



Homelessness from the perspective of volunteer care-workers

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Abstract

The term ‘home’ may be conceived as a space in which an individual or a group of individuals lives, often in a structure, with access to social amenities. It is also denoted by a group relation such as the family or history. Homelessness is a social phenomenon that poses challenges at both institutional and individual levels. As such, homeless people may have to contend with socio-economic problems like unemployment and the housing crisis; additionally, they grapple with individual problems like substance addiction and mental health issues. Many interventions have been developed to tackle the issue of homelessness, but none of them seems as cost-effective and widespread as volunteering, which is the act of helping another or others without expecting any monetary gain or incentive. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the development of altruistic perceptions and how they develop into pro-social behaviour, particularly the manner in which perceptions could influence behaviour that is helpful to the homeless population in the Johannesburg city centre.

The study found that the participants’ willingness to volunteer was not deterred by the negative thoughts they had about the homeless people they helped. However, they reported that their willingness to help tended to wane when the help was of a charitable nature and this is when their perceptions determined whether or not they were willing to give donations to the homeless on the streets. The study found that participants freely assisted to the homeless people they deemed to be in the vulnerable group, for example, families, women, children and the elderly because of societal expectations. On the other hand, the participants indicated that they were less willing to provide charity to men whom they labelled criminal or substance addicts. In this case, they were willing to help in other ways such as fostering study groups, soup kitchens and the provision of health care. Though the participants’ negative perceptions often made them hesitant to help, they were not swayed in their willingness to help through voluntary actions. The study found that altruistic beliefs result in altruistic attitudes, which are more concerned

about the helpful action than the person being helped. Therefore, altruistic intentions may be nurtured, as they inspire individuals to help others, including the homeless people living in the Johannesburg central business district (CBD). Consequently, altruistic values, such as benevolence, are more important than the perceptions and attitudes people hold about the homeless people living in and around the city centre as these thoughts may change when volunteers acquire altruistic personality traits.

Key words: careworkers; grounded theory; home; homelessness; volunteerism

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work submitted for the Master's Community-Based Counselling Psychology programme at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This research report has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.



(Signature of candidate)

30 day of April 2021 at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

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I would like to express my greatest gratitude to my friends and family for inspiring and motivating me throughout this research journey. I am overwhelmingly thankful for their constant, unwavering support and for shouldering the financial burden for my degree and the emotional support I needed to complete this thesis.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this research report to my son Luvuyo Aphiwe Hempe.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the study

Homelessness is a pervasive social problem bedevilling both the global and the South African communities (Mashau, 2017). In South Africa, homelessness is being addressed through the use of community-based volunteers and informal care workers within outreach initiatives, religious organisations and community-based intervention programmes (Sanchez, 2010). However, more research is needed to explore the effectiveness of using volunteering to solve social inadequacies such as homelessness. This study provides insights into the complexities of the problem of homelessness in the South African context and further interrogates the dynamics of volunteerism as a panacea to social ills. Additionally, the study examines how this intervention affects efforts to ameliorate the plight of homeless populations. Therefore, the study seeks to understand the extent of the problem of homelessness and some of the reasons contributing to this social phenomenon in South Africa. It further explores the reasons why people may decide to become volunteers working with people grappling with homelessness. In doing so, it clarifies the factors contributing to volunteerism as an act of altruism directed at the greater good of others and the symbiotic functioning of a community. Comprehending how internal and environmental factors influence individuals' choices brings a greater understanding of volunteering in the context of helping the homeless. Volunteering may have a ripple effect on the pro-social system at the micro, meso and macro levels, which enables the agents working with the phenomenon of homelessness to analytically interact with their surroundings by reflecting on how their preconceived perceptions about people who live on the street impact the level and kind of help offered (Dovidio et al., 2005). Lastly, the paper emphasises the importance of exploring the role of interpersonal and intra-personal motivations that influence a volunteers' decision to help others, particularly the homeless.

Homelessness ranges from living in shack dwellings to living on the streets. Therefore, there is a need to define what shapes the help people offer in addressing the problem of homelessness. Though homeless people are varied, they appear homogenous and seemingly experiencing similar living conditions owing to the similar living environments they share. The environment of homeless people, however, does not negate the fact that their support needs may be myriad. For instance, a street dweller is more likely to suffer the effects of unemployment and structural exclusion than an individual living in an informal settlement with access to government welfare and services (Ward & Seager, 2010). Equally, the informal settlement is an environment that presents the homeless individual potential to access housing in the future (Block et al., 2011; Speak, 2007).

The values and norms of a society appear to influence the general public's perceptions of the state of homelessness. For example, the attitude in the West is that homelessness results from a lack of agency (Speak & Tipple, 2006). This suggests that there is a degree of choice associated with destitution. This argument discounts the external reasons for the phenomenon, which may include, a housing deficit, a lack of affordable accommodation, an economic decline or recession, a lack of household income, high rates of unemployment and strained social networks (Cross et al., 2010; Du Toit, 2010). As such, misconceptions about the condition of the homeless may lead to welfare policies that inadequately address the problem (Speak, 2007).

Consequently, developing countries like South Africa should envisage a more accurate picture of the problem in their regions. The following three-level approach presupposes that homeless people are resisters of societal conditions that adapt to the homeless environment as a way of surviving structural deficiencies; moreover, homeless people find themselves homeless often due to circumstantial crises (Speak, 2007).

Level one is concerned with homelessness as a supplementary strategy to poverty, mainly as a response by single people in dealing with economic constraints and the conditions of destitution

(Speak, 2007). That often involves the process of economic migration from impoverished areas with limited resources to more prosperous urban areas (Johnston et al., 2020). Individuals leave their homes and opt to live on the streets to work and save money to send back home.

Level two homelessness is a survival strategy often applied when the homeless individual in level one is unable to secure an income and they become destitute on the streets as they have no way of reducing the levels of poverty in their place of origin and they may not have the means to support themselves on the streets (Burke et al., 2013; Speak, 2007). People belonging to this group either become isolated or form street networks as they lose hope of returning home and settle for their current conditions as a way of life; relying instead on support from the government and non-governmental organisations (Speak, 2007).

Level three is the perception of street homelessness as crisis management (Speak, 2007). Most, if not all forms of homelessness, are a response to some form of calamity and being homeless is perceived as an expression of an individual's agency and autonomy (Mashau, 2017). Precisely, specific circumstances may lead to homelessness, such circumstances include bad choices, socio-economic status and social exclusion (Cirolia, 2014; Cross et al., 2010; Speak, 2007).

It is at level three that unforeseen, unavoidable or unfortunate events may result in homelessness. Which may include the following examples, a rift in the family system due to a death or a loss; a dysfunctional system underpinned by abuse and neglect; natural or man-made disasters leading to loss of accommodation; and the loss of a household's income, contributing to eviction (Kriel, 2017; Mashau, 2017). Additionally, mental health issues, substance abuse and addiction could aggravate a household's circumstances, leading to conditions of homelessness (Austin et al., 2009; Dawson-Rose et al., 2020; Schneider, 2014). At this level, individuals may resultantly experience chronic homelessness as they may not have the capacity or the resources to make informed decisions

to positively transform their living conditions (Hodge Jr et al., 2017; Hopkins et al., 2020; Speak, 2007, p. 2010).

Child homelessness, a form of crisis homelessness as homeless children bear the brunt of extreme poverty, neglect and/or physical abuse (Ward & Seager, 2010). To some degree, every level involves some sort of agency, therefore, homelessness is a reaction to some unliveable or unbearable circumstance (Speak, 2007). In other instances, it is a form of survival, when vulnerable people become homeless as they attempt to protect themselves from harm, for instance, a victim of an abusive relationship fall under this category (Speak, 2007; Ward & Seager, 2010).

In 2004, the Johannesburg Alliance estimated that the number of homeless children in the Gauteng Province ranged from 3000 – 3500 people; statistics that were corroborated by a study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2005 – 2008 (Cross & Seager, 2010). The HSRC found that the number of street homeless adults in Gauteng Province ranged from 6 000 – 12 000 and there were approximately between 100 000 and 200 000 homeless people in South Africa (Cross & Seager, 2010; Cross et al., 2010). The Global Homelessness Statistics (2018) reported that there were 200 000 homeless people in South Africa. Currently, however, it may be difficult to corroborate these statistics due to the displacement and elevated mortality rates caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Benavides & Nukpezah, 2020). However, the use of temporary mass shelters may help identify and document homeless populations in metropolitan cities (Marcus et al., 2020).

Isolation and the lack of basic resources have resulted in street homeless people being South Africa's most distressed population (Hopkins et al., 2020), as they may be living rough outside in spaces such as bridges and parks owing to some unforeseen and/or unfortunate reasons (Hopkins et al., 2020). Nevertheless, much effort seems to have been invested in alleviating the housing crisis for individuals who are living in informal settlements, such as the Reconstruction and Development

Programme (RDP), where houses were built throughout the country (Block et al., 2011; Piat et al., 2015). Although there seems to be a dearth of policies meant to improve the living conditions of the individuals living rough on the street and as such, homelessness in an informal settlement may replicate a conventional home in sharp contrast with living rough on the street (Cross & Seager, 2010; Du Toit, 2010). Be that as it may, South Africa's social welfare, which is governed by the Department of Social Development, and administered by the South African Social Security Agency, helps the underprivileged to get access to the much-needed social grants (Department of Social Development, 2021; South African Social Security Agency, 2018, & The Presidency, 2004, pp. 1-30). However, the effectiveness of this intervention on curbing homelessness has not been assessed; therefore, barriers impeding access to these resources may need to be identified (Cross & Seager, 2010).

Social grants address access to basic needs for the underprivileged population, although the social intervention may not effectively eliminate homelessness, which is often a result of a multitude of reasons ranging from poverty to mental illness and addiction (Piat et al., 2015). In this case, the Human Settlements Department may be equipped to build homes and the Department of Health could handle the treatment of mentally ill and substance addicted homeless individuals (Department of Human Settlements, 2021). Both departments could collaborate to solve a problem that has individual and structural influences, thus creating better outcomes for homeless people.

Civil society organisations have been at the forefront in terms of tackling the crisis of homelessness in the country; this may call for a more community-based approach to the problem by interacting directly with the individuals on the streets (Sanchez, 2010). These organisations include non-government organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs) and faith-based organisations (FBOs). The intervention measures include setting up shelters, orphanages such as child welfare centres, feeding schemes, donations of apparel and the provision of non-perishable

foods (Mashau, 2017; Rodriguez & Eidelman, 2017). These preventative measures, which mainly target the youth, focus on setting up bible groups and after-school learning programmes.

The community's response to the problem is socially and personally driven to support the different and unique needs of the homeless population, whereas the government is concerned with providing basic services and housing to those living in difficult conditions, which seemingly excludes those living on the streets of the Johannesburg metropolis (Cross & Seager, 2010; Roets et al., 2016). South Africa's safety net, which includes housing and financial grants, gives more support to the population who live in informal homes than the more developed countries like the United States of America; however, more developed countries in Europe seem to have adopted a more integrated approach to tackling the problem of homelessness (Cross & Seager, 2010; Department of Social Development, 2021; Mashau, 2017).

In Africa, South Africa typifies countries with a supportive network for the homeless population and it considers the effects of the past and provides those who were previously disadvantaged and oppressed with much-needed access to land for housing and income to support their children and families (Block et al., 2011). However, this approach may not satisfy the needs of the homeless street dwellers as this group may have experienced familial disintegration, finding it difficult to access state resources and they may not be documented by the State thus relying heavily on civil society for support. In contrast, shack dwellers have close family units, government-supported access to services, free basic education and the provision of household needs such as food parcels and income provided through grants (Cross & Seager, 2010; Ward & Seager, 2010).

Over the years, the alarming rates of homelessness in Johannesburg CBD have been instigated by loss of economic stability and security, resulting from unemployment and eviction; exhaustion of resources and break down of an individual's community network, leading to isolation; inability to secure an income because of a lack of skills and training; migration of individuals from

poverty-stricken locations to the inner city and migration of refugees and asylum seekers (Clary et al., 2016; Cross & Seager, 2010).

Homelessness is a far-reaching condition that ranges from shack dwelling to rough living on the street (Mashau, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to define homelessness, as the definition held by helpers shapes the kind of help received by homeless people in the CBD. Even though homeless people may have similar living conditions and experiences on the streets, their support needs may be different. Homelessness can occur in informal settlements such as shacks and this is mainly caused by unemployment and a lack of access to housing; or the crisis often happens on the sidewalks of the city, due to more individualist reasons such as substance addiction and mental ill-health (Brubaker et al., 2013; Cross et al., 2010; Du Toit, 2010). Furthermore, homeless people may perceive their homelessness differently based on prior experience with destitution and precarity. In developed countries, homelessness seems to be attributed to a homeless person's lack of agency (Du Toit, 2010; Speak & Tipple, 2006). This excludes external factors instigating homelessness, including housing deficit, a lack of affordable housing, and economic decline (Cirolia, 2014). Therefore, it seems welfare policies may not adequately address the problem as they may not factor in the structural difficulties that lead to and prolong homelessness.

Volunteerism, a carefully planned action, occurs consistently for a long period; the behaviour is neither coerced nor obligated; during the volunteer activity, the individual has the freedom of choice regarding participation or non-participation in a related activity; occurs under the auspices of an association with a group of people; and aims to help disadvantaged individuals by assisting them with helpful skills (Hustinx et al., 2010; Lundahl & Wicks, 2010; Penner, 2004; Shagurova et al., 2016; Wilson & Musick, 1997). Volunteerism encompasses the services offered free of charge by individuals or a group of people; that may or may not be part of a non-profit organisation in the aid of others who do not have access to particular resources, without external incentives or financial

gain; volunteers work towards a particular cause (Buffel et al., 2015; Fegan & Cook, 2014; Wilson, 2000).

Volunteers frequently assist individuals who are designated homeless because of the social conditions under which they live. Their living environment deprives them of access to services as well as resources and essentials such as food and shelter. To gain a deeper understanding of how the volunteer community behaves towards the social crisis ushered in by homelessness, an exploration of their perceptions regarding homelessness could help illuminate what motivates volunteers to act pro-socially towards homeless people who are often marginalised and overlooked. Thus, this study reiterates the importance of theorizing volunteer work as an intervention meant to alleviate homelessness.

There is a complex interrelationship between the volunteers' perceptions of homelessness and the responses to this social problem (Piat et al., 2015). A homeless person, who may have ended up on the street, may need welfare for several reasons including housing, food and basic services (Ward & Seager, 2010). Consequently, the language used to categorize homeless people, groups people into clusters where they may not necessarily fit in, which may determine the assistance volunteer care workers are willing to offer the homeless. Conceptualising these perceptions may highlight the philosophies guiding volunteer care workers as they engage in helpful behaviour. Additionally, these categorisations influence the kind of help received by the homeless population in Johannesburg in particular (Clary et al., 2016; Sanchez, 2010).

1.2 Aims of the study

This study explores the perceptions of homelessness held by volunteer care workers working with homeless people in Johannesburg. It seeks to understand how these perceptions inform the way volunteers interact with the homeless. It further explores the motivation behind individual volunteer care workers' desire to work with the homeless population, and how their perceptions of

homelessness influence their work; this may be useful in developing more effective interventions that address the widespread problem of homelessness in Johannesburg.

This study focuses on the perceptions of volunteer care workers who work with the homeless population living in Johannesburg city centre. It further focuses on how people perceive the need to assist others, especially in the context of a city that is famous for its fast-paced urban culture. The study also focused on the several factors that contribute to volunteers' decision to help homeless people in the city.

1.3 Rationale

Currently, approximately 150 million people are living on the streets globally and as of 2015, there were 200 000 homeless people in South Africa (Cross et al., 2010; Global Homelessness Statistics, 2018). Of these people, 50 000 reside in Gauteng Province and it is estimated that 15 000 of them live on the streets of Johannesburg (Mitchley, 2020). The majority of South Africans live below the poverty line, which may place a burden on the government as it has to deal with increasing numbers of homeless individuals. At face value, society may seem overwhelmed by the unsustainably rising numbers of homeless people due to the scarcity of resources and space to accommodate the increasing population. In 2017, Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) found that the poverty levels in South Africa increased from 53.2 % in 2011 to 55.5% in 2015 (Poverty on the rise in South Africa., 2018). Ostensibly, the majority of the citizens had to deal with the reality of poverty, at that time (Lehohla, 2017). Consequently, more people are now at a greater risk of becoming homeless than they were before. These statistics give some insight into the huge magnitude of the problem of homelessness in South Africa and the world at large.

Volunteer care workers are stakeholders in this crisis, as they work for a variety of agencies that offer support to homeless individuals. Volunteers may serve soup at soup kitchens, provide healthcare services and other essential services that homeless people may not have access to, because

of the exclusion from social structures they experience due to displacement; volunteers could also work towards improving homeless people's living conditions by providing shelter or advocating for the reformation of housing policies (Giesler, 2019; Rodriguez & Eidelman, 2017). They form part of the network the homeless people can rely on to cope with their situation.

In particular, non-profit and non-governmental organisations may be the key to the solution by redressing the systems that lead to this phenomenon (Roets et al., 2016). Therefore, volunteers may ensure that society is just by helping all its members gain access to basic rights like housing and challenging the inequalities in South Africa. Similarly, despite the decline in government aid and philanthropic assistance, volunteers still determine the survival of shelters as they make meaningful and inexpensive contributions to shelter organisations (Lundahl & Wicks, 2010).

However, it seems shelter administrators think volunteers may fail to meet the needs of the homeless as they provide for their most basic needs of shelter, food and donations. Whereas, homeless people identified the following needs: basic supplies such as food and toiletries and important services such as health care; financial support; educational and vocational needs; and support for independent living. Volunteers provide short-term, one-day projects, food and clothing donations (Lundahl & Wicks, 2010). Therefore, one-day voluntary activities are necessary but may not be as valuable to the homeless as the needs that encourage agency, autonomy and independence; such needs include physical health, mental well-being, and skills development and training (Dennis et al.,

2012; Lundahl & Wicks, 2010). This suggests the need for more skilled professional volunteers (Fegan & Cook, 2014).

For this reason, the researcher was interested in exploring the concept of volunteerism, focusing particularly on the volunteers who work in and around the Johannesburg inner city where there seems to be an ever-increasing scourge of urban poverty, homelessness, economic migration

and pockets of people periodically emerging on the streets (Johnston et al., 2020). Furthermore, there is seemingly a huge dearth in the literature on volunteers' experiences and perceptions of homelessness which motivated the current study.

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is Husserl's Sensation and Perception Theory that views perception as the comprehension of the world as symbols of things and experiences that are categorised into homogenous groups (Kamppinen & Sajama, 1987). Additionally, these symbolic groupings interact with the environment, past experiences and the value system, resulting in the formation of meaning. The conceptual definitions provide a context of cognitive perception, which relates to how humans come to understand the subjective process of meaning formation.

The study explores volunteers' perceptions of home and homelessness as individual, social and institutional constructs. It further elaborates that homelessness is a social crisis that describes a scarcity of resources reflective of society's ailments. There seem to be varied pathways to homelessness, including mental illness, substance addiction, and criminal activities; therefore, the cycle of homelessness could be aggravated by mental illness, substance use and criminality and inversely, homelessness may result in people suffering from these conditions (Johnson & Chamberlain, 2011; Piat et al., 2015). As such, interventions ought to address these channels of homelessness and its varying levels that range from complete destitution to shack dwelling.

Furthermore, this paper defines volunteerism and explores how altruism leads to pro-social behaviour. The study discusses the different kinds of altruism, selfishness and altruism, the Voluntary Process Model, the development of moral judgment and the levels of pro-social behaviour (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016).

This study explores how volunteer care workers perceive homelessness as a construct. It aims to clarify the role of perceptions in informing the volunteer's desire to act helpfully towards homeless

people residing in Johannesburg CBD. Thus, this study highlights the different factors that shape pro-social behaviour that seeks to address homelessness. Moreover, the study seeks to uncover the beliefs the volunteers held, thus motivating their pro-social behaviour and any other meanings they attach to the homeless crisis.

1.4 Chapter organisation

Chapter 1: This is an overview of all the chapters after the introductory chapter, providing an overview of the information in the research report.

Chapter 2: Encapsulates the literature review and discusses the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The theoretical framework expands on the concept and process of perception and how it influences an individual's behaviour. The chapter reviews the literature on the definition of 'home' and the social problem of homelessness, illustrating the pathways to homelessness, the levels and kinds of homelessness and the current interventions developed to address the problem. Then, the chapter explores altruism, pro-social behaviour and volunteering, particularly in the context of tackling homelessness.

Chapter 3: The chapter is a presentation of the methodology, detailing the methods utilised in the research's data collection and data analysis processes. The study adopted the qualitative research design whose ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions are based on the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivism asserts that knowledge is the product of human intellect; therefore, people create their realities but common ideas may lead to a shared reality, which the researcher is bent on documenting. The Grounded Theory methodology gives a step-by-step guide to how the interviewer and interviewees collaboratively conducted the study. The chapter explains how data retrieved from the participants were used to create a theory of their experiences and views of the homeless in Johannesburg and to determine whether this affected their voluntary action if at all.

Chapter 4: This is a presentation of the findings, illustrating the study's results in a thematic map and a table of the sub-themes which were identified by categorising the codes that emerged from

the data set. Furthermore, the results section provides a summary of the themes according to the research questions and methodology, to draw meaning out of the themes that emerged during data collection and analysis processes.

Chapter 5: This chapter provides an analysis of the themes and a discussion of the findings and their meaning concerning the reviewed literature which was guided by Husserl's Sensation and Perception Theory. Furthermore, the researcher forms a theory from the themes represented in the findings of the study, thus proposing a theory outlining the reason for the volunteers' pro-social behaviours towards the homeless people they work with.

Chapter 6: This chapter presents the conclusion and proffers recommendations based on the findings of the study. It summarises the research paper, also clarifying any points of contention by outlining the boundaries of the study. It also looks at the strengths underpinning the viability of data. The researcher reflects on the factors that unintentionally influenced the results and how these factors were considered during data analysis. The chapter then gives recommendations for further studies on what the researcher believed could be beneficial to the field of Community Psychology.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter gave an overview of the state of homelessness globally and specifically in Johannesburg, South Africa. It further examined volunteerism as a social resource developed to addresses social issues and crises, particularly homelessness. Furthermore, the chapter introduced the theoretical framework underpinning the study and gave an overview of the forthcoming chapters constituting the research report. The next section is a review of the literature on the concepts of perception, home, homelessness, current interventions, altruism, pro-social behaviour and the development of volunteer behaviour.

Chapter 2

Theoretical framework and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature and theory relevant to this study, disseminating perception as a construct by exploring the processes of perception formation. It discusses Husserl's Sensation and Perception Theory that guides the current study. Furthermore, this chapter explores the concepts of a home and the condition termed homelessness, thoroughly surveying what several authors depicted of these states of living. Moreover, the chapter reviews particular pathways to homelessness and explores interventions to the problem. Lastly, chapter reviews literature on altruism, pro-social behaviour and volunteerism as an intervention developed to eliminate homelessness.

