

https://dspace.org/

A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg

Msimango, Thando Dimakatso

2023-03
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/40319

A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/



Title: A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

A research report submitted to the Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

In partial fulfilment of the degree of Mater of Arts in Social development

Student: Thando Dimakatso Msimango

Student number: 1732600

Declaration

I Thando Msimango, hereby declare that this research report is a true reflection of my work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete in-text and referencing list. Furthermore, this work has not been submitted for a Master's degree examination at any other institution of higher learning.

Signed: T.Msimango Date: 14/03/2023

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God for carrying me through my dissertation journey and giving me the strength to complete it.

I sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr Priscilla Gerrand, for her inspiration and support in ensuring that I complete my dissertation.

I say a big thanks to my friends and family, Lindiwe Nene, Andries Nene, Nomonde Nene, Sanelisiwe Nene and Buhle Nene, Thobeka Ntlamba and Tebogo Mosebi, for all their support and prayers.

Aldridge Munyoro, who assisted me greatly throughout my research journey.

Abstract

Homelessness is a global concern. Several factors that trigger homelessness, such as natural disasters and wars, poor education, poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence and mental illness, have frequently been identified. South Africa has seen an increase in the number of people living on the streets of its major cities. This has culminated in the initiation of different research studies looking into the phenomenon of homelessness. However, there seems to be a gap in the studies looking at the plight of homeless women within the Braamfontein area of Johannesburg. Therefore, this study explored the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein and is based on a constructivist paradigm. The study adopted a qualitative approach, and a single case study design was adopted. Snowball sampling was used to select 13 participants who met the selection criteria. A semi-structured interview guide was used as a research tool, and one-on-one-in-depth interviews were used to collect data. Thematic analysis was also used to analyse the data. The study can contribute to developing and enhancing gender-specific intervention programmes earmarked for women living on the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg. It is hoped that the study might also initiate debates around the subject matter. Recommendations are made for future research.

Key words: Homelessness, Homeless women, Social Development, Intersectionality

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE 9

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 9

Introduction 9

Statement of the problem and rationale for the study 12

Research Question 13

Aim and Objectives 14

Primary aim 14

Objectives 14

Definition of key concepts 14

Homelessness 14

Social Development 15

Organization of the report 16

CHAPTER TWO 17

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW. 17

The theoretical framework underpinning the research 17

Ecosystems theory and the ecological systems theory 17

Social development 19

Literature Review 21

Introduction 21

Conceptualization and contextualization of homelessness 21

Contextualising homelessness in South Africa 24

Causes of homelessness in general 25

Social Exclusion 25

Causes of homelessness for women 28

Experiences and survival strategies used by homeless women living on the streets. 31

Conclusion 34

CHAPTER THREE 35

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 35

Introduction 35

Research Approach 35

Research paradigm 35

Research Design 36

Population, sample, and sampling procedures 36

Sampling 36

Sampling technique 37

Location of study 38

Research tool 39

Pre-testing of the research tool 40

Method of data collection 40

Method of data analysis 41

Trustworthiness 44

Credibility 44

Dependability 45

Transferability 45

Confirmability 46

Ethical considerations 46

Doing no harm 46

Informed consent 47

Deception of participants 47

Confidentiality and Anonymity 48

Limitations and delimitations of the study 15

Conclusion 48

CHAPTER FOUR 49

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION 49

Introduction 49

Emerging main themes 50

Theme 1: Push factors leading homeless women to live on the streets 51

Theme 2. Physical, emotional, and sexual challenges are experienced on the streets 60

Theme 3 Survival strategies are implemented 66

Theme 4: A number of practical steps can be taken to address the needs of homeless women 70

Conclusion 71

CHAPTER FIVE 73

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 73

Introduction 73

Summary of findings and conclusions reached 73

References 76

Appendix A Participant Information Sheet 88

Appendix B: Consent Form for Audio-recording of Interviews 91

Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Guide 92

Appendix D: Ethical clearance certificate 94

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Homelessness has long been recognized as a global phenomenon (Vázquez, et al. 2019). It is prevalent in poor sectors of the population in both developed and developing countries (Busch-Geertsema, et al., 2016). The causes of this complex social problem are generally linked to several factors: poverty and unemployment, breakdown of the family system and behavioural health issues, such as disability, mental health, and substance abuse (Batterham, 2019). It is associated with the high rates of domestic abuse and violence directed at females (Tenai & Mbewu, 2020).

The challenge of homelessness is also a social problem in South Africa. Despite the seriousness of this issue in South Africa, there are no reliable statistics on homeless people, and this has raised concerns among researchers, policymakers, and civil society (Cross et al., 2010a; Kriel, 2017; Naidoo, 2010). However, Cross et al.'s (2010) paper stated that the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) estimated that there are approximately 100 000 - 200 000 homeless people in both urban and rural South Africa. Furthermore, the HSRC as highlighted by Cross et al. (2010a) noted that the situation is worse in Johannesburg where the number of homeless children is estimated to be around 3000. Statistical data records have not improved in the past decade: "census data on the homeless, is almost non-existent (para. 3, HREC, 6th July 2021).

Shoba (2021) further highlighted that in South Africa the problem of homelessness continues to escalate at an alarming pace. He goes on to say that more women are also increasingly becoming homeless in South Africa.

The problem of homelessness is strongly tied to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Existing literature shows that many black people were victims of forced removals by the colonial government. The majority of indigenous South Africans lost their land as part of the colonial project to create reserve labour for industries in the cities.

A lot of research has been done on the phenomenon of homelessness in South Africa. Existing literature mostly focuses on the diverse causes of homelessness, the experiences and the socio-economic factors that contribute to this phenomenon (Cross et al., 2010a; du Toit, 2010; Kok et al., 2010; Naidoo, 2010). More recently, in South Africa a couple of research studies focusing on homeless individuals during the Covid-19 pandemic (Marcus et al, 2020; Mathole & Ross, 2022; Nzimande, 2022). Although some shelters were set up, the organisers weren't well-equipped to manage homeless other challenges coming to fore "

> … the unpleasant physical, mental and social side effects of withdrawal from opioids, including elevated temperature, increased respiratory rate, anxiety, nausea and diarrhoea, tachycardia, hypertension, sweating, tearing, runny nose and bone and muscle pain. because this also presented challenge of handling drug abuse (Marcus et al., p. 6, 2020).

The difficulty in conceptualizing homelessness has shaped the current literature on homelessness as well as intervention strategies globally (Please & Hermans, 2020). These debates have fuelled the existing research focus on the causes of homelessness.

This definitional entanglement has not only shaped research on this phenomenon but has also shaped policy responses to this problem. Naidoo (2010, p. 131) acknowledged that: "The varying definitions have made it difficult for the South African Government to distinguish street homelessness in policy interventions, from people who are inadequately housed".

More recently, research that looks at the phenomenon of homelessness has included a focus on women. Some studies have highlighted the various psychosocial and socioeconomic issues experienced by homeless women (Moloko-Phiri et al., 2017). Some scholars have highlighted the risk of sexual abuse and violence that both homeless women and men face in South African cities (Hills et al., 2016; Weinrich et al., 2016). Fofana et al. (2018) also emphasised that access to sanitation and safe homes is greatly felt by women than any other group and their sexual and reproductive health is greatly compromised (Fofana et al., 2018). As a result, homeless women are vulnerable to poor physical and mental well-being (Allahqoli, et al., 2018; Duke & Searby, 2019).

During the Covid-19 researchers focused on how this pandemic affected the homeless. Though this literature is still scarce, research shows that homelessness increased from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. Some scholars discuss the amplified challenges experienced by street dwellers as a result of this pandemic. For example, Mathole and Ross (2022) highlighted how homeless people struggled with inconsiderate lockdown regulations. They highlighted that homeless people struggled to obey rules that required them to stay at home because their homes are the streets, and this resulted in mistreatment by the police. Other scholars have researched the various poverty related challenges of being homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic. All these issues have contributed to the evolving issues of homelessness.

The issues presented in this section of my report are just a reflection of the dominant discourses that shape existing literature on homelessness in South Africa and the policy gaps that have informed the current study. This present study aimed to understand the experiences of the homeless women.

Statement of the problem and rationale for the study

Homelessness is a prevalent concern in South Africa. As highlighted in the previous section, there are no reliable statistics on the homeless, however, a large body of literature has noted the seriousness of this problem, especially in urban areas such as Johannesburg (Cross et al., 2010a; Kok et al., 2010; Naidoo, 2010). Roets et al. (2016, p. 161) noted that:

> In South Africa, the homeless population comprises a large percentage of people with low or no income who are increasingly migrating to larger cities in search of work, which in turn increases the housing problem in these densely populated areas.

I have personally observed the phenomenon of homelessness in Braamfontein Johannesburg where I spent five years staying as a university student. I have seen homeless people most of whom are women, sleeping on the pavements even during very cold winter conditions. These people have no homes, they live without adequate shelter, water, electricity, or food. These are some of the challenges that existing literature has tried to tackle.

Fromke (2018) highlighted the difficult conditions that homeless people live under in South Africa. They highlighted that homeless people frequently have no access to safe-drinking water and sanitation. This poses a threat to their health, and it is an infringement of their Human Rights. These issues were reiterated by Adebayo et al. (2022), who also focused on the impact of Covid-19 impact of homeless women in South Africa.

The situation is much worse for homeless women, most of whom are black Africans. Research shows that there is a continued increase in homeless women in South Africa. These vulnerable women are exposed to issues such as substance abuse, and sexual and physical abuse (Khoza, 2014, citing Dladla and Vetten, 2004) which increases their risk of developing HIV. Furthermore, these women bear the humiliation of menstruation while living in unhygienic places

on the streets (Fromke, 2018). Moloko-Phiri's (2017) paper posited that the position of women in patriarchal societies such as South Africa makes them easy victims of homelessness. This scholar argued that women are usually engaged in unpaid work such as domestic work. Their circumstances are precarious and can easily find themselves in the streets.

There is no doubt that homelessness as a phenomenon has received a great deal of attention by researchers and policy makers Despite growing evidence that the number of homeless women living on the street continues to increase in South Africa, literature that focuses on the lived experiences of these women is still scarce. Most of the existing literature tends to adopt a gender-neutral approach to studying homelessness. Furthermore, research on the impact of COVID-19 on the homeless has begun to emerge, but it's still scarce. Research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the already existing inequalities when it comes to the phenomenon of homelessness. Scholars have argued that the plight of the homelessness women has been exacerbated because of this pandemic. Therefore, there is a need for research that brings to light the lived experiences of these women (Khoza, 2014). Grenshaw (2018) argued that although black women may have experienced similar forms of discrimination and oppression as black men, one cannot assume that the challenges they face, and their lived experiences are the same.

Another rationale for conducting the study was that it had to potential to make a meaningful contribution to social work praxis regarding working with women who are homeless. The social work profession places a strong emphasis on social justice and equity. Some social workers are involved in policymaking. This research sought to inform how these social workers could improve policy and practice regarding homeless women on the streets of Johannesburg.

Primary research question

What are the experiences of homeless women living on the streets in Braamfontein, Johannesburg?

Aim and Objectives

Primary aim

The study aimed to explore the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg.

Objectives

The objectives of the study regarding homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg were:

1. To understand the reasons why homeless women live on the streets.

2. To enquire how homeless women support themselves and/or are supported by others.

2. To explore the daily challenges experienced by these homeless women.

3. To understand the coping mechanisms employed by homeless women on the streets

4. Investigate what these women think should be done to help them address the challenges they currently face.

5. Make recommendations regarding what intervention strategies could be implemented to help address the needs of these women.

Definition of key concepts

This section seeks to define the following concepts: homelessness, homeless women, and social development.

Homelessness

As highlighted by Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2017) there is no agreed upon definition of homelessness and consequently, different terms are used to refer to different contexts. For this research, homelessness was simply defined as women living on the streets for whatever reason.

Social Development

There is not one specific definition of social development. However, the definition by Midgley (2014) was adopted here to define this concept because his understanding of this concept has been adopted in South Africa. Midgley (2014, p. 240), defines Social Development as "a process of planned social change intended to promote the well-being of the population as a whole and their livelihoods through social, economic, political, cultural and environmental change." This means investing in people so they can reach their full potential. Social development can also be considered as the greater part of development that seeks to improve the quality of life (Midgley, 2014).

The primary values of social development include but are not limited to Ubuntu (humanity), social justice, equality, democracy and participation, non-discrimination, and reconciliation (Patel, 2015, pp. 147-148).

Overview of the research approach and design

The study adopted a qualitative approach, and a single case study design was adopted. Snowball sampling was used to select 13 participants who met the selection criteria. A semi-structured interview guide was used as a research tool, and one-on-one- in-depth interviews were used to collect data. Thematic analysis was also used to analyse the data.

Limitations and delimitations of the study

The first limitation of the study was the issue of privacy. As highlighted earlier, the interviews were conducted in the streets where these participants stay. There was a lot of noise in the surroundings. Anyone could also walk in and disturb the interview. This affected the quality of transcripts to some extent. To try and address this, I tried to find the quietest spot in the streets of Braamfontein; places that are not usually crowded.

Another limitation was that conducting this qualitative study was time-consuming and I was restricted in terms of a deadline to submit the final report. However, to delimit this issue reason, I prioritised focusing on completion of my study and using my free time constructively in this regard (For example, when not gathering data I made an effort to continue with a rigorous literature review.

Organization of the report

This report is divided into five chapters. In the current chapter I provided an introduction and background to the study. This chapter introduced the topic of homelessness and contextualized it. I provided my rationale for conducting the study. I provided definitions of key concepts/terms and focused on the main research question, aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter Two focuses on the theoretical framework underpinning the study and discusses accredited literature relevant to the phenomenon of homelessness.

Chapter Three discusses the research paradigm, the research design and research methods. Steps taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the report are focused on and ethical issues taken into considerations when conducting the study are also covered.

