections stronger (bonding social capital)

A community is a group of people who have developed connections based on mutual trust and reciprocity through their continuous interactions (Brown and Keast, 2003:2). The study revealed that Ivory Park community members are not closely connected with other community members and as such, that makes their overall connections weaker. As discussed in section 2 by one informant that due to diversity their connections are weak because of thin trust among themselves. These ideas are support by Kindler et al (2015:12)'s assertion that the most important factors that segregate networks are nationality, regional origin, education, and residence status. Therefore, due to their diverse nature of their community, their wea k connections make their bonding social capital low. To clarify this more, Kindler et al (2015:12) adds that diversity lowers the degree of interaction and connectedness among people in the community. This point of view was shared by Mavis, Edward and Raymond as they argued:

> *"Our connections are weak regardless and I do not think they will ever be strong because this is not the first time we witness floods, for those who live closely by the riverbanks, every time it rains, they experience minor floods however the extreme one happened in April 2022. Given that we still experience floods even though they are not extreme, our connections were supposed to be stronger now so that we can work together to assist each other."* (Mavis, aged 60-70, participants interview,22/11/2023)

> *"Our relationships are not strong. I must say, ever since I started staying here 8 years ago until now, the overall connections are very weak. In my own outlook, this is caused by our diverse characteristics, language, place of origin and others. So, there is no way they can be strong". (*Edward, aged 40-50, participants interviews, 22/11/2023)

"It does not make them stronger because we are not close. we just greet each other from afar but that does not make our connections any stronger". (Raymond, aged 20-30, participants interview,10/12/2023)

Contrary to Mavis, Edward and Raymond's views, the study observed that despite most respondents supporting the perspective that their social connections are weak and that affects their levels of bonding social capital, Joyce and Constance revealed that this extreme flooding event that took place in April 2022 made them realise that strong relationships offer companionship and emotional support (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). It is essential to work together as a community to mitigate the challenges that come with flooding disaster. These ideas resonate with Wellman (2001:2)'s argument that healthy communities are densely knit, tightly bounded groups.

> *"It is true our social networks are very weak here in Themba Khoza section, Ivory Park however, I for one, after that tragedy I learnt how important it is to have strong connections as a community. Since I was assisted by my neighbours and my sister in Christ from church to remove my belonging to my sister's shack which was not affected by water, I now know how to ask for assistance from the neighbours unlike before the tragedy. So, in short, I can say this disaster has taught me to work together with people." (*Joyce, aged 30-40, participants interview, 22/11/2023)

> *"As much as I have said earlier that here it is every man for himself kind of situation, after the flooding event our bond as a community especially those who were affected became somehow stronger because it came to our senses that no man is an island, you need to integrate with other people and assist where possible so that in future they can as well reciprocate the same benefit." (*Constance, aged 50-60, participant interviews, 25/22/2023)

Social networks that have many links are defined as the close knit or dense while those with few links are deemed less dense or loose knit (Clark, 2007). It can be concluded that in Ivory Park, some respondents have explored the strengths or weaknesses of ties in their networks and this is close to saying that one's strong ties form a dense network and one's weak ties forms a less dense one (ibid).

4.4.2 How working together with organisations outside their community makes their connections with others stronger (linking social capital)

This sub section unveils how the community members of Ivory Park working together with organisations beyond their community strengthens their connections with others through linking social capital. As asserted by Woolcock (2001) in Claridge (2018:3), linking social capital are relationships between people and groups in various social strata within a hierarchy where various groups can access income, power, and social prestige. Linking social capital has numerous indirect benefits for the community that are sometimes overlooked in the literature, such as connecting government workforce with the people who provide knowledge and skills to carry out their duties (ibid). In addition to these benefits, communities with higher levels of social capital across all areas are better equipped to mobilise during difficult times and are less likely to experience unfavourable consequences. However, despite these positive impacts, the study observed that working together with organisations makes their social connections weak. This is further elaborated by Refilwe in his argument that:

> *"Working with organisations or the government does not make our connections any stronger because firstly, we do everything for ourselves, they do not assist us at all, they do little to none so our connections with them is very weak."* (Refilwe, aged 60-70, participants interview, 22/11/2023)

The study discovered that, working together with organisations gets spoilt by the community representatives like the street committees in a sense that, they are assigned some duties to perform within the community as articulated by Edward, the street committee discussed in section 4.3.4, unfortunately they do not render such services or distribute those food parcels but instead, they prioritize their friends and families who might not even be in need of such resources. For example, during the flooding event in this community, Edward stated that some

street committees were selling food parcels that were meant to be distributed for free to the affected members of the community.