2.2 Theoretical framework

This study underlines the importance of exploring the perceptions of volunteers regarding homelessness to understand how this relates to the work they do. The study's conceptualisation of the perceptions of these volunteers is guided by Husserl's Sensation and Perception Theory, which contends that perceptions are informed by content, context and past experiences (Kamppinen & Sajama, 1987). Perception differs from judgement, as the former is more subject to previous experiences than the latter. Perceptions are formed from the meanings individuals consciously and subconsciously attach to particular objects or concepts (Carman, 1999). On the other hand, judgements are the presumption formed by an individual from environmental cues (Lindell, 2014). However, both perceptions and judgements may influence an individual's behaviour and how they interact with the world around them (Carman, 1999; Madary, 2010). However, perceptions formation is a subjective process, where the perceiver construes the mental representation of the object, which may not necessarily be representative of the true state of the perceived object (Bower, 2017). Husserl's Sensation and Perception Theory identifies three important elements to perception, namely *hyle*, *noesis*

and *noema* (Kamppinen & Sajama, 1987). *Hyle* represents things that exist without the inferred perception as all things do exist without meaning, it is when the object is sensed or experienced without any interpretation (Kamppinen & Sajama, 1987). *Noesis* refers to definitions formed from mental processes; in other words, this is where objects are categorised through mental schemas. *Noema* refers to the meanings that are formed, including the consequential descriptions of the objects and perceptions, which are the meanings formed through these descriptions (Preston, 1994). Therefore, perceptions may be described as subjective experiences of existence. Additionally, meaning may seem universal but in essence, the presentations of meaning attached to objects may differ and become more personal and layered depending on the complexity of the sensed object (Mohanty, 1974; Preston, 1994).

The aforementioned constructs underpin Husserl's Theory of Intentionality of Perception, which postulates how experiences are intentional if they are associated with an object, be it concrete or abstract; conversely, perception may be non-intentional if it is formed based on sensation or imagination (Tae-Chang, 2009). Additionally, these intentional and non-intentional experiences are constantly creating each other, resulting in actions (Tae-Chang, 2009).

The Theory of Intentionality considers three kinds of consciousness, which Tae-Chang (2009 p. 52) described as:

“Husserl commences on his analysis of intentionality by classifying three kinds of consciousness: 1) Consciousness as the entire psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness; 2) Consciousness as the inner awareness of one's own psychic experience; 3) Consciousness as a comprehensive designation for 'mental acts', or 'intentional experiences', of all sorts. The first kind of consciousness embraces all kinds of psychic experience and the third designates conscious as 'intentional experience'. Therefore, the third one is included in the first as a class of psychic experience.”

Therefore, a person who may have a negative experience of street dwellers may see a homeless person externally as unclean and lazy because of the negative schema they may have formed about similar people using the third kind of consciousness. Thus, the individual may perceive homelessness more as a choice than a social condition and may avoid people because of this negative connotation.

However, a person who has different experiences with poverty and despondency may see a different picture and have empathy for homeless individuals living on the streets. This kind of consciousness may create a level of acceptance of all states of being, for this kind of individual.

Nonetheless, the Theory of Perception is watered down by its decisive look into a subjective and intentional process of perception, overlooking the relationship between the perceiver and the percept. This may create a barrier to the flow of consciousness. Furthermore, the theory's emphasis on how objects are perceived through content discounts the experiences of perception without content.

2.3 Conceptual definitions

Dancy (1988) asserts that cognitive perception, which is the process of acquiring true or false beliefs concerning a situation, helps individuals form meaning about the objects in their environment. The individuals use that interpretation to make decisions about the environment by identifying things that are similar or different. Furthermore, cognitive perception is how an individual consciously uses mental processes to make representations of the world around them and how they use these representations to make judgements that influence behaviour (Michaels, 2000). Therefore, perception is the process of creating beliefs about the world and the knowledge development about events.

Additionally, it is the processing of information and the clustering of things the conscious mind is exposed to daily and how these schemas contribute to the overall interaction with the external world. It is the information acquired through the five human senses, namely sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste; in other words, it is how individuals experience the reality around them (Dancy, 1988). However, perceptions can also be formed without using the sensory organs. Hallucinations are a typical example. It appears that perceptions are not always a result of the sensations individuals experience but involve the unconscious as well (Dancy, 1988).

Perception does not only happen through exposure to objects or events in the environment but through interaction with the perceived objects or events (Noe, 2004). This suggests that behaviour

contributes to people's perceptions and the skills people possess inform what they think. There seems to be a connection between perceptual and motor systems, suggesting that the process of perception formation is not passive, where the created perception occurs with the influence of behaviour (Amazeen & Amazeen, 2017). Therefore, it may be surmised that an individual's skill set informs how they perceive and interact with others in their world. The same situation may form different perceptions, which is interestingly applicable to the exploration of how volunteers perceive homeless people (Carel et al., 2002; Mark, 2007). Thus, the subjective nature of perceptions increases the risk of misconceptions about objects; perceptions may not necessarily be realistic or as real as the individual would perceive the object to be (Brown & Rose, 2015; Nilsson & Sand, 2017).

Perception involves the processes of memory and cognition; thus, it is plausible to suppose that memory itself is deeply intertwined with the perceptive process and a stimulus may not possibly be observed and understood objectively because individuals' perceptions could be influenced by preconceived notions formed long before exposure to stimuli (Horschig et al., 2009). For example, a red jacket may be perceived more as an item of clothing than part of the colour spectrum due to the expectation attached to its function, which is to be worn and not to be appreciated for its hue. Additionally, the same may be said about people; for example, an individual who speaks fluid Mandarin may not necessarily be of Asian descent. This is how the world may influence perception, implying that the perceptive process involves discerning a group of factors about an object being perceived before observing it, such as the expectation of an observer interacting with a person who is living on the street could equally be preconceived, and the observer may mislabel the homeless individual as vulnerable where they may have more autonomy than is perceived by the observer (Horschig et al., 2009). The observer may notice the multiplicity of homelessness if they have not been privy to thought processing about the construct before an encounter (Horschig et al., 2009).

The Gestalt Theory proposes that the influence of the parts of a whole object and how they exist as parts of the whole description are equally describable as unique parts (Graham, 2008). The

theory further explains that the observer perceives objects through imposing order onto them, thus forming meaning about them (Blosser, 1973). This process follows a pattern where the perceiver observes reality and forms meanings in a particular way (Blosser, 1973). Therefore, perception is a presentation of the sum of the parts that are observable as a whole. The theory suggests humans' pattern-seeking behaviour and how they see the sum when they are observing an object and not necessarily the parts that constitute an object (Graham, 2008). For example, a volunteer may see a group of destitute people living on the streets of Braamfontein and may perceive them as a group of homeless people who may be substance addicts habitually involved in some criminal activities. Nevertheless, some of those people may not fit in this pattern and may in reality have a unique back-story and reason for their current state of living.

The five laws underpinning Gestalt psychology are: firstly, the law of similarity, which states that individuals tend to categorise objects that share commonalities. Perceptual objects are observed through discrimination; therefore, the observer can discriminate between an individual and their background and form the perception of an object as a whole (Blosser, 1973; Green, 2018). For example, if a homeless individual lives in a park, the observer may perceive them as destitute but the park may be seen as an environment for outdoor activities.

However, the homeless' presence in the park may influence if they receive the label homeless or not. Similarly, a homeless individual who is standing in some form of shelter may not be considered homeless, but the sum of the characteristics that an observer deems as making a person destitute are considered, for instance, their clothing, cleanliness and purpose for being in the shelter. Secondly, the law of proximity states that an individual perceives an object when all of its parts are adjacent to each other (Blosser, 1973; Jackson, 2008).

Thirdly, the law of closure regards an observer as finding it easier to perceive an object when all of the parts are enclosed (Blosser, 1973; Jackson, 2008). Fourthly, the law of good continuation posits that the perceptual object's parts are categorised by their linear position (Blosser, 1973; Green,

2018; Jackson, 2008). An example of closure and continuation could be likened to a volunteer that may have different perceptions of a homeless person in a shelter compared to a homeless person living at a friend's apartment; thus, the label may not be similar when the individual being perceived is not outwardly in need.

Lastly, the law of membership character indicates that a part of the whole is dependent on the whole; thus, the context of the whole makes the characteristics of its parts (Blosser, 1973). Therefore, context and past experiences influence perceptions and they are not solely dependent on the object but the circumstances that constitute the object and how the perceiver interprets the sum of those parts. An understanding of these components informs an individual's understanding of how volunteers might form a perception of homeless individuals they help and how this image may influence their helpful behaviour.

Perceptions are self-reinforcing and this may lead to exclusive language, attitudes and behaviours (Amazeen & Amazeen, 2017). Ill-informed perceptions lead to limited interventions which are unfit to meet the needs of the homeless. These incorrect labels lead to stereotypes and increase stigma towards the homeless (Nilsson & Sand, 2017).

Speak and Tipple (2006) identified four categories of negative perceptions. Firstly, there is competitiveness. For example, this occurs when a business community uses apathetic language and holds a negative attitude towards people who live on the pavements outside their premises. Secondly, people judge homeless people as valueless, creating a barrier for the homeless and the resources they require. Government and other agencies use this valuing language and interpret helping the homeless as a futile exercise because of the ineffectiveness of government interventions. Thirdly, there is appearance, which occurs when people use uncaring and negative language to scrutinise the appearance of homeless people.

Furthermore, these definitions are used to justify the ill-treatment of the homeless population. The use of words such as dirty, filthy, repulsive, stinky and so on is degrading and dehumanising to

the people being labelled as such. The last category is when people use pity, charity and compassion to understand the homeless condition; these manifest when entities such as religious and humanitarian institutions use sympathetic language such as unfortunate, weary and frail. This language is inclusive and may lead to helpful behaviour but may lead to the perception that homeless people are victims that have no control over their living conditions.

2.4 Definition of a home

According to Olufemi (2002), a home, commonly known as a place of shelter, is a multifaceted concept comprising of numerous elements. The traditional conception of a home is an adequate space that is secure, liveable, accessible, structurally durable and stable. It has basic infrastructure and access to clean safe water, proper lighting, heating and ventilation; it is an environment suitable for human habitation, close to essential facilities such as healthcare facilities. furthermore, it should be affordable for the dweller.

Douglas (1991) mentioned that a home is a complex concept and the structures that constitute a home are of many different shapes and forms. It may be a modern house or a homestead where the land is as integral to the functioning of a home as the individuals on it. Some structures are more mobile, like a tent or a camper; however, what is common among these different forms of homes is the presence of a group of people who, through some form of fidelity, are committed to living together and depend on each other within a family system. It is often an intergenerational commitment bound by time and does not necessarily need to be fixed in one location, though space is as important as the people who constitute this minor community.

Therefore, the home is a concept dictated by space, time, people, interrelations and allegiance. Together, these features contribute to the concept of a home though it denotes other entities. For example, an individual staying in a vacation house may say they are using the space for their leisure

within a designated amount of time, but may not regard the staff at the facility as relatives or have any commitment towards them or the property.

“Home is where the heart is”, is a proverb that indicates that the home is a space in which people feel comfortable and permanently rooted as such a home has emotional and cognitive features (McAndrew, 2015). The home engenders a sense of belonging and attachment encapsulated not only in the property but for the things inside the structure of a house and the people who reside in it (Somerville, 2013). The home is seemingly more than a structure, as it may involve the community at large; therefore, a home cannot exist without the support structures provided by society (Phillips, 2015). For instance the amenities provided by the government, such as sanitation. Consequently, volunteers may form part of this social fabric, as they support the community through projects and programmes such as the provision of food parcels and aftercare services (Phillips, 2015).

2.5 Constructing homelessness

Homelessness, which is generally perceived as living on the street, is a broad phenomenon because there are varying levels of homelessness. Roets et al. (2016, p. 620) describe homelessness as a concept that should:

“... be regarded as being on a continuum, ranging from people who may be at risk of becoming homeless to those who currently have absolutely no shelter of their own and live and sleep on the streets, in parks, in train stations and the like, and who do it mostly for economic reasons.”

This suggests that the phenomenon does not happen by chance but through a process of interrelated misfortunate circumstances, strongly tied to poverty and economic instability. The disparities in income may adversely affect access to housing for low-income groups; as such, the land where homes are built is hard to obtain for poor people. Furthermore, home ownership has become difficult for the vast majority of people and the possibility of family homelessness has also become a disquieting reality (Bassuk & Rosenberg, 1988; Shinn, 2010). Furthermore, poverty is reflected in the

little amount of resources families may have at their disposal, resulting in them failing to run a home (Shinn, 2010). The amenities required to maintain a space make it difficult for low-income families to live satisfactorily, consequently creating an environment that may not encourage a symbiotic family system, which possibly leads to ruptures in the family unit and the home as a physical and symbolic structure (Shinn, 2010).

Thus, the following clusters of homelessness could accurately be more descriptive and representative of the people living under dire conditions: economic homelessness to describe people who may find themselves homeless because of disparity and poverty but who may be educated or skilled; chronic homelessness may be experienced by individuals who may be homeless for an extended period due to mental illness, physical disability, substance addition or the lack of independence; moreover, near homelessness relates to young professionals struggling to secure employment (Moyo et al., 2015; Sanchez, 2010; Zlotnick, et al., 2010). Additionally, homeless people could be classified as: the detached homeless group, temporary overnight sleepers that utilise the services of shelters for the homeless to deal with their unforeseen homelessness which may be caused by evictions or people who cannot meet the cost of commuting from their communities to the inner city; and informal settlement dwellers living within a government's safety net but driven to the outskirts of society due to economic inequalities (Du Toit, 2010; Mashau, 2017).

The Reconstruction and Development Programme was implemented in South Africa in 1994 by the government, with the aim of redressing social exclusion and economic inequality (Block et al., 2011). The programme included the provision of housing to the underprivileged populations that were oppressed during apartheid, thus aimed to create equality and increase access to basic rights for all the citizens in the country (Block et al., 2011; Cross et al., 2010). However, the following pertinent questions arise about the programme: how does the housing dilemma persist in a society where individuals can access free housing? How do rates of homelessness increase when there is a programme addressing the housing crisis? Subsequently, the persistent housing crisis has resulted in

informal dwellings sprouting from the village, city, to the suburb. The lack of affordable, decent housing and high levels of unemployment often contribute to the high levels of homelessness in South Africa (Block et al., 2011). Poverty and social exclusion also contribute to homelessness, and they are not exclusively related; therefore, factors such as social precarity and illiteracy may work together to create homelessness.

Precarity occurs when an individual finds themselves in unfortunate and unliveable conditions because of structural and unpredictable economic and wellness challenges (Frost et al., 2019). This ultimately leads to the state of homelessness because people assume that the homeless choose not to be part of society or be bound by the rules and laws that govern being part of a community (Kriel, 2017; Parsell & Parsell, 2012).

Parsell and Parsell (2012) proposed that people end up living on the streets because of substance addiction. Therefore, substance addiction is a contributing factor as it often means that the homeless individual has some issues regarding functioning holistically as a member of a community. Homeless people living on the streets often suffer from substance use disorders and drug dependence.

Moreover, they may be diagnosed with schizophrenia or other psychiatric disorders such as depression or anxiety. Therefore, psychiatric disorders may be prerequisites for becoming addicted to a licit or an illicit substance (Whitbeck & Armenta, 2015). Substance use disorder may lead to substance abuse psychotic disorder when the individual displays symptoms similar to those of schizophrenia and they can suffer from hallucinations, delusions, mood swings and psychomotor interruptions (Austin et al., 2009). All these conditions could result in the disruption of the home and may contribute to the state of homelessness.

These symptoms make it difficult for the patient to conform to societal norms, as they may not experience the world as others do. The criminality of substance abuse also escalates problems that influence chronic homelessness, as it perpetuates stigma and associates homeless people with deplorable behaviour. This makes it hard for the homeless to get assistance, as they may fear

judgement. Attributing homelessness to personal reasons exonerates the structural conditions that contribute to homelessness. Socio-political factors like unemployment are largely attributed to the government and the state of a country's economy and as such, the homeless may not have control over the external issues they are faced with (Schneider, 2014).

A study by Creech et al., (2015) found that serious mental illness is related to chronic homelessness, or repeatedly becoming homeless (Moyo et al., 2015). Disorders such as bipolar, depression and post-traumatic stress contributed to long-drawn-out destitution on the street. Additionally, acute homelessness was found to be associated with economic and structural issues such as lack of access to housing for people who are underprivileged. On the other hand, chronic homelessness was linked to the risk of mental illness, which contributes to individuals not being concerned with societal norms (Moyo et al., 2015). Furthermore, Burnam et al. (2000) ascertained that financially underprivileged individuals with a serious mental illness are at risk of becoming homeless due to these conditions if they do not get the required assistance such as access to housing, basic resources and education.

Homeless individuals are most likely to exhibit symptoms of mental illnesses, particularly depressions, bipolar, anxiety and schizophrenia, among others, and they may be coming from broken homes or experiencing some form of social disruption, exclusion and isolation (Piat et al., 2015). Homeless people vary and some may include orphaned children, runaway teens, families, men, women, and the elderly. Pathways to homelessness are numerous, including poverty, unemployment, being unskilled, illiteracy, limited or a lack of access to healthcare and single-parent headed or child-headed households (Canfield, 2014; Du Toit, 2010). In an unpredictable economy, investigating how shelters utilise unpaid work could assist the shelters to effectively help the homeless population (Lundahl & Wicks, 2010).

Care workers' stigma or prejudgements about the homeless can act as an obstacle that homeless people need to overcome to get the aid they need to survive (Phillips, 2015). The notion of the home

as a structure with material possessions could mean that belonging is a fixed and effective condition and that homeless people cannot find the feeling of belonging in a space without any physical structure. However, this notion excludes the fact that a sense of community can be created by people, as they form communities on streets and in shelters (Daya & Wilkins, 2012).

2.5.1 Public perception of homeless people

Perceptions are self-reinforcing and this may lead to exclusive language, attitudes and behaviours, ultimately contributing to chronic homelessness (Amazeen & Amazeen, 2017; Zlotnick et al., 2010). When a helper's perceptions are ill-informed, the interventions become too limited and unfit to meet the needs of the homeless. Incorrect labels feed stereotypes and increase stigma towards the homeless population (Nilsson & Sand, 2017).

There are four categories of negative perceptions, as stated by Speak and Tipple (2006). The first is competitiveness and a typical example is when a business community uses apathetic language and holds negative attitudes towards people living on the pavements outside their businesses. Secondly, people judge the worth of the homeless as valueless, thus creating a barrier inhibiting the homeless from access to the resources they require. For example, government and other agencies use this valuing language and interpret helping the homeless as a futile exercise basing their stance on the ineffectiveness of government interventions. The third perception is appearance, which manifests when people use uncaring and negative language to scrutinise the appearance of homeless people.

Furthermore, these definitions are used to justify their ill-treatment of the homeless population. Words such as dirty, filthy, repulsive, stinky, and others are used, which degrades and dehumanises the people labelled as such. The last category is pity, charity and compassion, exhibited by such groups as religious and humanitarian institutions that use sympathetic language. This sympathetic language is inclusive and may stimulate helpful behaviour; however, it also looks at the homeless as victims, thus disregarding their agency (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

The language embodying the perceptions held by the public about the homeless are expressions such as: a homeless person is evil and has bad intentions; and that homeless people are gangs of thieves, fiends and drug addicts (Schneider, 2014). These perceptions misinterpret and exaggerate the criminal aspect of homelessness, leading to high rates of incarceration of homeless adults and children (Vitale, 2010). Such perceptions also misjudge the cause of homelessness attributing it to delinquency, whereas in contrast, criminality may be instigated by the need to meet basic needs such as food and shelter; therefore, homelessness may display an individual's socioeconomic status (Du Toit, 2010).

Homeless people are often perceived as beggars, which may not truly represent the entire homeless population, since some homeless people may not beg for resources. For example, homeless people may request temporary employment or part-time work (Cross et al., 2010). This perception garners financial assistance and disregards the emotional and skills-based needs of homeless people. Some people perceive the homeless as experiencing mental or psychological disorders (Creech et al., 2015; Moyo et al., 2015). This excludes the needs of homeless individuals and demarcates them as bereft of agency, resilience or emotional intelligence. This may be false as most street dwellers are resilient and self-sufficient.

Therefore, this creates a revolving door for the homeless people in psychiatric facilities, thus excluding their socio-economic conditions by creating a controlled and unsustainable environment. Homeless people are perceived as immoral, a label attached to homeless women in particular (Du Toit, 2010; Speak & Tipple, 2006). Words such as widow, outcast and prostitute are attached to destitute women. Such labelling disregards social issues such as gender-based violence and patriarchy, which confront women, disinherit them of their spouses' estates (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

Furthermore, living on the street could signify agency, as a reaction towards a dangerous home dynamic. This stigma extends to the children of those women further creating self-fulfilling prophecies of immorality, as women end up engaging in prostitution to fend for themselves and their families.

The trauma could be compounded by the roughness of the street experienced by the women through assaults and sexual abuse (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

Homeless people are perceived as vagabonds that are mainly found in South Africa's six metropolitan cities, including Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Bay, Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, Tshwane and eThekweni, which have a constant influx of migrants seeking employment and livelihoods (Du Toit, 2010; Mashau, 2017). People may migrate from different parts of a country in search of better incomes or they come from other countries seeking improved living conditions for themselves and their families. They are also seen as wanderers because they may not occupy the same space on a daily basis as they move around quite often. This representation excludes permanent residence of informal settlements, who have limited access to pro-social resources (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

There is another perception that regards homeless men as loners deprived of care. However, a disruption in the family system could result in men's solitude and disconnection from the community and society (Shinn, 2010). Furthermore, this notion, which often pervades the media, does not look at the networks formed by street dwellers, suggesting that top-down interventions may not adequately describe or tackle homelessness and it may be worthwhile to create a community-based policy for the phenomenon (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

Furthermore, there are limited policies that directly address street homelessness, outlining the recourses and ramifications for other vulnerable groups like children, the unemployed and women who may not be as destitute as the individuals living on the streets of Johannesburg; this is partly because of the tension between developing a homelessness policy and revitalising the debilitated streets of what was once a thriving business district (Cross et al., 2010).

People perceive the homeless as victims. In other words, they see them as too emasculated and powerless to ameliorate their condition, removing their autonomy and agency over their situation. Additionally, victimhood and vulnerability may not necessarily be comparable as vulnerable people may still have the ability to survive through their resilience, whereas a victim is seen as too

incapacitated to help themselves out of destitution (Speak & Tipple, 2006). For example, street kids who run away from home because of abuse find agency in being homeless as a form of control, self-help and survival.