Chapter Four presents the research findings and a critical discussion of these findings.

Chapter Five summarises the main findings and the conclusions drawn. Recommendations are made based on research findings.

CHAPTER TWO

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW.

The theoretical framework underpinning the research

The theoretical framework is one of the most important features in the research process. It influences " the selection of a topic, the development of the research questions, the conceptualisation of the literature review, the design approach, and the analysis plan for the dissertation study". (Clare & Osanloo , 2026, abstract) Below I discuss the theoretical framework underpinning my research. The framework consists of the ecosystems theory, the intersectionality theory, and the concept of social development.

Ecosystems theory

The ecosystems theory emerged from the theories of ecology and the general systems theory. In many respects the ecosystems theory is reflected in the Person-Environment perspective in social work. The concept of 'Person' or 'client' is very broad because 'person' can refer to " … individual persons, families of many diverse forms, neighbourhoods, formed and natural groups, organizations and associations of many kinds, communities, even nations (Mattaini, 2008). In my study I focused on individual persons, namely homeless women.

The concept 'environment' is also broad because it includes the built and natural environment; institutions and their policies; personal, collective, and structural oppression; and human, social, ecological, spiritual, and physical assets and needs. Institutions include the education, justice, and economy (Mattaini, 2008). In my study, homeless women were perceived as living in a built environment (namely streets in Braamfontein based in Johannesburg, which is a well-structured, urban suburb).

However, for homeless women living on streets of Braamfontein, they are exposed to unhealthy conditions because suitable accommodation is not accessible to them because of their

poor financial circumstances. This can have a negative impact on their health and psycho-social well-being.

Weiss-Gal (2008, p. 65) explains the Person-in-Environment perspective as follows (It should be noted that the term Person-Environment is currently used to avoid emphasis on either the 'Person' or 'Environment'):

> … the individual and his or her environments as forming an ecosystem, consisting of the individual, all the systems with which the individual has reciprocal relationships, the wider environment in which the individual acts, and all the mutual interrelationships that occur between the individual and the various subsystems. Within this ecosystem, individuals are influenced by and influence their environments through their actions.

Ecological systems theory

The phenomenon of homeless women can also be understood and explored through the ecological systems theory that was developed by Brofenbrenner in 1977. Although Brofenbrenner focused on how children's development is affected by five various levels of systems, every person, including homeless woman, can be seen as having been affected by these five systems (Greene, 2017).

Brofenbrenner (1977) identified five systems, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystem. The five systems are interrelated and can have an impact on a homeless woman's well-being depending on the different types of 'interaction' she has within the systems and between the system and the systems impact on one another.

The first system level is known as the microsystem and is the innermost system and can be defined as the: "…most proximal setting in which a person is situated or where children directly interact face to face with others." In the case of the proposed research, the microsystem can be conceived as people who share a close relationship with the homeless woman; usually not

family members but with whom she shares a close relationship with on the streets. The mesosystem has more to do with her interaction with other people on the streets. For example, she might be selling food on the side of the road to survive and thus would be interacting with 'customers' or other people walking along the streets in Braamfontein that she occupies.

When looking at the macro-system in the environment, which includes politics, neighboring settings, and history, it can be argued that they have an impact on causing and enhancing homelessness. I think that the high level of poverty experienced by many South Africans falls within the macro-system because socioeconomics, laws, policies etc. in the homeless woman's environment can be having a significant impact on her life. The family and spouse being the characteristics of the meso-system also play a role in influencing homelessness because some of the homeless people, particularly women, leave their homes because of domestic violence, family problems and violence from their own families (Rotich et al., 2012).

The fifth level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is known as the chronosystem. This system incorporates the concept of time. In other words, as we live, we pass through various stages of development, major life transitions, and historical events. For example, South Africa is currently facing an employment crisis. It is estimated that 50% of the population is unemployed (Brivik, 2021).

Social development

My study was also guided by the social development perspective. Incorporating the input from various authors, (for example, Midgley, 2015; Patel, 2015), social development is viewed as a multifaceted and dynamic process of change in society where the economic, social, political, cultural, and environmental as well as gender are integrated together in order to achieve human

well-being. Lack of either of these components leads to distorted social development and human well-being.

When looking at the economic component of social development, it can be argued that economic inequalities and lack of financial resources is one of the reasons why these women live in the streets under harsh conditions. Furthermore, the social component of social development includes but not limited to basic service delivery and social welfare such as access to housing, clean water, sanitation, and health as well as education. It can be argued that homeless women living in the streets of Braamfontein do not have access to such services and this leads to unequal or distorted social development in South Africa.

The ecological systems theory and the ecosystems theory both focuses the person-in-the environment and the impact social systems of the environment have on the person's holistic well-being. Systems such as the macro-system which include economic conditions, culture and politics also form an important part of sustainable social development. When people do not have access to economic development opportunities such as being unemployed and not being able to afford basic survival resources such as food, electricity, and water. This affects their well-being, and some leave their homes and go to other provinces and countries in search of employment and better living conditions and freedom from some cultures that constraint them. This interplay between the social systems and broader ecological systems show how distorted social development comes to play where people do not have access to social welfare resources and economic opportunities leading to homelessness.

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this section of my report is to present a literature review of the topic of homelessness. Relevant literature on homelessness will be critically discussed. The section will start by contextualising homelessness internationally and in South Africa. I then discuss the various challenges faced by the homeless and the impact these challenges have on the well-being of the homeless people in South Africa.

This literature review will also point out although there is ample literature on homelessness, the gendered nature of homelessness has been largely ignored in the existing literature.

Conceptualization and contextualization of homelessness

Homelessness is a contested concept. The difficulty in pinning down a unified definition of who should be considered homeless has also affected policies and interventions for homeless people globally. Scholars such as Fromke, (2018), Khoza, (2014); Okamoto, (2007) and Tipple and Speak, (2005) have tried to unpack the conceptualisation of homelessness. They tend to agree that trying to impose a one jacket fits all approach to homelessness is a futile process because homelessness differs based on the context in different nations, countries, and regions

To put this into perspective, some scholars argue that the term homeless is relative to the context in which it is used. Khoza (2014) argued that developed countries such as Germany and England do not experience the same levels of homelessness as poor counties in Africa such as South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi. This argument has been supported by scholars such as Cross et al., (2010a); Kok et al., (2010), and Naidoo, (2010) who pointed out that in some countries, people may have access to living structures that are not deemed to be of good living standard therefore these people are considered homeless. On the other hand, in many poor counties, a lot of

people don't have access to a roof over their heads and live on the streets are considered to be homeless.

Furthermore, Marsh (2006) posited that definitions of homelessness differ globally because most of the time they reveal and are characterized by those countries' political agendas and interests. In their desire to design a global framework of homelessness Busch-Geertsema et al. (2016) provided three dimensions to be considered when defining homeless. They argued that one must look at security, the physical and the social domain These scholars went on to explain that the notion of having a home must consider whether the people can stay there for extended periods, and thus there is a sense of security. They also argue that the physical structure of a home must be in acceptable living standards (Busch-Geertsema et al., 2016). Lastly, they argue that people must be able to engage in social relations which make a home more stable.

According to Tipple and Speak (2009), the concept of homelessness in South Africa is often associated with rented backrooms, squatter settlements and not having a secure tenure, whereas some countries like Zimbabwe define homelessness as not having access to housing structures. In a study conducted by De Beer and Vally (2015), they used the definition of street homelessness provided by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). They defined street homelessness as those people living on the streets, on pavements, bushes, and under bridges who do not have a social network of assistance and have no shelter at that given time (De Beer & Vally, 2015).

Khoza, (2014), in his study in Midrand, South Africa, used almost the same definition of homelessness as that of Olufemi (2001). Olufemi (2001), in his study of work of feminization of poverty among street homeless women in South Africa, categorized homelessness around aspects such as being houseless, roofless, substandard housing and insecure accommodation.

An observatory study that was conducted in Cape Town provided a definition that also highlighted in a way the living conditions and experiences on the streets of homeless people The study defined homelessness as "… waking up daily on an ice-cold pavement, spending sleepless nights in the rain, not knowing where your next meal will come from, constantly engaging in conversations of begging, and hoping for a piece job." (Fromke, 2018, p. 2)

A lot of the existing literature has focused on poverty and its relationship to the problem of homelessness (Herring et al., 2020; Samzelius, 2020; Timmer et al., 2019). Research has shown that in South Africa, homelessness is seen as a consequence of socio-economic issues. Kriel et al. (2017) further argued that homelessness goes beyond poverty; it is the highest form of social exclusion that affects the life chances of those affected.

Another commonly cited cause of homelessness is unemployment (Pophaim & Peacock, 2022). Many people in South Africa make their way to urban areas to secure employment but are unsuccessful securing unemployment (Tenai & Mbewu, 2020). However, scholars such as Cross et al (2010a) and Clarke et al. (2020) argued that true homelessness is related to living in the streets with no access to accommodation. Also, some conceptualisations of homelessness have been largely influenced by politics (Speak, 2012). Speak (2012), argued that definitions of homelessness by some governments are restrictive and exclude many people who may fall into the homeless category. He argued that this exclusion is strategically used by these governments to absolve themselves of their duty to address the social ills of the poor and to uphold the shelter rights of all their citizens (Speak, 2012).

From a global perspective, one can agree that many scholars tend to agree that unemployment, poverty, and lack of access to land or housing are some of the factors linked to the condition of homelessness (Cross et al., 2010; Kriel et al., 2017; Kriel, 2017; Roets et al., 2016).

The significance of these debates on how to conceptualise the phenomenon of homelessness is that it has affected policy and deliberate action to address this problem in South Africa. Naidoo's (2010) paper highlights that the different conceptualisations of homelessness have affected the counting of homeless people during censuses in South Africa. As a result, it affects policy responses against homelessness.

Contextualising homelessness in South Africa

A large body of knowledge agrees that homelessness is a global issue and some of the trends leading to this phenomenon are diverse and similar. However, contextual issues are key to gaining an in-depth and more nuanced understanding of this phenomenon. This is true for South Africa. One cannot begin to claim a firm grasp of homelessness without paying attention to the legacies of apartheid and colonialism.

Colonialism and apartheid subjected the majority of black and coloured people to extreme deprivation. Through colonial racialist laws such as the 1913 Natives Land Act, many black people were dispossessed from their land to create massive reserves of labour for white companies in cities. These dispossessions forcibly removed the majority of indigenous South Africans from their ancestral homes, therefore, making them homeless and sending them to designated areas (Cross et al., 2010a; Morrow, 2010; Obioha, 2022). As noted by Cross et al. (2010b) these evictions of indigenous South Africans from their homes created what is known as the vagrancy and squatting problem. Many indigenous people who no longer had access to land got jobs and laboured as tenants in white farms whilst others around the countryside occupied and squatted on land and this was deemed illegal by the colonial government. According to Cross et al. (2010b) in places such as Kwa-Zulu Natal, the problem of vagrancy and squatting was already a growing concern and the colonial government empowered magistrates to remove squatters from public and private land.

Cross et al. (2010b) further noted that in the 19th century, there were more black displaced people squatting illegally in white-owned farms than people staying in the reserves.

Causes of homelessness in general

The causes of homeless has been the focus of much research.

Social Exclusion

The Institute of Global Homelessness (2022) emphasised that homeless is a global, complex issue resulting from several integrated elements including, public health, housing affordability, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse, urbanization, racial and gender discrimination, infrastructure, and unemployment. Furthermore, the interplay between these elements is expressed in a host of ways depending on local contexts. Levels of homelessness rise and fall dependent on shifts in, and changes to, any one of the elements.

Homelessness in Europe and North America became prominent in the 1980s (Okamoto, 2007). In Japan, it emerged as a social problem a decade later in the 1990s. In Japan, the 1997 economic crisis brought on by the instability of Asian currencies led which led to a further increase in the number of homeless people (Okamoto, 2007).

Olufemi, (2001) and Roets et al., (2016), believed that economic, social, political, and cultural factors are the root causes of homelessness in many developing countries. Tenai and Mbewu (2020) and Fromke (2018), in their studies, had almost the same understanding of the causes of homelessness. They believed homelessness in general results from a combination of social, economic, and political issues such as poor family support, unemployment, affordability and accessibility to housing, and the government's inability to achieve its social justice policy. In a nutshell, they understood the causes of homelessness using structural lenses (Van Hugssteen, 2009).

Like in South Africa, the comparative study that was conducted in the United Kingdom and Japan highlighted the causes of homelessness in general as a result of economic, social, and political factors (Okamoto, 2007). Some people in Europe believed that freedom of capital transformation and the freedom of labour transformation as changes in economic structures have been the contributing factors to homelessness (Okamoto, 2007).

One of the most widely discussed factors causing homelessness across the globe is poverty and unemployment. Research shows that the majority of people that are homeless lack access to jobs and are unable to meet their basic needs. In many developed countries, scholars view homelessness as a problem of neoliberal economic policies and poverty Sewpaul et al., 2012; Neale, 1997 & Sewpaul et al., 2012). Scholars such as Makiwane, et al. (2010), and Tamasane and Schneider (2010) Sewpaul et al., (2012), Neale, (1997) and Sewpaul et al., (2012) had the same perspectives about the causes of homelessness. They perceived homelessness as rooted in poverty, poor government systems, poor access to housing and educational opportunities and neoliberal policies.

Cross et al. (2010) highlighted that in the United States of America government policies tend to provide limited support to the poor and homeless. The government downplays its responsibility fully provide housing. Instead, it provides affordable housing for the poor. This perpetuates homelessness for those that cannot afford it at all.

In South Africa issues of poverty and inequality a much more pronounced. As Cross et al (2010) pointed out, in developed countries many of the people considered homeless are not necessarily poor. This goes back to the difficulty in conceptualising homelessness because it is relative. In the South African context, the majority of people are living in poverty. In most cases,

homelessness refers to those without shelter (Cross et al., 2010b; Kok et al., 2010; Moyo et al., 2015).