> *"Working together with organisations makes our connections in this community weaker because we know that the government sometimes issue out resources to assist unlike they did during the flooding event that took place in April 2022, however they do not get to be delivered to us therefore, we begin to have weak relations with our representatives and those that have strong personal connections with them as we blame them for exhausting resources that were meant to assist us all for free or they use favouritism to assist people".* (Precious, aged 20-30, participant interview, 04/01/2024)

From Precious's argument, it can be concluded that due to corruption by the street committees, other community members see no need to strengthen their connections with others because, either way, they already know that they will not get assisted as some are more favoured than others. While acknowledging Poortinga (2006: 255-256)'s view that in difficult times, social capital works as a stress reliever and a source of material and social assistance, it is different in Ivory Park in a sense that their levels of social capital are low, and they see working together with organizations making their connections with others even weaker.

In support of that, Constance also added to the views of the above informants that working together with organisations does not make their connections any stronger, they are just the same.

> *"The only organisation that assisted with food parcels, blankets etc was gift of the givers however it was just a few numbers of people who got those food parcels. As for our government, we did not get any form of assistance from them as a result, I can say we do not work together with the government. For me our connections are still the same regardless, whether within our community or between us and the organisations beyond our community". (*Constance, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

Because their social networks are already low within their community, thus; they struggle to access resources, working together with organisation does not strengthen their social connections at all but instead they make them even weaker because, they believe that when it comes to accessing the resources, some of the community members are favoured than others. Indeed, individuals with higher amounts of social capital can accomplish more, while those with lesser

levels may find it more difficult to accomplish the same objectives (Perry, 2022). This view by Perry is evident in this community as Raymond argued that:

> *"We are already a disadvantaged community here in Ivory Park. Often, we are sidelined when it comes to resources allocation as compared to the nearby locations. If you see us here living inside these shacks at this risky area you should know that we cannot afford to rent proper places that are safe or buy houses, we are all stranded. So, I have realised that because of our marginalised state, we are sidelined. For me working together with the organisations makes our connections with them weaker because in the first place they do not include us at all."* (Isaac. Aged 60-70, Participant interview, 18/12/2023)

From Isaac's argument, it can be concluded that, working with organizations beyond their community is not helpful because to start with, they do not get most of help from organizations or the government. They do things on their own. Therefore, they do not have a close relationship with organizations. In the view of Kindler et al (2015:12), social capital is not lacking in varied societies; rather, it is lacking in underprivileged ones. Kindler and colleagues' sentiments resonate with Isaac's argument that due to their socio-economic status they have poor connections with organizations and as a result, that affects their linking social capital. Diversity does not necessarily cause low levels of social capital however low social capital is caused by being disadvantaged, it exists more in disadvantaged communities. Another argument from Kindler et al (2015:14) presents an in-depth review of recent labor laws in the UK aimed to build social capital in underprivileged areas. When it comes to the most impoverished places, their primary criticism of the government is based on their belief that the local community lacks social capital and works on emphasizing community cohesion as the relief (ibid).

4.4.3 How trust and shared norms impact the effectiveness of their social networks in coping with challenges.

The building of trust between individuals is reliant on rational action and participation (Bautista and Bayang, 2015:663). One way to conceptualize social capital is as trust-based free-will connections (ibid). Drawing from this argument by Bautista and Bayang, the study revealed that trust and shared norms within the Ivory Park community negatively impact the effectiveness of their social networks in relating to their coping strategies. However, quite a few of respondents

like John, showed a different perspective that on having close relationships with neighbours can build trust between the two actors.

> *"There was a time when I was not around when the first flooding event took place, my wife and kids were accommodated by my neighbours so in that case, my trust for them improved because they assisted my family in times of distress in my absence." (*John, aged 30-40, 25/11/2023)

The study also found out that, adverse times makes people to learn to corporate with others and eventually build up trust to enhance the reciprocation process. This view was outlines by Pauling in her argument:

> *"As much as we do not share the same norms because we come from different regions and cultures, we have all witnessed flooding especially us who live by the banks of the river. W assisted each other as the 5 of us as neighbours while others were not willing to join and assist. Now we have a common understanding that during tough times it is crucial to lend a helping hand so that your benefit can be reciprocated to you in future. As a matter of fact, we can now group ourselves as women and offer support to people who have life challenges however the sad p*
>
> *art about this is that it is just the 5 of us who engage in such. The rest of the community members within our section here in Fikile Mbalula, Ivory Park, are not interested in joining us and enhancing this community network that we were trying to build up. So, our number does not make a difference and besides, if they are not willing to assist other people, then we also cannot assist them when they have problems" (*Pauline, aged 50-60, participant interview, 18/12/2023)