Lastly, people perceive the homeless as outsiders and refer to them using words such as ‘foreigner’, ‘illegal residents’ and so on, grouping all immigrants together without considering their reasons for immigrating, which could include seeking asylum, refuge from war-torn, impoverished countries, finding economic security in more developed countries and supporting their families at home (Frost et al., 2019). Any misconception may lead to othering and stigmatizing the homeless, creating a barrier to the much-needed resources required to address chronic homelessness. The worst result could be xenophobia that may threaten the livelihoods and safety of homeless immigrants.

Perceptions can mislead the public through propaganda that spreads through social media, the conventional media and hearsay. The stigma exhibited by the people who work for institutions such as state welfare departments and non-governmental organisations thwarts the intervention measures developed by agencies and the government. These seemingly helpful intentions could impede the progress of the fight against homelessness (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

It is important to explore the perceptions of the homeless as they shape people’s understanding and treatment of the issue of homelessness. The public assists homeless people to access the much-needed resources and services. Moreover, in a democratic society, these perceptions may influence a policy framework meant to address homelessness (Canfield, 2014; Du Toit, 2010; Tsai et al., 2017). For instance, a recent study by Uturn on the cost of homelessness may influence the budgetary allocation earmarked for housing by the government of South Africa (Hopkins et al., 2020). The report outlined how costly homelessness was for the City of Cape Town in 2019. The total cost to support homeless people in the city was approximately R744 million (Hopkins et al., 2020). Having a budget for the problem of homelessness may streamline the programmes put in place to deal with the problem

of homelessness and make them more cost effective with longer lasting outcomes (Du Toit, 2010; Tompsett et al., 2006; Tsai et al., 2017).

Contrary, negative perceptions could inform legislative and policy frameworks that despise helping the homeless, thus implementing interventions for managing them, resulting in their forceful removal and the gross criminalisation of the homeless population (Clary et al., 2016; Giesler, 2019; Pospěch, 2020). The public may also experience compassion fatigue, a feeling of being overwhelmed by the number of beneficiaries that need assistance, which results in individuals becoming less sympathetic to the homeless and desensitised to the problem (Figley, 2002; Tompsett et al., 2006). The public could become disinterested in and indifferent to the growing state of homelessness in the Johannesburg CBD (Sanchez, 2010). Additionally, the working class could be too inundated by their financial constraints to deal with the plight of the homeless population.

The media, the public and policymakers have a triangulated influence on each other; however, the media may punt propaganda that overshadows the perception of individuals (Cronley, 2010). Therefore, the perception held by the media about a compassion-fatigued public may lead to fewer media reports being publicised on the issue (Figley, 2002; Tompsett et al., 2006). Furthermore, the media's framing of the problem shapes the manner in which the public perceives and interacts with the homeless.

Nevertheless, the financial status of the public does not predict people's views on homelessness and the poor. Consequently, the working class may identify with the state of helplessness being experienced by the homeless. Therefore, the perceiver's demographic status may influence their perceptions as well (Tompsett et al., 2006).

The public's view of the economy as the main contributor to the escalating rates of homelessness discounts the institutional structures that contribute to poverty, limiting access to basic needs for the disenfranchised, thus aggravating chronic homelessness. Therefore, homelessness needs to be viewed more holistically, with stakeholders and the public appreciating the complexity of

homelessness, specifically its multifaceted pathways and presentations. This creates a multipurpose approach to the problem that factors difference and does not use umbrella terms to overcast everyone in the group (Block et al., 2011; Tompsett et al., 2006). For example, the collectivistic perception may view homelessness as a disruption in the family or social network, whereas the individualistic perception may assert that homelessness is a result of mental or physical illness and a lack of agency (Johnston et al., 2020; Munroe, 2018). However, it is important to note that privilege and higher levels of education lead to an individualistic mentality and the belief that homeless people lack self-determination (Dennis et al., 2012; Tompsett et al., 2006).

The public holds the following perceptions about the homeless: homeless people need more support and compassion; the general public's attitudes are liberal and comprehensive; homeless people should be allowed to live and beg in public spaces; homelessness is more reflective of structural inequalities and inadequacies than a demonstration of laziness on the part of the homeless; the presence of homeless people in their neighbourhoods does not irritate them; negative words used to describe the homeless include illiterate, aged, unmarried, mentally ill and addicts; however, the language became more sympathetic especially among those who felt the effects of the unemployment (Piat, et al., 2015; Tsai et al., 2017).

2.6 Interventions addressing homelessness

This section outlines the interventions developed by the world in response to homelessness. According to Vitale (2010) The Safer Cities Initiative was implemented by the Los Angeles Police Department as a response to the scourge of homelessness in Skid Row in Down Town Los Angeles to decrease the drug market, lower the number of cart-pushing homeless people on the streets, to beautify the location and possibly improve the lives of homeless people in that location. Law enforcement agents believed that the aggressive approach to dealing with the destitute in the area could decrease the number of homeless people residing in the streets (Vitale, 2010). The initiative managed to clean

up the environment but ended up displacing homeless people; essentially, it did not have the desired effect of addressing homelessness in Los Angeles, contributing to chronic homelessness (Vitale, 2010).

The policing intervention, criminalises the crisis, which downplays the social problem, worsening the condition of the homeless due to loss of access to services, basic needs, employment and permanent housing, as victims of structural inadequacies, homeless people are labelled offenders and often charged with criminal offences, creating a revolving door with law enforcement facilities (Du Toit, 2010; Hodge Jr et al., 2017; Vitale, 2010; Wilking et al., 2018).

Homelessness exists concurrently with severe mental illness; both conditions contribute to the aggravation of the other (Moyo et al., 2015). For example, homelessness may influence the development of such conditions as depression, anxiety and trauma to name a few. Equally, these severe mental disorders could exacerbate deplorable housing conditions (Ventriglio et al., 2015). Homelessness caused by mental illness can lead to the homeless' victimisation on the streets, involvement in criminal activities, physical diseases and ultimately mortality (Hodge Jr et al., 2017).

The current interventions developed to help homeless individuals who are suffering from mental illness include family support and care which is unskilled and ill-equipped (Kriel, 2017); rehabilitative housing programmes; incorporating treatment and autonomy by integrating psychotherapy and providing supported accommodation, for example, assisted living programmes (Hodge Jr et al., 2017). Furthermore, the United States of America has implemented a number of programmes to help chronically homeless individuals who are suffering from mental illness and substance abuse (Brown et al., 2020). These interventions include permanent supportive housing, providing housing units for accommodation and supportive resources (Kriel, 2017); rapid rehousing, a short-term measure for the newly homeless people to help them acquire housing and skills development with the aim of increasing their employability, simultaneously decreasing chronic homelessness on the streets (Rodriguez & Eidelman, 2017); permanent rent subsidies, where the homeless receive funding to acquire and secure permanent accommodation (Brown et al., 2020) and

private market housing, where the homeless secure their own accommodation after being part of treatment and supportive services that lead to employment (Brown et al., 2020). Permanent rent subsidies and private market housing are the most sustainable interventions as homeless people with agency and autonomy that fund their accommodation are seemingly able to maintain and sustain their homes (Brown et al., 2020; Rodriguez & Eidelman, 2017). Suggesting that stable employment and housing seemingly reduces homelessness.

The continuum of the residential programme model proposes that homeless people are varied and could live on different parts of scales of the intervention ranging from shelters where they are dependent on the shelters for accommodation, basic resources and services and have limited autonomy over their living conditions (Ventriglio et al., 2015). To halfway houses, where homeless individuals are housed in response to an emergency situation; therefore, this is a transitive form of housing from previously unfit housing conditions to supportive housing, for example, housing for victims of abuse. This includes group homes, such as orphanages that often target particular groups of people in order to accommodate their physical needs and work on their social needs. Lastly, there are supervised housing programmes with a level of autonomy where individuals are given the freedom of apartment, where they are in control of their subsidised living environment.

However, this joint approach to curbing the crisis of homelessness may be unfit for homelessness that is triggered by severe mental illness. As the joint approach may attempt to address both issues insufficiently leading to adversity such as a revolving door of street homelessness. Thus, there has to be a two-pronged approach to the problem of homelessness which incorporates both a more streamlined housing policy and an investigation of the effectiveness of clinical treatments (Ventriglio et al., 2015).

Homelessness is such a broad condition encompassing shack dwellings and rough living occurring on the street. Therefore, there is a need to correctly define the concept to tailor-make suitable

and effective interventions that sufficiently address homelessness. Homeless people are a diverse group with different needs though they share similar environmental conditions.

2.7 Altruism and pro-social behaviour

The study aimed to investigate and determine how altruistic perceptions are formed and how they inform pro-social behaviours, which are actions performed for the benefit of another or a group of other people, and ultimately how this interaction occurs between volunteers and the homeless people they help in the city (Hoffmann et al., 2020).

Truly unconditional altruism occurs when an individual intends to act in a way that benefits another person or other people (Gantt & Burton, 2012; Shagurova et al., 2016). It is not directly observable but its effects may be measured by observing the resultant behaviours and their consequences. Positive results from the recipients of altruism include improved living conditions and the attainment of skills such as computer skills. Furthermore, people may judge the observed behaviour as altruistic, leading to the helper garnering some social adoration. On the other hand, truly involuntary altruism occurs when an individual helper is unaware of their altruistic behaviour when they have helped another person or group of people. However, this may be difficult to investigate as these incidents may not be observed or recorded by others (Goodman, 2014; Lindell, 2014).

These explanations are consistent with the Humanist Theory of Behaviour, which asserts that altruism is a private, personal process that occurs in the altruistic agent's conscious and subconscious being (Briggs et al., 2010). Therefore, the intentions are abstract and immeasurable, unlike the scientific account of altruism, which maintains that altruism is evolutionary and its main function is to maintain behaviour that ensures reproduction and survival (Briggs et al., 2010). Socio-biological theories suggest that altruism is a pro-social process that is concerned with the effects of the altruistic individual's external behaviour and how this contributes to one's survival in a society (Briggs et al., 2010). This attests to the observable nature of altruism.

Thus, an individual may be ostensibly altruistic though the intrinsic intention may not be measured directly. Consequently, the focus shifts to the judgement's others make about the altruistic act and how genuine they perceive it to be. Therefore, one could surmise that altruism is an internal process that influences external attitudes towards helpful behaviour (Goodman, 2014). Reciprocal altruism, on the other hand, looks at how helpful acts performed for the benefit of others to get some form of reciprocal compensation (Goodman, 2014; Shagurova et al., 2016; Stevenson & Maher, 2006). Though this may be monetary, it is mainly some form of social position and admiration from others (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016). This complements the notion that altruistic behaviour is evolutionary and necessary for social cohesion.

According to the psychological development theory, an individual may react altruistically towards a beneficiary in need because of how they are raised and reared; the altruistic agent may be displaying behaviour that is more conditioned and assimilated than a representation of their moral judgement (Lundahl & Wicks, 2010). Additionally, an individual's personality results in helpful pursuits; therefore, heredity may support the notion that personality traits stimulate the development of altruistic behaviour (Lundahl & Wicks, 2010; Shagurova et al., 2016). Furthermore, the Golden Rule posits, "You should do unto others as you want them to do unto you", which explains how benevolence is expected amongst humans (Goodman, 2014). The Christian version of the formulation differs from the Judaic version which adopts the negative stance, "Do not do unto others what you would not want to be done unto you", as the Judaic version emphasises the punishment rather than the reward. Therefore, it could be hypothesised that the behaviour elicited from this rule is dependent on one's cultural and social norms (Goodman, 2014).

Altruism and selfishness are both perceived as survival tools; however, there is stigma attached to the latter, as it does not support the survival of the social group but that of the individual (Rachlin, 2002). However, selfishness is an innate behaviour that manifests during infancy; as such, it might be beneficial during childhood, whereas altruism may be necessary during adulthood when the individual

is being assimilated to their family, culture, community and society. Moreover, people feel more inclined to help those whom they perceive would reciprocate their behaviour. However, people tend to be more inclined towards helping those they believe to be genuinely altruistic and it would be more beneficial to the altruistic agent if they were consciously aware of the benefits of their helpful behaviour. “Altruism” and “selfishness” are both linguistic terms which could consequently be manipulated and misconstrued depending on the understanding and intelligence of the individual using them (Goodman, 2014). At face value, one's altruistic behaviour may be considered intrinsically selfish if further details are not given to the people who are observing and judging it. For instance, if an individual donated to a charity organisation but later reveals it was for tax purposes, the authenticity of that individual's altruism will be questionable. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether true altruism really exists or if it is masked by altruistic reciprocity, where an individual helps another with the unconscious or conscious expectation of receiving the same favour. Thus, although selfishness appears immoral and contrary to social norms; it seems to be innate and necessary for evolutionary purposes (Eldakar & Wilson, 2008). Arguably, however, altruism in itself is an evolutionary and learned behaviour that is necessary for maintaining social norms. Social altruism is necessary for the assimilation of group members and group success (Wilson, 1992). The different definitions of altruism proffered by the different schools of psychology have influenced the definition of volunteering and its purpose. Five definitions of altruism have emerged from the different schools of thought (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

Firstly, the Egocentric Approach perceives altruism as mainly for the agent to gain future benefits. Therefore, the agent or helper is expected to help another person or people in anticipation for some form of reward, which replicates reciprocal altruism mentioned above (Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Shagurova et al., 2016). This approach maintains that true altruism does not exist, thus selfishness motivates volunteer activity. However, this approach disregards helpful behaviour that occurs without incentives of any kind, for example, assistance rendered during emergencies or disasters.

In other words, it does not consider the pro-social behaviour that is not coerced by the need for money, pleasure, favour or satisfaction. Furthermore, the approach does not give evidence of social, personal or spiritual benefits. Nevertheless, involuntary pro-social behaviour may not necessarily be a result of true altruism but may be due to social distress impelling the protective motive for volunteering (Haski-Leventhal, 2009). Thus, an individual's level of egoism, altruistic values and social involvement influence an individual's motivation to volunteer (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

Secondly, the Psychoanalytic Approach asserts that altruism displays a person's mental well-being. Initially, during infancy, an individual who is said to be egoistic is later socialised to respond to the needs of others (Grbich, 1990). Accordingly, a person initially loves the self and this self-preservation drives altruism, mainly to enhance the id's drives and to protect the self from uncomfortable feelings. This leads to the development of the superego, an unconscious function that governs how an individual interacts with others by developing moral judgement. Freud posited that the ego is a result of a tug of war between the superego, which is the urge to merge with the community and the id, the innate pleasure drive that strives for happiness (Abu-Raiya, 2014). The suppression of the id's drives and the influence of the superego leads to the development of altruistic values, which helps the individual assimilate to their socialising agents and community to survive (Rennison, 2001; Segrist, 2009). As such, feelings like anger and sadness are not expressed because they are judged as inappropriate for the good of the group, they are then internalised and may lead to the development of guilt and shame, which are feelings that are directed to the self and not the environment. Ultimate Psychological Hedonism supports the psychodynamic notion as it suggests that people act to increase pleasure and decrease pain. Consequently, the enhancement and protective motives stimulate altruistic attitudes and their subsequent pro-social behaviours (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

Thirdly, Developmental Psychology maintains that altruism is a result of the socialisation of a child. Similar to Psychoanalytic Theory, this theory posits that during development, egoism is suppressed as altruism develops. Through child-rearing and learning, the child develops from an

egotistic individual to an altruistic adult. However, a contradiction manifests when the child exhibits altruism during infancy; for example, incubator infants may instinctually cuddle their weaker peers. This helpful behaviour increases the weaker infant's probability of survival. This is a form of empathetic distress, and as such, the discomfort an individual experience when others are in distress seems to manifest even in early childhood.

The Developmental Psychology Theory proposes three levels of empathy exhibited by children; the first level is when a child reacts to the person in need, which is similar to the way they would want to be treated and comforts them in the manner they would want to be comforted. The second level involves an understanding of the other, who is possibly different from the child; therefore, children customise the way they comfort others to meet the needs of the situation. The third level involves an overall understanding of another person's needs and having sympathy for them, which leads to more other-oriented empathy. Children move from the first level to the third level through arousal of empathic effects. An involuntary action occurs when a child learns and understands that others and the environment exist separately from the self and that other people have the possibility of being different from them. This contributes to the range of altruism from solely self-centred, reward-based altruism to extremely other-centred self-sacrificing behaviours (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

Moreover, Krebs and Van Hesteren (1994) outlined seven stages of altruism that individuals go through where the pro-social behaviour is guided by the values of each stage. Stage one egocentric accommodation, which is protective behaviour for the relief of distress. Stage two instrumental cooperation, which involves having a reason to be altruistic which is similar to reciprocal altruism. Stage three mutual altruism, being sensitive to other people's needs and respecting their positions. Stage four is conscientious altruism, feeling responsible for humanity. Stage five autonomous altruism, the individual is guided to act by their moral judgement. Stage six, integrated altruism, is when the individual can wholly identify with the needs and experiences of others. Stage seven universal self-sacrificial love, when individuals are willing to take on risks for the well-being of another. These stages

suggest that the older a person gets, the higher the chances of volunteering as they move through these stages of altruism. Furthermore, age comes with an increase in the resources and time available for volunteering.

The fourth psychological school of thought to analyse altruism is the Social Psychology Theory. It asserts that altruism is based on pro-social acts and these are behaviours that result from the interaction between an individual and their environment. As such, a person's values are based on internal factors, motives and societal norms. These interact with situational factors and contribute to effective pro-social actions, ultimately leading to the social relationship between the volunteer and the beneficiary. This is supported by the Symbolic Interaction Theory, which states that people attach symbolic representations and interpretations to behaviours and experiences they observe. Therefore, volunteers constantly assess and reassess a beneficiary's actions because of the need for people to understand each other, which suggests that morality and pro-social behaviour may develop when a person can identify or understand another person's circumstances and viewpoint. However, this perception glosses over people's different reactions to similar stimuli. For example, when an individual is harmed by another, the immediate reaction would be anger, whereas another person would be irritated whilst another does not display any affective reaction at all. Therefore, interpretations are unique and personal and this leaves room for misrepresentations that are influenced by an individual's personality, emotional intelligence and experiences (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1994). As such, an individual act on the environment by volunteering and, concurrently, the environment also influences the perceptions and attitudes of the individual through interaction with the beneficiaries of the voluntary activity (Dovidio et al., 2005).

The last psychological theory of altruism and its effects on volunteerism is the Altruistic Behaviour Theory, which proposes that the personality traits influence altruistic behaviour. The traits related to altruism include extraversion and emotional stability, alluding to the existence of an altruistic personality type. A person may have an altruistic personality if they exhibit the following

characteristics: empathetic generosity, a strong self-image, self-efficacy, an inner locus of control, a low need for appraisal, assimilated to moral norms, commitment to helping, dedication to a cause, and has a sense of responsibility and a good work ethic (Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Shagurova et al., 2016). The Developmental Theory and the Altruistic Behaviour Theory suggest that an individual should be securely attached during childhood for them to develop into an altruistic adult. Bowlby's Attachment Theory proposes that when a person is born, they seek closeness with their primary caregiver; in other words, they look for proximity to an attachment figure, their mother, in most instances (Bretherton, 1992; Levy et al., 2011). The main reason for this interaction is to secure the infant's survival in a new environment. Bowlby's Attachment Theory suggests that a securely attached person would have experienced their caregiver as consistently available to meet their needs and equally, the caregiver may have allowed that individual room to explore and as such, to develop a perception of themselves as lovable, trustworthy, capable and valuable (Verschueren et al., 1996). This fosters the development of an autonomous and empathetic person who is sensitive to the needs of others, thus showing concern for other people by evaluating their actions and affective reactions (Hazan & Shaver, 1994).

Therefore, the individual can identify and accurately respond to the suffering, needs and wellbeing of others because the adults who held them in mind reared them in a conducive environment. Furthermore, such individuals possess a psychological sense of community - an interpretation of one's sense of belonging. Hence, a securely attached person has the following characteristics that may increase their rates of volunteering: they use other-oriented empathy or reasoning; possess an enhanced sense of community; have altruistic personality traits; have a positive attitude and pro-social perceptions about helping others. On the contrary, a person who has avoidant attachment has the following characteristics, which decrease the rate at which they volunteer: they use me-oriented empathy or reasoning; have a low sense of community; have avoidant personality traits; and a negative attitude and perceptions about helping and the beneficiaries of helpful behaviour (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016).

Situational factors that influence volunteering are the events and circumstances that affect a volunteer's perception regarding helping others; this in turn influences their readiness to act helpfully (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016). For example, emergencies and disasters may trigger a different emotional response than poverty and destitution. Where people may be triggered by shock in an emergency, poverty may illicit feelings of sorrow and worry in the public. Dovidio et al. (2005) propose The Bystander Intervention Model, which suggests that most people are likely to help others during emergencies. It posits that an individual's willingness to help increases during an emergency as the helpful act does not require long-term commitment. However, volunteers seem to be willing to help homeless people and they are willing to engage a long-term commitment involved in this volunteer behaviour.

2.8 Volunteerism

Studying the perceptions of volunteers that work with the homeless population may bring new insights into their experience of volunteering within the context of the destitute. The study further insightfully details what drives the behaviour of volunteers. For example, altruism has been defined differently by different fields of study. In Psychology, it is an intrinsic process that focuses on an individual's intentions (Goodman, 2014). In contrast, sociobiological theories suggest that altruism is a pro-social process that mainly focuses on the effects of the altruistic individual's external behaviour and how these contribute to survival in a society (Goodman, 2014). Therefore, this study perceives altruism as an internal process that leads to selfless acts performed for the betterment of others and the prosocial behaviour of volunteering is a case in point.

Aydinli-Karakulak et al. (2016), propose the Voluntary Process Model, which submits that the satisfaction volunteers derive from volunteering makes the help last longer. The model proposed six dimensions that explore how individuals find satisfaction in volunteering, which are; the value an individual places on altruism; an individual's understanding of helpful behaviour; their knowledge and experiences; their social influences such as group membership and family membership; their career,

including an individual's need to further their education and skills; and the protective dimension, proposing that individuals volunteer in order to avoid their negative emotions.

The benefits of volunteering are the perceived personal rewards volunteers derive from voluntary action and these include greater physical health; community belonging; adopting a pro-social attitude and social responsibilities; becoming more social and politically active; and psychological well-being (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016).

Values in the study were investigated through the Volunteers Functions Inventory that posits that there are six motives for the pro-social behaviour affecting the attitudes held by volunteers, namely enhancement, values, understanding, protectiveness, social well-being and career opportunities (Briggs et al., 2010). Values are long-standing and close to an individual's core beliefs. In contrast, attitudes are less abstract in view of specific external outcomes. Values may be me-orientated, benefiting the self, for example, 'achievement' is a value that encourages success through completing tasks and goals. Other-oriented values emphasise altruistic behaviour and helping others and 'benevolence' is a typical example (Briggs et al., 2010).

Consequently, volunteers could view helping the homeless as a solution to a problem or as a duty to be performed by humankind for all (Shagurova et al., 2016). Morality, which involves judgements formed about the actions of others, is highly linked to the beneficence of the group more than the needs of the individual, and may influence when and how people volunteer. Morality also involves an individual's behaviour towards others based on these judgements (Baumeister & Vonasch, 2012; Gibbs, 1979). It is partly dependent on the judgements formed about the behaviours of others, which subsequently influences the perceptions and interactions that may occur after the judgements (Baumeister & Vonasch, 2012). Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development outlines the different levels of morality that he based on the developmental stages in Piaget's Theory of Development.