Homelessness in South Africa dates back to the colonial and Apartheid period when black individuals were forcefully removed from their lands to live in designated 'black areas' (Cross & Roux, 2010; Kok, et al., 2010; Morrow, 2010). The movement of black people to shack settlements ended up creating a space for street homelessness to expand (Kok et al., 2010).

Difficult family backgrounds

Research also shows that many homeless people experience difficult familial relations that can result in them running away from home (Cross et al., 2010b; Doutney et al., 2016; Tutty et al., 2013; Ward & Seager, 2010). A study by Maepa et al. (2015) on the street homeless children in Limpopo contended that many homeless people have a history of adversity back home. Issues such as different parenting styles and abuse play an important role in pushing the homeless into the street (Maepa et al., 2015).

Ward and Seager's (2010) study also highlighted that homelessness can be a result of abusive caregivers. Their study found that many homeless children experience ill-treatment in their homes which leads them to run away. Some of the participants in this study noted that they have experienced sexual abuse from their stepfather or other forms of violence which made staying at home intolerable (Ward & Seager, 2010). Le Roux (1996) also found that broken homes contribute to homelessness. His study details how some young people were abused by their parents to the point of running away. In this study participants detailed how their mother would chase them from home whenever they wanted to have sex with the neighbour, amongst other forms of abuse.

The situation is much worse for women who experience sexual abuse and other forms of violence, however, there is very little focus on these homeless women.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse has also been found to be a contributing factor to homelessness. It is believed that when a person becomes dependent on a substance, they end up losing themselves then the substance takes over their lives (Ndlovu, 2019). As a result, the person loses their job, house, and family and ends up being homeless. Unfortunately, they face many barriers which prevent them from coming off the streets.

Substance abuse is also connected to domestic violence against women, where women are battered by their partners who abuse substances which drives them away from home to the streets for safety and survival (Munge, 2020).

In a study that was conducted in Cape Town by Black (2017), her findings revealed that although substance abuse might be the cause of homelessness, stigmatization was a barrier to leaving the streets. The stigmatization was found to have resulted in more addiction to the substance and internalization of street life making it difficult for homeless women to change their situation.

Furthermore, homeless women tend to abuse substances as a coping mechanism on the streets and to escape the hard realities and challenges they face on the streets (Black, 2017). Though substance abuse may be a cause of homelessness, studies also show that substance abuse is also a serious issue among the homeless themselves. A study conducted with the homeless in Hillbrow found that homeless people were likely to be engaged in substance abuse because of stresses related to their living conditions (Moyo et al., 2015).

Causes of homelessness for women

In most countries, the homelessness of women is not given as much attention as the homelessness of men or homelessness in general (Tipple & Speak, 2009). The homelessness of

women is seen as invisible; a hidden nature of homelessness because of the lack of literature and research on it (Olufemi, 2001).

In the USA and developing nations such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the homeless are often women and children from rural areas who have come to the city looking for better living conditions and life-enhancing opportunities (Roets et al., 2016). Although they have been no clear statistics, there has been an increase in women living in the streets of South Africa for different reasons and harsh conditions (Rotich et al., 2012). Phiri and Perron (2012) described harsh conditions such as the risk of being sexually and physically harassed, unplanned pregnancy, living in unhygienic conditions and lack of access to sanitary pads.

Furthermore, researchers have found that social problems are linked to the homelessness of women such as domestic violence, substance abuse, poverty, crime, foster care as well as patriarchy (Fromke, 2018).

According to Tenai and Mbewu (2020), understanding the causes of woman's homelessness is not easy because women in developing countries face a different set of issues than their counterparts in developed countries. This is because of differences in access to education, property rights, women’s rights, and access to social services.

In some developing countries, cultural practices such as ‘property grabbing’ whereby relatives of a deceased man take all his property and leave his widow and children homeless (Sikich, 2008). Actions like these indicate that homeless women in developing countries have a long way to go before they can be at the level of their sisters in developing countries.

Furthermore, a lack of family support networks and government welfare support networks accompanied by insufficient housing means that women in developing countries face a different kind of homelessness brought on by rapid modernization (Fromke, 2018). Although there are

differences in woman's homelessness in both developing and developed countries, there are still commonalities found, for instance, domestic violence and poverty remain the major causes of women's homelessness globally (Munge, 2020).

In a study that was conducted by Khoza (2014) the street homeless women blamed poverty as the overarching issue. In his study, he further mentioned how being poor impacts the other aspects of the street homeless females' lives including their joblessness, ill health, and their lack of education (Khoza, 2014). Moreover, the study discovered that some women came to South Africa from countries such as Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi for better living conditions and to seek employment. These women when they were not successful with their job hunting, became homeless as a result, and they had no close family networks to turn to for help.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is recognized as a primary causal factor for homelessness among women (Thomas, et al., 2021). Domestic violence can be defined as a repetitive pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over the other person (Munge, 2020). It includes any form of abuse such as physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse.

A study that was conducted by the World Health Organization, found that about 60 000 women and children were victims of domestic violence in South Africa, excluding cases which were underreported (Munge, 2020). Furthermore, Munge (2020), and Lewinson et al. (2014) also identified that women in domestic abusive relationships were more likely to become homeless.

Munge (2020) further revealed the issue of housing insecurity. He argued that intimate partner violence had turned homes into spaces of fear and violence instead of places of security, safety and comfort for women leading to them becoming homeless. Tutty et al. (2013) further

supported this argument that intimate partner violence is a huge concern that can contribute to the condition of homelessness among women, in South Africa.

Some scholars note that although there are safe shelters and centres for victims of domestic violence only a few women survivors utilize them due to lack of knowledge of such services. As a result, these women find themselves living in the streets under extremely harsh conditions (Mathebula & Ross, 2013).

Experiences and survival strategies used by homeless women living on the streets.

Mental Health

Existing research shows that homeless people, especially those with disabilities have limited to no access to mental health services. According to Herrman et al. (2004), access to mental health services is a challenge for many homeless people with mental illnesses. They argue that homeless people are prone to various psychological problems. Furthermore, those that are homeless and mentally ill require deliberate access to psychiatric treatment. However, these people do not get this treatment.

The situation is worse in developing countries where many mentally ill homeless people may never come in contact with mental health treatment in their lifetime. This is different from many developed counties such as Australia where homeless people have access to community-based care and access to mental health services (Herrman et al., 2004).

Doutney et al.'s (2016) paper also shows a growing concern about mental illnesses among homeless men in Australia. They argued that mental illnesses such as schizophrenia becoming a serious health concern owing to the changes in policies on the management of chronic illnesses.

Research also shows that trauma is a common characteristic of homeless people. Studies by Keeshin and Campbell (2011); Doutney et al. (2016) and Deck and Platt (2015) highlighted that many homeless people experience a traumatic event at least once in their lives. As discussed earlier in this section, experiences of trauma are among the causes of homelessness for many men women and children.

Many homeless people suffer from victimisation from their past which leads to serious mental illnesses (Milburn & D'ercole, 1991; Miller et al., 2004). The situation may be worse for women. Doutney et al. (2016) observed that there is a lot of research on homeless women and mental illness in Australia. Their study further found that many homeless women experience a lifetime of abuse leading to serious mental ill-health. Furthermore, Munge (2020) and Tutty et al. (2013) also argued that homeless women are prone to serious psychological problems as a result of intimate partner violence. These homeless people need mental health services, but they do not access them.

In South Africa research shows that there is a strong correlation between homelessness and mental illness. When Moyo et al. (2015) conducted research with homeless people in Hillbrow, they found that the conditions of the homeless are likely to produce or perpetuate mental illness.

Experiences of crime and violence

Experiences of crime and violence are common among homeless people in South Africa (Cross et al., 2010b; Hills et al., 2016; Maepa et al., 2015; Meth, 2003). Existing literature has documented the difficulty of surviving on the streets. Often people on the streets are forced into crime and violence to survive. As highlighted by Maepa et al. (2015) when young people enter the

life of living in the streets, they have to portray traits of strength, toughness and being fearless to command respect and survive. This is often exhibited through crime.

Though some homeless people are perpetrators of violence, they are also recipience of violence. Studies show that homeless people, especially males, often are attacked and harassed by law enforcement. This phenomenon was very prominent during the COVID-19 lockdown when many homeless people experienced police brutality (Hills et al., 2016; Mathole & Ross, 2022; Sewpaul et al., 2012)

The situation is much worse for women who are often at the receiving end of such crimes and male aggression. In an ethnographic study that was conducted in Europe focusing on female homelessness in that country, their study revealed strategies that were used by women to protect themselves, such as pretending to be, or turning themselves into lesbians to protect themselves from other males especially at night (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016).

In South Africa, research shows that sexual abuse is a common experience for homeless people in South Africa. Studies show that people staying on the streets are vulnerable to sexual abuse. (Khoza, 2014). Hills et al.'s (2016) study revealed how women are forced into sexual activities by men because they cannot protect themselves. In Hills et al.'s study (2016), one of the participants explained that she lives in fear because one of her friends was stabbed in her private parts whilst trying to fight off boys who wanted to rape her.

De Beer and Vally's (2015) study revealed how women on the streets often slept in pairs to feel safe because of the threat of sexual violence from males in the streets. Despite all these serious challenges facing women, there is still a dearth of literature within the South Africa context that focuses on the experiences of these women, especially in social work literature.

Strategies to earn livelihoods

Existing literature also shows that women on the streets often engage in various survival strategies including but not limited to collecting and processing waste material, selling goods on the streets as well as begging as a strategy for financial gain (Moyo et al., 2015). De Beer and Vally (2015) also found that like in Japan, begging on the street pavements and by the traffic lights was one of the economic survival strategies employed by homeless people. The results further revealed that the common strategy used by women was sex trade in exchange to meet specific needs such as financial needs and food (De Beer & Vally, 2015).

Conclusion

In this chapter I initially focused on the theoretical framework on my study by describing the ecosystems, social development, and intersectionality theories and why they were relevant to my study. I then discussed pertinent literature on the topic of homelessness. For example, I acknowledged debates about the conceptualisation of the concept of homelessness. I also contextualised the phenomenon of homelessness in South Africa by looking at the legacies of apartheid and forced removals of black people from the land. I discussed the causes of homelessness and the experiences of this category of the population in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology of this research study. It mainly discusses the qualitative research design that I adopted, the sampling procedures, and the research tool I used to gather data. I also discuss thematic data analysis in some detail because it was the procedure, I used to analyse data gathered.

Research paradigm

The study was informed by the constructivist paradigm. This is because I believe that people are unique and develop personal meanings of life experiences. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that if a researcher adopts a constructivist approach, they delve into study participants' subjective views and interpretations of their life setting. In the study personally as the researcher have interacted with homeless women living in Braamfontein in order to explore their experiences in this setting.

Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was used for this study. A qualitative approach is a broad method of inquiry that seeks to understand human and social interactions through the subjective lenses of those experiencing the phenomenon (Hennink, et al., 2020). This research approach is characterized by the fact that it adopts a naturalistic approach to its subject matter and promotes a full understanding of human behaviour in its natural setting (Silverman, 2020).

A qualitative approach was appropriate for this study because of its strength in eliciting and describing feelings, emotions and experiences which are difficult to explain using numerical values

(Creswell, 2014). The qualitative approach enabled me to explore in-depth the experiences of homeless females living in the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg.

Research Design

A research design is a blueprint of the research. It maps out the methods and processes of conducting one's research (Yin, 2014). In this study, I adopted a single case study research design based on the Merriam's (2009) perspective. Merriam (2009) defined a case study as an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system or "case" (p.40). Harrison, et al. (2017) added that a 'case' is bounded by time, space, and activity. In my study the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein was the "case" and time can be regarded as time period during which I conducted my interview from January to October 2022. Merriam (2009) explained that one way to determine the boundedness of the cases study is to ensure there is limit to the people being interviewed or the time to conduct the research. If the time or interviews are infinite, then that design is not regarded as a case study.

Population, sample, and sampling procedures

A population can be defined as the entire group of people that the researcher seeks to study and make conclusions on. This is the total aggregate of people from which the research sample is selected (Neuman, 2014). For this study, all homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein are the selected population from which a sample was drawn.

Sampling

Sampling refers to a small section of the population that is selected for data collection (Neuman, 2014). The study sample consisted of 13 homeless females who lived on streets in Braamfontein. In selecting 13 participants the researchers utilized the saturation principle.

Saturation refers to the point where researchers collect data until they reach a point where no new data is being produced (Fusch et al., 2018; Fusch et al., 2017).

Initially, I had anticipated that 10 interviews would be enough, however, new data continued to surface hence a sample of 13 participants. This is a demonstration that in qualitative research, the researcher must be open to flexibility. It is not always the case that things will go according to plan. Sometimes researchers learn lessons from the field and must anticipate changes and quickly adapt to those changes (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

The inclusion/selection criteria for selecting participants were as follows.

- All participants must be women 18 years or older.
- They must be able to communicate coherently.
- They must have been homeless in the streets of Braamfontein for at least three months so that they could share their thoughts and feelings based on living in the context for a reasonable amount of time.

The exclusion criteria were:

- Homeless women who were intoxicated at the time of being approached.
- Homeless women who could not communicate well or understand the purpose of my research.
- Homeless women who suffer from mental illness.

Sampling technique

The snowball sampling technique was used to recruit participants for the study. Snowball is a sampling technique that works through a network of referrals. When using this technique, the researcher identifies initial participants who also refer the researcher to other participants that may

be willing to participate in the study (Neuman, 2014). This technique is most suitable in situations where potential participants are hard to find (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Snowball sampling was appropriate for this study because recruiting homeless people is not an easy task. One cannot be sure about the status of homelessness of potential participants. Also, there were chances that some of the homeless women may not want to be interviewed. Some potential participants were sceptic about my intentions as the researcher. Therefore, the use of snowball sampling helped me to locate these homeless women. I had prior contact with two of the homeless participants when I was staying in Braamfontein. I reached out to these participants, and they referred me to other homeless women who later agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, snowballing was effective in sampling participants for this study.