Pauline's response resonates with Bautista and Bayang (2015:663)'s idea that productive collaboration, citizen involvement, networks, and social trust all support one another. Additionally, the development of trustworthy connections is a prerequisite for both collaboration and trust (ibid). In Pauline's view that her other 4 community members were trying to build up a support group of assisting people in tragic times as a panacea because the government hardly intervenes during tough times, it is easier for her, and the other 4 members engage in that because they have more generalized trust. It is difficult for that association to be a

success because other community members, unlike her who has spontaneous sociability, are not willing to engage. Like Bautista and Bayang (2015) alludes that social trust, reciprocity, civic engagement, and organizations all support one another, there is no way the group can be a success if other community members do not have solid trustful relationships . This implies that their thin trust and shared norms amongst them as community members negatively impacts the effectiveness of their social networks.

In addition, the study also observed a very interesting perspective that some community members have particularised trust, which is described as trust which stands for our shared confidence in those who are close to us, such as friends and family (Braesmann and Stepheny, 2021). This kind of trust is mostly found among the community members who have been interviewed and makes it hard for them to connect with their fellow community members. Indeed, trust is fundamental to social life (Igarashi et al, 2008:88), however in Ivory Park, their thin trust negatively impacts their social lives, and this is because they do not have shared norms as they migrated to this region from different places of origin. This perspective is echoed by Constance and Rose:

> *"I do not think we have shared norms because we are totally from different regions and cultures. We only connect when we contribute for funerals. Apart from that we do not interact. Therefore, trust is very thin because for instance, I do not trust my two neighbours because they are men, and they are always hanging with their other male friends from Malawi. I find it hard to interact with them because I do not trust them. Trust impacts our networks because in the first place, we do not know each other on in-depth and secondly our connections are very weak." (*Constance, aged 50-60, participant interviews, 25/11/2023)

> *"As I have stated that there is no solidarity here and we do not have shared norms, these 2 aspects impact our networks in a negative way, and it becomes hard to cope in tough situation. For example, I keep asking myself who is going to assist me during flooding disasters. Every time when I see dark clouds what comes to my mind is flooding, drowning, and having no one around to help! This has affected me emotionally and it is hard to heal from the trauma. If our connection was strong, I still believe my stress wouldn't be that much because I will be knowing that there are people around with whom*

we help each other. But instead, it poses more stress because I already know that it is one man for himself". (Chantelle, aged 40-50, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

These thoughts fit in Igarashi et al (2008:89)'s idea that social interaction is facilitated by generalized trust, which motivates people to approach others and form closely knit ties. After all, there should be no barrier to stepping outside of one's comfort zone, getting to know new people, and creating social opportunities when most people are deemed trustworthy and whose good will can be presumed (ibid). In actuality, individuals who have a high degree of generalized trust are more likely to cooperate with strangers than those who have a low-level level of generalized trust (ibid).

4.4.4 How factors like trust, reciprocity and social ties influence the community's views on the potential benefits of strengthening social capital.

The study was also interested in gathering data on how factors like trust, reciprocity and social ties influence the community's views on the potential benefits of strengthening social capital. The study revealed that because of weak connection they have within their community, they do not perceive strengthening the social capital useful because in the first place, there is no solidarity, there is thin trust and low levels of reciprocity. They posited that this flooding event that took placed in April 2022 was not the first flooding they experienced however this one was too extreme with high water levels. As it was not the first one and they did not learn to work together to prepare well in time for future disaster, that means there is no way they can bring about changes to that because some people are not willing to be part of the game change. As articulated by Aldrich (2017:359-360), communities where residents hardly collaborate may struggle to express their demands to resource providers and come to an understanding regarding a common future neighborhood vision. On the other hand, communities that show stronger resilience are those whose members can overcome problems, share a common identity, and are cooperative in planning their recovery (ibid).

"It depends on one person to the other, whether that person really wants to help you or not. It can be hard to make social capital to be stronger because we differ as people. Some are dedicated to helping people while some find it fine to do things alone without someone intervening. With me, I do not see strengthening social capital a better way of enhancing our resilience to cope better in future challenges because, say for instance,

> *bonding social capital is strengthened, corruption from our community representatives is going to ruin that because they already have their own favourites within this community".* (Mavis, aged 60-70, participant interview, 22/11/2023)

Mavis's point of view corresponds with Leonard (2004:929) In their critique of Putnam's work, that social capital has the potential to restrict people's choices and behaviors in certain cases. This is because social capital may stem from denying other people access to resources. Therefore, for Mavis, strengthening social capital in general cannot assist in coping better with challenges.