According to Baumeister and Vonasch (2012); Gibbs (1979) and Aron (1977), there are three levels of moral judgement. These levels include the following stages of judgement:

Level 1: Preconventional Judgement; at stage 1, the individual acts morally because of their prediction of punishment and the desire to be obedient. Here, the individual is mainly concerned with labelling behaviour as right or wrong. In stage 2 the individual uses naive instrumental hedonism, when an individual looks at what is right and whether their behaviour benefits them and others.

Level 2: Conventional Judgement; which begins at stage 3 maintaining good relations and seeking the approval of others. At this stage, an individual is concerned with what others deem socially appropriate, basing their judgment on pro-social norms and stereotypes. At stage 4, an individual is concerned with social order and authority, perceiving society as the source of moral judgment and as such, they make their judgements with the intention of ensuring the greater good not only for the individual but for the whole system.

Level 3: The Post-Conventional Judgment, commences at stage 5, where an individual is concerned with a contract and a democratically accepted law. They are mostly concerned with the rights and welfare of others, which are protected by the collective in the form of a judiciary and other regulation agencies. Moral judgement ends at stage 6, where an individual possesses personal principles of conscience. Individuals emphasise respecting people as unique entities and equal emphasis is put on the social system and justice. At this level, using this philosophy helps an individual to make 'fair' decisions that are not closed-minded but decisions based on the complexity of people and society.

According to Aron (1977, p. 2):

"Kohlberg's view the essential ingredient of moral development is not social pressure, the superego, or habit, but rather a certain mode of reasoning and judgment. A simple behaviour, according to Kohlberg, is in itself neither moral nor immoral; the moral context is supplied by the reasoning behind the behaviour. The type of reasoning which lies behind social interactions undergoes significant changes from childhood to adulthood. All forms of moral reasoning, according to the theory, are products of particular cognitive structures. These structures are neither innate nor environmental, but arise through the interaction of the child with his social environment... At first, the structures of moral thought are rather primitive, but, as the interaction of the individual with his environment progresses, new and more complex structures evolve and supersede the original ones."

Therefore, the volunteers may be operating from similar or different stages and as such, it would be interesting to investigate their perceptions in this regard.

The following concepts examine the reasons people help the needy during horrific incidences. The Just Act Model, which proposes that people act pro-socially because they perceive the world as a good place, where bad people are punished and good people are rewarded for their behaviour. As such, people volunteer on the basis of being good. The Terror Management Theory, which posits that people react voluntarily when they fear for their safety; for that reason, pro-social behaviour, seems to be a survival mechanism (Penner, 2004).

Additionally, the theories of antecedents, factors that motivate an individual to initially volunteer, are as follows: The Other-Oriented Empathy Theory, which describes the process of comprehending the experiences of others outside of one's group, the feelings that result from that comprehension and the subsequent helpful behaviour. The Prosocial Motivations Theory that describes the external factors prompting individuals to volunteer, such factors include social media and their ties to other people who may be part of organisations (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016).

Another possible influence of volunteering is socialisation, a systematic transference of cultural norms and societal values, which plays a part in determining how individuals process the information in their environment and subsequent experiences (Grbich, 1990). The family, as the initial socialising agent, acts as a precursor for certain behaviours (Wilson & Musick, 1997). Behaviours which are expected of particular people, depending on their class, race and gender to name a few. Consequently, when individuals behave contrary to societal expectations, they are perceived as abnormal by members of their community, leading to the implementation of social structures whose aim is solely to work with these apparent anomalies, for example such as rehabilitation programmes and prisons (Grbich, 1990).

A study by Nesbit (2012) found that within a community of families there were more female than male volunteers; nevertheless, married individuals volunteered more than their single

counterparts, as men were reported to be more likely to volunteer if they were influenced by their spouses, implying, that men volunteer for validation, though, this does not account for same-sex relationships. Thus, more research is necessary to clarify the relationship between gender and volunteerism. Additionally, Nesbit (2012) asserted that the Substitution Theory provides the basis for prolonged volunteering.

The theory, states that individuals in a household take on different responsibilities. Therefore, when one member takes on the economic constraints, the other can invest more time in volunteering; whereas the Complimentary Theory argues that people are more likely to volunteer together as a way of bonding and spending more time on a shared value (Nesbit, 2012; Rotolo & Wilson, 2006). In addition, due to its collective nature, religion plays an important role in encouraging pro-social behaviour (Oman et al., 1999; Wilson & Musick, 1997).

Pro-social behaviours exhibited by volunteers help to support community structures that are not functioning as expected, consequently becoming beneficial to the volunteers themselves (Clary et al., 2016). Pro-social behaviours are those voluntary acts performed to help others (Basingerc et al., 2018). The volunteer could use human capital, the transfer of skills and knowledge to others; or cultural capital, the use of status and belonging, to support individuals who may feel alienated from society because of their present position (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014; Wilson & Musick, 1997). Individuals are motivated to volunteer by the following reasons: a need to contribute to the community; their religious affiliation; pro-social personality traits; the need to enhance their lived experience; and empowering others (Hustinx et al., 2010; Lundahl & Wicks, 2010). Other institutions may also influence volunteers' perceptions. These institutions include government sectors and constituents providing services to the underprivileged, such as the following departments in South Africa the Department of Human Settlements, the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development, the South African Social Services Agency and the Department of Home Affairs (Department of Home Affairs,

2021; Department of Human Settlements, 2021; Du Toit, 2010; The Presidency, 2004, pp. 1-30; The President, 2004, pp. 1-94).

It is imperative to determine what it means to be pro-social in the context of the field of psychology, the study of the mind and subsequent behaviours and sociology, the study of societies. Pro-social behaviour refers to actions performed by an individual or group for the benefit of another individual or group. These can occur at the three levels mentioned below by Dovidio et al.(2005):

First, the Micro Level looks at the evolutionary, sociobiological and genetic explanation of pro-social behaviour. At this level, pro-social behaviour originates from the innate drive to survive. For example, Charles Darwin postulated that helpful behaviours increased the chances for genetic survival because acting prosocially increases the chances of being safe and finding suitable mates. The Kinship Selection Theory, claims that humans are more inclined to help people who they feel are genetically similar than people who are different from them suggesting that this increases their chances of survival. Additionally, social selection means that humans are inclined to help others who share common characteristics with the helper; therefore, finding commonalities between the volunteer and the recipient increases willingness to help. This level examines the biology of helpful behaviour and the resultant behaviours. For example, a more dominant left hemisphere increases helpfulness. Furthermore, personality traits such as agreeableness and extraversion influence the development of pro-social behaviour (Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Hustinx et al., 2010).

Second, the Meso Level, the relationship between the helper and the recipient of the helping activity in specific situations or events. This didactic interpersonal relationship generally flows in one direction, from the helper to the recipient. The Meso level focuses mainly on when individuals helped during the 1960s –1980s, however during the 1980s –1990s. The focus changed to consider why people helped. Leading the emergence of the following models: The Bystander Intervention Model, which postulated that people often engaged in helpful behaviour in emergencies; and the Cost-Reward Analysis Model, which looked at how people helped when they expected to gain from the helping,

such as gaining an ego-driven reward to avoid a negative emotion or externally through rewards like incentives. Thus, people are most helpful when being helpful is a learned behaviour, a standard in their family, community or society.

Lastly, the Macro Level proposes that pro-social behaviour can exist in a group context like volunteerism, a planned action by a specific group of people or organisation performed for the benefit of other groups for a particular cause and a specified period. At this stage, organisational associations and religious beliefs increase the propensity for voluntary action.

It is necessary to investigate volunteerism and volunteers because of their contribution to the economy; volunteers are a source of unpaid, unskilled or skilled labour (Hustinx et al., 2010; Shagurova et al., 2016). Volunteer activities are prolonged actions by people as they invest time and sometimes money for the betterment and well-being of others. The Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT) proposes that the motivations for pro-social behaviour are other-oriented or me-oriented. Other-oriented empathy is altruistic and concerned with the well-being of others whereas, me-oriented empathy is mainly concerned with individualistic motives directed towards the well-being of the self. For example, benevolence is an other-oriented value, which is self-transcending and inclined towards the needs of others. Conversely, the construct achievement is a me-oriented value that ensures self-enhancement and individual success (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2010).

The Behavioural Reasoning Theory, emphasises that pro-social reasoning guides the motives an individual gives for volunteering, which is supported by the Volunteer Functions Inventory, purporting that six motives may justify a person's decision to volunteer.

The only other-oriented motive is the expression of values, it delineates how altruism and humanitarian concerns drive an individual towards voluntary action. In contrast, the following motives are me-oriented: the career motive, when a person considers the career-related benefits of volunteering such as the up-scaling of skills, more work experience or to improve a resume; the understanding motive, where the person is concerned with comprehending the self and others around them as they

learn about new ideologies and values; the social motive, when the person volunteers to conform and bond with their peers; the protective motive, which is concerned with protecting the ego from negative uncomfortable feelings like guilt and self-doubt by reducing or avoiding them; lastly, self-esteem enhancement, which feeds the ego, resulting in positive emotions like happiness (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2010; Haski-Leventhal, 2009). However, the value placed on a motive contributes to the attitude an individual has towards volunteer behaviour. Attitudes are directed towards specific objects and/ or events in an individual's environment, for example, people in need, organisations and activities (Briggs et al., 2010).

Therefore, a positive attitude towards helping others increases the possibility of volunteering to help others. Furthermore, communal values such as altruism and benevolence develop positive attitudes towards helping others, which perpetuates volunteering. Seemingly, other-oriented empathy positively influences pro-social attitudes and future attitudes, thus encouraging pro-social behaviour that is future-oriented. On the contrary, agentic values like autonomy and achievement do not affect pro-social attitudes; therefore, me-oriented motives could lead to short-term psychological contracts that result in unsustainable volunteer activities.

2.9 Conclusion

The current study used Husserl's Theory of Perception as a metaphysical milieu that provides the ontological background to the study to develop insights into how volunteers perceive the home, homeless people and the broader crisis of homelessness. Furthermore, the chapter reviewed the literature on the different pathways to homelessness and the varied kinds of homelessness. It further explored altruism, pro-social behaviour and volunteerism and the purposes of these constructs. Additionally, the chapter reviewed the levels of pro-social behaviour and the antecedents for pro-social action, including altruism and moral judgement. This is important for the development of a theory outlining how a volunteer's perceptions may contribute to their pro-social behaviour.

The next chapter outlines the methodological procedures and research design. It discusses the data analysis process that was followed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodology, research design and the research questions guiding the current study. It further discusses the interpretive paradigm, which fosters an understanding of the perceptions of volunteer care workers regarding the home, homelessness and the state of the homeless. The chapter describes the sampling techniques, research instruments, theoretical reflections and ethical standards that were considered during the conceptualisation of the research study. Moreover, the chapter explains the thematic analysis method used to interpret the data and how it was best suited for the study.

3.1.1 Research questions

The following research questions informed this study:

1. How do volunteer care workers perceive the concept of the home and the meaning of homelessness?
2. How do volunteer care workers perceive homeless people using the definitions they form?
3. In what way do these perceptions contribute to how they interact with the homeless people they work with regularly, that is, how perception turns to action?

3.2 Research paradigm

A research design, commonly found in the methods, explains the sampling and data collection process. However, in this section, the research design is an overarching umbrella for the research paradigm, which encompasses qualitative or quantitative research or a combination of the two. This study used the qualitative research design. Qualitative research is commonly known as a softer approach with less precise measures. However, there has been a paradigm shift over the years since

the emergence of positivism in 1830, as it emerged that quantitative research is hard to perform on social studies in which the research mainly examines representations and not necessarily direct constructs (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

3.2.1 Components of a research paradigm

A research paradigm comprises the basic beliefs based on the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions held by a researcher. A paradigm is determined by asking the three basic questions: The Ontology question: What is the form and nature of reality? The Epistemology question: What is the nature of the relationship between a participant (the person with the knowledge) and a researcher (the person investigating the knowledge)? The Methodological question: How can a researcher go about finding the information they think should be known? (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Scotland, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013).

Interpretivism or constructivism assumes multiple, obtainable and conflicting social realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Additionally, it posits that the products of human intellect may change as they become more informed and sophisticated about constructs. The broader transactional, subjective assumption sees knowledge as a co-creation that occurs during the interaction between the investigator and the respondents. Hermeneutic, dialectic methodological contexts aim to reconstruct previously held constructions (Held, 2019).

Within a particular research paradigm, a researcher envisages the existence of a research problem and the processes involved in comprehending the speculated problem. In this study, the researcher considered the grounds of a qualitative and quantitative research study and determined that a qualitative research design would best suit the aims of the study as the researcher was interested in

gathering qualitative data about the unique viewpoints of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The interpretive paradigm, which guided this study, differs from a positivist or post-positivist inquiry because it does not see reality as an external entity outside the individual experiencing or perceiving it, but as a socially constructed experience (Willis, 2012). Therefore, the interpretivist framework is suitable in the social sciences, where reality may not be observed directly as a construct but is often determined by how individuals perceive and interpret their environment (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

The interpretivist approach to inquiry asserts that individuals are members of groups with shared meanings of existence because of their shared experiences and similarities (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005; Phothongsunan, 2010; Willis, 2012). Therefore, the findings represent the experiences of the research participants and the influence of socialisation on the participants. Additionally, the research findings discuss the researcher participant interaction. Group membership and status influence an individual's perception. Additionally, this may contribute to preconceived views about reality and the environment. Which ultimately contributes to the theories an individual uses to understand the world. For example, volunteers may feel the need to help others because of the Golden Rule, which states that an individual should treat others how they want to be treated (Goodman, 2014).

Furthermore, the theories underpinning beliefs may contribute to behaviour. For example, if a volunteer believes that everyone has agency over their lives, they may treat homeless people badly or may judge them as lazy. As their philosophy could be that homeless people are in that predicament because of their bad choices. The perception discounts the role of circumstances in causing ill-informed choices arising from systemic issues or that individuals are victims of chance.

In this study, the interpretive paradigm expounds on how volunteers perceived the home and homelessness; they developed knowledge based on the phenomena and the factors that may interrelate

with abstract concepts. The study explored volunteer perceptions, which is a phenomenon specific to the selected group, thus providing the basis of knowledge to which theory was developed. The interpretivist paradigm proposes that reality is subjective; hence, it is constructed through an investigation of and engagement with the participants.

Mottier (2005) and Scotland (2012) mentioned that knowledge is symbolic, additionally, knowledge is the result of consciousness acting on the external. It is vital to be aware of this subjectivity and its possible effects on a study. As the researcher and the participants create a shared reality by using symbols such as language. However, reality does not supersede existence as such, how humans understand their world points to the existence of phenomena. Through the use of our perceptual or sensory organs such as sight and hearing, we create order in what may feel chaotic, a world in which humans have limited control over the environment and have an incomplete understanding of the workings of the world.

This consciousness navigates how an individual behaves towards the phenomenon they perceive. Moreover, there seems to be a dualism between what is constructed as reality and the existence of social phenomena; therefore, humans both create and are part of the reality they perceive. This leads to the researcher's decision to use the interpretive paradigm to guide the investigation of the perceptions, interpretations and meanings held by volunteers who help homeless individuals in the inner city of Johannesburg.

3.2.2 Strengths and limitations of the interpretive paradigm

The approach's major strength lies in its naturalistic approach to inquiry. The participants are studied within their context or natural environment (Rolfe, 2006). Which fosters a complex understanding of the participants' perceptions (Willis, 2012). The weaknesses of the interpretive research approach include false consciousness of the relativism of the paradigm and as a result,

different versions of reality can exist for one construct. Interpretivism is subjective, making it hard to generalise the collected data, as it may not apply to different individuals or groups outside of the sample group (Rolfe, 2006; Willis, 2012). The researcher used the Constructive Grounded Theory methodology to co-construct a theory about the phenomenon with the participants. The next section describes the Constructive Grounded Theory methodology in detail.

3.3 Research design

The term research implies a process of inquiry undertaken by a researcher to understand a particular phenomenon (Bryant, 2017). The qualitative research design was adopted to obtain data for this study. As it is unique to the participant group of the current study, focusing on the views of the participants without inferring a control measure of statistical values (Yilmaz, 2013). By establishing a plan of action for executing the study through the methods which are dependent on the research questions. The researcher investigated the phenomenon within its natural setting without manipulating any part of the study or isolating the participants from their natural environment. Furthermore, qualitative research endeavours to comprehend the meaning the participants form about the phenomenon (Mottier, 2005; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

3.4 The Constructivist Grounded Theory

The study adopted a phenomenological research approach by exploring human experiences from a qualitative viewpoint and analysing the data obtained from the participants. The Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology guided the data collection to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Moustakas (2011) mentioned that the Constructivist Grounded Theory aims to investigate experiences and theorise their meaning by directly interacting with or observing the participants in their natural setting. The theory also helped the researcher explore the experiences that have not been explored before the current study; consequently, the method allowed the researcher to

co-construct and theorize the collected data. The rich data fostered an understanding of the phenomena and this helped paint a clearer picture of the perceptions held by the sample group (Birks & Mills, 2011). According to Glaser and Strauss (2006, p. 1): "The discovery of theory from data – which we call, grounded theory", supports the notion of data being imperative in the development of doctrine and ultimately knowledge production.

The Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology has been developed in the following fashion since its inception in the 1960s (Bryant, 2017):

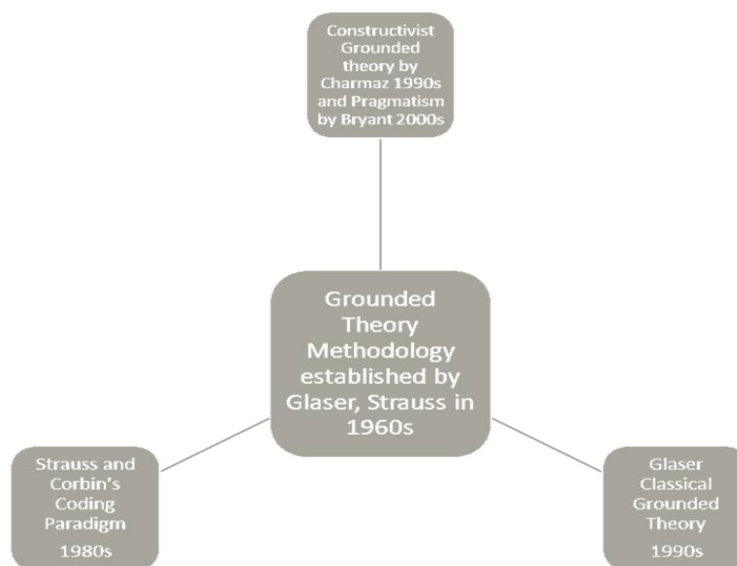


Figure 3.1: The Variations of the Grounded Theory Method:

Adapted from: Bryant (2017, p. xi)

3.4.1 Brief history

The Grounded Theory Method is a systematic approach to qualitative research developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967 (Glaser & Strauss, 2006). Its tenet is the need to verify existing classical theories and generate new theories (Lämsisalmi et al., 2004). It is a method for developing theory from collected data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Therefore, it takes a bottom-up approach to inquiry, which is suitable for a study conducted within the school of community

psychology, which stresses participatory action research. When stakeholders and members of a community are involved in the design and execution of research in their community as experts they can focus the aims of a study on the members' experiences simultaneously a researcher should get assistance from funders and experienced professionals to broaden the reach and effectiveness of the research (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995).

The researcher co-constructed knowledge from data obtained from the participants and not from a hypothesis (Badreddin, 2013; Bryant, 2017; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The Grounded Theory Method is a methodology where relevant concepts are explored in their natural state (Länsisalmi et al., 2004). Accordingly, the theory helped the researcher uncover new insight into and construct meaning about social phenomena that emerge from the context. The grounded theorists should do this without forcing and adjusting the information from previous theoretical frameworks.

3.4.2 Basic elements of the Grounded Theory Approach

Firstly, the Grounded Theory methodology looks at conceptual categories and their proponents. Secondly, it investigates the preliminary hypothesised relationship between categories and their properties, thereby developing a theory that accounts for the majority of the behaviours presented by the participants. The approach uses the constant comparative analysis method, where the participants' input is examined, by simultaneously coding and analysing the collected data (Glaser, 2002; Kolb, 2012). This process of data triangulation considers the data collection method, the participant observations and document analysis, which contribute to the formulation of a grounded theory underpinning the topic of interest (Länsisalmi et al., 2004).

3.4.3 The Grounded Theory process

The field data collection was conducted through thematic interviews and observations (King, 2004). This took into consideration the length of time used to obtain data and the number of contact

sessions required with each participant. Where the researcher allocated a month for the interviews and only required one (n=1) interview session from each participant. The sample was as varied as possible, considering the preliminary hypothesis and individuals who are knowledgeable about and experienced in the phenomenon being investigated. An interview guide was used, altering the questions but maintaining the meaning (King, 2004). The researcher recorded the interviews as far as possible, utilising an electronic recording device. The researcher selected the inductive thematic analysis approach to analyse data, where a theory was formed from the data collected from participants (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The researcher generated a descriptive theory about the phenomenon, thus creating a preliminary hypothesis in the following manner: firstly, the researcher read and categorised data into codes; grouped related codes into more meaningful clusters; organised these clusters into coherent themes; the themes were used to clarify patterns and the shared meanings that emerged (Länsisalmi et al., 2004).

Kolb (2012) stated that the constant comparative method compares different codes, identifies overlaps and fine-tunes the selection of themes by comparing different concepts to one another and getting a unique description of each theme. The integrative category compared themes and categories, resulting in an integrative theory that facilitated the development of an overall theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

The following advantages and disadvantages were considered in using the Grounded Theory Approach. The advantages are that the methodology aided in the discovery of rich contextual details on homelessness; it provided a method of exploring new terrain; helped provide definitions and describe new spaces and concepts. The disadvantages are that data collected from the Grounded Theory lack generalisability outside the context of the study; the subjectivity of the method may influence the researcher's bias; the participants may also give socially acceptable answers that may not accurately represent the population (Länsisalmi et al., 2004).

In the 1990s, the approach to methodology was further developed by Kathy Charmaz, who termed it the Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2016). The theory asserts that research is an interconnected process, and the behaviours of the sampled population can be studied to uncover emergent meanings formed by individuals in the group. Furthermore, the constant analysis of the researcher's involvement in the research process and how it may affect the participants and the overall research may yield rigorous and trustworthy data.