Regarding recruitment of participants, I stayed in Braamfontein for five years as a student. During my stay, I used to visit some of the homeless people and bring them food. I developed a relationship with them. When I was looking for participants for this study, I reached out to one of the male homeless people that I knew. He then referred to his friend, a female who was also homeless and staying on the streets of Braamfontein. At first, the lady was sceptic about my intentions, she thought that I had paid her male friend, or her male friend was benefitting from this whole process. She later chose to trust me and referred me to two other participants. Those participants also connected me to their close friends who were also homeless in Braamfontein. This is how I recruited participants.

Location of study

Braamfontein is the oldest recognized central suburb of Johannesburg in South Africa (Donaldson & Terence, 2015). It is a culturally diverse business district comprising a mix of office blocks, restaurants, student accommodations, tertiary institutions, office blocks and hotels

(Donaldson & Terence, 2015). It is an area with inconsistencies in service delivery and most of its population are middle-class workers and students. However, there are also illegal immigrants staying in poor vandalized hotels with no proper water, sanitation, and electricity services. In my own experience of Braamfontein as a student and resident for over 4 years, Braamfontein is a high-crime area and most of the time students are mugged, and others are kidnapped and robbed by illegal migrants using cars. Such incidences are usually not reported to the police but tertiary institutions like the University of the Witwatersrand and Rosebank College know about such incidences.

Research tool

In this study, I utilized a semi-structured interview guide. The reason is that it is useful for obtaining detailed information about experiences, feelings, and opinions (Peters & Halcomb, 2015). A semi-structured interview guide is a document containing the list of questions that the research seeks to ask the participant. The document usually contains broad open-ended questions that allow the researcher to have an in-depth conversation with the participant (Creswell, 2012). A semi-structured guide also allows more detailed questions to be asked to all participants. The detailed questions can also lead to deep responses which will be good because it will lead to more understanding of the topic researched (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017).

Another advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that it is flexible. Researchers do not have to strictly ask the questions in the guide only, rather, researchers can make follow-up questions in response to the information shared by the participants. Furthermore, they also provide the researcher with the opportunity to be able to probe the responses to get clarification and elaboration to ensure greater accurate data (Halcomb, 2015).

In this study, the interview guide enabled me to probe more into the experiences of homelessness among the participants. The guide also helped me to get back on track whenever the discussion was falling off track from the purpose of the research. (Refer to Appendix C)

Pre-testing of the research tool

Pre-testing refers to the testing of data-gathering tools on a small sample of respondents before the actual study (Mikuska, 2017). This is done to identify any problems such as insensitive questions in the interview schedule or unclear wording (Mikuska, 2017). For this study, I selected two homeless women to participate in the testing of the research tool. These women did not form part of the sample that was selected for the research. When I administered my interview guide to these participants, I noticed that there were questions that were not clear. For example, when I asked about the experiences of being homeless, I neglected to inquire about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. I had to revisit my interview guide and ask questions that probe more into the issue.

Method of data collection

To collect data, face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted with each participant. Interviews are a method of data collection whereby the researcher has a deep conversation with the participants to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon they are investigating. According to Yin (2015), one of the advantages of in-depth interviews is that they enable the collection of people's experiences and the meaning they attach to those experiences. Furthermore, interviews allow the researcher to probe more into issues that may not be clear (Hennink et al., 2020).

Using in-depth interviews was very efficient because it allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of homelessness among women living on the streets in

Braamfontein. The interviews allowed me to make follow-ups on matters that were unclear and homeless women were able to tell their stories.

Data were collected over one month. I managed to conduct 13 interviews with homeless women who stay in Braamfontein. I collected this data until I reached saturation. The interviews were conducted in the streets of Braamfontein where these homeless women stay. These interviews lasted 1 hour to 1 hour and 30 minutes. This was because at times participants had a lot to share regarding their challenges of being homeless.

One of the challenges I faced was related to privacy. As highlighted earlier, the interviews were conducted in the streets. At times there was lots of noise coming from the traffic. Also, there were several disturbances from people passing by and other homeless people who wanted to find out what was going on during the interview. This affected the quality of the audio-recording and this impacted the quality of the recording and the transcript.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), privacy is very important when conducting research interviews. This is because distractions may lead to breaking the level of engagement developed between the researcher and the participant.

The interviews were conducted in English, but the participants were allowed to respond in their home language. I can communicate in various South African languages which made it easier to explain the research question using these languages when the participants struggled to understand the questions in English.

Method of data analysis

Thematic analysis was used as the method of analysing the data. Thematic analysis is a method of analysis for qualitative data (Wagner, et al., 2012). It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as interview transcripts (Chowdhury, 2015). Thematic data analysis was appropriate for my

research as it has to do with closely examining the data to identify common themes, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up more often among research participants during interviews.

For my study, I utilised the model by Braun and Clarke (2013). Below are the steps I followed:

Phase 1 Familiarisation with data

This is the first phase of data analysis for this model. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the researcher needs to immerse themselves in the data. This involves reading and reading the transcripts. Braun and Clarke (2013) also noted that it doesn't matter if the researcher has collected data themselves and they already have insights. It's very important to engage in an active process of going through the data again and writing down interesting thoughts and patterns. At this stage, I also went through the data again. I read all the transcripts and I was writing comments about some of the interesting issues I got about the experiences of homelessness. This is where I started to note some of the reasons that lead to homelessness.

Phase 2 Generating initial codes.

This phase of the analytic process involves the generation of initial codes (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This phase can commence once the researcher has familiarised themselves with their data and have managed to write down some ideas that they picked out from the process in Phase One.

After reading the transcripts and listening to the audio-recordings and generating a list of ideas or notes, I had to start creating codes out of these ideas. At this stage, I was using highlighters in Microsoft word to highlight some themes that were reoccurring in the data. For example, I would code sections of the transcripts about reasons for being homeless with a red colour and challenges faced in the street with a yellow colour.

Phase 3 Searching for themes.

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), this is the stage where the researcher starts to identify themes for the study. This is the stage where the researcher starts thinking about combining the codes into meaningful themes. I had coded all my transcripts with different colour codes. The challenge was to start grouping all the similar colours together and come up with names for these grouped colours. I had to create different Word documents and label them according to their colour. In each Word document, I placed all the coloured passages that belonged to the same colour. I was also able to give general names to the themes that I grouped together. It is at this stage that I started looking for patterns across themes.

Phase 4 Reviewing themes

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), this phase commences when the researcher has potential themes. However, these are not the final themes, they are only candidates and may need further refining. This was the case for my study. I had written down potential themes based on the colour codes. Themes such as mental and physical health, being unemployed etc were emerging. I realised that some of these themes speak to the same things and might need to be collated while I had to break down some of the themes into subthemes.

Phase 5 Defining themes.

Phase Five involves the refinement of themes to form concrete themes. At this phase, the researcher must finalise defining the themes so that they can concentrate on analysing closely the data within those themes. I had come up with clear themes that would be used in the presentation of the findings. However, I found that when I got to analyse the extracts in these themes I also at times went back to redefine these themes. This shows that the process of data analysis is flexible. Even though this model is very helpful, qualitative processes are not rigid they allow for flexibility which is why they are efficient (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell, 2012)

Phase 6 Report writing

According to Braun and Clarke (2013) Phase 6 starts when themes have been defined and a deeper analysis has been done for data falling under each theme. The challenge at this stage is to try telling a complex story about your data in a meaningful way. While writing this report I used as many quotations as possible to accurately capture the essence of each theme.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the research refers to a set of criteria that are used to establish the quality of the research (Bryman, 2012). The components which were used to establish trustworthiness for this study are credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability. These components were initially refined by Lincoln and Guba in 1985. These components are discussed below.

Credibility

Credibility can be defined as the extent to which the researcher provides a valid account of what the participants experienced. For this study, credibility was achieved by going back to the research participants with the results of the study. In other words, after I finished transcribing, I went back to the participants and read them the transcript. The reason I read it to them was that most of the participants could not read so I had to confirm whether I captured their true accounts by reading to them. I also conducted in-depth interviews with the participants and observed their behaviour when the interviews had to be put on hold while the participants had to immediately address others. My research supervisor conducted regular supervision sessions with me to ensure that I was following correct research procedures. She also checked the themes that I had identified as corresponding with the verbatim quotes I used to substantiate my findings based on thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was also based on specific, thorough procedure guidelines provided by the Braun and Clarke's (2013) model.

Dependability

Dependability has to do with the researcher's study findings being consistent and repeatable (Anney, 2014). Based on these criteria, researchers have to consider the extent to which similar results can be generated by other researchers using the same methods (Anney, 2014). To facilitate dependability of the study, I have described in detail the research design and methods I used to ensure that they were logical and clearly documented by transcribing all the interviews verbatim.

I also conducted an audit trail suggested by Koch (1994, cited by Nowell et al., (2017), in the sense that I have described in detail why I selected the theoretical framework underpinning my study and the methodological process. Koch (1994, cited by Nowell et al. 2017, p. 3) explained that an audit trail provides readers with evidence of the decisions and choices made by the researcher regarding theoretical and methodological issues throughout the study, which requires a clear rationale for such decisions.

I kept a reflexivity journal of all the challenges I faced while collecting data. I also kept an account of the decisions I had to make in the field. For example, in my research proposal, I had mentioned I would sample 10 participants, but I later realised that I had not reached saturation when I did the 10^{th} interview. These are some of the issues I documented in the journal, and I am sharing them in this report to enhance dependability.

Transferability

Transferability can be viewed as the extent to which the study results can be adopted to understand other contexts (Anney, 2014). In other words, “Transferability refers to the generalizability of inquiry. Nowell et al. (2017, p. 3 citing Tobin & Begley, 2004) pointed out that “In qualitative research, this concerns only to case-to-case transfer.” According to Korstjens

and Moser (2018), a thick description of the research process enhances the transferability of qualitative research. For this reason, I did not only describe the experiences of the participants in detail and my observations, but I also described their context.

Confirmability

Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that conclusions and interpretations of the study can be independently confirmed by other researchers (Anney, 2014). Nowell et al. (2017, p. 3 citing Halpren, 1983) pointed out that "keeping records of the raw data, and transcripts can help researchers systemize, relate, and cross reference data, as well as ease the reporting of the research process are all means of creating a clear audit trail. Though qualitative research is subjective, researchers must strive to ensure that their prior knowledge and theoretical frameworks do not affect the results (Bryman, 2012). However, Bryman (2012) remarked that too much focus on theories may overshadow the voices of the participants hence tarnishing the results (Bryman, 2012).

Ethical considerations

The present study received ethical clearance by the Human Research Ethics Council (non-medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand prior to commencing data gathering. The protocol number is SW 22/06/01.

Doing no harm

A researcher has a responsibility to ensure that no harm comes to the participants as a result of their taking part in the study (Neuman, 2014). The researcher must also ensure that the research questions do not threaten and disrespect the dignity of participants (Neuman, 2014). This study had the potential to cause psychological discomfort to the participants. Some participants talked about their painful experiences in the streets. I planned to refer the participants to Johannesburg

Lifeline Counselling Services in Johannesburg to provide psychosocial support to the participants in the event that they needed it. After each interview, I discussed the opportunity of receiving counselling at this organisation free of charge. However, the participants were not keen to receive counselling.

Informed consent

Informed consent entails explaining all the details of the study to participants and then inviting them to voluntary agree to participate in the study (Neuman, 2014). In this study, participants were given a Participant Information Sheet to read. Because these are homeless women, and some could not read, I had to explain to them in detail about my study. I told them that there were not forced to participate in the study; that their participation was voluntary. I also told them that they were free to withdraw at any time. I explained to them that when I interviewed them it would probably take one hour. All these particulars were in the Participant Information Sheet (See Appendix A).

After the participants had full knowledge of the study, I gave the participants a Consent Form to sign as evidence that they agree to take part in the study. (See Appendix B)

Deception of participants

At no point in the research process should participants be deceived about the purpose of the study and the research procedures. Neuman (2014), stated that participants need to be fully informed of the purpose of the study and other basic information relevant through a participation information sheet before they can participate. For this reason, in the participant information sheet, I explained the purpose of my research and the research protocol. I was dealing with homeless people and thus some of them might have assumed that they could get some kind of handout if they participated in the study. Because I wanted participants, I could have easily allowed them to

believe they were benefits associated with the study. However, I explained to participants that there are no benefits attached to participation. For material needs (such as food and temporary accommodation) I had to refer participants to Ikhaya Lethemba Shelter services in Braamfontein where these services are free of charge.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality in qualitative research can be defined as taking steps not to share any information that the participants share with the researcher. Any information shared by the participants should be kept confidential (Neuman, 2014). Anonymity entails ethical protection for participants which protects their identity from disclosure and makes sure they remain unknown and nameless (Neuman, 2014). To ensure anonymity researchers must always take steps to ensure that the information shared by research participants cannot be linked to them. Though anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed, I used pseudonyms to ensure that participants could never be linked to the data they shared. Transcriptions of the interview were kept on my password protected laptop and the Consent Forms were kept locked away.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the methods used in this study. The chapter detailed the effective use of a qualitative approach and a case study design. Methods of data collection and analysis were also discussed. This chapter also addressed the ethical dilemmas encountered and how the authors addressed any ethical issues. I also set out details of how I tried to ensure trustworthiness of my study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg. This chapter presents the research findings and critically discusses these findings. The findings are based on thematic analysis of raw data gathered when exploring the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein that enables an appreciation of their storied lives.

The structure of the chapter is based on three main themes and sub-themes that emerged when I thematically analysed the data according to the Braun and Clarke model (2013). The discussion is guided by the need to have a detailed understanding of how the 13 homeless women lead their lives.