Margaret and Mxolisi share the same sentiments with Brown and Keast (2003)'s ideas on their study where they observed that local community activity had a significant impact on how people took care of themselves and one another, attempted to manage and improve their environment, and reacted and attempted to influence public services.

> *"For me it all stems from our social networks. If we strengthen our social connections, then it is going to be easier to have high levels of social capital. If our connections keep on being weak like they are, then we will forever experience exclusion when it comes to accessing resources because the minority have connections with the ward councillors and can get Favors while majority of us have challenges. Therefore, if our social connections are strong, ultimately our social capital will be high, and we can be able to handle future climate change disasters better". (*Margaret, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023

> *"When spider webs unite, they can tie a lion! If our social bonds or connections are strong, it can be easier to mitigate challenges that come with climate change disasters like the flooding that we experienced here in April 2022. Since we will be knowing that we are not alone in this tragedy, it will be better knowing that there are people in our community who are empathetic and are always willing to assist.". (*Mxolisi, aged 40-50, participant interview, 10/12/2023)

In addition, the findings revealed that it is of no importance to strengthen bonding and bridging of social capital. Because of favouritism and discrimination, some community members may still have a problem with accessing resources or getting help. Therefore, rather think strengthening linking social capital can somehow help because people from different organizations do not

know them on in-depth level so it will be hard for them to discriminate them or sideline them due to fact that they are cross border migrants or perhaps use favouritism. This proposition is supported by Constance and Charles in their discussion:

> *"What we need as a community is for the government to intervene. Having strong linking social capital would be the best because we can be able to access resources and other forms of assistance during difficult times. We are going to be treated equally. Again, we can cope better knowing that at least help is coming, because almost all of us here we cannot afford life, so it is hard to assist someone with something when you cannot afford your own life."* (Constance, aged 50-60, participant interview, 25/11/2023)

> *"For me, I do not think strengthening social capital can be helpful in anyway because firstly, we do not connect on the highest level here, we just greet each other, and it ends there. Rather, even though the government too, is just there but it is not helpful, rather what I think can work is strengthening linking social capital whereby it can always be easier to get assistance from organizations or the government: people who do not even know us individually and will not be able to practice favouritism. That can help us better cope in future". (Mandla, aged 30-40, participant interview, 10/12/2023)*

> *"I don't think there can be any change if the social capital could be made stronger because now, we are used to how we live. everyone minds their own business here and does not really care about who does what."* (Simphiwe, aged 20-30, participant interview, 10/12/2023)

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents introduction, the informant's biological information by clarifying their age, gender, the time they have lived in Ivory Park, and the frequency they have been affected by the climate change(flooding). The study' s findings were presented and discussed in detail. Several themes were identified in this study and discussed under the study's three objectives. These includes: The levels of social capital among displaced persons in ivory park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels, The essence of social networks among displaced persons in ivory park, and how they contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during and in the aftermath of flooding and How the essence of social networks influence the

effectiveness of social capital among displaced populations in ivory park in the context of their resilience and coping mechanism. Out of these themes, the study has revealed that there are low levels of social capital in Ivory Park due to factors like weak social connections, lack of trust that leads to low reciprocity, which influence variations in these levels. Furthermore, the nature of their social networks is weak and does not enhance or contribute to their coping strategies and resilience during the climate change. Also looking at the role of external agencies and governmental organisations, they do influence the resilience during climate induced disasters and this is seen from mavis argument that they received food parcels from Thuthukani centre where the Gift of the Givers organisation was allocating food parcels to these flooding victims. However, it is on a little scale as majority of the informants highlighted that they did not get assistance from any governmental agencies. In addition, the study showed that government agencies do give out resources like they did during these flooding crisis in Ivory Park however, as asserted by one respondent, the street committees and the ward councilors already had people they were willing to assist on account of favoritism, therefore in this case, linking social capital(governmental agencies)'s ability to influence resilience gets hampered by the bridging social capital(the street committees).In a nutshell, as the study acknowledges that quite a small number of informants asserted that they have better connections with their family members and friends, it is essential to note that the majority's social networks including the communal network at large have weak ties which contributes to the low levels of social capital

CHAPTER 5: MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In conclusion to this dissertation, this chapter includes a summary of the results, a discussion based on the objectives of the study, discussion of theories and a consolidation of results into recommendations for academic research and policy. It also reflects on the study's limitations, and the implications of these for future work. Since the township was established, Ivory Park has witnessed flash floods, particularly in locations near the Kraaifontein riverbanks. These floods make some residents became vulnerable in ways that impacts their livelihoods and their emotional well-being. This study interrogates the somewhat romanticised notion that marginalised communities collaborate during difficult times. More specifically, this study set out to explore how social networks and the levels of social capital influence coping strategies and resilience of displaced persons in Ivory Park due to flooding. This was unpacked through in-depth interviews with qualitative research methodology to direct the investigation. It found that low levels of social capital within the Ivory Park community are a result of the weak social relationships.