The Constructivist Grounded Theory maintains the following: reality is socially constructed; experiences are found in their social milieu; analyses are a methodological progression of experiences; reality cannot be predetermined and or controlled by those constructing it, instead it emerges and moves like a current; human beings mediate within realities and influence the flow of the current but do not determine the existence of reality; is careful of the logical analysis of language; investigates meanings found during the research process and how these interrelate and influence each other; postulates the approaches that are used when carrying out the research; investigates peoples' behaviour, aiming to solve the problems that result from these behaviours; the Constructivist Grounded Theory asserts that the research instruments should allow for research to take place over a specified period (Charmaz, 2016). In other words, the sample study is undertaken in a moment or event and may not necessarily be indefinite; connects truths and ideals; relates the researcher to the study participants; views research as a symbolic process that exists through language; reality is dependent on perspectives that are created, unconsciously and consciously, by individuals who live through experiences that shape the perspectives; and outlines a methodological approach to critical analysis.

The Constructivist Grounded Theory is useful to this study as the researcher noted the personal biases that may have influenced the data collection, interpretation and analysis process. These may include the researcher's age, experiences, social class to name a few. Charmaz (2006) and

Henning (2004) propose that the theory acknowledges that by merely communicating with the participants, a researcher is taking part in the social interaction and that influences any data being collected. An awareness of this reality can help the researcher understand phenomena and grapple with their beliefs and values, which may influence how they engage with the research on a particular phenomenon.

Through the Constructivist Grounded Theory, which was guided overall by the interpretive framework, data was collected and analysed and meaning was made of the social interaction, thus fostering an understanding of how the sample of Johannesburg-based volunteer care workers understood their environment and the social problem of homelessness (Henning, 2004; Mottier, 2005; Yilmaz, 2013).

This assured the researcher of broader and more in-depth data. Furthermore, the researcher had an opportunity to learn more about the experiences of the different participants in the study and identify themes that aided in the formation of a theory. Additionally, the interviews were conducted with the identified people of interest, the data collected from these participants were coded and themes were noted and analysed (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This developed the theory guiding the care-workers who work with the homeless in the city of Johannesburg.

3.5 Research methods

3.5.1 Sampling techniques

The Grounded Theory ratifies the use of theoretical sampling, where data are collected, collated and analysed for the main purpose of generating theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2006). As such, sampling is guided by the data needed to develop the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2006). Groups that will abet the development of the theory through comparison were sampled by examining the benefits of variation and similarity in the group sampled for the study about volunteer experiences.

The snowball sampling technique, also known as chain referral sampling, depends on the initial subject being conveniently chosen because the population is hidden. This initial subject links the researcher with the second wave of participants, which connects the researcher with the third wave of participants and so on. Therefore, the sample grows literally like a snowball rolling down a snowy hill. This sampling technique is used in human and social studies and allows access to groups that are difficult to find such as people who live in different communities but perform similar functions like volunteers (Etikan et al., 2015; Sharma, 2017).

There are two kinds of snowballing: linear snowball sampling, where the researcher recruits a single participant, who then nominates the next participant and so on until the study ends and; exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling, where every recruited participant recruit another (Taherdoost, 2016). The disadvantages of snowball sampling include the bias that comes from selecting a sample that shares similar traits and views and that it is laborious; however, investigations may yield exceptionally rich data (Etikan et al., 2015; Taherdoost, 2016).

Snowball sampling, which is a form of non-probability sampling, relies heavily on word of mouth. Identified members of the sample group are essential in exploring who may be able to refer the researcher to other potential participants (Garner et al., 2012). Therefore, it involves asking for recommendations and assistance from those who would have identified individuals who could provide in-depth data (Garner et al., 2012).

For the benefit of this study, the researcher adopted a two-pronged approach to non-probability sampling techniques in recruiting participants for the study. Firstly, the study made use of purposive sampling, which is a form of non-probability sampling that requires the researcher to make a judgment on whether or not a possible participant would be able to give them the data they need to explain a phenomenon under study (Garner et al., 2012; Sharma, 2017). In other words, a researcher is guided by the question: "Is this participant an expert or gatekeeper about the topic?" The identified

participants have to possess particular characteristics for them to be included in the sample. These characteristics included whether the participant was a volunteer worker working particularly with the homeless population in Johannesburg.

The three non-governmental organisations that were initially identified were Trinity Church Health Services, Usindiso Ministries and The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. All of them have volunteers that work with the homeless population ("Holy Trinity Joburg, 2018; "The Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2018; "Usindiso Ministries, 2018). However, as the researcher commenced the study, it emerged that Usindiso Ministries had been abandoned and the clinic adjacent to it referred the researcher to the 3 Kotze Street Shelter for possible participants, which lead to interviews with participants who run their soup kitchen associated with an undisclosed church. The manager of 3 Kotze Shelter advised the researcher to find more participants at MES (Mould Empower Serve) Johannesburg, a community organisation that runs a shelter within Hillbrow, in an attempt to find more participants; however, the contact person at the shelter was not responsive.

Following the snowball sampling, 11 participants were interviewed from the Trinity Catholic Church and the 3 Kotze Street Shelter, organisations providing services to the homeless in Braamfontein. Trinity Church, situated adjacent to Wits University East Campus, provides free basic health services, runs a soup kitchen and offers bible study groups for the homeless population in and around the Braamfontein area. Additionally, the 3 Kotze Street Shelter offers shelter to the homeless in the Johannesburg City Centre and Hillbrow. The 3 Kotze Street Shelter was a centre where individuals living on the streets could access social welfare and basic needs and services, as they run an evening shelter, a soup kitchen and have social workers working on the premises. Furthermore, they partnered with ladies from an undisclosed church to run a soup kitchen offering food to the individuals who stay in and around the shelter. The shelter also provides social welfare services.

Therefore, the common characteristics amongst the possible participants are that they volunteer and work with the homeless.

3.5.2 Participants

The sample comprised 11 participants who all volunteered at the identified sites of interest and had been referred by others connected to these organisations. They were mainly Black Africans and Coloured; 3 immigrants and 8 South Africans; students; retirees; religious and/or observed traditional South African beliefs; they ranged from working class to middle class; the age of the participants varied from 19 to 60 years; some recently got involved in volunteer work and others saw volunteering as a way of life.

Age	6 Youths (18 – 35) 3 Middle Aged (35 – 59) 2 Old aged (60 +)
Race	10 Black 1 Coloured
Citizenship	8 South Africans 3 Immigrants
Religion	10 Christians 1 Traditionalist
Gender	6 Males 5 Females
Volunteer	11 Volunteers
Vocation	4 Students 4 full-time employed 1 Part-time employed 1 Unemployed

Table 3.1: Participant Demographics

Out of all the initially identified points of interest, only Trinity Church was viable. The rest were inaccessible for instance, Usindiso Ministries was a rundown shelter and the Centre for The Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) stated that they were not able to assist as they claimed

that this research project was not in line with their services and that their employees were paid. Following this initial impediment, volunteers from the church were contacted; thereafter, snowballing occurred, as participants established a connection with other volunteers. Saturation occurred as participants were part of the same organisation sharing the same characteristics and doctrines. They confirmed their involvement in the improvement of the lives of the homeless. Additionally, the church assists the homeless by providing resources for their basic needs such as food, medical assistance, shelter. Moreover, illustrating how they cater to the spiritual needs of homeless people in the city through their bible study groups.

Another shelter that was identified in Hillbrow was the 3 Kotze Street Shelter as the researcher was unable to get participants from MES because the shelter's contact person remained non-responsive despite multiple attempts at contacting them. The 3 Kotze Street Shelter was a centre where individuals living on the streets could access social welfare and basic needs and services, as they ran an evening shelter, a soup kitchen and have social workers working at the premises.

The demographics of the volunteers were as follows; there were 6 male and 5 female participants. The slight difference could have been related to the safety or lack thereof of working with the homeless population and the widely perceived criminality widely. Additionally, there were 10 Black participants and 1 participant who classified themselves as Coloured. Furthermore, there were only 3 immigrant participants and 4 students. Of the 11 participants, 10 were Christians and 1 was a traditionalist. The participants shared similar characteristics, and because of the snowball sampling technique, they may have recommended other participants who shared similar characteristics, which could have created some saturation as the participants were part of the same organisation and shared similar characteristics and doctrines. They expressed their involvement in the improvement of the lives of the homeless by providing food, medical assistance and shelter and also their spiritual needs through their bible study groups.

As the study particularly required volunteers, it was difficult to identify a more varied group. The participants needed to have specific knowledge about volunteering and the condition of homeless people in Johannesburg, which made the data set more exclusive but the collected data were rich and insightful.

3.5.3 Interview techniques: Semi-structured interview

3.5.3.1 What is an interview?

An interview is verbal interaction between an interviewer and the participants or interviewees who respond to a series of research questions (King, 2004). Unlike a questionnaire, an interview is a conversational series of questions and answers that requires some form of verbal interaction, whether telephonic, face-to-face, individual or group. An interview is dependent on the data needed to achieve the research aims and to answer research questions and it can be closed or open-ended, depending on the depth required from the data (Lewis-Beck et al., 2011; McLeod, 2014).

3.5.3.2 Types of interviews

There are two main types of interviews; firstly, there is a structured interview that is a formal, closed-ended set of questions. A structured interview is advantageous as it is reliable, quantitative and generalisable. It is quick to process and accesses a large sample of participants. However, the structured interview style is limited by inflexibility and the research findings may not be full of depth. The second is an unstructured interview, also known as a guided conversation. This type of interview is informally guided by open-ended questions. Throughout the interview process, there are additions, adjustments and additional questions to accommodate a participant's educational level and to overcome language barriers. Its strengths are: it is a flexible interview process, it solicits in-depth qualitative data, and the validity of the findings is guaranteed. The limitations of an unstructured

interview are that data collection and analysis processes are time-consuming and it may be costly to train interviewers.

An interview schedule is a set of prepared questions that help an interviewer conduct an interview. The interviewer may follow the interview schedule word-for-word or be more flexible, depending on the type of the interview (Länsisalmi et al., 2004). The interview schedule has two components: a list of questions that should be read verbatim and the instructions stipulating the process the interviewer must follow, which can be recorded and transcribed after all the data have been collated. Additionally, participants' answers may be noted in the interview guide or notebook (Adams, 2015; King, 2004; McLeod, 2014).

However, the interviewer effect may influence the participants' responses. The interviewer's appearance may influence a participant's behaviour, resulting in bias on the part of the interviewee because of the interrelated nature of the interview process, where the researcher and the participant engage in a conversation to co-construct meaning about the research topic. The interviewer should also be mindful of their prejudices and biases when interviewing vulnerable groups, such as children and victims of abuse. The interviewer should also be mindful of their language and vocabulary to accommodate the participants to solicit the most from the interviews. An interviewer should consider a participant's education, social background, age, class and ethnicity when considering the questions to include in an interview. Furthermore, an interviewer should be mindful of the sample group and the fit of the questions; for example, some participants may be uncomfortable answering personal questions bordering on intimacy. Therefore, the interviewer should be acquainted with the sample before developing the interview guide (Lewis-Beck et al., 2011).

3.5.3.3 The semi-structured interview technique

The semi-structured interview technique is a conversational interaction where an interviewer uses closed-ended and open-ended questioning to elicit answers from participants. This is supported by Adams (2015) who asserted that the responses give inferences to the research topic and aims. Furthermore, the conversational nature of the technique allows room to adjust questions where necessary to get rich data from the research participants. The semi-structured interview is useful when the investigation is on the following: the independent thoughts of individuals in a group; topics that may make participants uncomfortable; the effectiveness of an innovative programme; new information that has not been explored before the current study; if a researcher judges the information gathered as insufficient for elucidating the topic, they may use semi-structured interviews to probe; to investigate the incongruities in data, after a quantitative research technique (Adams, 2015).

In this study, the participants were sampled and selected using the most random sample possible to limit the effects of bias. The researcher selected the face-to-face interview as it was the most suitable technique for the topic. The questions were then drafted and an interview schedule was developed from the draft. Additionally, the study was peer-reviewed and the questions were checked for validity and relevance to the topic. Furthermore, questions that were biased and likely to elicit socially appropriate answers were identified because of the fear of shame the participants might feel. Meetings were scheduled with participants during reasonable times such that some interviews would take place in the morning while others were in the evening (Adams, 2015).

The semi-structured method is suitable for the exploration of perceptions and opinions held by participants regarding complex and sensitive topics. It probes participants for more data and clarity on unclear answers and it leaves room for the alteration of wording but preserves the meaning of the questions. In contrast, the standardised interview schedule requires the researcher to follow the

interview guide word-for-word, eliminating the bias that may have arisen from changing the questions. A semi-structured interview is flexible and the researcher can adjust language so individuals with different educational levels may grasp the meaning of the questions. However, the language barrier is minimised by the flexible nature of the semi-structured interview. Therefore, it is worthwhile to use this method when interviewing non-English speaking participants.

Furthermore, audiotapes were used to increase validity and to replicate the conversations and make the content retrievable (Barriball & While, 1994). They also provide a detailed account of the conversation between the researcher and the participant; thus, storing the verbal and non-verbal cues, such as pauses, gives more meaning to the collected data.

The semi-structured interview agenda is as follows: firstly, the researcher had to establish rapport with the participants, which was difficult as the participants were hard to find since most of them did not reside in the areas they chose to do voluntary work. The researcher set the tone during the interview by greeting and introducing themselves to a participant, outlining the purpose of the interview and study, which was meant to gain more insight into the perceptions and behaviours of the volunteers. Secondly, the researcher asked non-threatening but relevant questions to get the participant to open up; this also meant that the researcher had to change their language at times to accommodate participants' vocabulary and comfort levels. Thirdly, the researcher then solicited participants' experiences of homelessness, either positive or negative, to get a more critical appraisal of the topic. Fourthly, the researcher asked any awkward questions towards the end of the questioning session, when the participant felt more comfortable as there are lower chances of social desirability bias influencing the participant's answers at this stage. Fifthly, the researcher asked for demographic or personal questions as issues of identity may be uncomfortable for some participants at the beginning of the interview session. At this point, some participants shared their personal

experiences regarding destitutions. Finally, the researcher ended the interview by asking the participants to reflect on and respond to future-oriented questions (Adams, 2015).

The purposive, snowball sampling technique was used to sample the population as the participant group was hard to access because most of the participants did not reside in the location where they volunteered to work. Furthermore, they were varied, as they accommodated students, retired individuals, religious figures and traditionalists. Therefore, to find the commonalities between this varied population set and to determine the differences thereof, the researcher decided to use the semi-structured interview guide. To effectively solicit information, the vocabulary was changeable and even translated for individuals with a language barrier.

3.5.3.4 The interview schedule

For this phenomenological qualitative study, audio-recorded interviews spanned 30 – 45 minutes. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to guide the discussion during the interview with the participants to elicit the participants' views and opinions regarding the homeless and volunteering (see Appendix A). The researcher aimed to solicit the following themes from the participants: the participants' thoughts about the homeless; how perception leads to pro-social behaviour; the influence of participants' thoughts on their altruistic behaviour towards the homeless population residing in Johannesburg CBD.

An electronic audio-recording device was also used to record the conversations. The audio recordings were transcribed and saved on a password-protected laptop within an encrypted folder.

3.6 Data analysis and reflexivity

3.6.1 Thematic analysis

The thematic analysis (TA) method is a qualitative research method for identifying, analysing and interpreting data. Therefore, it is the process of coding raw data, expanding them to find possible themes and patterns within and across qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Clarke & Braun, 2017; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Herzog et al., 2019). The thematic analysis method is used to create accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes, the building blocks for themes, larger patterns of meaning, with a central unifying concept, the research topic (Ando et al., 2014). The thematic analysis of the research provides a framework for organising and reporting analytical observations, through rigorous analyses (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

Thematic analysis is useful because it is theoretical, methodological, and flexible; therefore, it can be used for a variety of research questions, methods, epistemologies, and approaches to knowledge development (Herzog et al., 2019; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The thematic analysis technique aids the researcher to systematically identify themes embedded in the participants' views, perspectives, values, attitudes, behaviours and culture (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

The benefits of utilising the thematic analysis technique include an analysis of large or small units, homogenous samples with participants sharing characteristics such as gender, race, economic strata or behaviours and so on, or a heterogeneous group, whose participants are varied and their differences are the topic of interest in the study (Wilson & Musick, 1997). Data can be analysed through thematic analysis; for example, the data may be from widely used techniques such as interviews or emerging methods such as narrative or qualitative surveys; the collected data may be inductive and yield explicit meaning, or it may be deductive, looking into the underlying patterns and meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Clarke & Braun, 2017; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

However, researchers need to be mindful of the flaws associated with assuming that it is a one-size-fits-all analysis method for qualitative research. The research analysis is guided by the kind of knowledge required to develop a theory (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Compared to other methods, the thematic analysis method does not have a rich theoretical basis; neither does it give details on the analysis of discourse; and there may be a lack of coherence among emerging themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The thematic analysis technique uses a 6-step approach to analysis; however, a researcher may choose not to follow these steps linearly as they can interchange the steps (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Nowell et al., 2017). The steps include: Phase One; the researchers' familiarisation with the data, having a prolonged engagement with the data, the document's potential codes, keeping records; Phase Two involves generating initial codes, by going through peer debriefing, such as consulting with the supervisor and having a presentation of themes, reflexive journaling and using a coding framework; Phase Three, involves searching for themes, which can be trustworthy if the researcher diagrams to make sense of the themes and to illustrate how they link with the raw data, keeping notes of themes and showing how they are related to the research questions and aim of the study; Phase Four has to do with reviewing themes and sub-themes by vetting them with the colleagues', checking one's themes by comparing them to the raw data; Phase Five, defining and naming themes by going through peer debriefing, documenting meetings, documenting the process of naming the themes; Phase Six, producing a trustworthy report, by having a peer debrief, describing the coding and analysis process in writing, including an audit trail and the reasons for the use of particular approaches, methodologies, analytical methods and research tools (Ando et al., 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2012; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Nowell et al., 2017).

3.6.2 Self-reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process of awareness a researcher experiences when conducting research thus becoming aware of the effects of the topic, participants and the researcher on the research process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Probst, 2015). Furthermore, it involves one's comprehension of how the researcher and the participants are inadvertently influencing each other and the data (Probst, 2015). Therefore, a researcher should be aware of how their prejudices influence the collected data. Reflexivity supports a recursive relationship between the researcher, the subjective responses and the inter-subjective dynamics of the research process. In the process, one becomes increasingly aware of the co-constructive process of data collection. Being reflexive is necessary for a qualitative inquiry, where the conditions of the study are not as controlled as a set of quantitative research (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Consequently, there are greater chances that the researcher affects the data to some degree.

Reflexivity encourages constructive research by establishing rigour in the research process (Probst, 2015). Rigour is the clarity of the researcher's awareness of the effects of the researcher on the research process, creating an understanding of the internal and external dynamics of research. This happens when a researcher can examine themselves, exploring their assumptions, emotional reactions, cultural and class standing. The Theory of Reflexivity purports that no research is truly objective, but it is not a solution to subjectivity. Therefore, it is necessary for awareness and knowledge construction.

Reflexivity has the following advantages: increased accountability; the trustworthiness of the research and researcher; richness and depth of data; maintenance of research ethics and principles; validity and reliability of the research process; quality of knowledge; benevolent and non-malicious treatment of participants; ensuring the researcher's well-being; documents all the research decisions;

tracks the research progress; continues with the researcher's personal and professional growth (Ando et al., 2014; Nowell et al., 2017; Probst, 2015).

The disadvantages are as follows: the researcher may be overwhelmed by anxiety associated with the research, especially if they are a novice. Project-related issues such as time management also pose challenges; for instance, lack of evaluation by superiors and peers; the researcher may not be trained, as researchers often learn as they conduct the research; and an overall lack of awareness about social ills (Nowell et al.,

2017; Probst, 2015).

3.6.3 Trustworthiness

In research, trustworthiness pertains to the reader's appreciation of the value of the research findings (Braun & Clarke, 2012). According to Braun and Clarke (2012) and Yilmaz (2013), for the analysis to be deemed trustworthy, the research should be credible; therefore, the findings should represent the participants' views, perspectives or experiences; the research ought to be transferable, with other researchers in the same field of study being able to use the data, thus, is it generalizable; the findings should be dependable, the report should be logical, clear and the findings should be traceable; the discussion must be confirmable and interpretations should be derived from the data, there should be a link between the codes, themes and the report; there ought to be an audit trail, coupled with some evidence of the decisions made in the process and the rationale for the researcher's decision-making, which may be found in the research proposal; and there should be evidence of research reflexivity, showing that the researcher researched in a recursive self-critical manner, and there should be an inner and outer dialogue about the different parts of data collection and analysis processes.

The three principles of specification, division and tacit assumption ensure that a study is reliable and valid. The principle of specification mainly focuses on each question and how it relates to the aims of the study (Barriball & While, 1994). The principle of division considers the use of correct sequencing and wording of questions such as using more introductory questions at the beginning and the personal ones at the end of the interview. The principle of tacit assumption is concerned with determining the true meanings underlying the participants' answers, because different words may be interpreted differently by different participants. The semi-structured method allows for the clarification of the meaning of each response, through probing. These principles ensure the validity and reliability of the findings as the questions may be piloted to clarify their meaning, check the relevance of research issues, explore any sensitive topics, get valuable data, complete incomplete responses, clarify inconsistencies within the sample group, help the participant remember important information through probing.

Probing also establishes rapport and reduces the risk of eliciting socially desirable answers that may negatively affect the validity of a study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This happens when the demand characteristic effects are considered, which are the answers obtained from the participants because they are believed to be preferred social responses whether they are true or false (Barriball & While, 1994). The demand characteristic effects occur when there are stark differences between the researcher and the participants. Such differences may manifest in age, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and educational level. The researcher should be mindful of how they present themselves during the interview to minimise these effects.

For research to be rigorous, it should have an agenda outlining the background, aims and usefulness of the study in the field. There should be a clear step-by-step process of research; a level of subjectivity e.g., colleagues should be part of the process; the researcher should be able to self-

interrogation e.g., noting conflicts of interest and rigidity; and lastly, the researcher should make use of an audit trail e.g., journaling choices (Probst, 2015).

Find the researcher's reflection in Appendix B.

3.7 Ethical considerations

The Grounded Theory was ethically considerate, as the researcher immediately informed the participants about the research techniques, purpose, risks and benefits of the study. The researcher informed the participants of the voluntary nature of the study, about confidentiality and the limits to confidentiality before the data collection process commenced. Additionally, the participants were informed of the consequences associated with any threats of harm the participants might encounter and how they could be prevented. The participants were informed about how the collected data would be managed and safely kept and how they may access the findings of the study (Länsisalmi et al., 2004).

The American Psychology Association (APA), a governing body for psychologists proposes that psychologists should adhere to the following ethical principles when undertaking research: be benevolent, be non-maleficent, ensure fidelity, be responsible, have integrity, uphold justice, respect human rights and the right to dignity (Baker & Charvat, 2016).