However, before beginning presenting my research findings, I provide a summary of the socio-demographic particulars of the participants of that I personally interviewed. Lee and Shuele (2010) pointed out the purpose of presenting these variables in a research report. They explain it is necessary to determine whether the participants in a particular study are representative of the target population.

In the table on the following page, I present this information.

Table 1.

Socio-demographic particulars of the research participants

The table below summarises the socio-demographic particulars of the 13 research participants.

Participant Number	**Age of participant**	**Race**	**Period of time living on the streets**	**Where participant originated from**
1	22 years old	B	8 months	Zimbabwe
2	28 years old	B	4 years	South Africa: Cape Town in Khayelitsha township
3	26 years old	B	7 years	Lesotho
4	27 years old	B	6 years	South Africa: Alexandra township, Gauteng
5	19 years old	B	3 years	South Africa: Durban Westville township
6	32 years old	B	7 years and 2 months	South Africa: KwaZulu Natal in Newcastle
7	29 years old	B	4 years	Lesotho
8	23 years old	B	4 years	Zimbabwe
9	27 years old	B	3 years	Lesotho
10	25 years old	B	7 years	South Africa: Kwazulu Natal in Empangeni
11	28 years old	B	6 years	South Africa: Kwazulu Natal in Durban
12	21 years old	W	4 years	South Africa: Cape Town in Khayelitsha township.
13	32 years old	W	6 years	South Africa: Cape Town

Apparent from this table is that all participants met the inclusion criteria. The age range was from 19 – 32 years. Two participants were white and 11 were black. The shortest period living on the streets was eight months and the longest period was seven years. Seven participants were South African, and they came from different provinces: two from Cape Town, four from Kwa-Zulu Natal, and one from Gauteng. Three participants came from Lesotho and two from Zimbabwe.

Emerging main themes

Theme 1: Push factors leading homeless women to live on the streets

'Push factors' can be described as something that makes people want to leave a place or escape from a particular situation. Based on data analysis it became apparent that the homeless women I interviewed had similar reasons leading them to have to live on the streets of Braamfontein, thus shaping their life trajectories. The sub-themes below indicate the reasons why the participants decided to 'escape' from the home setting.

Sub-theme: Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse

Data analysis suggests that most of the homeless women were abused within the family set-up. This included physical, sexual, and emotional abuse that was perpetrated by close relatives.

Of the 13 participants interviewed for this research, nine respondents cited the family as an 'uninhabitable' space characterised by abuse in its various forms. They felt the need to escape because they did not want to continue being abused. For example, Participant 1 revealed during the interview that:

> *[I ran away] because at home back in KZN my sister's husband was abusing me physically [and] no-one was willing to help including my sister and community members…I ran away*

from home and came here [to Johannesburg] fearing for my life. I wanted to be away from home so that they cannot abuse me anymore.

This passage sheds light on how women were abused by close family members and did not receive any support from the broader community.

Similarly, Participant 5 also linked abuse to her resolve to move out of the threatening home circumstances:

I arrived here in 2020. I was 17 years old at that time. I ran away from home in Durban in Westville. I was staying with my stepfather and my mother. My stepfather had been raping me since I was in primary school in grade 4. I would tell my mother but then she would say I am lying [and] I am behaving like a rebel child, a word my stepfather would use to call me. He would rape me when my mother is not around or gone to do her piece jobs. He started by putting his fingers in my vagina then it escalated by putting his penis in and choking me…he would do this while threatening to kill me and my mother if I told anyone. When I was doing Grade 9. I could not take it anymore either. I would kill myself or run away. I decided to run away from home.

In a case of sexual abuse, Respondent 12 saw life on the streets much more bearable than at home:

I arrived here in Braam in 2019 January. I left my home after my grandmother died, and I was left with my dad. My mother died when I was young. When my grandmother died my father started forcing himself on me. At first, I thought he was punishing me when I have done something wrong, but it started to become a habit…When he came to my bedroom, he strangled me and raped me. I would fight and try to scream but then the strangling would not allow my voice to come out. He started to refuse me to go to school knowing very well that I will report him. He would lock me inside the house and lock the gates. I ended up falling pregnant with his son. I fell pregnant again with his daughter. They have no birth certificates or birth letters for those children because he refused me to give birth at a

hospital, I even healed on my own without any medical attention. People from my hood in Khayelitsha did not see anything wrong when they could not see me on the streets. I stayed there locked up with those kids till one day I knocked him with a bottle of his own beer. He passed out I took the keys and fled, and I never looked back.

Participant 6 revealed during the interview that she resorted to living on the streets after selling her parents' house in Soweto and invested the money in her boyfriend who, together with his family, later abused her:

> I arrived here in 2015 in mid-October. I remember it was during the time of fees must fall. I'm homeless today because I trusted a man over my family. I used to stay with my boyfriend in Newcastle. I sold my parents' house in Soweto when they died. I then took the money to build backrooms for rental at my boyfriend's family house. He was not working at the time [and] I was providing for him; mind you, he was a qualified biotechnologist. He then got a job. He changed completely … he started cheating and being emotionally and physically abusive. me. He and his sisters literally chased me out of the house [after] I invested so much in them. I tried going back home [and] I was told to go to the nearest hell.

After being exploited, the participant was abused by those she considered her "new family". Her whole life hit a nosedive after her own family rejected her following her ill-fated actions of squandering her late parents' estate. Ultimately, street life seemed the only viable step to take.

Participant 8 stated that she ended up in the streets following ill-treatment at the hands of her aunt who brought her from Zimbabwe under the pretext of assisting her to finish school and shaping her life,

I arrived in Braam streets in 2019, but I have been staying in the CBD since 2014. So, I have three and a half years staying in these streets of Braam. I was forced to leave my aunt's

place in CBD when I was tired of them using me. She took me from Zimbabwe in 2014 and she came with me here to South Africa promising my grandparents that she would help me finish school and get a job so that I can be independent since my parents passed away, but instead, when I arrived here she started to abuse me verbally and emotionally telling me how useless I was. She refused me to go to school but used me as a cleaner in her salon and a babysitter for her children. She would hide food from me, not dish up for me, call me all sorts of names insulting me even in the street. I couldn't take it anymore [and] I left. I couldn't go back home because I had no money or other family members here in South Africa".

Illustrated here is the disadvantageous combination of being a migrant and an orphan. Away from home and mercilessly abused by someone she considered the closest relative; street life was the only viable option for the respondent.

Participant 11 highlighted during the interview that she ran away from her abusive boyfriend in Durban and came to Johannesburg with the hope of starting a new life,

I arrived here in 2017 from eThekwini. I ran away from the boyfriend I was staying with. I was looking for a job here because he was the only one working back home. When we started dating, we were staying at his parents' house [and] he told me there was no reason for me to work as he can provide for me, and he was getting paid a lot of money. After about three years of dating, he started to change, he spoke too much over things, and he then started beating me up without a reason. We seemed to be always fighting. When he was beating me, it was like he was fighting with a man. He broke my tooth and finger while I was trying to defend myself. When I told people they would not believe me…instead, they would say that I am tarnishing his name on purpose. His family would insult me and say I am a useless woman. So, one day I had had enough. I stole money and took a bus to Joburg, I did not even have a plan".

Demonstrated in this passage is how the respondent found the power relations within the institution of the family unbearable and opted for life on the streets.

Participant 13 revealed that she ran away from her abusive husband and took it upon herself to start a new life on her own after securing a job in Johannesburg which she lost abruptly and left her with no other option but to turn to the streets,

> *When I lost my job in 2016, I had no other means to pay rent. I used to rent in Hillbrow [and] the landlord kicked me out. I had no choice but to sell my little furniture to get some food and money to survive. Going back home was not an option because I ran away in 2014, leaving my son and his abusive father behind in Cape Town. I was lucky to land a job. However, my greener pastures were shortened when I lost the job.*

Caught between a hard surface and a rock, street life remained the only viable option for the respondent as she could not bear the abuse back home.

This sub-theme resonates with existing literature. Research shows that victimisation is a major factor that pushes women and youth to become homeless (Milburn & D'ercole, 1991; Miller et al., 2004). Lewinson et al. (2014) highlighted that traumatic experiences of violence and abuse are often common among women who become homeless.

Keeshin and Campbell (2011) and Deck and Platt (2015) also found that histories of abuse are common among homeless people. These histories of abuse continue to impact on this vulnerable group, hence the need for treatment of past traumas of the homeless.

Munge (2020) and Tutty et al. (2013) also highlighted that intimate partner violence and other forms of abuse remain a cause for concern because they contribute to women being homeless. Tutty et al. (2013) went on to say that as soon as women leave their homes because of abuse, they become homeless and may at times seek care shelter.

However, a lack of knowledge about these shelters may lead them to reside on the streets (Munge, 2020). Olufemi and Reeves's (2004) detail the experience of a woman who left her

matrimonial home because she was continuously raped and sexually assaulted by her husband, hence she left the home to look for a job and thus landed in the streets of Johannesburg. Therefore, the findings though sharing contextually unique experiences of the homeless in Braamfontein, collaborate with current research literature and add to the subjective experience of the phenomenon of homelessness.

Sub-theme: 2: Poverty and pitiful conditions

Data analysis indicated that poverty at home had 'pushed' the homeless women towards Johannesburg where they ended up on the streets. Poverty in this regard can be understood through the macro-system lens because socioeconomics, laws and policies in the homeless woman's environment can have a significant impact on their lives.

Participant 7 revealed during the interview that she travelled from Lesotho with the hope of finding a job in Johannesburg where things did not go according to her plans:

> *I came here in 2019…it's been 4 years now. Poverty is the only thing that pushed me to leave my country. Things were bad, especially after my parents passed away in 2015; they were the breadwinners. I struggled to support myself, my son, and my younger siblings. My older brother would try to assist here and there but he had his own small family, and his wife was very selfish and controlling him. It came to a point where I could not take it anymore. I took my son to his paternal family to visit, took my younger siblings to visit my brother then I took off in efforts to look for greener pastures.*

Unfortunately, she did not secure employment and her troubles were worsened.

Likewise, Participant 9 linked her departure from home and existence on the streets to poverty and failure to manage a decent living:

> *My story is sad. I came here thinking I'm coming to work, that I got a job. A friend of mine linked me with this guy who said he was from South Africa. It was a call centre job and there were about five of us who had been promised a job through WhatsApp. They even provided us with transport money, but we arrived here only to find out they were only looking for two people. I couldn't go back home [and] I was afraid of the disappointment and embarrassment I was going to cause my family. Initially, I thought I was going to get a job soon and I wouldn't stay in the street for long, now I have lost my documents my phone and clothes they stole them. I don't have any family members here in South Africa. I don't want to go back to Lesotho anymore, I cannot cause pain for my family, they are a very well-respected family.*

Participant 10 cited living below the poverty datum level as the reason for her departure from home to Johannesburg where things got tough and ended up in the streets of Braamfontein. Her discussion demonstrates the pitiful conditions characterising the participant's life back home which are equalled to her life on the streets.

Existing literature has extensively discussed the correlation between socioeconomic factors and the phenomenon of homelessness. Scholars have argued that poverty and social exclusion are critical factors in the making of homelessness (Cross et al., 2010; Kriel et al., 2017; Kriel, 2017; Roets et al., 2016). Cross et al. (2010) linked homelessness to poor government policies on poverty. He argued that government priorities tend to focus on attracting foreign investments at the expense of addressing poverty and hunger and this has fuelled the challenge of homelessness in South Africa.

The issue of poverty is at the heart of the social development concept which is an important lens in this study. As noted by Fofana et al. (2018) and Midgley (2014), policies should strive to improve the living conditions of people including their wellbeing so that they can reach their full potential. Poverty is a critical issue in South Africa and these participants show that it drove them

to the streets, hence the need to adopt a social development approach to addressing the plight of homeless women.

du Toit (2010) argued that in South Africa, the homeless are often concentrated in major cities, mostly in public spaces so that they can gain access to lucrative begging spaces where they can scavenge for food, sell favours etc. He further explained that unemployment and lack of access to housing and healthcare are also challenges for the poor that trigger homelessness among many young people in South Africa. Though many of these studies address the socioeconomic issues associated with homelessness, the gendered nature of these issues is neglected as demonstrated by the findings of my study, which suggest that women experience poverty uniquely because of intersecting identities such as gender, homelessness and race and social exclusion. These identities continuously interact to amplify the way these women experience poverty and homelessness and this needs to be visible in current literature.

The theory of social development also reiterates this point by explaining social development as a multifaceted process (Midgley, 2015). A process which includes economic, social, political, environmental, cultural, and political inclusion of people to achieve sustainable social development of which it is not the case for homeless women in the streets of Braamfontein.

Sub-theme 3: Peer pressure and illegal substance abuse

Data analysis also indicated that the influence emanating from friends led participants to street life. For example, Participant 2 revealed during the interview that she came to Johannesburg for her undergraduate studies but fell off the groove and messed up her entire life after meeting new friends:

> *I arrived in 2016 as a medicine student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I came to study this side then things turned out sour for me. Yes, I remember I was enrolled at Wits in 2016 coming all the way from Cape Town in Khayelitsha. My life was shaping up very well, I had passed very well, and I was admitted for medicine. I did my first year in 2016 then my second and in my 3rd year in 2018 Hillbrow. I started missing out lectures on Monday because of a hangover. I started drinking from Thursday till Sunday…at first, it was fun but then I got introduced to new friends and an older man. I don't know how but I ended up failing. I lost my bursary and was kicked out of my student residence, an outside accommodation. I went to stay with a friend who later forced me to sell myself and my soul to the devil to survive. I couldn't [and] I opted for the street as a result.*

This passage of the interview shows how the participant succumbed to peer pressure and got involved in substance abuse, hence ending up as a street occupant. Some studies have also indicated peer pressure as a cause of homelessness. Olufemi & Reeves (2004) detailed some of the causes of homelessness among women in South Africa. In their study, one of the women participants described how she came to Johannesburg to seek employment after strong encouragement from close friends who later dumped her at Park station resulting in her being homeless.