5.2 Summary of findings

The findings and recommendations are summarised from the themes that emerged during the interviews and data analysis.

The study observed an interesting theme based on the essence of social networks among displaced persons in Ivory Park, and how they contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during and in the aftermath of flooding. The observation was that members of this community have different social networks they are part of, some are members of the church groups, some are priests, some are street committees while some are more into familial connections however, these connections are not specifically tailored for addressing collective crisis. The nature of these individuals' weak community ties does not necessarily mean that they are lacking institutions or connections within their community; rather, it appears that they lack particular connections that serve as a primary means of addressing collective crisis and that positively support resilience and coping strategies. Considering floods as the primary subject matter, Ivory Park has experienced flooding in the past, but these occurrences have not shaped the community in any way for future preparedness, as a result, their thin communal ties expose them to

vulnerability particularly during environmental disasters. In addition, the study discovered weaknesses in the community social networks in this region. Participants noted a lack of cohesiveness and brittle social bonds, which affects their ability to recover from disasters and also has repercussions for disaster resilience. For example, if people experience flooding and others remain as observers not helping, this suggests that the affected community members might not be able to handle the disaster in future because they will be well informed that they are on their own to cope and recover. The challenges brought about by these strained communal social ties both during and after disasters cause community members who were once impacted by flooding to experience heightened nervousness, and this was supported by one informant who highlighted that she gets apprehensive every time she sees clouds because she knows that no one is going to assist her.

The study acknowledges that only a small percentage of respondents recognised the significance of the other social bonds like family and friendship networks which were perceived to be more helpful and supportive, offering both practical and emotional support however, these types of connections are not specifically addressed to assist during collective calamities. In contrast to communal relationships, the aforementioned social networks—family and friendship networks—have important roles in enhancing community members' ability to cope with tragedies on an individual basis, not collectively. However, during a climate-related disaster, these kinds of connections do not support the community as a whole, it favours the minority. Nevertheless, given that this community frequently witness flash floods, it seems not reinforce its social networks in anticipation of major disasters, and this contributes to the hampering of resilient amid environmental upheavals. In this case, the marginalised societies like Ivory Park can be analysed as a society with weak social ties and heightened low levels of social capital.

Secondly, the study explored the levels of social capital among displaced persons in Ivory Park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels. The results of this research show that the Ivory Park residents have minimal interpersonal ties, which stems from their poor social capital. This makes it difficult for them to access resources both inside and outside of their immediate neighbourhood. The study was anticipating to of cooperation and solidarity within this community because there is a stereotype that marginalised populations have strong social links; nevertheless, it discovered that the connections in this community are poor.

The study contends that factors like discrimination, diversity, and corruption that impact social capital are the reasons we observe weak links. These factors are the main reason why the connections are weak because the community members find it hard to connect when they are diverse which also results in lack of trust. Once further, discrimination also makes it hard for the community members to get along as it is made up of migrants from different regions. To add on this issue of discrimination amongst these community members which impacts their social bonds, Gauteng serves as both a transit and a destination area (Landau and Veronique,2008:13), and as a matter of fact, more people migrate to Gauteng for opportunities. Some of these migrants are internal migrants while some are cross-border migrants who highlighted that they migrated to Gauteng, Ivory Park for job search. The primary form of transit involves the continuing of frequent trends in circular migration from rural South Africa and other parts of the region, as well as traders and refugees who migrate to Gauteng in search of possibilities for temporary safety or financial gain (Landau and Veronique, 2008:13). Therefore, discrimination prevails between these two types of migrants within the Ivory Park community as the internal migrants complain that cross border migrants are here to take their jobs, "The rate of unemployment has frequently led to conflicts between immigrants and groups of south Africans who blame foreign nationals for taking jobs meant for them" (Myeni, 2022) and this creates more hatred which hampers their interaction patterns that builds up solid communal bonds. Apart from that, one respondent noted that vulnerability manifests during climate-related catastrophes since reciprocity appears to be poor and members do not share benefits, which in turn hinders the community's capacity to create efficient coping mechanisms both during and after disasters. In that sense, they are less equipped to be resilient enough to cope with challenges during flooding. In terms of accessing resources, their inability to access resources both within and beyond their immediate community hampers their ability to recover and adapt in the face of environmental threads. Furthermore, the community becomes less resilient and unable to cope when factors that affect these levels of social capital like corruption, prevail because it is difficult for them to thrive when fair treatment is lacking. For instance, during the flooding event food parcels were distributed based on favouritism, only a few members of the community could access to resources while the majority were stranded.