The above-mentioned principles give research-specific guidelines for researchers within the field of Psychology to give accurate information to the Research Review Board when proposing a study, providing participants with the details of the study and informing them about the process of data collection before receiving informed consent. Researchers should obtain informed consent from a participant before interview sessions are recorded. A participant who chooses not to participate should be protected from any consequences, such as not getting a grade if they are a student or not receiving benefits at work for non-participation. Therefore, participation should not give the

participants an advantage over those who decline involvement. When informed consent is unobtainable beforehand, the researcher should ensure that the informed consent is obtained as soon as possible, for example, when a participant is unable to make informed judgements because of a disability or mental illness or a learning disability, the researcher should not persuade the participants to take part in a study, as participation should be voluntary and not obligatory. The researcher should not be deceptive as far as possible and only omit information when the required data is found in a participant's natural environment and is critical to the study, thus decreasing the effects of the researchers. The deception should not cause any pain or severe emotional distress and informed consent should be acquired and the details of the study should be given as soon as possible. Participants should be debriefed and informed about the nature of the study, its results and its conclusion. Furthermore, this debriefing should help participants correct any misconceptions by clarifying the findings.

Therefore, the researcher identified the problem, and was knowledgeable about their field of study and did not waste resources conducting an irrelevant study (Baker & Charvat, 2016). The researcher ensured, as far as possible, that every member of the population of interest had an equal opportunity to get selected for the study (Baker & Charvat, 2016). The researcher contacted different sites of interest in an attempt to widen the pool of participants. Generally, the researcher should consider the chain of command so they are accountable to their peers and supervisors (Baker & Charvat, 2016). The researcher presented the research proposal and preliminary findings to the supervisor and colleagues in their school.

The selection was as random as possible to ensure the variability and reliability of the study (Wheeldon & Åhlberg, 2012). The participants selected in the sample made an informed decision to participate and informed consent was crucial in this regard. Informed consent forms the basis of ethical considerations for research in the field of human sciences; therefore, the following steps

should be undertaken to enhance informed consent: loudly reading out the written statement and description of the study for each participant; explaining any unclear terms and meanings; asking possible participants if they would be willing to participate and having willing participants to sign and date an informed consent form.

The consent form comprises a statement about the sponsors or organisations that support the study, a statement of the purpose of the study, including the project's goals, and details the process of participation, considering the number of sessions and the length of each session. The form also outlines any benefits and risks associated with participating in the study, outlining how the information will be managed and how the participant's confidentiality and privacy will be protected. It explains how anonymity will be secured, such as omitting identifying information, stating any limits to confidentiality and privacy concerns must be elaborated before the study. Instances, when confidentiality may be broken, should be outlined, including the threats of harm to the self or others (Baker & Charvat, 2016).

Furthermore, compensation should be stated, bearing in mind that too little compensation may decrease the number of individuals willing to participate in the study and that a big compensation may lead to a bias inclined to the social desirability effect. Participation was strictly voluntary the researcher gave the participants their contact details and an opportunity to review their experience regarding participation in the study.

When selecting a research instrument, the risks and benefits of using measurement for the participants and the study were considered. The data collection process should not be judgemental and interviewers should be trained. Moreover, data analysis should follow the standards of the field of study and the data obtained should be consistent. The report write-up should be a reflexive process involving supervisors to give the research ethical guidance. This ensures that the interpretation is

rigorous and trustworthy. The researcher should distribute findings in such a way that the participants and the research community can access them.

The research will be guided by the following principles of ethical research practices. The first is the participant informed consent; the participants of this exploration will be informed of the purpose of the research, all the possible consequences associated with taking part and that the research is completely voluntary and that if they feel uncomfortable at any point during the study, they have the right to withdraw participation (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Additionally, participants will be informed that the study will be conducted using recorded interviews. This will be elaborated before any recording takes place (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Secondly, informed consent will be obtained from the three organisations, as the study involves participants who work within the context of these organisations in the form of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs) (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The organisations will be informed about the purposes of the research and all of the possible consequences of granting consent; these may be beneficial or harmful, but they need to be stated explicitly (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Anonymity was guaranteed as far as possible and the information to be collected will only identify their gender and volunteer roles and duties. Any personal information was excluded from the interviews and participants were reminded of withholding their real names (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The interviews were conducted sensitively and were mindful of the possible internal distress the topic might raise for the participants. No harm will threaten the participants and the study guarantees that it will bring to the forefront a social experience that has not been previously studied in depth (Henning, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

3.8 Conclusion

Through the Grounded Theory, the study explored the perceptions of volunteer care workers on homelessness, evaluating how this sample constructed meaning on homeless as a construct. The methodology rigorously presents the thought process and documents the decisions made to ensure that the research design was suitable for the study and its participants. Furthermore, it allows the reader to evaluate the value of the study within the field of Psychology. The next chapter explains the data analysis process, presents the findings of the study. Then recommends a theory based on the research findings of the perceptions of homelessness that influence volunteers' behaviours.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the qualitative data collected using the Constructive Grounded Theory. It presents the thematic analysis of the transcribed and coded data. Coded data were categorised into themes, which were interpreted then meaning was formed from the identified themes. Comparing the findings to the reviewed literature by exploring the information gathered through open-ended individual interviews allowed the researcher to theorise the findings and the research questions in particular. The researcher discussed the findings of the results by providing participants' accounts of the home, homelessness, altruism and volunteerism as sub-themes emerging from the data. It concludes with a theory of the findings and their implications for the current literature.

This chapter is an analysis of the perceptions held by the volunteer care workers who participated in this study. Husserl's Theory of Perception was the basis of this study. Which asserts that perceptions are formed through judgments of current objects or circumstances and the perceiver's past experiences. It is a synopsis of the participants' views that were gathered during the interviews, interpreting statements about homelessness and the experiences of volunteering. The following themes were identified during thematic analysis and will be discussed further as the chapter summarises the results: definitions of the home; definitions of homelessness; the negative perceptions of homeless people; empathetic perceptions of homeless people; factors that changed the volunteers' perceptions; the motivations for pro-social behaviour and; the reasons for volunteering to help the homeless.

4.2 Results

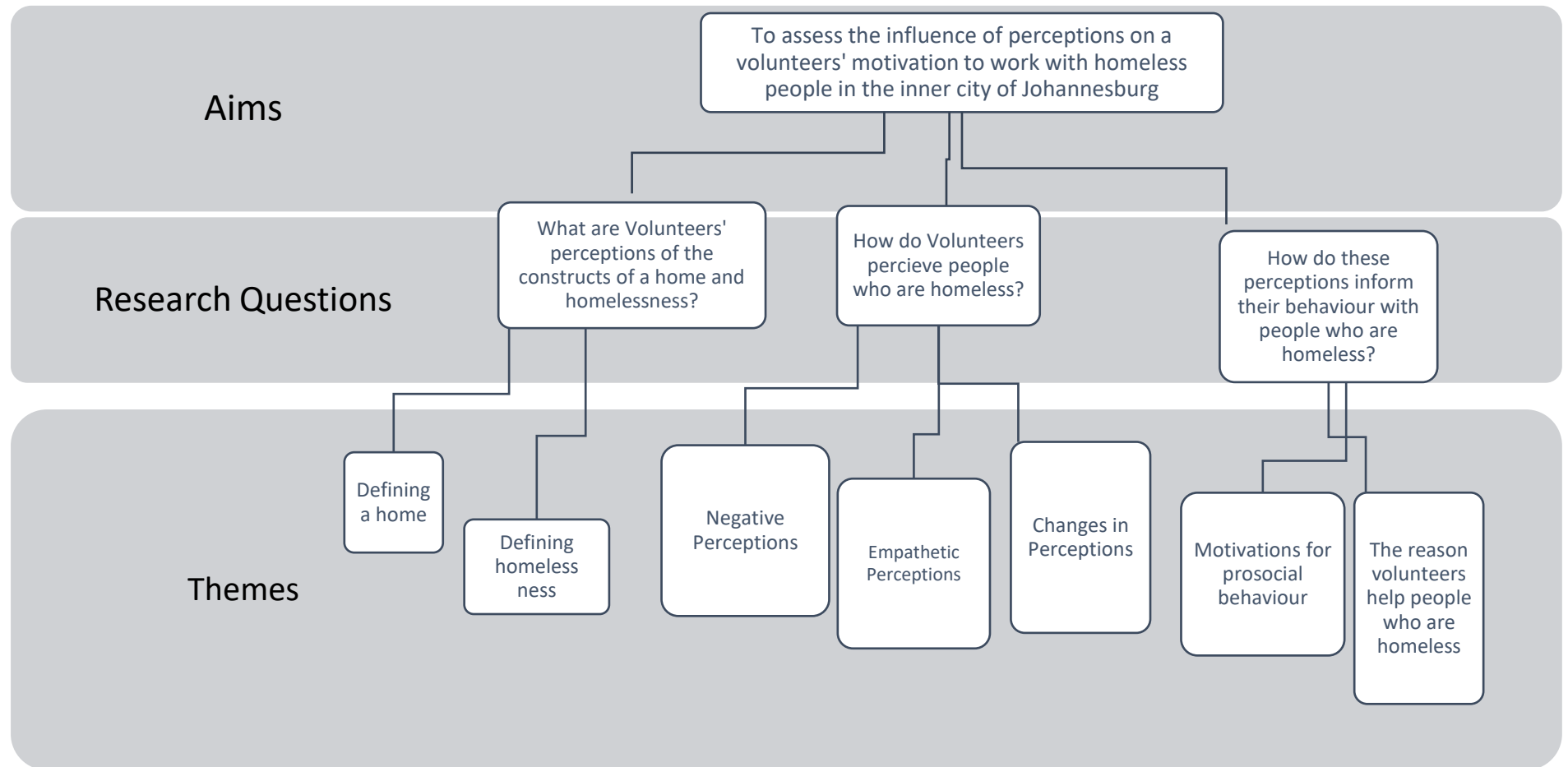


Figure 4.1: Thematic map of the results

Themes						
Definitions of the home	Definitions of homelessness	Negative Perceptions of homeless people	Empathic Perceptions of homeless people	factors that changed the volunteers' perceptions	Motivations For pro-social behaviour	Reasons for helping people who are homeless
Sub-Themes						
1. Safety, security 2. Space, structure, direction 3. Family, kinship 4. Affect, emotional connection 5. Nationality	1. Lack of safety 2. Lack of psychological well-being 3. Lack of physical well-being 4. Place not for accommodating people 5. Poverty 6. Depends on the time one is living homeless	1. Sympathy: think people may be orphaned, weak and meek, helpless 2. Dangerous: criminality, delinquency, aggressive	1. A symptom of social issues: poverty, politics, health system, unemployment, addiction, precarity, mental illness, illiteracy, witchcraft (beliefs) 2. Discomfort judging others: Feel they can relate with being destitute	1. Volunteer experience changed perceptions 2. Language barrier creates a misunderstanding between volunteer and people who are homeless 3. People who are homeless are more complex than their physical appearance	1. Care for Humanity 2. Help people similar to them/ in-group perception 3. Work is rewarding (Benefit) 4. Socialized to help 5. Open-minded personality (Altruistic Personality) 6. Personal experiences with social ills 7. Religious values for altruism	1. Values and principles influence Pro-social behaviour 2. Joined NGO/ FBO/ CBO 3. Affect - Felt uncomfortable and angry with other people's suffering 4. Responsibility for restoring hope (Homelessness is not a fixed state) 5. Made a long-term commitment 6. Would want to be helped if they were destitute 7. This is a calling (Spiritual)

Table 4.1: Themes and sub-themes

4.3 Summary of results

Theme 1: the participants defined home in several ways. Firstly, a home was defined as a safe place. Therefore, participants believe the inhabitants of a home should be safe from the dangers of the world, such as abuse and crime. Participants believed that people should be safe from any form of harm in the home but asserted that violence may turn a home into an unbearable and unliveable place (Olufemi, 2002).

Secondly, participants thought that a home is a place designated by space, structure and direction (Douglas, 1991). It is a place meant for the accommodation of humans. A home may be a conventional house, an apartment in an urban area, a homestead in a village and a shack in an informal settlement (Douglas, 1991). The participants said that some homes give their inhabitants easier access to government services, such as a house in the suburbs. However, other homes may have limited access to these services, such as informal settlements. Therefore, the participants perceived a home as a structure manifesting in many shapes and forms. Furthermore, an individual's socioeconomic status does not determine whether an individual has a home or not; it only influences the kind of housing available to that person. As such, a person's feeling about the structure determines how they feel at home.

This leads to the third definition that postulates that a home is a place where people from the same family share a living space. A home is a place that houses the members of a family unit, where each member plays a role in the symbiotic functioning of the family system (Cross & Seager, 2010). Therefore, home is the connection between the people who live in a house and it is as important as the walls that keep it upright, as a rupture in the family creates a toxic home environment. The participants also believed that a family is a group of people sharing a history and lineage; as such, a home is a place where an individual's ancestors lived.

Fourthly, a home is a place with emotional bonds, as the participants stated that family members care for one another (Somerville, 2013). For example, a mother rears, protects, supports and provides for her children in a home. Lastly, it is a place of one's country of origin and one's national heritage. The participants asserted that home is also a country of origin for immigrants. They further perceived the home as a place of origin, where the individual shares cultural and ethnic ties with a particular community.

These definitions suggest that home is more about people and their connections than it is about the quality of the living environment, although the participants asserted that the importance of home is embodied in the shelter it provides from the harshness of society.

Theme 2: the participants defined the social problem of homelessness as a state of being, where the homeless individual is not protected from harm at all. The participants believed that homeless people may become victims of physical or psychological trauma, at any moment (Frost et al., 2019). As such, there is no security or protection from the harshness of the world. The participants perceived the state of being homeless as the lack of the resources and services to maintain psychological and physical health. Therefore, the participants thought that homelessness is a result of untreated psychological disorders such as schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance addiction, anxiety and depression among others (Piat et al., 2015). Furthermore, the participants thought that homeless people have limited access to healthcare services resulting in undiagnosed medical conditions, with other homeless people with disabilities living rough on the streets.

The participants perceived homelessness as a state of living in uninhabitable conditions, such as parks, under bridges and pavements (Hopkins et al., 2020). There is no privacy or access to government services like sanitation, clean water and electricity. The participants asserted that the problem of homelessness reflects the state of poverty in the country as evidenced by the mass

migration to urban areas like Johannesburg. These migrants come to the city in search of employment to secure household incomes (Du Toit, 2010). However, the shortage of unskilled jobs has contributed to the destitution experienced by the homeless people residing in the city. The participants mentioned that people are labelled homeless depending on the amount of time they have been homeless. For example, a student living in the library while waiting for accommodation is referred to as being in transition, whereas an elderly man who has been living on the pavements in Braamfontein for many years is perceived as homeless.

Theme 3: The participants had two categories of negative perceptions of homeless people they worked with. The first one is that they thought that homeless people were vulnerable and needed help and they felt sympathy for the homeless people they interacted with (Speak & Tipple, 2006). They perceived homeless people living on the streets as sad, frail and miserable. As such, this perception of vulnerable and homeless people led the participants to believe that homeless people are helpless, hopeless and have no agency to change their deplorable living conditions.

The second negative perception is that homeless people are dangerous, resulting in some participants being wary of certain homeless people (Vitale, 2010). They perceived homeless people as delinquents who disobeyed the law. Homeless people residing in the City of Johannesburg were perceived as violent, drug-addicted gangsters who end up on the street because they were excommunicated by their family members because of their unruly behaviour (Johnson & Chamberlain, 2011). The participants also asserted that substance abuse hindered the moral judgement of some individuals, leading to the state of homelessness they find themselves in. Additionally, the participants believed that some homeless people were not interested at all in being part of society and as such, they struggled with assimilating the norms of their community.

Therefore, the participants thought that homeless people are either vulnerable or a threat to the safety of others. Furthermore, children, women and the elderly seemed to be grouped under the

vulnerable group, whereas young men were judged harshly. This suggests that men are expected to be more autonomous and have more control over their living conditions.

Theme 4: The participants had empathetic perceptions of the homeless people they worked with. The first one is that the participants saw homeless people as victims of social conditions, particularly inequality. Homelessness is a sign of a broader social issue such as poverty, which may lead to homelessness. The participants believed that the mass homelessness in the Johannesburg CBD illustrates the ineffectiveness of South Africa's welfare and housing policies that address the needs of shack dwellers receiving social grants and free housing, but not necessarily helping the people living rough on pavements. The participants viewed addiction as a disorder that requires treatment and not as a reflection of the criminality existing in the country, though it reflects that the addict may have underlying psychological problems.

Additionally, the participants mentioned that some homeless people seem to suffer from a mental illness, which could have influenced their homelessness. Family members may not have the skills and/or capacity to deal with persons with a mental illness. The participants believed that some homeless people express their beliefs by being homeless; as such, some homeless people were believed to have been bewitched. The participants also thought that illiteracy among homeless people could have led to their ill-informed decisions to migrate and get stranded on the city's streets.

The second category of empathetic perceptions is the discomfort the participants had about judging homeless people as they could identify with the feeling of helplessness. This identification with the people they help may have made the participants more open to the complexity of the social problem facing homeless people. As such, the participants mentioned that they were interested in helping people in general and that volunteering about homelessness or changing the rates of homelessness. Here, the participants seemed reciprocally altruistic. Furthermore, their pro-social behaviour appears to be a demonstration of their unconscious discomfort with vulnerability. It seems

that the participants' unconscious internal drives, experiences, education and level of awareness led to empathetic perceptions.

Theme 5: The factors that changed the volunteers' perceptions are captured below. The participants stated that they changed their perceptions about homelessness and homeless people because of their experience of volunteering with them. They believed they were exposed to the reality of homelessness and that the label was not sufficient to describe the people they helped. They reportedly learned about how multidimensional homeless people can be and that the condition of homelessness is complex, ranging from conventional street homelessness to shelter dwellers. The participants asserted that they believed they had attained a higher level of awareness regarding destitution, precarity, and agency. They reportedly observed people who were struggling to survive, but they did not seem as meek or violent as previously perceived. Therefore, the participants saw the homeless as everyday people with unique stories. They added that the initial perceptions resulted from language barriers and misjudgements occurring because of miscommunication.

Theme 6: The participants listed the motivations for pro-social behaviour. They felt responsible for humanity as a whole, indicating that they may be operating from the last stage of moral judgement. They spoke about being connected to people they shared similar characteristics with. They asserted that this increased their willingness to help as they could identify with the feelings and behaviours of homeless people.

Helpful actions were rewarding for the participants. Even though they did not receive material rewards, they cherished the feeling of being good and helpful people. This suggests that altruistic behaviour is guided by the superego construct of the unconscious (Segrist, 2009). Additionally, the participants who were members of helpful organisations may have assimilated the altruistic values of the group. The participants also believed they were open-minded and were able to

work with people, suggesting that they had altruistic personality traits (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016).

Theme 7: The participants gave reasons for volunteering to help the homeless. The only other-oriented reasoning was the most important to the participants of this study (Briggs et al., 2010). They mentioned that they helped others as an expression of their values and principles, adding that they believed that they had a spiritual calling, indicating that there was an intrinsic reason motivating the participants to help the homeless. However, the following me-oriented reasons motivated the participants' decision to volunteer: thus, the participants wanted to assimilate into the organisations they joined and honour the long-term commitment to the performance of volunteering duties; they wanted to protect themselves from unconscious feelings, as they felt uncomfortable and unsettled when they saw other people suffering; the participants were enhancing their self-esteem as they felt good when they restored other people's homes (Briggs et al., 2010).

Additionally, it seems that the participants used reciprocal altruism, which suggests that they would also want to be helped if they were in a helpless position (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Volunteers' perceptions on the constructs of a home and homelessness

The participants asserted that a home is a safe space that provides warmth, love and comfort to its inhabitants. Participant 003 said,

“Okay , remember when you were born, the eyes you saw were your mom’s and the Doctor’s eyes, but then you were kept with this one lady for twenty four hours and it started a bond. It started the warmth and a safety net. That same person takes you and puts you in a new nest where there are different people, where you also adapt to this new nest. That is why when we call a home, it is where you feel safe because this is where you were protected from birth. You know, these are the first people who knew me before I said my first word. When I was crying, they were holding me, jumping around, giving me water, milk, food, and doing everything to me. So, this is the real reason why it is safer. That’s why, when you get married, you get married to the person with whom you feel safe.”

A home can be an erected structure meant for housing or accommodating people and their needs. Participant 004 said,

“Ikhaya akusi ii ii ikhaya umndeni nasem’khukhwini kungaba sekhaya. (A home is a family; even a shack can be a home.)”

And Participant 010 shared these sentiments stating,

“A home does not necessarily need to be a building. It can be a shack on the side of the road. It could be anywhere where you feel safe and at peace.”

Similarly, Olufemi (2000) asserts that a home is a place of shelter, which is secure, liveable, accessible, structurally durable and stable. However, a home can be any kind of structure meant for this purpose, even if the living conditions are dilapidated (Douglas, 1991). Therefore, a home can be in a four-walled shack made of aluminium or a mansion with many rooms and lavish amenities. A home can also be a modern apartment in a large urban city or a rondavel in a village or small town. Therefore, an individual’s socioeconomic status and lifestyle may determine the house that they live in; it is not necessarily the existence of a home as space. Thus, it is important to note that the concept of home is not bound to a space only.

The participants mentioned that a home is a place of nationality, heritage, lineage and history. Participant 006 said,

“Your family orientation or where your parents are is your home.”

Participant 005 stated that,

“A home is a place where I come from. It would be my country because I am not from South Africa. So, when I am leaving my workplace and say I am going home, I mean my house. However, when I am planning to travel to my country, I say I am going home.”

Supporting literature confirms that a home is a place an individual lives in with others who share a common lineage and family history (Somerville, 2013). It has strong ties with a person’s origin, such as ancestry and nationality. Since some of the participants were immigrants, they stated that home was their country of origin, where their families and relations lived. Home carries connotations of permanence; for example, a participant mentioned that living at a particular residence does not feel like living at home, because she felt no one originates from Johannesburg and that her living conditions

were in constant flux in the city, unlike at home where her parents have lived for many years. Therefore, a home is linked to the parental figure construct, and as such, for a house to be classified as a home, it needs guiding elders and at times even children who can lead other children during childhood. Furthermore, the parental figure may not necessarily have to be biological but a bond of some sort; an example could be a family where the children are adopted.

Hence, a home is a standalone entity from which a person originates and where there are initial socialising agents (Grbich, 1990). However, homelessness is seen as a social condition and not a lack of a permanent structure. Homelessness is seen as a symptom of a rupture in a system, particularly the family system, such as abuse in the home. Alternatively, a fissure in the societal system, such as an inundated government that cannot handle its responsibility to citizens, may lead to issues within the economic, educational and healthcare sectors, all of which contribute to the resultant destitution. Shifts in the family dynamic, having limited resources and unmet service provision may contribute to homelessness.

The participants reported that a home is a structured place providing refuge from the physical and emotional dangers posed by the world, where a person lives with and is supported by their family. Participant 001 said,

“So, I think everyone, even an animal, needs support and as humans, we are very emotional. We need someone to talk to or just someone to help with something every day.”

Participant 003 gave an account of how a homeless person who was abused landed on the street, stating,

“I dropped out from those things when I was still young. I ran away from shelters when I was still young because I felt I was being abused at those places and I started roaming around at an early age.”

The family is an integral part of the home, as the home is where a person is born, socialised and reared into adulthood (Douglas, 1991; Grbich, 1990). There is a sense of permanence, belonging, kinship, history and nationality attached to the home. There is a parental figure in a home; it may be a primary caregiver, biological or non-biological parent, extended family member or even older siblings

that create some culture or routine behaviour. A home is a comfortable place, where the person receives love and is free to be themselves without the threat of judgment and stigma. It is a place that influences an individual's emotional stability and nurtures mental health. It also allows its inhabitants access to resources.

Participants perceived homelessness as a lack of all the social aspects, affective representations, structure and stability of the home. Therefore, being homeless is a state of not having resources, warmth, comfort, safety, refuge and human contact. Participant 005 said,

"Homelessness is when a person does not have resources because they are most important. If you are homeless, you don't have resources and most of the time you find homeless people carrying bags where their belongings are. So, they don't have resources, hence they are destitute."

A homeless person may also be constantly under the scrutiny of other people's opinions. Furthermore, the term 'homeless' is a label that people attach to the homeless person's whole identity, regardless of other aspects of their life. Homeless people are only perceived as homeless if they are chronically homeless. Participant 002 asserted,

"At first perhaps, but I feel like the more homeless you get, the more you are likely to be called homeless. If you have been homeless for longer periods, it becomes your life. You know, you no longer have to put up this façade because you now fall into the category of homeless. That is now your new identity. Whether you wanted it to be or not, that is now how society labels you. So, society gives you that identity if you are now a homeless person. This is what you are, no matter how you act on your own, if you fall into that category."

Chronic homelessness makes the label stick (Sanchez, 2010). Volunteers perceived homelessness as a capricious circumstance; however, it is an unsafe designation where individuals find themselves living in spaces and structures not designated for human accommodation (Frost et al., 2019). Such spaces include a sidewalk, underneath a bridge, a library and so on. Some volunteers described the state of destitution as resulting from a fracture in the family dynamic, including violence or neglect in the home.

Volunteers that participated in the study also mentioned that homelessness is a state of helplessness and the result of unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances. Participant 004 said,

"I saw it, kanti unom'yeni wakhe (I realised she was with her husband) and when I greeted them ngabona ukuthi yabona la laba baya fika (I realised that they are new to this place). Yabona nathi

soyi three masingaya lapha... (if the three of us were to go to the there)... Omunye umuntu uzosibona ukhuthi (Another person would be able to see that) we don't belong. I could see that they don't belong here, bayafika (they just arrived)...Ngathi umphe ipapa (I asked her if she is really giving the baby pap?). Wathi mama yisimo (She told me that it was the situation normally this would not happen). Ngathi hayi nami mntana 'mi ngiya bona yosimo (I agreed with her and said yes the situation is causing her to give this baby such solid food). Nami bengi bona ukuthi yisimo (I could also see it was the situation). Hey! Ngathula, ngathu yintombazana, ngumfana (I was stunned then I asked her if the baby was a girl or a boy. Because I was trying to establish ukuthi (about), how I could help."

Volunteers view homeless people as coming from broken homes where there was a rupture in the family foundation. This could be due to fights and disagreements making some family members feel unsupported by the other members. To the volunteers, a homeless person may not be able to adapt to changes in the family dynamic and this could lead to the rupture; such changes include the passing of a parent. Homelessness could be a result of physical, emotional, verbal or psychological abuse.

Participant 004 said,

"Icauzwa abantwana abanga hloniphi (It's caused by disrespectful children in the home). Abantwana abanga hloniphi, aba mameli aba funi ukutshelwa, especially makuhambe umzali. (Children who don't respect and don't listen, often don't want to be told anything, especially when a parent passes away). Ja (Yes), icauzwa umsindo emakhaya, iabuse (it's caused by fights or noise at home and abuse)."

Participant 003 said,

"Ja (Yes), he tells him the glorified parts but doesn't tell them the struggle and we are not brought up the same."

The participants also believed that mental and psychological illness influences the presentation of street homelessness. Participant 003 said,

"They are destitute and going through a lot of mental challenges. When I say mental challenges, I mean schizophrenia or bipolar or depression".

Participants viewed addiction and delinquency as contributors to homelessness. Participant 007 said,

"Wazibonele ukuthi uyazicontroller wayeka ukulandela the right direction aphiwe ngabazali (Children started seeing that they are in control and stopped following the correct direction they are given by their parents). So, they will end up homeless because angasa funiukumamele abazali bam'khulusile bambonisa ukuthi education is the best (he doesn't want to listen to his parents who raised him, showing him the importance of education). So, waphum'e endleleni ene knowledge ayinikwe aba zali (so the person may have struggled and lost direction with the insight he received from his parents), so the foundation was lost on the way... Yiyo inkinga, ja, nje ngoba manje sekuna lezi futhi I'dakamizwa. It's not easy ukuthi

baphume kizo (Yes it is the main problem and things are aggravated now in the wake of the abuse of substances and it is really not easy to get off substances).

Participant 002 mentioned,

“Substance abuse leads to homelessness. Some people are disowned by their families and they would rather go and live on the street and continue with their habits, than reform. Most people are disowned, and some of them do have homes but they feel as though being out on the street feeding their addiction is better than reforming. So, that’s what happens.”

The participants perceived the home as a place of refuge with familial ties. It is a place where members of a family designate a building for living, such as a house, an apartment or a back room. The home provides its inhabitants with access to basic needs and resources. However, the participants’ answers on the homeless construct focused on the pathways to street homelessness and not necessarily homelessness as a broad condition, which may be due to their experience with this specific group of homeless people. Homelessness is a condition whose states range from having no liveable form of shelter commonly known as ‘sleeping on the streets’ to having a satisfactory and secure form of housing with no familial and permanent ties among its inhabitants. It is a term that signifies a lack of housing, services and basic needs such as water and electricity (Mashau, 2017; Roets et al., 2016; Speak & Tipple, 2006). The participants mainly spoke about street homelessness in the CBD. Their categorisation of the homeless population excluded autonomous people with access to resources.

Therefore, the results confirm the importance of studying the perceptions of the public on homelessness to address the usefulness of the current interventions, as they may not appropriately confront the condition of the homeless in its broad context (Roets et al., 2016). The results suggest an array of pathways to homelessness, which informs the civil society’s perception of homelessness and their approach to dealing with the issue, which seems dissimilar to the approach outlined in the policies designed to tackle the issue such as the government’s housing and welfare policies (Department of Human Settlements, 2021; Department of Social Development, 2021). For example, if it is perceived as a criminal problem, measures such as the clean-up campaigns are implemented, for instance, the cleaning up of Skid Row in Los Angeles, in the United States of America (Vitale, 2010). Alternatively,

the government could implement housing policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme in South Africa where there is a longstanding history of displacement and homelessness (Block et al., 2011; Du Toit, 2010). Furthermore, healthcare interventions may be implemented where the perception is that homelessness is a manifestation of mental and psychological disorder (Moyo et al., 2015; Speak & Tipple, 2006).

4.4.2 Volunteers' perception of the homeless people they help

The following language was used to express the perceptions held by the volunteers about the homeless; furthermore, the responses corroborate the perceptions explored in the literature review. A homeless person is an evil person with bad intentions. That implies that homeless people are gangs of thieves, fiends and drug addicts (Schneider, 2014). Participant 001 said,

"I think it's true because the majority of the time, homeless people are perceived as robbers or thieves ready to steal stuff and they will just be hooligans and things like that. I think that is the perception that is out there."

This notion made participants apprehensive about the people they label as such and this judgement may be incorrect as mentioned in the literature review. It creates a misrepresentation of the population and most importantly, it incorrectly directs resources towards curbing delinquency and criminal activities and may not realistically solve the problem of homelessness. Furthermore, if a volunteer judges a homeless person as delinquent, it decreases their willingness to help them with the services they need, notwithstanding their involvement in crime (Schneider, 2014; Vitale, 2010).

Homeless people are needy and are beggars. Participant 005 said,

"Many years ago, there was a White guy who always begged here. I used to give him money, but one day, I saw him smoking. Since that day, I stopped giving him."

Participant 008 added,

"It shocks me that they live on the streets. So, when I met him, I spoke with him and he spoke so well and he engaged so well with the bible study. I couldn't picture him on the side of the road. You know that kind of thing. I just couldn't see it until I eventually had a one-on-one conversation with him outside of the bible study. He said he slept on the side of the road because he did not have a place to stay. It was the same with all of them. They are literally homeless but you would never guess that because they don't speak as if they are. I guess you always think that a homeless person will be begging, and has to be begging all the time and is always low and doesn't have any self-esteem, or the ability to speak."

This notion of homelessness is a label seemingly reserved for people who look tattered and vulnerable. However, when the volunteers perceived the homeless as deceitful their charitable behaviour towards the individuals changed to policing behaviour, supporting the literature that reports that the public generally perceives a criminal element as tantamount to living homeless (Vitale, 2010; Wilking et al., 2018). Furthermore, their interaction with the people who beg creates a presumption that all homeless people lack a certain level of agency over their own lives (Schneider, 2014). This misrepresents the homeless population as suggested in the literature review, as it disregards their access to income through temporary work; furthermore, it does not consider the homeless people's need for non-financial support (Cross, et al., 2010).

Homeless people are mentally ill or suffer from psychological disorders (Creech et al., 2015).

Participant 002 mentioned that,

“Substance abuse leads to homelessness. Some people are disowned by their families and they would rather go and live on the street and continue with their habits, than reform. Most people are disowned, though some of them do have homes. However, they feel as though being out on the street feeding their addiction is better than going back and changing.”

Participant 003 said,

“He does not even need funds, he's not dangerous to anyone, but he has a mental condition. So, whoever touches him needs to get him to a psychologist to start therapy and get the appropriate medication, test out the medication. Hopefully, if the medication works properly, the senses might come back. So, we've been with him for a month now. So, next week we need to take him to the clinic because he has now gained the trust. So, we need to manipulate him a bit to lure him to the clinic but when we get to the clinic. This is the correct procedure as we are dealing with a mentally challenged individual. He has issues with anxiety, crowded places and isiphithiphithi (crowded, noisy places).”

The participants perceived the homeless as having some power over their lives and that they choose to live on the street even if the choice is ill-informed (Speak & Tipple, 2006). Furthermore, the participants were not conversant with the knowledge of the psychological causes of homelessness though they seem to empathise with the mental anguish driving some homeless individuals onto the streets of Johannesburg.

Therefore, volunteers perceived the people on the street as more self-sufficient than reported in the literature review. As such, the volunteers were aware of the biopsychosocial factors influencing homelessness.

Homeless people are perceived as immoral, a label particularly attached to homeless women. Participant 009 said,

"I don't think so, most of them look normal. You actually cannot single out a homeless person."

There is no evidence to support this notion in the current study, as participants had constructive assertions about the people they helped. The volunteers did not use the words 'widow', 'outcast' and 'prostitute' during the interviews. The volunteers do not see the homeless as iniquitous, but they view their current circumstances as a symptom of structural inequities. As such, their understanding of homelessness was complex in this regard (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

Volunteers perceived homeless people as wanderers, roaming metropolitan cities that have an influx of immigration. Participant 001 stated,

"Umm (laughs a bit) it's about coming to Johannesburg with the hope of making it. Then, one realises Johannesburg is not truly such a friendly place. So people come to Johannesburg thinking it's a big city loaded with opportunities and people think they can make it in Johannesburg. That's the painted picture around and then, you get here and you realise that everything is material, and you need to survive."

Participant 003 said,

"You are valued by someone, but when I don't feel that, not I put myself in the pressure to say let me go to Johannesburg hoping to find employment there."

The participants viewed homelessness in Johannesburg as reflective of society and the politics of the time, suggesting the existence of corruption and the mismanagement of the resources of the country and municipalities. Overall, this contributes to the struggle of the people underneath the poverty line as they may be unemployed and dependent on monthly social welfare handouts for survival. This may increase the number of people seeking to improve their lives as they see Johannesburg as the 'The City of Gold', a place where one can come and change themselves for the better. However, the participants felt as though the homeless may have been misinformed about the

city because they may have gotten information from someone who had not experienced living in Johannesburg or the homeless themselves had not done adequate research. Furthermore, a lack of education and skills may contribute to their employment, resulting in them being destitute.

Some may come to the city following a family member who may have migrated to Johannesburg and turned out to be successful (Johnston et al., 2020). This increases the hope of being successful in the city, even though this may not necessarily be the case. As the results may be due to chance and opportunities that the family member would have manipulated when they migrated, the situation becomes unique. If this is not one's story when they migrated, the participants saw shame as the reason people would not travel back home after not prospering as expected; therefore, people may see living homeless as more bearable than living as the family's disappointment at home. Negative self-talk leads to the self-fulfilling prophesy that further contributes to their lived condition (Creech et al., 2015). This and other seemingly bad choices lead to an extended stay on the streets for some homeless individuals. This corroborates the literature averring that people may migrate from different parts of a country in search of a better income (Johnston et al., 2020). The homeless are seen as wanderers because they may not occupy the same space daily, often moving around the city centre. This representation excludes people who permanently live in informal settlements with limited access to pro-social resources (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

Another perception was that homeless men were loners that do not have anyone who cares for them. Participant 004 said,

“Ja (Yes) Kufuneka siconnecte futhi (we need to be able to connect again). No man is an island. Ngiyophila ngiyi one estradeni kuyoze kube nini, ngoba ngiku kwatele wena ufuna indlu or wena uzenza umama wami, kodwa awusi'ngumama wami (How long will I live alone on the streets for, just because I am angry at you for wanting the house or because you have been acting like my mother, when you aren't) ”.

Participant 006 disputed this and said,

“It's not always the case, you would always think that they would be lonely, but some people are not lonely. Some people get into some forms of brotherhoods, comradeship or whatever on the street but there will always be a level of loneliness on the streets.”

Volunteers did not perceive the homeless as completely isolated but stated that homeless people form units and communities with other street dwellers. Inherently, volunteers thought that the familial connections found in the home may be emulated by the homeless, who get connected with people who share their lived experience and resilience (Shinn, 2010). Therefore, the disruption of the family unit does not necessarily lead to isolation, which suggests that volunteers believed that networks can be formed on the streets. This supports the literature that posits that top-down interventions may not adequately deal with the issue of homelessness and that it may be worthwhile to create policies based on the communities of homeless people as the construct is wide-ranging (Speak & Tipple, 2006).

The homeless are victims, and volunteers see them as too helpless and powerless to redress their condition. Participant 007 said,

“There were children left alone outside. A 15-year-old child was taking care of other children aged 3 and 7-years. So, they were traumatised and left alone again, as the mother got arrested.”

Contrary to findings by Speak and Tipple (2006), which suggests that homelessness is caused by a lack of agency, the volunteers perceived the homeless as people with agency and that homelessness was a reaction to the socio-economic and financial situations. The participants also believed that homeless people act in response to the loss of a parental figure or violation of their rights. Therefore, they may not see the homeless as a group of vulnerable individuals but as survivors (Creech et al., 2015; Ventriglio et al., 2015). However, the participating volunteers explored the dangers of being homeless. Participant 007 said,

“Even when it is cold, they are outside there. It is worse when it is raining because the blankets will be cold and wet; they are just staying and spending sleepless nights. Even when they sleep, they don’t know that someone would come to kill them.”

Volunteers perceive the homeless as outsiders and use the words ‘foreigner’, ‘illegal residents’ *et cetera* to refer to them. Participant 006 said,

“Homelessness is, caused by a lot of refugees. We have done a lot of studies and found that the majority of the homeless people were actually immigrants. A lot of people move to South Africa with prospects of finding better jobs and a better life. However, they do not get to a point where they enjoy that eventuality. So, the majority of the people we serve are not South Africans but actually foreigners that came looking for better prospects and better job opportunities.”

The participants were sympathetic to the plight of the homeless, and as such, these groupings did not lead to othering in the form of xenophobia. The participants were willing to go an extra mile in terms of getting the homeless people documented at the Department of Home Affairs, refuting the literature on the public categorisation of the homeless into groups. The participants seemed to grasp the multifaceted structural and safety issues behind immigration, for instance, immigration resulting in one becoming a refugee in South Africa by applying for an asylum status (Department of Home Affairs, 2021; Speak & Tipple, 2006). There was an understanding that some homeless people coming into South Africa may be refugees seeking refuge from war-torn countries and these may be political asylum-seekers seeking asylum from political opponents threatening them with imprisonment; or economic asylum-seekers seeking refuge from poverty. Educated migrants may move from their countries to more developed countries seeking to secure better incomes to improve the lives of their family members (Tsai et al., 2017).

4.4.3 The effect of perception on the volunteers' behaviour towards homeless people

4.4.3.1 The volunteers' perception of altruism and pro-social motives

It appeared that some volunteers were truly altruistic while others were reciprocally altruistic (Gantt & Burton, 2012). As such, most of the participants were part of a faith-based organisation as they believed in the 'Golden Rule' enshrined in the Christian religion in the book of Matthew chapter 7 verse 12 (Goodman, 2014; Holy Bible & New Living Translation, 2015). This suggests that their altruistic values positively influenced how they perceived helping and the people they helped. For example, Participant 010 said,

“Actually, my initial attraction to doing this was to study the Bible. I’ve always studied the Bible from the time I met Christ. I was about 20 when I met Christ; it was like a one-on-one sort of encounter. We grew up in a Christian home, where we went to church (unintelligible 32:39) and all that, but these ones just fly away. As an adult and after an encounter with God, one stumbles on the word God personally; it’s a different ball game and that was what happened to me when I was 20. So, from then on, I always studied the Bible. Even before I started coming to Bible Study, I was already studying the Bible. I have a very good knowledge of the Bible even though I’m not a bible scholar. In the past, I tried to join Bible studies with different parishes and people, but they never fulfilled me. However, when this one came up, I was attracted by the first person I (unintelligible 33:25) It was for the homeless people. My initial attraction was that I was going to be here and study the Bible.”

Participant 009 said,

“Actually, I am not catholic. But you should be good... And do good without expecting anything in return.”

Therefore, participants seem to volunteer as a way of assimilating with their faith-based organisation. Additionally, the results support the social-psychological assertion that pro-social behaviour is a result of an interaction between the self, namely a person’s personality traits and attachment style and the environment, such as a society, class, education and race (Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Hustinx et al., 2010; Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1994). This process may result in the volunteers identifying with the homeless people they help. Participant 011 said,

“Just reflecting on his story and that you can come from a good family and you know you can live this perfect life, go to university and stuff like that, but you never know what’s actually going to happen in the future because, like I said, he knows the Bible. You can meet someone who has been to school speaking proper English.”

Additionally, Participant 008 said,

“I don’t know, but it just makes you feel like there’s injustice going on in the world.”

The Psychoanalytic Approach purports that altruism’s main function is to protect an individual’s id from feelings like guilt (Grbich, 1990). Such feelings would be excruciating to experience and may influence the participants to perform helpful behaviour to reduce the discomfort. For example, Participant 011 mentioned,

“I felt sad because of the fact that I judged him like before, actually knowing him personally. It was quite saddening, and I was very disappointed.”

Participant 006 also agreed and said,

“To tell you the truth, I am comfortable here. Another thing that makes me stay is that I think people who help the homeless tend to feel satisfied. For me, it’s not, even though it does make me feel good. For me, it’s what the other person needs. It’s less about me and more about the other person. I think this community did that. You had a group of people who sat down and greeted other people. They treated them respectfully. They treated them with kindness; they sat down and asked them question on what they were doing. We know where most people live; we know what their situations are and we know their struggles. For me, it was like there was a group of people that was not doing this from a selfish point of view. It feels great to help others, but that is not the ultimate aim. The actual helping is encapsulated in the aim. I found a group of people that actually shared that with me and I think that’s why I stayed.”

Participant 008 mentioned,

“When you deal with homeless people or any type of service, ministry and stuff like that, you have to battle because you always try to draw the line of when you're giving too much. When you're expecting too much from yourself, and that kind of thing, because you could literally give everything away, you could give everything away. If you're not careful, then at the same time you feel guilty for being careful because sometimes you feel like maybe you needed to give.”

4.1.3.2 Volunteerism

According to the Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT), other-oriented empathy is the main influence for volunteer activities, as most participants felt it was necessary to help others. However, the me-oriented values influenced the participants' reasons for volunteering to work with the homeless in particular (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2010).

The participants felt that the pro-social behaviour was not about the homeless but about helping people. Participant 007 stated,

“There were children left alone outside, and a 15-year-old child was taking care of other children aged 3 years and 7 years. So, I was doing voluntary work in prison; so, I started to think about what I could do about it.”

Participants enjoyed helping others. Participant 006 said,

“It could have been any cause to tell you the truth. I am comfortable here. Another thing that I think people who help with the homeless tend to have the satisfaction I want, thus to feel good about myself. For me, it's not, even though it does make me feel good. For me, it's about what the other person needs. It's less about me and more about the other person. I think this community did that. You had a group of people who sat down and greeted other people. They treated them respectfully. They treated them with kindness. They sat down and asked them questions on what they were doing. We know where most people live, and we know what their situations are; we even know their struggles. For me, there is group of people that are not doing this from a selfish point of view. It feels great to help others but that is not the ultimate aim. The actual helping is encapsulated in the aim. I found a group of people that actually shared that with me and I think that's why I stayed.”

The participants' environment contributed to the interest in helping, and felt guilty that other people had to live under certain conditions. Participant 009 said,

“I didn't understand why the world can be so cruel. That is the first thing that came to me.”

Participant 008 added,

“Comfort makes you feel better and whole, whereas when you're not comfortable, you actually feel, you start to have compassion and I mean there's a lot of quotes on compassion. Compassion is willingness to suffer with someone else, feeling someone else's pain and what they are going through. I bear that as well, even though we have different situations, I will be bearing that with them. So, to have that type of deep compassion, one should be willing not being comfortable. That's not something a lot of people can do. That does not make her a bad person.”

Faith and religious affiliation encouraged them to help others. Participant 004, mentioned that,

“Kukhona ophakelayo laphayana umuntu ozoku tshela ukuthi mina kithi kuse Rockville, kuse Orlando. (Someone in the soup kitchen will tell you that their home is Rockville, another will say he comes from Orlando.) Buyel’ekhaya, omunye uzothi kuphi? (You could tell them to go home and they would look at you surprisingly and as ‘you say I must go back were?’.) Uyabona ukuthi yiyo into eyenza nje ayi gazi tshela nje ukuthi abantu befe kangaka unkulunklu makanga ngicgina ngibe na sixty years, ngiretire ayi ngifuna ukusebenza nom’phakathi. (You see, that’s why I saw that people are dying at an alarming rate. If God is so willing, He should have kept me living till I turn sixty years and then retire to work with the community.”

Participant 009 said,

“Actually, we do have groups in church. I was actually put in homeless.” Researcher: *“So you were assigned in other words.”*

Participants wanted to renew other people’s hope. Participant 002 stated,

“Hopefully, it helps them and renews their hope. We don’t preach to them. Well, there are two different things. There’s St Vincent De Paul where we serve soup and then there’s a bible study group.”

Participant 007 said,

“Ja, bengifuna into bengiyi funa kakhulu ukuthi (Yes, what I wanted the most was to)... Aba funa abafuna ukuthi babuye to the right, babuye bazimele futhi (Those who want to come back on the right path and stand on their own feet again). Ngiba my plan was, even now I am focusing to buy land.”

The participants were committed to a long-term cause and it was their duty. Participant 005 said,

“It was my house duty and at first I had come to assist here. It was a house duty. At that time, as a resident, I had a duty to assist here”.

Some participants started that they volunteered by chance, indicating that they wanted to do something else but happened to find themselves in this space. Participant 004 said,

“Nami ngangi’ngazi ngufuna ukucabanga izinto zama soup kitchen kanti ke ngizoba nenhlanhla vele a friend of mine naye waba nom’bona ke ufuna sivule ikhaya labantwana senza iprison ministry. (I also did not know how I was going to do this but I was lucky because my friend had an idea of having a home for children because we do a prison ministry). Enkonzweni yethi kune prison ministry so waye fun’ukuthi sibe nekhaya ngoba eprison wena ma’uboshiwe umntwana wakho ma’ena two years bayam’khipa. (At church we have a prison ministry programme. So, my friend wanted to have a home because in prison when you are locked up with your child when your child turns two, they are released from the correctional services system into society)”.

Participant 001 said,

“Why homeless? (Laughs) Actually, this started when I was still in high school, where it wasn’t really about the homeless but about little kids, primary school kids. I used to help young kids with homework. When you get to university and there are so many homeless people and there is a programme already running, you get attracted to it. It’s about seeing a good initiative and wanting to be part of it.”

Participant 011 said,

“Well, I was actually assigned there. There wasn’t really a choice basically. More like here is a group of people talk to them.”

Participants were moved to act by a higher power. Participant 005 mentioned,

“And the first time that I came down to assist the homeless I was moved.”

Participant 006 added,

“To be honest with you, I went through Lent. In the Catholic Church, Lent is a time for reflection, prayer and giving back. Then, I had seen the guys when I was coming back from work and then I thought it was okay for the forty days of Lent. I’m going to try and join this group. So, I joined them and I did it for forty days. It was about 6 odd weeks. I ended up building a community of friends and then it was more than just coming to serve the homeless. It was like a family; it was like me and my family were doing something greater; you and your family doing something great.”

Participant 010 mentioned,

“My initial attraction was that I was going to be here and study the Bible. I’m learning a lot, I’ve learnt a lot, I learn every week. Honestly, I learn a lot about God, you know, about the word of God. I have a deeper understanding of life in general.”

The participants wanted to help the vulnerable and needy. They were curious about the homeless people they saw regularly, and they find working with the homeless more affordable than other ways of helping. Participant 002 said,

“Again, it goes back to my first encounter. Seeing that I couldn’t pay a homeless person, I thought about what I could do to work with them and then I found out about St Vincent De Paul in my first year.”

The Behavioural Reasoning Theory, which emphasises the Volunteer Functions Inventory, that outlines six motives for justifying a person’s decision to volunteer and was supported by the results as the volunteers seemingly used the other-oriented motive, which is the expression of values motive. Additionally, the following me-oriented values were found in the data: the understanding motive, the volunteers wanted to understand the self and others; the social motive, the volunteers volunteered so they could assimilate and connect with their peers; the protective motive, the volunteers were worried about negative uncomfortable feelings like guilt; lastly, self-esteem enhancement, volunteers felt good when they helped others and some found volunteering a spiritually rewarding exercise (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2010; Haski-Leventhal, 2009). However, the greater value placed on a motive determines how much it influences an individual’s attitude that drives volunteer behaviour, taking into consideration the fact that values are abstract, broadly guiding how a person lives.

Alternatively, attitudes are directed towards specific objects and/or events in an individual's environment, for example, needy people, organisations and activities (Briggs et al., 2010).

In the current study, the researcher was interested in finding out what drives the altruistic attitudes volunteers have towards homeless people living in Johannesburg city centre. Furthermore, these perceptions influenced the helpful behaviour the volunteers exhibited. It was difficult to identify participants who willingly wanted to participate in the study. Volunteer participants were hard to access, as most of them did not live in the community of interest and if they did, their living conditions were far superior to those found in the shelters of the people they helped. For example, student volunteers had campus residence in Braamfontein.

Volunteers expressed the view that energy did not flow in a linear pattern from the volunteer to the people being helped. On the contrary, the participants found the work quite rewarding. They believed that they gained more insights and spiritual growth from helping homeless people. Additionally, they learned some life lessons as some of the homeless people they helped demonstrated wisdom.

The reward for volunteering to help homeless people was seemingly not materialistic but internal as participants felt satisfied when they had assisted the homeless in the inner-city community (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014). The participants commented that they feel duty-bound to help and there was a level of sympathy and empathy involved as they imagined that they also wanted to be helped if they found themselves in the same situation (Lämsäsalmi et al., 2004). They were guided by spiritual values of gaining favour and treating others as equals, no matter their circumstances (Goodman, 2014). This could mean the participants did not want to be judged as bad if they did not help; therefore, they assimilated the values of their organisation. However, more research is required to investigate the intricacies of the reward-punishment system underpinning the antecedents of volunteering.

The participants suggested that they helped the homeless because altruism and benevolence were their guiding values and that they would help anyone in need (Briggs et al., 2010). Therefore, their perception of the homeless did not necessarily affect their pro-social behaviour. Some started helping the homeless by chance because of their affiliation with a church, which supported the assertion that their altruism influenced their volunteering activities which were directed towards the homeless.

Some participants had strong feelings of discomfort regarding people living in destitute conditions; this guilt in turn made the participants help the homeless (Haski-Leventhal, 2009). Ostensibly, the superego acted on the perceptions of the participants who in turn relieved their guilt by helping the homeless (Segrist, 2009). Therefore, the volunteers were also reciprocally altruistic because of the negative and sympathetic perceptions they held about the homeless. Moreover, the participants felt they needed to restore the hopes of homeless people, indicating that they regarded the homeless as part of their in-group and could relate to their experiences and struggles against homelessness. As such, the helpful behaviour may also reflect the nature of helping others as a form of group survival and not necessarily the individual experiencing the problem. Inherently, they all believed that chronic homelessness was a dynamic condition capable of changing at any moment given the right combination of intervention measures.

4.5 Conclusion

The thematic analysis of the data elicited from the volunteer care workers revealed the perspectives of each participant, particularly the fact that the volunteers viewed the home as a place of safety mainly underpinned by the relational ties an individual has with the people around them, including their kin. There appears to be an emotional connection between participants and the home. In contrast, homelessness is seen as a symptom of a socially unjust world and individuals who are living on the streets are not seen as homeless per se. The volunteers who participated in the study asserted that they were aware of their own biases and tried to maintain an open mind, by not overtly

judging people who live on the streets or in similar conditions. Moreover, altruistic values seem to supersede the volunteers' prejudicial urges and the majority of the participants found the pro-social interaction with the people they helped rewarding. They felt that individuals living homeless were part of an in-group human race, suggesting that certain circumstances could plunge any person into destitution, including poverty, unemployment and substance addiction. Therefore, to some degree, they empathised with the people they helped and the resultant discomfort motivated their decision to act. Therefore, the perceptions of the two constructs, namely the home and homelessness are not coterminous. The perceptions of homelessness are influenced by volunteers' comprehension of systematic inequalities in society and toxic family dynamics. These perceptions inform volunteers' attitudes towards different people who are designated homeless and the kind of assistance required. However, the help is mainly confined to the provision of basic and spiritual needs to homeless people and further investigation is imperative to determine the effectiveness of the help being provided.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This research study explored the literature on the perceptions people hold regarding the home, homelessness and the perceived reasons for pro-social volunteer behaviour meant to address the state of homelessness in Johannesburg. This inquiry was underpinned by the Constructive Grounded Theory as a qualitative data collection method. Data were thematically analysed and presented through a process of coding and categorising. The results elaborated these themes and sub-themes and conformed to the overall aim guiding the study. The identified themes were clustered and meaning was formed from the raw data. It emerged that the labels for a home were more effective and familial compared to the definition of homelessness which was related to the systematic inequalities and the inadequacy of resources. The investigation fostered an understanding of how these labels shame if at all the volunteers' motivations to help people living homeless and the kind of help they offer.

The study was guided by Husserl's Theory of Perception, which states that perception involves a process of sensing, cognition and meaning formation, ultimately leading to reaction. Therefore, the hypothesis people form about their environment determines how they interact with the same environment. In the light of this assertion, the study aimed to investigate whether or not the participants helped the homeless because of the meanings they attached to the home and homelessness and find out, through open-ended questioning, what motivates them to help.

As suggested by Husserl's Theory of Perception, the participants based their interpretation of homeless people they encountered on their immediate judgements of the exterior of the homeless individuals and their own experiences with similar people, personal experiences of helplessness and the discomfort stimulated by judgement. Therefore, the participants' positive perceptions of the value of helpful behaviour made it easier for them to perceive the homeless as needy people and not outcasts living on the outskirts of society.

The participants defined a home as a place with space and direction; a structure meant for living and not designated for other purposes such as a library or cafeteria. The place is safe, secure, and shelters its inhabitants from any form of harm. There are emotional connections with other members of the household. These members share nationality, kinship, history and familial relationships. The household is led by an elder; even if the household is child-headed, the eldest sibling takes on that role.

They perceived homelessness as a lack of safety, security as well as physical and psychological well-being. Homelessness occurs when an individual or group occupies a space not designated for accommodation such as a bridge or a park. Homelessness is a result of unemployment, poverty and scarcity of basic resources. Also, it reflects the economic climate of the time, for example, a recession could compel some families to live on the streets.

The participants held negative perceptions about the homeless, and these perceptions included the following. They felt sympathetic for homeless people, viewing them as vulnerable; for instance, young children were labelled ‘orphans’ and the elderly were labelled ‘weak’ and ‘meek’. The participants also empathised with homeless families as they found this phenomenon abnormal. They perceived homeless individuals as dangerous, criminal, delinquent, aggressive and perpetual addicts. These labels were mainly attached to solitary men.

The empathetic perception held by volunteers was that homelessness is symptomatic of complex social issues, including poverty arising from high unemployment rates. Political vicissitudes may cause homelessness, for example, people who migrate as political asylum seekers may end up being homeless if they do not receive basic resources. Homelessness may be an outcome of severe addiction, as individuals lose their homes if they are evicted or fall victim to a disaster that damages their house or become homeless when they are chased away from home. A deficiency in the healthcare system may compel some disabled individuals to live on the streets. Furthermore, the inaccessibility of mental healthcare treatment facilities for the impoverished can lead to homelessness. High rates of illiteracy and the cost of higher education may instigate homelessness. Furthermore, the participants

thought that sometimes people's beliefs often lead to homelessness, for example, the belief that a person was cursed and thinks this curse led to their homelessness. The participants also felt guilty when they judged the homeless they helped to assert that it is unkind to do so because they can identify with the feeling of helplessness.

The participants affirmed that their perceptions changed over time because of their experience during their volunteer work. They realised that the language barrier may act as an impediment between volunteers and the homeless, but over time, they would find a way of learning more about the people they help and the labels become inappropriate. Volunteers ultimately comprehended that homelessness is not only about external appearance. The participants believed that homelessness is not an individual problem but a societal one.

The participants were motivated to help others and drew inspiration from their values particularly the obligation to take care of humanity. Thus, they realised that they shared similarities with the homeless, they found helping others fulfilling, they understood that society encourages them to act helpfully, as such, they agreed that their behaviour is partly a reflection of social norms; participants thought they were quite open-minded, asserting that this allows them to be open to other people and less apprehensive of strangers, making it easier for them to help others. They have also experienced some form of destitution or helplessness and this makes it easier for them to relate to the homeless people they interact with. Furthermore, the participants thought their religious beliefs made them more altruistic as they are encouraged to value the well-being of others.

The participants thought it was necessary to help homeless people living in Johannesburg because helping others is a value that influences their helpful behaviour. This may have led to the participants' initial interest in non-governmental organisations or faith-based organisations (Mashau, 2017; Rodriguez & Eidelman, 2017). Participants mentioned that they felt physically uncomfortable seeing people living rough every time they came to the city and this prompted their voluntary actions. The participants feel responsible for restoring the hope of homeless people; this seems to be a display

of *Ubuntu*, a philosophy underpinned by the thinking that “I am because we are”, an altruistic South African belief that the community is as important as the individual. The participant made a verbal commitment to the long-term cause of serving in the church’s bible study group or soup kitchen. The participants displayed reciprocal altruism as they thought that they would also like to receive similar assistance if confronted by a similar predicament. Some participants perceived their volunteer action as a calling and that they did not have a choice in the matter.

5.2 Synopsis

Participants in this study perceived homeless people as victims of structural ailments, which forced them to live in uninhabitable places. These systematic failures include poverty due to unemployment, lack of treatment facilities for mental illness, limited substance addiction programmes meant to cater to the number of people who need care, an education system that cannot manage the illiteracy rates and an immigration policy that does not sufficiently address the plight of destitute immigrants (Frost et al., 2019; Moyo et al., 2015; Piat et al., 2015). However, the participants did not perceive this reasoning as sufficient, as they believed it deprives the homeless person of their autonomy.

Additionally, they thought that homeless people do not openly disclose psychological issues like anxiety, depression, negative self-talk, peer pressure and asserted that the homeless associate homelessness with spiritual reasons such as witchcraft (Burnam et al., 2000; Creech et al., 2015).

The participants did not want to overtly label people ‘homeless’, even if they had thoughts about the homeless people they helped. Some participants found some homeless people to be aggressive, scary and thought that they may be addicted to substances and involved in criminal activities. They saw homeless people as frail, sad and tattered, which made them regard the homeless people they encountered as vulnerable.

Volunteers thought that the homeless seem out of place in the City of Johannesburg. They felt sympathy for the people they perceived as meek and torn, like women, children and the elderly. In

addition, the participants empathised with those whom they perceived as uneducated and poverty-stricken. The volunteers felt uncomfortable expressing their perceptions of and judgements about the homeless. They asserted that their perceptions changed when they started volunteering with organisations that helped the homeless population in the city, after which they were impressed by their intellect and comprehended the issue in a more complex and self-aware manner. They were more open to other pathways and presentations of homelessness, asserting that they reflected on their judgements not reflecting the true state of homeless people. Therefore, misconceptions were mainly caused by the language barrier as they struggled to communicate with the people they assisted weekly. They were surprised to find that most of the homeless people they served were clean and independent to some degree and that some of these people taught them new things about life and spirituality.

Pro-social behaviours are actions performed by an individual or a group for the benefit of another or a group of others (Briggs et al., 2010). For example, the helpful behaviour exhibited by the volunteer workers working under the instruction of church-based organisations (CBOs) or non-profit organisations (NPOs) to help the living conditions and provide basic needs for the people living on the inner-city streets of Johannesburg (Sanchez, 2010).

Altruistic values and attitudes such as benevolence seemed to be the key values guiding the participants as 10 of them were linked to CBOs and asserted that they had a calling towards helping others. However, only two participants were specific about that calling, thus helping the homeless.

The Christian values, including the Golden Rule, seemed to contribute to the participants' initial decision to undertake volunteer work.

However, the following factors contributed to the volunteers' final decision to volunteer and the increased frequency of their volunteer activities: gender, age and the level of helplessness of the beneficiary; the age and gender of the volunteer; the relationship between the volunteer and the beneficiary; if the volunteer's peers were members of the NGO involved in a pro-social activity; the

volunteer's sense of helpfulness; other-oriented empathy; the volunteer's attachment style and personality traits (Aydinli-Karakulak et al., 2016; Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Wilson & Musick, 1997).

Conclusively, the data from the Constructive Grounded Theory research study suggests that volunteers' different perceptions about the homeless ranged from negative to sympathetic; and the homeless' socio-economic status could be described as dishevelled and frail, law-breaking, reclusive, and illiterate; above all, they were vulnerable to addiction, unemployment and poverty. Additionally, they had empathetic thoughts about the homeless people residing in Johannesburg's CBD, which included their understanding of the effects of psychological and physical ailments on the rates and presentation of homelessness, the relationship between high levels of unemployment and poverty and the rates and levels of homelessness, and the social exclusion of the street homeless, which prevents them from accessing government resources. Furthermore, they were able to empathise with the homeless because of their own experience with helplessness; as such, volunteers were able to identify with people living rough on the streets of Johannesburg.

However, the thoughts the volunteers had about the homeless hardly affected their initial decision to volunteer. Furthermore, these perceptions did not influence for whom, why and for how long volunteers behaved pro-socially. The results corroborate the literature on the Complimentary Theory that posits that people volunteer because of their involvement in and membership to an organisation such as a religious organisation, where they share similar values with other group members (Nesbit, 2012; Rotolo & Wilson, 2006). Volunteers are intrinsically altruistic and possess other-oriented values that seem to guide their volunteer frequency, helpfulness and commitment towards improving the lived experience of the homeless (Gantt & Burton, 2012; Goodman, 2014). Although the results confirm that the participants' initial perceptions of the homeless people they met on the street of Johannesburg city centre affected the kind of helpful activity they performed, this was not hard-fast as the participants seemed to have altruistic personality traits such as openness and

extraversion that made them more open to changing their perceptions about the homeless and the condition of homelessness.

5.3 Strengths and limitations

Several limitations affected the current study. The reliability of the study was compromised as the sample was not adequately representative of the population in the City of Johannesburg as the participants shared similar characteristics such as race, religious affiliation and norms, which could be due to the sampling technique that was used to recruit the participants for the study (Etikan et al., 2015; Wheeldon & Åhlberg, 2012). As such, the participants had to be volunteers working particularly with the homeless people residing within and around the Johannesburg city centre. Therefore, the sample is exclusive in that they all formed part of a network of organisations that worked in the inner city and this rendered the generalisability of the data difficult. Thus, the reliability of the study may be confirmed if further studies are undertaken to verify the findings; however, the validity of the study increased as the qualitative nature of the study meant that in-depth data were collected (Probst, 2015).

The English Language was the main vehicle of communication, even though the researcher accommodated participants that were not fluent in English and communicated with them using their vernacular language. Furthermore, there are 11 official languages in South Africa and meaning may change depending on the language being spoken, leading to miscommunication and the resultant misunderstanding (McLeod, 2014). However, the flexible open-ended questioning in the semi-structured interviews made elaborating questions for participants possible and as such, the researcher clarified any terms or questions that proved problematic for the participants (McLeod, 2014). The participants verbally communicated their perceptions with the researcher, and the conversations were audio-recorded on an electronic audio recording device. Therefore, non-verbal communication was not recorded; such communication included non-verbal cues and body language (Brems, 2000). Consequently, no inferences were made on the meanings of this form of communication. The social

desirability effect bias may have also influenced the participants' responses as the participants may have judged how open they could be with the researcher, depending on the researcher's age, gender and language use, which may have inversely influenced the data collected (Baker & Charvat, 2016). Furthermore, the research process was time-consuming during data collating and analysis, which involved transcription, coding and thematic grouping (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

The study was naturalistic, as such, the researcher was able to interact with the participants in their natural environment, thus limiting the effects of the researcher bias and that made it easier for the researcher to establish rapport with the participants (Rolfe, 2006; Willis, 2012). Furthermore, the participants seemed to share similar experiences and ideologies which made it easier to track and trace generalisable data; however, this may differ for dissimilar groups (McLeod, 2014). The open-ended nature of the discussions made the data collected by the researcher rich and insightful, opening up possibilities for further research. Furthermore, the participants were able to discuss their personal experiences, which may have increased the trustworthiness and validity of the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Probst, 2015).

5.4 Implications for future research and interventions

Based on the results, the researcher believes that the following topics may be considered for investigation: Homeless people's perceptions of volunteers and the effectiveness of volunteering to solve the problem of homelessness; A quantitative study of the effectiveness of volunteering as a measure to decrease the rate of homelessness in Johannesburg; A quantitative survey of the perceptions and opinions of volunteers on homelessness; Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the homeless have been placed in camps to control the spread of the virus and support the homeless population, therefore a qualitative study on the effectiveness of mass camp shelters as an intervention for homelessness. Finally, researchers may consider investigating the problems that discourage volunteers from

volunteering and investigating why volunteers commit themselves to short-term voluntary activities and not lifelong pro-social actions to tackle the phenomenon of homelessness.

5.5 Conclusion

This paper was a Grounded Theory exploration of volunteer caregivers' perceptions of the home, homelessness, and their perceptions of the homeless people they regularly interact with. The study essentially explored the influence of perceptions of homelessness and how these affect the pro-social act of volunteering. The study sought to answer the question: Does perception encourage or discourage or not influence pro-social behaviour towards the homeless population of Johannesburg? The study found that altruistic beliefs principally influence the volunteers' decision to help the homeless population. Furthermore, the results suggest that a volunteer's membership to an organisation influences the people being helped, and the length of the volunteering activity, but that perceptions influence the kind of volunteer activity they perform. Therefore, perceptions are bypassed by the volunteers' personalities, values and norms as they only influence the way the volunteers help the homeless. For example, volunteers are more willing to give off their time than they are willing to be charitable.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. What comes to mind when you hear me say the word “home”?
2. What comes to mind when I say the word “homeless”?
3. What do you believe causes homelessness in Johannesburg?
4. Please tell me about an encounter you had with a homeless person that you can remember?
5. Physically how did you experience that person (please tell me about the senses you used)?
6. What did you think about that person initially, before you spoke to them (How did you perceive them)?
7. Were your perceptions true or do you believe they were false, and why do you say so?
8. What did you think about them after the interaction (after you spoke to them)?

Appendix B

Researcher's Reflection



Personal reflection on the reason for my study:

Homelessness is a real is a widespread issue in South Africa in particular in the Johannesburg area. I also feel as though the homeless tend to blend into the background and form part of the concrete in the city. This has been physically depicted by an artistic take called "homeless Jesus" in front of the Trinity Church in Johannesburg. This urged me to want to understand how individuals come to work with and support the homeless. As these people form part of their support structure and help the homeless by providing them with resources they would possibly have access to if they had a home. Understanding how perceptions drive people to work with the homeless could be useful in solving the problem as the large majority of the population seems to be aloof about the problem.

Thinking about how I have passed by so many people living on the streets and how I often I looked away because of the tension and discomfort I felt about seeing people live under those conditions. From a psychodynamic perspective I could interpret this as my mind or my superego prompting me to act because I could tell that morally other people cannot be overlooked. That people can get lost in the cracks of society and somewhat forgotten is shocking, especially in the African society with the discourse of Ubuntu in the forefront. Therefore, exploring where the psychological need to help others stems from could be integral in solving a highly social phenomenon. As homelessness is a structural dilemma studying the homeless in isolation will not be sufficient to solve the problem in its entirety.