Basically, the findings of the study resonate with current literature. Some scholars have linked homelessness to substance abuse in various ways. Scholars such as Moyo et al, (2015) and Black (2017) highlighted the illegal use of substances among homeless people as a coping mechanism for their difficult lives. These scholars argue that people who are homeless are prone to illegal substance use as an escape from their harsh realities. Other scholars have emphasised that substance abuse can also be a cause of homelessness (Fromke, 2018). This study has also linked substance use to the lived experiences of women in the streets.

Theme 2. Physical, emotional, and sexual challenges are experienced on the streets

Within this theme, I describe the granular accounts of homeless women and how they lead their lives on a daily basis in the streets of Braamfontein. I examine the difficulties they encounter, how they deal with them, and the nature of support that they get which keeps their lives going.

Sub-theme 1: Meeting basic needs is difficult.

The street as a space of strife was an issue constantly raised in the interviews. Data analysis suggested that homeless women faced intricate challenges on a daily basis. This started with the ostracization that these women had to contend with by virtue of staying and sleeping in the open. All respondents pointed to the street as a space of intersecting difficulties and hence gesturing at how homeless women are perceived as having been affected by different systems (Greene, 2017).

Participant 2 opened up about how life on the street presented her with a host of challenges:

> *I struggle to get food, just to go on day to day. I am forced to eat in rubbish bins of student residences because I know I might find spoilt bread or food. I struggle to bathe… I usually bathe in those decayed and damaged buildings by the park station but sometimes the water does not come out or maybe someone does it. I just pour myself with water no soap, Colgate, lotion, or towel things are worse when I'm on my periods because I need to use dirty dry clothes I picked on the streets as sanitary towels … when it is this hot, I smell quickly.*

Another participant emphasised "I experience hunger, being raped, threatened, and mugged by other homeless people… [Sometimes] I don't get that lucky to get cars that I can wash and people to assist in carrying their groceries from the shop to their car, so I suffer from hunger, stress sometimes of not making any cent for the day".

Sub-theme 2. Stigmatisation has a negative impact on emotional well-being

Participant 4 described how she is affected psychologically by existing on the streets: *"Also staying here brings a lot of embarrassment and it has killed my self-esteem. I am always stressed, and I forgot things because I think too much".*

Other research findings have also highlighted the correlation of homelessness and low self-esteem. Scholars have argued that homeless people often develop low self-esteem because of their unfortunate circumstances (Dang, 2014; Keeshin & Campbell, 2011).

One study found that high self-esteem was strongly correlated to building resilience among the homeless (Dang, 2014). Osborne (2002) argued that homeless people are always striving to find strategies to maintain self-worth and improve their self-esteem, and at times uncooperating the identity of being homeless into their overall identity plays a huge role in improving self-worth. Unfortunately, none of the participants in my study indicated that they enjoyed a good sense of self-esteem or trying to improve their sense of self-esteem.

Sub-theme 3: Shelters are not suitable and consequently shunned

All the homeless women participants made it clear that they avoided shelters and preferred hustling around rather than being placed in shelters because they consider shelters uninhabitable spaces. Some respondents, due to the clear vision of how they wanted to make their futures, considered shelters as unproductive. For example, Participant 10 remarked that:

> *I do not know a lot of them. I just know a few, but again I do not like being in a shelter, They do not help us to get jobs [and] all they do is feed us and provide a place to stay and bath.*

Other participants described shelters as constrictive spaces and preferred staying on their own. For example, Participant 11 revealed that: *When I came here, I was staying at Winsor West shelter for a week [and] I ran away. I do not like shelters; I like to hustle for myself".*

Other participants expressed their concern about the nature of shelters and the way they operated which limited their freedom Participant 3 explained that:

> *When I am in serious need of pads or food, I go to the Kotze street shelters, but I don't want to stay there permanently. I am fine here. I can hustle and stay with my boyfriend in the street [where] there are no rules.*

The rigidity of the rules at shelters was also gestured at by Participant 3: *"As for me I don't want to go to a shelter. I feel it will restrict my hustling lifestyle. I am fine here in the street, plus I am with other homeless people who have become my family".*

Other participants also raised the issue of rigid rules. However, Participant also mentioned she feels undermined at shelters and there is a lack of skills training:

> *I don't like shelters because at the shelters we get abused emotionally where the staff at these shelters talk down on us like we disgust them…they have ridiculous rules like no one must be outdoors after 6 pm …they don't even find jobs for us or give skills training; we just sit there the whole day.*

Sub-theme 4. A complex relationship with homeless men

Data analysis revealed that a complex relationship exists between homeless men and women living on the streets of Braamfontein. Irrespective of the protection and support these women get from those that they consider boyfriends; they are also victimised. Participant No. 4 revealed during the interview that:

> *I have been raped before a few times and no one believed me or even assisted me. Some of the homeless men stole almost all my belongings. They will harass me a lot when I have lots of food or they see me having some money, and they would want to take it away from me. For means of protection, I now have a boyfriend who is also homeless. I sleep with him so he can protect me. I do not love him. He is a bully, and he is controlling, but at least he can provide me with other basic needs. He comes with food, and he steals toiletries for me. He does not smoke like me but sometimes he drinks heavily, and he beats me up.*

This passage demonstrates the intricate relationships that homeless women have with homeless men. This participant has to bear both the burden that comes with her boyfriend's behaviour and being homeless.

Participant 1 stated that she stays with a group of homeless men for protection where she is also victimised*: "They [men] do bother me. Do you see the one wearing a white t-shirt? He's Xhosa…he bothers me sometimes although he protects me most of the time".* She added:

> *We suffer here with everything; we don't have a roof. I am a girl and there are too many males who are homeless surrounding me. It is difficult to protect yourself when you are a girl. It is a challenge, even in cold weather and very hot weather we are here.*

Participant 2 also emphasised the complex relationship she has with homeless men on the streets of Braamfontein:

> *One of the other challenges also includes other homeless men forcing me to sleep with them in exchange for protection and hustling food for me. I obviously have to agree because I need their protection and the food to get by…but sometimes I do not agree, and they rape me regardless.*

These verbatim quotes reflect the gendered nature of homelessness when it comes to sexual abuse and intimate relationships. Participants sadly expressed how they were harassed and raped

by homeless men on the streets yet needed their protection. This shows the cruel realities that women experience in the streets.

Research shows that homeless people are at risk of diseases such as HIV because of their vulnerability in the streets (Cumber & Tsoka-Gwegweni, 2015; Wutoh et al., 2006). These scholars argue that the situation is worse for young women and children who receive sexual initiation at a very young age while some engage in transactional sex for survival. As a result, sexually transmitted diseases such as Gonorrhoea are a serious issue needing immediate attention in South Africa.

Furthermore, some scholars have highlighted how homeless migrant women are sexually harassed and in many cases forced to deliver sexual favours on the streets in South Africa (Idemudia, 2014).

Sub-theme 5: Challenges faced were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The women in my study also detailed their painful experiences in the streets during this COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Participant 3 shared how lonely she felt during the lockdown. She revealed that her practice of begging also allowed her human connection with her clients. This was no longer possible during the lockdown, and it affected her greatly. She said that:

> *Yoh! do not even remind me… that was a difficult time for me. I know I do not usually talk to the people passing by and chat with them besides begging for money and food to eat. But when everyone was now locked inside their houses because of the Covid-19 rules, it was stressing me, and I felt lonely for some reason. It was like we were just living alone as homeless people in a world with no people. It was difficult to get used to the quiet streets with no people to use to push our hustling. Even students at their residences we saw them*

leave residences going home because some chat to us we would ask, and they would say the residents told them to go home and spend the hard lockdown levels there.

Participant 5 revealed that she was faced with hunger. They struggled for food because the pandemic affected the begging market. She shared:

They were no people in the streets; the streets were quite like someone died. The police were patrolling non-stop, it was difficult to hustle. The streets had no one to beg for food and money. People were very scared of homeless people since we were associated with dirtiness and germs. Even the police could not come close to us to address us. At least the Methodist church kept giving us food. Although it was too little… It was tough because most people I used to beg for food and money were students when they were walking to and from school or the mall or the restaurants because they have money. Days will go by without me having something to eat because I could not hustle the way I used to. Covid-19 really affected me badly.

Participant 9 also described her experience of suffering from hunger. She revealed that she usually begged in the area near Pick n Pay, Braamfontein. During Covid-19 very few people passed by, and most shops were closed. This made it difficult for her to find food.

2020 was difficult for me. Already it is difficult to get food here on the streets. But the Covid-19 lockdown rules that no one must be outside the streets made it worse for me. It was like the president did not think about the homeless people on how we hustle and how we make a living because we need to beg the people in the streets, so if they are not there, we starve. The hard lockdown sent me straight to starvation. They were very less and close to no people that were passing on the streets for me to beg. Stores around here including Pick 'n Pay, and restaurants were now closing early. I could no longer beg the students who used to come and eat at these restaurants because everyone now was using the scooter delivery thing. The restaurants started being very strict and no longer wanted dirty and smelling homeless people outside their restaurant's doors because everyone was worried about the washing of hands and cleanliness of which I was the opposite.

As shown by these participants, the Covid-19 pandemic brought about increased challenges for homeless women. The begging business was no longer lucrative. Also, people were scared to come into contact with others which made it difficult to also ask for food in the streets. The participants also revealed how the lockdown rules affected them. These homeless women faced abuse from the police who were forcing them out of the streets. They also had challenges acquiring masks and often clashed with police over these issues. These findings reflect the difficulty that homeless women face and how these difficulties were amplified because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the literature on the experiences of homeless people continues to emerge, available studies show that homeless people faced a myriad of challenges since the onset of the pandemic. Scholars highlight the brutal treatment of homeless people by law enforcement. Others detail the challenges of complying with Covid-19 regulations which often landed them in trouble (Chris, 2020; Levine & Manderson, 2020; Young & Koch, 2021).

Some scholars have highlighted how homeless people were forced out of their spaces of work into shelters out of the city and the poor living conditions in these shelters (Chris, 2020, 2020; Mathole & Ross, 2022). However, these studies fail to adequately document the experiences of women as illustrated but these findings.

Theme 3 Survival strategies are implemented

My study findings also revealed the various strategies adopted by homeless women in South Africa to survive in the streets. The study showed that these women were not just passive, but they actively deployed varying strategies so that they can survive

Sub-theme 1. Personal relationships provide protection.

Respondent 12 highlighted how her boyfriend provided her with support to survive difficult times:

> *I barely cope. It's hard but then my boyfriend is the one that helps me with most of the things. He stays here in the street of Braam too. We steal together to get food and money to buy glue and smoke. He protects me although we fight a lot, but he is there even if it is not all the time.*

The extract above showed that homeless women also engage in strategic intimate relationships in the streets. In this case, the participant felt that the boyfriend was supportive, he was her accomplice in committing crimes to find food and to get illegal substances. It is interesting how illegal activities are viewed as ideal supportive behaviour in the streets. In this case the boyfriend was a supportive system that was available in this participant's environment and this helped her to survive the streets. Studies show that supportive systems in a person's environment are crucial to building resilience and improving social functioning (Altiere & Von Kluge, 2009; Prabhu et al., 2010). For one to be a fully functioning human being they need their immediate systems to be supportive (Mehta et al., 2009; Prabhu et al., 2010; Zingaro, 1983). Though the support received by this participant may be considered not to be idl, this form of support helped her pass-through difficult times

Sub-theme 2. Striving for independence

Data analysis indicated that despite the challenges that they face, homeless women can stand up for themselves. Respondent 3 opened up about her efforts to stand up for herself by stating bluntly: *"I have learned to survive and be strong; it is better than going back home."*

Despite the everyday challenges she faces as a street dweller, Respondent 5 implied that she is eager to work for her survival:

> *I try to stand outside Pick 'n' Pay to help carry people's groceries and accompany them to their cars, then they give me money. Some of them are going home to visit so I help them*

> *with large suitcases and bags all the way to Bree, Park Station, Wolmarus and MTN then they pay me for my service. I then buy food and my weed and mind my own business. Sometimes I steal and pickpocket people there by the MTN, the busiest place. Luckily, I have never been caught. But I really don't like to do that just that things become tough.*

This passage demonstrates the different conventional and unconventional means that homeless women employ to sustain themselves.

Similarly Respondent 6 described how she is trying to achieve self-reliance: *"I have learned to survive and hustle for myself. I have learned to overcome most challenges through looking for piece jobs like washing cars, helping people carry groceries to their home [and] doing gardening".*

Lucid here is a sense of independence and existing according to one's chosen ways amidst a quandary. Respondent 13 also reflected on how she can stand on her own without support from other people. *"I help carry people's groceries, wash dustbins and cars just to get something to eat. I also buy my crystal [and] it helps me to cope. I just flow and forget my problems. You see I wear like a man to avoid getting approached by men, I do not want a man in my life, and I am fine like this".*

Sub-theme 3. Creating a sense of belonging through familyhood

The notion of familyhood was an issue evident in the interviews. Participants highlighted their desire to create a "second family" so as to forge a sense of belonging and support each other. Participant 1 explained: *"To try and protect myself I have to sit with those men over there at the church door, it's better that way.* A person can feel a sense of belonging when we stay in groups as homeless people".

Likewise, Participant 2 highlighted the importance of existing in groups: *"Then to protect myself I chill most of the time with other groups of homeless people [and] mostly it works for protection but also just for some sense of belonging and support.*

Participant 7 also gestured at how she exists as part of a homeless family: *"But then for protection, we usually stay in groups as homeless people to protect and support each other, we are like a family…I take them as my second family because I spend most of my time and days with them trying to make a living".*

Participant 12 pointed out that forming small 'families' enables homeless people to provide support for one another: *"We also share food with some of the homeless people sometimes. We are like a family, but we fight a lot too, but when we are together people fear us even the police officials."*

Regardless of the difficulties that other homeless individuals place on her, Participant 8 revealed the importance of a family: *"The only challenge is the harassment from other homeless people and being forced to smoke glue with them in order to fit in and find a sense of belonging, and to create a second family."*

Although I could not locate any other research findings related to homeless people's need to belong to a 'family', it is well-known how important it is for human beings to feel connected to one another. It is a fundamental human need. (Allen et al., 2021).