Another observation was on how the essence of social networks influences the effectiveness of their social capital among Displaced populations in ivory park in the e context of their resilience and coping mechanisms**.** The study observed that the relationships the Ivory Park community

members have with other members makes their overall connections weaker due to diversity for instance, as per the study's findings. Their differences and inability to trust one another make it difficult for them to establish close relationships. In addition to the fact that their interactions with one another within the community are challenging, working with organisations does not improve relationships as those organisations do not put their needs first. They are aware that the government occasionally provides resources in times of disaster, however the street committees exhaust these resources by offering them to their friends and relatives. Moreover, these community members face exclusion during adverse times because of their marginal status, therefore, working with organisations diminishes their relationships even further.

Lastly, an intriguing theme on how social networks, reciprocity, and trust influence how the community views the potential benefits of building social capital was also discovered by the study. The observation was made that this community perceives strengthening their levels of social capital as ineffective because there is very little involvement, and majority exclusion when it comes to resource allocation and provision of other resources. For instance, the fact that community authorities prefer their own favourites within their community when allocating resources, it already shows poor social connection between the community authorities and the community members, which ultimately alters the nature of social capital. Apart from that, other informants mentioned that strengthening social capital stems from strengthening social networks. If their social connections keep on being weak like they are now, then they will forever experience exclusion when it comes to accessing resources and other forms of assistance during environmental threads because minority have connections with the ward councillors and can get favours while majority have challenges. Some individuals favour strengthening linking social capital more than bridging and bonding social capital because they feel that since no one in the government or organisation really knows them thoroughly, everyone can be treated fairly.

5.3 Discussion of theories

Resilience theory, which is defined as the capacity to endure, bounce back from, and restructure in the face of adversity so that every member of society acquires or preserve the capacity to prosper (Arnold et al, 2014) was employed in this study. The definition that is currently in use within the disaster risk management community, which defines resilience as the capacity to cope or bounce back from shocks or extreme events, needs to be expanded upon, according to the expanding

agreement among development and humanitarian partners (ibid). This theory was applied in this study to evaluate the dynamics of the Ivory Park society in the context of disaster resilience. It helped the study observe and comprehend how people in the community cope with challenges and other stressors, but based on observations, data gathered challenges the traditional perspective of resilience theory, particularly regarding the constraints imposed by poor social networks in Ivory Park. Their poor social networks hinder them from returning favours, which makes it hard for them to properly adapt to environmental catastrophes and renders them too vulnerable to catastrophes brought on by climate change. Based on its observations, the study proposes that this theory be modified to represent the complicated nature of community resilience more accurately, especially in situations where social networks are weak, as this study found. Furthermore, Arnold et al (2014:6) lay out some challenges associated with resilience building, and they highlight that building the resilience of the underprivileged cannot be easily achieved. This process requires a variety of supporting interventions at various organizational and regional levels (ibid). Adjusting this theory aims to improve the applicability and effectiveness in understanding and addressing resilience in diverse social settings. There is a need for a more nuanced understanding of resilience in communities with low social capital. Also, the theory needs to broaden the idea of resilience to include more than just bouncing back from adversity and address social inequalities that might prevent certain communities from being resilient.

The second theory that was employed by the study was social capital theory, which offers material and social assistance as well as serves as a stress relief during difficult times (Poortinga, 2006: 255-256). With employing this theory, the study gained a greater understanding of how societal capacity and connection mobilise resources from various societal levels, and how it impacts their resilience. However, contrary to the tenet of this theory that social capital is the ability to mobilize resources from various socioeconomic levels and the interconnectedness within society (Samutachak et al, 2022), the study proposes refinements to this theory based on the study's insights, highlighting the need to consider context specific factors that influence social capital levels and resilience. Firstly, the theory needs to understand that social networks are influenced by many factors like discrimination, corruption, diversity, favouritism and other, not just people's relationships. Secondly, it has to create a better way of measuring social connections that looks at both how many connections people have and how helpful those connections are. Additionally, the need for refinement in this theory resonates with Baerenholdt and Aarsaether (2002:155) in

their assertion that, Putnam acknowledges that social capital cannot always be beneficial. Although he has not fully included this insight into his empirical research, his remarks allow for a critic of explanations of how social capital is defined based on its purpose. (ibid). Having said that, this research adds to the ongoing debates in the field of social capital as highlighted by Putman in the work of (Baerenholdt and Aarsaether, 2002:155). Following this, the study found that, for Ivory Park society it is hard to mobilise resources due to thin social connections to aid their resilience gaps. For this reason, there is a discrepancy between this theory and the study's findings particularly regarding the inability of Ivory Park society to mobilise resources due to low levels of social capital and lack of trust .

5.4 Conclusion

The primary conclusions drawn from this research are that Ivory Park is a multicultural neighbourhood comprised of domestic and international migrants. Additionally, the study indicated that the various social networks inside this community contribute more to resilience than the communal ties during environmental threads. Again, there is a lack of solidarity, reciprocity, and trust in the larger community networks when examining the dynamics of the Ivory Park community and how they work together during climate-related catastrophes. Because of a variety of factors, including discrimination against cross-border migrants that negatively impacts the sociability of the community, diversity that negatively impacts the community's particularised and generalised trust, and weak propinquity among the community members, their levels of social capital are low**.** These results clarify that the Ivory Park community's lack of close community ties makes it difficult for members to develop coping strategies and resilience during displacement and environmental threads. On that same note, the social networks in this neighbourhood are not very close-knit, and assistance is sporadic for people who have witnessed neighbourhood networks, only a few of them got assisted by their neighbours while the majority were on their own. As a matter of fact, they find it difficult to build resilience and cope better with climate-related calamities because only friendship and family ties serve as a buffer during trying times. Finally, the resilience and coping strategies of the Ivory Park community are impacted by the weak social networks within their community. This implies that their lack of sociability limits the optimization of their mutual benefit exchange.

The Ivory Park community's poor social connections and low levels of reciprocity and trust have a detrimental effect on their ability to acquire social capital, to a point that there is no solidarity and an unequal allocation of resources during environmental disasters like flooding. When it comes to resource allocation, the majority is left out since representatives already distort the nature of social capital by giving preference to members of their own group who are already favourites. Since building social networks is the first step towards building social capital, if their current connections remain weak, they will always have low levels of social capital because only a small minority of them have ties to ward councillors and are able to obtain favours, while the majority faces difficulties. Strengthening all forms of social capital is like pouring old wine into a new bottle because of the factors that influence these levels of social capital; already, the representatives are corrupt and add more to inequality, and this community faces marginalisation because of its marginal status; however, strengthening linking social capital rather than bridging and bonding social capital can work better because, in the government or organisations, no one knows all community members in detail, therefore there will be no favouritism and everyone will be eligible for fair treatment.

5.5 Recommendations for policy and practice

Given the study's discussion of a conviction that marginalised communities collaborate during disasters, policymakers might as well presume that communities are cohesive during times of crisis, even in cases where this is not the reality. Before implementing disaster response policies, the study advises carrying out comprehensive assessments of community networks and vulnerabilities.

The study suggests methods for policy makers to collect accurate data concerning community connections and to consider factors like social inequality and fragmentation that may affect these connections. This could be done through adjusting the methodology section whereby the study will employ a lengthy ethnographic research and longer-term observations.

Indeed, the study recognises that policies can have varying effects on communities based on their social dynamics and resilience levels, and that environmental hazards brings an additional source of uncertainty for decision makers to handle (Arnold et al, 2014:5). The report does, however, advise creating adaptable policies that may be adjusted to the specific needs and challenges faced by various communities.

The study suggests that vulnerable communities should receive support from policies that prioritise equitable resource allocation. To make sure that policies are being implemented, there should also be continual evaluation and monitoring.

5.6 Limitation of the study and suggestions for future research

What makes this work valid is the methods employed in data collection. Semi structured interviews were utilized where informants were given a chance to narrate and give their own lived experiences in relation to climate induced disasters and also on-site observations were made. The study acknowledges that data was collected over a span of three weeks, limiting the depth of ethnographic observations, however these limitations do not invalidate the findings of this study, which focused more on ways in which social networks affect the efficacy of social capital levels and how those levels influence resilience and coping mechanisms. Due to short duration, the researcher could not gain a complete insider's perspective on community networks and behaviours. When ethnographic observations are conducted over an extended period, they can ideally yield long-term observations as well as additional generalisations based on participation in the daily behaviours of the community. Additionally, contrary to the limitations of methodology in this study, participant observation gives the researcher an insider's perspective about people's lives in the community and how they network, which was not possible in this study as it was conducted in a short period of time. To increase the variety of findings that can be drawn, future research may take an ethnographic and long-term focused participant observation strategy.

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Appendix A

Participant information sheet

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mpho Bokhatsi. I am a master's student in the African Centre for Migration and Society at University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am supervised by Prof Loren B Landau with my research titled: Exploring roles of social networks in influencing levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience among displaced persons in Ivory Park, South Africa.

You are cordially invited to participate in an interview. If you decide to take part, your participation in this research study will last for about 30 to 45 minutes at your home in Ivory Park at between 9am and 5pm.

I would like to audio record the interview if that is okay with you. This data will be stored in the computer with password that is only known by me for 6 months and deleted after 1 year when I complete my qualification. The data will only be accessible to the researcher.

The interview will be confidential. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or any other information that could be used to identify you. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this research study but your name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.

If you decide to be in the study, it should be because you are volunteering. You are not compelled to take part and you can stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue or respond to other questions. You will not get direct benefits or get paid if you choose to take part in this research and you will not lose any services, benefits or rights you would normally have if you decide not to join. In addition, taking part in this study will not cost you anything.

The risks for this research study are no more than what happens in everyday life or some of the questions asked may make you feel sad or upset. If this happens, I will stop the interview and continue another time.

This research shall be prepared as a research report. I would be pleased to email you a summary of this study if it would be of interest to you.

In case you have any inquiries during or afterwards about this research study, Please get in contact with me or my supervisor on the information provided below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), telephone +27(0)11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Yours Sincerely

MJB

Researcher Names: Mpho Jeanett Bokhatsi

Email: 2496768@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor: Loren B Landau

Email: loren@migration.org.za

Phone numbers: 011 717 4038

Appendix B

Consent form

Project title: Exploring roles of social networks in influencing levels of social capital, coping strategies and resilience among displaced persons in Ivory Park, South Africa.

Name of the researcher: Mpho Jeanett Bokhatsi

I, ……..……agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about	YES	NO
I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study	YES	NO
I agree that the interview activity may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that direct quotations from my interview may be used by the researcher in their research report/manuscript/book chapter	YES	NO
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name or other identifying data will not be used by the researcher in their research report/manuscript/book chapter	YES	NO
I agree that other researchers may use the information I provided in my interview (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my name and my personal information will not be used or passed on.	YES	NO

Participant Signature…….....

Participant Name……

Date……..

Researcher seeking consent signature: …….....

Researcher’s name…….

Date…….

Appendix C

Interview guide for displaced persons of Ivory Park

(1) Biographical Information

1. What is your gender

2. What is your age range

3. How long have you been staying in Ivory Park

4. How often have you witnessed flooding in this area

(2) Evaluate levels of social capital among displaced persons in ivory park, and factors influencing the variation in these levels

1. Can you describe the kind of relationships you have with other community members in Ivory Park since the displacement?

2. How would you characterize the level of reciprocity within your immediate community (bonding social capital)?

3. Have you been able to access external resources or support beyond your immediate community (linking social capital)? If yes, from where?

4.What factors do you think impact the levels of social capital within this community?

(3) Investigate the essence and extent of social networks among displaced persons in Ivory Park, and how these networks contribute to the development of resilience and coping strategies during climate change events (Flooding)

1.Can you describe social networks you are a part of since the displacement?

2. How have these social networks provided emotional support during and after flooding?

3. In what ways have your social networks facilitated in giving strategies on how to cope during climate change?

4.How do you perceive the function of social networks in strengthening your resilience and coping mechanisms?

4. Examine the impact social networks have on the effectiveness of social capital among displaced populations in ivory park in the context of their resilience and coping mechanisms

1. How do the relationships you have with people in your community make your overall connections stronger? (bonding social capital)?

2. Have you noticed working together with organizations outside your community making your connections with others stronger? (linking social capital)?

3. How do trust and shared norms impact the effectiveness of your social networks in coping with challenges?

4. How do factors like trust, reciprocity and social ties influence the community's views on the potential benefits of reinforce social capital

Appendix D

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR MIGRATION & SOCIETY (ACMS) ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: ACMS23/03**
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring roles of social networks in enhancing resilience and copingstrategies among displaced persons in Ivory Park, South Africa: Addressing the influence of low social capital.
INVESTIGATOR	Mpho Bokhatsi
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS)
DATE CONSIDERED	September 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	LOW RISK
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the Research Report
ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE	September 2023

CHAIRPERSON _____

(Associate Professor Jo Vearey)

cc: Supervisor: Loren B Landau

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethicscommittee.

I/we fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned researchand I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee.

Mpho Jeanett Bokhatsi
Signature

15 /03 /2023
Date