Theme 4: A number of practical steps can be taken to address the needs of homeless women

Within this theme, I discuss what homeless women thought should be done to ameliorate their prevailing situations and how this could potentially inform the intervention strategies that could be implemented to help address the needs of these women.

During the interviews I delved deeply into the kind of change that homeless women would like to be addressed to turn their lives around and how they orient themselves towards the future.

Sub-theme 1. Employment opportunities are needed.

Although leading stagnant lives in the streets of Braamfontein, participants shared their willingness to change their fate. In this respect, all participants expressed their need for assistance in (re)procuring an ID document and securing a job and shelter of their own so that they can lead independent lives. For example, Participant 1stated: *"I just need them [social service professionals] to help me get a new ID document and a job so that I will be able to stand on my feet"*. Similarly, Participant 3 stressed: *"Helping me to get a job will really make a difference in my life".*

Although still experiencing emotional pain from the sexual abuse at the hands of her stepfather, Participant 5 also demonstrated a good sense of making her future, *"They can help me get a job because I cannot go to school anymore; my mind and heart are too bruised. They can also help me with a place to stay; not a shelter a place of my own".*

Irrespective of her past mistakes and flaws, Participant 6, like other respondents, revealed her desire for a better life: *"I wish you guys [social service workers] can help me get a job and an*

ID. They stole mine when I got here/ I just want a job so: I can have a place of my own and independent".

This desire for independence is guided by the participants' clear understanding of where their lives went wrong both in terms of their own blunders and in cases of circumstances beyond their control. They showed the desire to try again, to start afresh.

Sub-theme 2. Need to have the financial means to reunite with family

Some participants demonstrated their wish to reunite with their families even after years of separation. For example, Participant 8 who came from Lesotho highlighted during the interview that: *"You can help me get a job and a new passport, so I can work and send money at home or at least go home with some money".*

In the same vein, Participant 11 expressed her wish to reconnect with her family back home: *"Eish, I don't know, but I think if you could help me with a job, it will be better. I could save money and go back home ".*

Unemployment is a huge problem in the South African context. Research shows that unemployment is one of the major causes of homelessness (Cross et al., 2010b; Kriel et al., 2017; Ward & Seager, 2010). Furthermore, scholars argue that the shortage of employment opportunities helps to keep the homeless in the streets because they cannot sustain themselves adequately (Cross et al., 2010b; Cross & Seager, 2010; Tenai & Mbewu, 2020).

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the themes emerging relating to the study objectives. Four main themes: The 'push' or compelling reasons why these women ended up homeless and living on the streets in Braamfontein. Theme 2 emphasised the many challenges homeless women faced while

living on the streets. Theme 3 drew attention to the coping strategies implemented by these homeless women. Finally, Theme 4 captured the need for homeless women to secure employment.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, I summarise the key findings of the study based on the main aim and objectives of the study. I also stress the conclusions that I reached. Finally, I focus on my recommendations based on my research findings.

Summary of findings and conclusions reached

Four themes emerged based on thematic analysis of research data. The first theme focused on what 'pushed' (or forced) the homeless women towards the edge and influenced their resolve to lead lives on the streets of Braamfontein, and in the process shaping their life trajectories.

It was established that most of the homeless women were physically, sexually, and emotionally abused within a family system. The perpetrators included close relatives, mothers, fathers and stepfathers, boyfriends, and husbands. These familial relationships, in line with the ecosystems theory, are characteristic of the microsystem (Rotich et al., 2012).

Peer pressure, which led to illegal substance abuse, was another causal factor of homeless women living on the streets; in other words, a factors apparent in the meso system.

Poverty and pitiful conditions also influenced the departure of participants from their homes. Poverty in this regard can be understood through the macro-system lens because socioeconomics, laws and policies in the homeless woman's environment can have a significant impact on her life.

The second theme captured the difficulties homeless women experience living on the streets. These included meeting basic needs, and the negative impact of stigmatisation on their emotional well-being. They also pointed out reasons why existing shelters for the homeless are not a suitable

resource of support and the complex relationships they share with homeless men. Furthermore, the daily challenges they faced were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Theme Three highlighted how homeless women implement 'survival' strategies. These included forming close relationships with men who can offer protection, striving for some form of independence, and also establishing a sense of belonging because they interacted with other homeless people with whom they could identify.

Theme Four focused on practical steps that homeless women think should be implemented to address the challenges they face. The main call was for suitable employment that could enable them to become adequately self-sufficient to leave living on the streets. This finding can be directly linked to the concept of social development, namely that socio-economic improvement needs to take place in order to empower poverty-stricken individuals. When looking at the economic component of social development, it can be argued that economic inequalities and lack of financial resources are one of the reasons why homeless women live on the streets under harsh conditions.

Recommendations for policy, research, and praxis

Based on my study findings, I make the following recommendations:

1. The South African government and non-government organisations in Johannesburg should provide access to skills training to capacitate homeless women to help them become financially independent.
2. Practical steps need to be followed to enable them to find employment. These include providing them with identity documents, free sanitary towels and clean clothes and washing facilities.

3. The policies implemented at shelters in Braamfontein for homeless women need to be reviewed. For example, are the rigid rules enforced necessary when homeless women are used to exercising free decision-making?
4. Homeless women require protection. Police patrolling in Braamfontein need to be mindful of the fact that homeless women are exposed to sexual and physical abuse.
5. On a macro level, social workers and other key role players should focus on supporting homeless women develop a sense of belonging. This could involve setting up community activities where community members in Braamfontein (including university students) can engage with homeless women and develop a 'healthy' sense of belonging.
6. Social media should also make community members aware of why homeless women live on the streets, daily challenges they experience and how stigmatisation can undermine their sense of self-worth.
7. Finally, there is a need for broader social work research on contextual interventions and use of stakeholder collaboration to address the gendered nature of homelessness.

References

Adebayo, P., Ndinda, C. & Ndhlovu, T. (2022). African cities, housing precarity and women's inclusion during COVID-19, Agenda, 36 (2),16-28, DOI:10.1080/10130950.2022.2057027

Adhabi, E., & Anozie, C. B. (2017). Literature review for the type of interview in qualitative research. *International Journal of Education*, *9*(3), 86–97.

Allahqoli, L., Fallahi, A., Rahmani, A., & Higgs, P. (2018). The prevalence of human immunodeficiency virus infection and the perceptions of sexually transmitted infections among homeless women. Nursing and Midwifery Studies, 7(4), 186-191.

Allen, K., Kern, M., Rozek, C., McInerney, D. M., & Slavich, G. M. (2021). Belonging: A review of conceptual issues, an integrative framework, and directions for future research. Australian Journal of Psychology, 73(1), 87-102. https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530.2021.1883409

Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS), 5(2), 272–281.

Babbie, E. R. (2013). The basics of social research. Cengage Learning.

Batterham, D. (2019). Defining "At-risk of Homelessness": Re-connecting Causes, Mechanisms and Risk. Housing, Theory and Society, 36(1), 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/14036096.2017.1408678

Black, K. (2017). Exploring the lived experiences of homelessness in a Cape Town suburb. Unpublished Thesis, University of Cape Town.

Brivik, T. (2021). Unemployment crisis: South Africa must ease restrictive labour laws and focus on job creation. Daily Maverick.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Bryman, A. (2012). Social research methods (4th ed.). Oxford University Press Inc.

Busch-Geertsema, V., Culhane, D., & Fitzpatrick, S. (2016). Developing a global framework for conceptualising and measuring homelessness. Habitat International, 55, 124–132. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2016.03.004

Carastathis, A. (2014). The concept of intersectionality in feminist theory. Philosophy Compass, 9(5), 304–314.

Cho, S., Crenshaw, K. W., & McCall, L. (2013). Toward a field of intersectionality studies: Theory, applications, and praxis. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 38(4), 785–810.

Clarke, V., Braun, V., & Hayfield, N. (2015). Thematic analysis. In Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods (pp. 222–248).

Clarke, A., Watts, B., & Parsell, C. (2020). Conditionality in the context of housing-led homelessness policy: Comparing Australia's Housing First agenda to Scotland's "rights-based" approach. AJS, 55(1). https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.97

Cooper, B. (2016). Intersectionality. In L. Disch & M. Hawkesworth (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory (pp. 0). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199328581.013.20

Crenshaw, K. (1990). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. Stan. L. Rev., 43, 1241.

Crenshaw, K. (1997). Intersectionality and identity politics: Learning from violence against women of color. In M. L. Shanley & U. Narayan (Eds.), Reconstructing Political Theory: Feminist Perspectives. Pennsylvania University Press.

Crenshaw, K. (2018). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics [1989]. In Feminist legal theory (pp. 57–80). Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.). Pearson.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Research Design. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). The selection of a research approach. In Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (pp. 3–24).

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage publications.

Cross, C., Seager, J., Erasmus, J., Ward, C., & O'Donovan, M. (2010b). Skeletons at the feast: A review of street homelessness in South Africa and other world regions. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 5–20. https

Davids, N., & Matebeni, Z. (2017). Queer politics and intersectionality in South Africa. Safundi, 18(2), 161–167.

Daya, S., & Wilkins, N. (2013). The body, the shelter, and the shebeen: An affective geography of homelessness in South Africa. Cultural Geographies, 20(3), 357–378.

De Beer, S. F., & Vally, R. (2015). Pathways out of homelessness. Research Report 2015, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Deck, S. M., & Platt, P. A. (2015). Homelessness is traumatic: Abuse, victimization, and trauma histories of homeless men. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 24(9), 1022–1043.

Decrop, A. (2004). Trustworthiness in qualitative tourism research. Qualitative Research in Tourism: Ontologies, Epistemologies and Methodologies, 156, 169.

Doutney, C. P., Buhrich, N., Virgona, A., Cohen, A., & Daniels, P. (2016). The Prevalence of Schizophrenia in a Refuge for Homeless Men. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 19(3), 233–238. https://doi.org/10.3109/00048678509158828

du Toit, J. L. (2010). Local metropolitan government responses to homelessness in South Africa. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 111–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350903519390

Duke RN & Searby, A. (2019). Mental Ill Health in Homeless Women: A Review. Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 40(7), 605-612. DOI:10.1080/01612840.2019.1565875

Fofana, I., Chitiga-Mabugu, M., & Mabugu, R. (2018). South Africa milestones to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on poverty and hunger (Vol. 1731). Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

Fromke, C. N. (2018). Community insights: exploring the lived experiences of homelessness through photovoice.

Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting triangulation in qualitative research. Journal of Social Change, 10(1), 2.

Fusch, P. I., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2017). How to conduct a mini-ethnographic case study: A guide for novice researchers. The Qualitative Report, 22(3), 923–942.

Gouws, A. (2017). Feminist intersectionality and the matrix of domination in South Africa. Agenda, 31(1), 19–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2017.1338871

Grant, G., & Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: creating the blueprint for your "house". Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, 4(2), 12-26.

Greene, R. R. (2017). Human behavior theory, person-in-environment, and social work method. In Human behavior theory and social work practice (pp. 1–30). Routledge.

Greenstein, R., Roberts, B., & Sitas, A. (2003). Qualitative research methodology. Research Methods Manual, 2–8.

Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., & Mills, J. (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 18(1). https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-18.1.2655

Herrman, H., Herrman, H., Evert, H., Harvey, C., Gureje, O., Pinzone, T., & Gordon, I. (2004). Disability and Service use among Homeless People Living with Psychotic Disorders. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 38(11–12), 965–974. https://doi.org/10.1080/j.1440-1614.2004.01488.x

Hills, F., Meyer-Weitz, A., & Asante, K. O. (2016). The lived experiences of street children in Durban, South Africa: Violence, substance use, and resilience. International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being, 11(1), 30302.

Gunawan, J., Aungsuroch, Y., Marzilli, C., Fisher, M., & Sukarna, N. (2021). A phenomenological study of the lived experience of nurses in the battle of COVID-19. Nursing Outlook, 69(4), 652-659. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2021.01.020.

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2020). Qualitative research methods. Sage.

Herring, C., Yarbrough, D., & Marie Alatorre, L. (2020). Pervasive penalty: How the criminalization of poverty perpetuates homelessness. Social Problems, 67(1), 131-149.

Khoza, R. (2014). Understanding Homelessness Through Women's Experiences and Journey Through it.

Keeshin, B. R., & Campbell, K. (2011). Screening homeless youth for histories of abuse: Prevalence, enduring effects, and interest in treatment. Child Abuse & Neglect, 35(6), 401–407. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2011.01.015

Killander, M. (2019). Criminalising homelessness and survival strategies through municipal by-laws: Colonial legacy and constitutionality. South African Journal on Human Rights, 35(1), 70–93.

Kok, P., Cross, C., & Roux, N. (2010). Towards a demographic profile of the street homeless in South Africa. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 21–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350903519309

Kriel, I., Tembe, M. J. P., & Mashava, V. R. (2017). Homelessness in Pretoria: Exploring the survival challenges of the homeless and their right to the city. Development Southern Africa, 34(4), 428–438.

Kriel, K. D. (2017). International responses to homelessness: Lessons for the City of Tshwane. Development Southern Africa, 34(4), 399–413.

Kondrat, M. E. (2013). Person-in-environment. In Encyclopedia of social work.

Kornbluh, M. (2015). Combatting challenges to establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 12(4), 397–414.

Le Roux, J. (1996). Street children in South Africa: Findings from interviews on the background of street children in Pretoria, South Africa. Adolescence, 31(122), 423–431. https://www.proquest.com/docview/195925815/abstract/923DC3369C4B430DPQ/1

Lewinson, T., Thomas, M. L., & White, S. (2014). Traumatic transitions: Homeless women's narratives of abuse, loss, and fear. Affilia, 29(2), 192–205.

Maepa, M. P., Idemudia, E. S., & Ofonedu, M. E. (2015). The relationship between Parenting styles and childhood trauma: A study of street children in Limpopo Province, South Africa. African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation and Dance, 21(2), 552–565.

Makiwane, M., Tamasane, T., & Schneider, M. (2010). Homeless individuals, families and communities: The societal origins of homelessness. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 39–49.

Marcus, T.S., Heese, J., Scheibe, A. et al. (2020). Harm reduction in an emergency response to homelessness during South Africa's COVID-19 lockdown. Harm Reduct J, 17, 60. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-020-00404-0

Mathebula, S. D., & Ross, E. (2013). Realizing or relinquishing rights? Homeless youth, their life on the streets and their knowledge and experience of health and social services in Hillbrow, South Africa. Social Work in Health Care, 52(5), 449–466.

Mathole, R., & Ross, E. (2022). How do you stay at home if you don't have a home? Experiences of homeless persons at homeless shelters in Tshwane, South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness, 0(0), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/10530789.2022.2107329

Mattaini, M.A. (2008). Ecosystems Theory. Chapter 12 in Comprehensive Handbook of Social Work and Social Welfare: Human Behavior in the Social Environment (Ed. Bruce A. Thyer). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Mayock, P., & Bretherton, J. (2016). Women's homelessness in Europe. Springer.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation. John Wiley & Sons.

Meth, P. (2003). Rethinking the 'domus' in domestic violence: Homelessness, space and domestic violence in South Africa. Geoforum, 34(3), 317–327. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(03)00005-8

Milburn, N., & D'ercole, A. (1991). Homeless women: Moving toward a comprehensive model. American Psychologist, 46(11), 1161.

Miller, P., Donahue, P., Este, D., & Hofer, M. (2004). Experiences of Being Homeless or at Risk of Being Homeless Among Canadian Youths. Adolescence, 39(156), 735–755. https://www.proquest.com/docview/195943629/abstract/81EEC215E0CF42F6PQ/1

Moloko-Phiri, S. S., Mogale, R. S., & Hugo, J. (2017). 'A shelter is not a home': Voices of homeless women in the City of Tshwane. Development Southern Africa, 34(4), 439–449.

Morrow, S. (2010). The homeless in historical context. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 51–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350903519341

Moyo, U., Patel, L., & Ross, E. (2015). Homelessness and mental illness in Hillbrow, South Africa: A situation analysis. Social Work, 51(1), 1–21. http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S0037-80542015000100001&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en

Mikuska, E. (2017). The Importance of Piloting or Pre-Testing Semi-Structured Interviews and Narratives. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Munge, E. B. (2020). The long-term effects of domestic Violence: A study of life histories in a homeless shelter in Cape Town, South Africa.

Naidoo, V. (2010). Government responses to street homelessness in South Africa. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 129–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350903519408

Ndlovu, Z. M. (2019). An exploratory study on substance abuse among homeless people: A case study of Durban city centre. [PhD Thesis].

Neale, J. (1997). Homelessness and theory reconsidered. Housing Studies, 12(1), 47–61.

Nzimande, N.P. (2022). COVID-19 and Homelessness: Response of South African Municipalities during First Wave of the Pandemic. African Journal of Development Studies (formerly AFFRIKA

Journal of Politics, Economics and Society), 12(1). https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-aa_affrika1_v12_n1_a1

Neuman, W. L. (2014). Basics of Social Research. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16(1), 1609406917733847.

Obioha, E. E. (2022). State response to homelessness in South Africa: A multi-agency housing focused intervention approach considered. Development Southern Africa, 39(6), 990–1006. https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2022.2103519

Ogunkan, D. V., & Adeboyejo, A. T. (2014). Public perception of street children in Ibadan, Nigeria. IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal, 22(1), 39–49.

Okamoto, Y. (2007). A comparative study of homelessness in the United Kingdom and Japan. Journal of Social Issues, 63(3), 525–542.

Olufemi, O. (2001). Insecurity of tenure among street homeless and poorly housed people in Johannesburg: Some planning responses. Paper presented at the ESF/N-AERUS International Workshop, "Coping with Informality and Illegality in Human Settlements in Developing Cities." Belgium: Leuven and Brussels.

Olufemi, O., & Reeves, D. (2004). Lifeworld strategies of women who find themselves homeless in South Africa. Planning Theory & Practice, 5(1), 69–91.

Pandey, S. C., & Patnaik, S. (2014). Establishing reliability and validity in qualitative inquiry: A critical examination. Jharkhand Journal of Development and Management Studies, 12(1), 5743–5753.

Pathak, V.C. (2017). Phenomenological Research: A Study of Lived Experiences. IJARIIE-ISSN(O)-2395-4396, 3(1).

Peters, K., & Halcomb, E. (2015). Interviews in qualitative research. Nurse Researcher (2014+), 22(4), 6.

Phiri, C. M., & Perron, B. E. (2012). Health implications of chronic homelessness: Lived experiences of adult men and women at a community in Gauteng province, South Africa. African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation and Dance, 18(Supplement 3), 160–173.

Pleace, N., & Hermans, K. (2020). Counting All Homelessness in Europe: The Case for Ending Separate Enumeration of 'Hidden Homelessness'. European Journal of Homelessness, 14(3) ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online.

Pophaim, J., & Peacock, R. (2021). Pathways Into and Out of Homelessness: Towards A Strategic Approach To Reducing Homelessness. Acta Criminologica: African Journal of Criminology & Victimology, 34(2). https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-crim_v34_n2_a4

Ridder, H.-G. (2017). The theory contribution of case study research designs. Business Research, 10(2), 281–305.

Roets, L., Botha, A., Greeff, M., Human, S. P., Strydom, H., Watson, M. J., & Chigeza, S. (2016). A synthesis of homelessness in South Africa: A rapid critical appraisal. Development Southern Africa, 33(5), 613–627. https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2016.1203756

Rotich, E., Mbai, I., Marete, I., Yego, F., Veny, M. B., & Lelong, B. A. (2012). Being homeless: Reasons and challenges faced by affected women. African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health, 6(1), 41–48.

Shields, S. A. (2008). Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective. Sex Roles, 59(5), 301–311. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-008-9501-8

Sewpaul, V., Osthus, I., Mhone, C., Sibilo, E., & Mbhele, S. (2012). LIFE ON THE STREETS OF DURBAN: NO MILLIONAIRE ENDING. Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk, 48(3), Article 3. https://doi.org/10.15270/48-3-83

Sikich, K. W. (2008). Global female homelessness: A multi-faceted problem. Gender Issues, 25(3), 147–156.

Silverman, D. (2020). Qualitative Research. Sage.

Speak, S. (2012). Alternative understandings of homelessness in developing countries (PhD Thesis). University of Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Tamale, S. (2020). Decolonization and Afro-feminism. Journal of Contemporary African Studies.

Tenai, N. K., & Mbewu, G. N. (2020). Street homelessness in South Africa: A perspective from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies, 76(1).

Thomas, K., Ward-Lasher, A., Kappas, A., & Messing, J. (2021). "It actually isn't just about housing": Supporting Survivor Success in a Domestic Violence Housing First Program. Journal of Social Service Research, 47(2), 232-244. doi:10.1080/01488376.2020.1745349

Tight, M. (2017). Understanding case study research: Small-scale research with meaning. Sage.

Tove, S. (2020). Paths to homelessness: Extreme poverty and the urban housing crisis (Faculty of Health and Society (HS), Department of Social Work (SA)). Routledge.

Tutty, L. M., Ogden, C., Giurgiu, B., & Weaver-Dunlop, G. (2013). I Built My House of Hope: Abused Women and Pathways Into Homelessness. Violence Against Women, 19(12), 1498–1517. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801213517514

Vázquez, J. J., Berríos, A. E., Bonilla, E., & Suarez, A. C. (2019). Homeless people in León (Nicaragua): Conceptualizing and measuring homelessness in a developing country. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 89(2), 296–303. https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000336

Wagner, C., Kawulich, B., & Garner, M. (2012). Doing social research: A global context. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

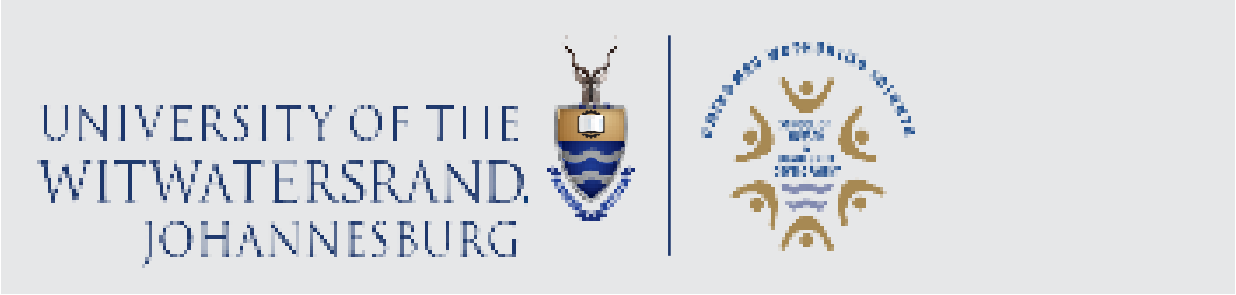
Ward, C. L., & Seager, J. R. (2010). South African street children: A survey and recommendations for services. Development Southern Africa, 27(1), 85–100.

Weinrich, S., Hardin, S., Glaser, D., Barger, M., Bormann, J., Lizarraga, C., Terry, M., Criscenzo, J., & Allard, C. B. (2016). Assessing sexual trauma histories in homeless women. Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 17(2), 237–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2015.1089968

Yin, R. K. (2014). Case Study Research: Design and Methods. SAGE.

Yin, R. K. (2015). Qualitative Research from Start to Finish, Second Edition. Guilford Publications.

Appendix A Participant Information Sheet



Title of Study: A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Good day

My name is Thando Msimango and I am currently a master's student registered for the Master of Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the Masters, I am conducting research on the experiences of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is hoped that the information gathered could motivate and lead to programmes for homeless men and women specifically. It is also hoped that the recommendations that I make based on the research findings will provide meaningful information to the Department of Social Development (DSD) and other non-profit organizations who focus in assisting homeless people in Braamfontein.

The outcome of this study would also contribute to the knowledge base of the Social Work profession regarding experiences of homeless women, together with specific interventions and services that could be rendered to people like you.

As one of the women living and working in the streets of Braamfontein in Johannesburg, you are ideally positioned to contribute to my research. I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. If you accept my invitation, your participation would be entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. There are no consequences or personal benefits of participating in this study. If you agree to take part, I will arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The interview will last approximately one hour. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering. If you decide to participate, I will ask your permission to audio-record the interview. No-one other me and my supervisor will have access to the recordings.

The recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. A copy of your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.

Some of the questions asked during the interviews might make you feel sad or upset. When this happens, I will stop the interview immediately, take a break and resume when you feel comfortable, or reschedule the interview for another day if you want to remain in the study Should you need some confidential and free counselling services or support you can contact Johannesburg Lifeline Counselling services in Johannesburg and their contact number is (011 728 1347).

With regards to assistance with temporary shelter, food, and clothing you can contact Ikhaya Lethemba Shelter services in Johannesburg Central. Their contact number is (011 240 3600). If you do not have a telephone I will provide you with address of the shelter or counsellor.

Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential, and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used for academic purposes (including publication in books and journals and conference proceedings). A summary of findings will be made to be available to you on request.

Please contact me on 065 314 4297 or my supervisor on 011 727 4475 if you have any questions regarding my study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability.

If you have any concerns and complaints about the study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical). Prof. Jennifer Watermeyer is the chairperson, and she can be contacted via telephone (011 717 1408), or email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours sincerely,

……

Appendix B: Consent Form for Audio-recording of Interviews

Title of Study: A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

I, …….. agree to participate in this research project. The purpose of the research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Please circle the relevant options below:

I understand that the recordings will be stored in a password protected computer with restricted access to only the researcher and supervisor.

YES	NO

I understand and agree that recordings will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed.

YES	NO

When the data analysis and write up for the research study is complete, the audio- recording of the interview and transcriptions will be kept for two years following any publication or for six years if no publication emanates from the study.

YES	NO

Direct quotes of my contributions to the interviews without any identifying information may be cited in any publication and /or conference proceedings once the study is complete.

YES	NO

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Guide

Title of Study: A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Interview questions:

Please may I have the following information from you before we go into more detail:

- How old are you?
- What nationality are you?
- Are you married/divorced/single?
- Do you have children?

Discussion questions:

1. When did you arrive here in Braamfontein?
2. Why did you come to Braamfontein?
3. How long have you been living here on the streets in Braamfontein?
4. What led you to living on the streets here in Braamfontein?

5.How have you experienced living on the streets of Braamfontein? Probing, please tell me more about this.

5. What are some of the challenges you experience living on the streets of Braamfontein on a daily basis?
6. How do you cope with these challenges?
7. Are you able to access resources such as the police stations, clinic, and non-governmental organizations including shelters? Please explain.
8. What kind of assistance do you think social service professionals can help you with?
9. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed by me.

Appendix D: Ethical clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW 22/06/01**
PROJECT TITLE	A case study of homeless women living on the streets of Braamfontein, Johannesburg.
INVESTIGATOR	**Thando Msimango**
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SOCIAL WORK
DATE CONSIDERED	19 August 2022
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	LOW RISK
EXPIRY DATE	31 August 2025

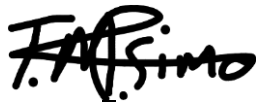
ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 22 August 2022 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(DR S Bala)

cc: Supervisor:

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

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

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



Signature **Date** 23/08/22

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES