“Exploring perceptions of dog walking among middle-class black people that walk dogs”

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters in Community-based Counselling Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities.

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Declaration

I declare that this research project on "exploring perceptions of dog walking among middle-class black people that walk dogs" is my own work and I was not assisted in writing this paper, nor has it been formerly submitted for any other degree or examination at any institution.

Signed: ……

Date: ……

Dedication

Your legacy is kept alive by strangers, whenever they are confronted with your image as if it were folktales. *Baba wami*, you shall forever remain my hero. Long live Mandla Emmanuel Mhlongo.

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Abstract

The black middle-class has grown exponentially since democratisation. While research on the black middle-class has kept apace of various permutations of this growth as well as those kept out of the mainstream economy by high unemployment rates, much less scholarship has been undertaken to explore the identity implications of class transitions. Beginning with anecdotal accounts about the aspirations of black middle-class people, with dog walking as the point of entry, this study sort to understand the meanings attached to dog walking from the perspective of ten middle-class black people who walk their dogs. The findings present a complex picture that suggests that we should nuance our understandings of black middle-class people in order to recognize the continuities and discontinuities with the black working class. While some resisted the idea of dog walking as a performance of middle-classness, the findings suggest that performativity is always at play in the social practice of dog walking. Secondly, the study found that the middle-class position is highly contested among black people ostensibly living middle-class lives in the suburbs of Johannesburg. This points to the instability of class identifications when understood in relation to over determined racialized identity and solidarity in South Africa. Lastly, the research presents the multiple roles that dogs and dog walking plays in the black middle-class family. The implications of this research suggest that more creative and nuanced ways of understanding the South African black middle-class are necessary in order to imbue this group with the complexity characteristic of people as they participate in everyday life.

Keywords: Black middle-class, dog walking, performativity, working class, Johannesburg, identity.

Title

Exploring perceptions of dog walking among middle-class black people that walk dogs

Research Aims

This study seeks to better understand the community of black middle-class people who walk dogs in the suburbs of Johannesburg. In this regard, it aims to explore how they understand the act of dog walking as middle-class black people who walk dogs within the context of black middle-class habits being under scrutiny.

Rationale

Observations and a photographic exhibition by Johannesburg photographer Marc Shoul in 2014 showing black people walking dogs in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg have led to some debate about who the people are and what the phenomenon means. This debate has raised questions about the identity expectations of black middle-class people. For example: Are black middle-class people who walk dogs a new phenomenon? Are they taking on habits that are associated with white people? What does their occupation of suburban spaces mean to them and those who observe them? Is dog walking a marker of middle-class habitus? Is suburban lifestyle or occupation a motive for dog ownership/walking? Related questions are the parameters of the identity performances available to black middle-class people and the possible ways in which race and class converge to limit and expand the scope of possible ways of performing identity. This is a topic of interest because it provides a lens to engaging ideas of identity surveillance and policing while simultaneously exploring ways in which black middle-class identities and ways of life might be evolving, contracting or expanding. While the Shoul exhibition was part of the impetus of this research, the study diverges from it in a significant way. Therefore, while the subjects of Shoul's photographs were working class employees largely dressed in domestic worker uniforms, the current study focused exclusively on middle-class people who walk dogs. I explain the decision to focus on middle-class dog walkers below.

Canham and Williams (2017) have illustrated that there are particular identity investments in maintaining boundaries in relation to how black middle-class people perform their identity. Identity policing has been shown to come from black working-class people, white people and from among black middle-class people themselves. This study is therefore interested in exploring the ways in which dog walking by middle-class black people expands, pushes or conforms to the expectations of allowable behaviors among black middle-class people. The interest in dog walking as a potentially contested behavior among black people is anecdotal and emerges from a statement made by former South African President Jacob Zuma that black people that walk dogs were imitating white behaviors of caring more about dogs than about other human beings (Sapa, 2012). The former president's statement made a number of suggestions: that black middle-class people that walk dogs are performing white behavior, and that this performance reflected lack of care for fellow human beings. Furthermore, the former President also remarked that this act of dog walking was a mark of assimilation to Western ways of life. Lastly, the statement assumes that black people did not walk dogs until they began to mimic white people.

The former presidents' statement generated heated exchanges and piqued my interest to understand the ways in which black middle-class dog walkers understand dog walking as an identity performance which attracts multiple meanings and discourses. This research therefore seeks to explore the meanings attached to this performance. It seeks to understand how black middle-class people that walk dogs make sense of this act. Consequently, class, gender, race and identity are implicated in these questions and these will be the lenses used to understand the research. Finally, this study is worth exploring because there are no recorded empirical studies that have been conducted to understand this phenomenon in South Africa and the continent more generally.

Research questions

1. How do black middle-class people make sense of their performance of dog walking?
2. What identity constructions emerge when making sense of the relationship between being black and middle-class and dog walking?

How do class and race inform understandings of dog walking?

Background

Against the backdrop of South Africa's apartheid history where white farming and urban communities were reputed to treat their dogs better than they treated black people, race and class have generally come into sharp focus when dogs enter the discourse. In addition, the role of dogs has been considered as a form of security against the real and imagined black burglar. Having orchestrated most of the brutality carried out by the white government police officers on black people, dogs remained feared and despised by the greater black community. Warnings such as "Basoba Inja", "Passop vir die hond" or "Beware of the dog," on driveways and gates of homesteads come to mind. These were always targeted at the imagined intruder who was cast as black. The use of African languages on these warning signs is an indication of the target audience or perceived threat. In addition to the bright red colour writing, there is also an image of a huge dog (also targeted at illiterate black people). Elsewhere in Melbourne, McKenzie (2009) notes that for most white families, dogs were also reared to warn off Aborigines in the 1840s. In colonial settler communities then, the dog is portrayed as the protector of white material possessions. Moreover, it is worth noting the cultural beliefs associated with calling another person a dog. In addition, in most African cultures, having a dog occupy indoor living spaces is generally frowned upon. This is because dogs are associated with filth and are perceived as possessions rather than as family members. Where they are treated as companions, an arm's length distance is still maintained.

This history of the almost human treatment of dogs by white people suggested that the dog was superior to the black worker. The role of black people in looking after white-owned high pedigree dogs (similar to how black nannies raised white children) is also implicated in how we have come to think about dogs in general. Within the context of continued race and class based inequality is the possibility that dog walking is being outsourced to black labour. There is also the possibility that black middle-class people are taking to walking their own dogs. The dog therefore comes to stand in as the signifier of class, race relations, and identity, as inflected through historical and ongoing realities and meanings.

According to Antonacopoulos and Pychyl (2014), dog walking is defined as the act of walking a dog with a leash as a form of exercise for both the dog and the walker or immersing oneself in nature or the community and enhancing social bonds. Following a statement by former state president Jacob Zuma that was reported in the Mail & Guardian newspaper where he claimed that black people who walk dogs are adapting to a Western

habit and that this would never make them white, there has been renewed interest in the nexus of the relationship between dogs and people (Sapa, 2012). It is unclear if dog walking has historically been a part of black culture. There is, however, some evidence to suggest that black people kept dogs for companionship, hunting and security purposes. A recent article published in the ENCA concurs with evidence that the black community kept dogs for hunting and security purposes (Mathebula, 2017). This suggests that the historical relationship between black people and dogs is not exclusively based on fear and loathing but is also positive. Dogs are therefore not to be exclusively associated with whiteness. With more black people entering the middle-class and living in the suburbs of Johannesburg, there is the possibility that they keep dogs as pets and thus they walk their dogs.

This study seeks to explore this phenomenon, thereby addressing the research questions outlined above. Furthermore, the study seeks to understand black middle-class people who walk dogs within the suburbs of Johannesburg and not professional dog walkers who offer this service. Domestic workers and gardeners who also walk dogs do not form part of the sample of interest as the focus is on middle-class black people.

Literature review

Much of the research on dogs is concerned with dogs as pets, their diseases, and their biology. I briefly outline some of this literature here. McNicholas and Collis (2000) found that pet ownership, especially dogs, is a catalyst in facilitating social interactions, which in turn yield positive feelings of well-being. Matchock (2015) concurs with the latter. In some cultures, dogs are perceived as family members while to some, an extra burden. However, across cultures, they introduce a certain functionality within the family and this value is mostly associated with children and the elderly (Pirruccio, Yoon & Ahn, 2019). However, dogs suffer a range of diseases, such as dog tick (Rhipicephalus Sanguineus), which can prove fatal if unattended to timeously (Carlson & Giffin, 1980; Dantas-Torres, Maia, Latrofa, Annoscia Cardoso & Otranto, 2017). According to Bourhy, Reynes, Dunham, Dacheux, Larrous, Huong and Holmes (2008), rabies is the most common disease that dogs suffer from. Rabies is defined as a progressive vital lyssavirus infection. The domestic dog is observed to be the most prominent host of this pathogen. Although vaccination measures are administrated in some parts of the world, rabies seems to continue to be a problem (Hampson, Dushoff, Bingham, Brückner, Ali, & Dobson, 2007).

Research on the interface between dogs and their owners has tended to focus on the health benefits of dog walking (Thorpe, Simonsick, Brach, Ayonayon, Satterfield, & Harris, 2006; Evenson, Shay, Williamson & Cohen, 2016). Another interest has been the ameliorative effects of pet ownership among those recovering from medical conditions such as cardiovascular operations (Friedmann & Thomas, 1995; Handlin, Nilsson, Lidfors, Petersson, & Uvnäs-Moberg, 2018). For example, Garrity, Stallones, Marx, & Johnson, 1989; Fields & Kogan, 2018) have argued that attachment of elderly people to their dogs was a supportive factor for older people's health. In psychological literature, the focus has been on the attachment between dogs (as pets) and their owners (Collis & McNickolas, 1998; Jalongo, 2018). This research has however tended towards neglecting issues of class, race and gender.

Research suggests that the presence of pets in households is associated with a multitude of health benefits especially among older people from the ages of 50 and above (Anderson, Reid & Jennings, 1992). Companionship is a huge benefit of a close attachment to pets among the elderly. Dotson and Hyatt (2008) support the value of the social aspect of owning a dog. Results show that older people with dogs tend to be more social and outgoing than those without dogs (Iwasaki, 2017). The older generation is generally accustomed to solitude and

being less verbal, but dogs motivate active interactions that are characterized with conversation, laughter and happiness. A study done by Antonacopoulos and Pychyl (2014) found that this phenomenon of dog walking yields observable benefits in the elderly community. These include decreasing loneliness and obesity that in turn reduces stressors associated with chronic illnesses (Volpe, Sukumar & Milliron, 2016). This is important for elders on medical treatment as they are able to form a routine around the habit of walking and feeding the dog. Those in the older generation sometimes suffer from lack of affection or the inability to provide such care, but dog patting is said to minimize these and enhance affection to extend beyond dogs (Headey, 1999). Siegel (1995) further notes that the presence of dog companions in households assists with how people approach life problems and helps with their self-efficacy. Brown (2014) conducted a study that supported the walking of dogs by elders in Japan. He noted that this yielded decreased reports of incidents related to or as a result of lack of movement in old age.

The role of dogs among children has also been positively acknowledged in research. Gadomski, Scribani, Krupa and Jenkins (2017) noted that the introduction of dog walking in their study promoted a decrease in medically related issues such as heart conditions in obese children and promoted good attachment and socialization. Physical activity is an important element in the growth of a child and dogs promote both this and elevated feelings of happiness. Apart from strong attachments, dogs help to promote responsibility among children as they generally task themselves with grooming and feeding their dog pets (Christian, Trapp, Lauritsen, Wright, & Giles-Corti, 2013). Moreover, in most middle-class families, dog ownership/walking forms part of the emotional connectedness of the family and gives members a relatable object of conversation and a sense of belonging. Dog walking has also been paired with autistic children and has produced positive results relating to safety and providing a nurturing role (Clark, 2018).

Black people and dogs

In addition to the health and psychological literature cited above, there is a body of work that examines the history of dog ownership. Some of this literature is outlined here. In almost all colonial settler communities, white settlers intervened in the relationship between dogs and local subjugated populations (McKenzie, 2009). This was largely done by killing these dogs in large numbers as a means of controlling oppressed populations. For McKenzie (2009, 238), “dogs and their control thus had the potential to intersect profoundly in the battles of

race and class enacted through a variety of nineteenth-century societies". Among the dogs destroyed in Cape Town were dogs that belonged to black people but these dogs roamed the streets unlike the more domesticated pedigreed dogs of middle-class white people that remained closer to the home. Van Sittert (2003) however illustrates that black residential areas where often targeted for dog culling while white people's dogs that roamed the streets were not killed. According to Van Sittert (2003) black dog owners in Port Elizabeth complained that the enemy of officials was the underclass dog while 'prized animals' were not targeted for culling. Diseases such as rabies and others were often used as the premise to control dog populations through mass culling and enacting bylaws for their control. Public safety was thus regularly used as an excuse to by-pass the law and enact discriminatory practices. As a way of introducing more 'humane' forms of dog control, the dog tax that was imposed on people. However, this was primarily targeted at the black underclasses.

Race, class, order and disorder are discourses that have underpinned dog ownership in South Africa throughout the colonial and apartheid periods. While other animals fared much worse than dogs, these rules had the effect of dog control in the cities and regulated the conditions under which black people could own dogs in urban areas. Phillo (1995) shows how companion animals such as dogs and cats have become domesticated for city and urban spheres while sheep, pigs and other domesticated animals have not been able to make this transition and remain on the peripheries of cities and in rural areas. Therefore, while dogs were able to move from the wild and into the homes of the middle-classes in urban spaces, other animals were excluded. Animals have a long history of enmeshment in rather complex power relations with humans (Phillo, 1995). Geographies have been imposed on animals in ways that determine where they live, how they navigate space and who can own them under what conditions. Of nearly all animals, dogs have been at the centre of this complex maze of power relations. Despite this literature on dogs, the combination of dog walking, class and black people, during the colonial and apartheid periods are generally absent.

Dog walking and race

While the historical work on dog walking is well documented, race has generally been muted in the histography of dog ownership. From the studies outlined above, it is apparent that dog walking is largely the preserve of health psychology, geriatric studies and medical science. It has not been associated with class, gender or race and the psycho-social aspects have received scant

attention. According to Anderson, Reid and Jennings (1992), dog walking is seen as an act of walking a dog from the place of residence and back that can be attributed to a sense of companionship between the dog and owner, which has health benefits associated with it. Given the scant literature on the relationship between class and dog walking, this study hypothesizes that middle-class people walk their dogs as a feature of their class position. The current study is therefore informed by anecdotal assumptions that are explored with participants. To support the assumption, Van Sittert (2003) has shown that in the nineteenth century, 'wild' dogs were cleared off the streets in order to make way for bourgeoisie pedestrians and their pedigree dogs. Police were often involved in clearing the streets of stray and dangerous dogs (Ogbom, 1993). Dog walking was considered a refined sensibility that signaled the class status of the dog and its owner.

In the present, one of the features of middle-class residential areas is that their dogs get walked along the streets. These acts or habits that have been developed by the middle-class can be said to distinguish them from the unemployed and working class. This distinguishes them from working class township communities where dog walking is not a common activity. In townships and rural areas, black communities own dogs for both emotional and functional value as they serve as a form of security within the households that do not and most likely cannot afford to install electronic alarm systems. Interestingly, in suburban areas breeds like Jack Russells are groomed as an alarm system in the house, as their barks assist in signaling some activity at the gate for the owners.

In rural areas, dogs are used to hunt small game to be consumed by households. As highlighted above, dogs are adopted in to the family system for their utility value. While psychological bonds exist between working class and rural families and their dogs, they are not as pronounced and performed as those of middle-class families. The dog naming practices of working-class families typically rely on a limited repertoire of names like Blackie and Spotty in addition to names that are contextually informed by local languages. However, dogs from the suburbs are given English names that are said to be fitting to their surroundings. Thus, one can deduce that the naming practices of dogs is dependent on the culture, environment, family's class position and exposure of the owners. Dog walking in suburban living in the black community is seen as both a class indictor and a means of enhancing the quality of life or improvements of one's earlier working class/township lifestyle.

In the post-apartheid South African context, class, race as well as gender and sexuality are implicated in practically all aspects of life including a practice as innocuous as dog walking. Since racial identity is a key construct towards understanding black people that walk dogs, I explore some of the literature in order to illustrate how the past may inform present day social conditions and configurations of identities and roles such as the practice of walking dogs. This is not to assume that race may have any significance for dog walking but rather to explore if in fact, black middle-class people believe that the practice of dog walking has any bearing on what they think about their own identity in relation to their class, race and gender. The color of crime was depicted as black during the period of apartheid and dogs were utilized specifically to combat crimes that involved house bulgers and restoring peace in the townships (Latzer, 2018).. The act of walking a dog has been a habit of the white culture and exercised in spaces that are considered safe, secluded from black people and not congested. Ford (2000) notes that the concept of race is embedded in culture and having observed the interaction of dogs within black lifestyle is informative of their culture.

According to Chavez and Guido-DiBrito (1999) racial identity is how a group of people sharing a particular space and culture perceive or identify themselves on the basis of their skin colour. Racial identity may also be ascribed to persons based on historical antecedents that lead to particular identifications (Bernard, Hoggard & Neblett, 2018). People then ascribe sameness to being safe and easy to identify with. Thus, the identity of a particular group is influenced by the spaces occupied, being of a certain class and the mutual interactions that are said to be socially accepted within that geographical location. Sameness and racial belonging therefore implicate skin colour, class practices, interaction, geographical proximity, and an imagined community of shared identifications.

The Natives Land Act of 1913 was one of the earliest major pieces of legislation to racialize the occupation and ownership of land and space (Plaatje, 1921; Mbeki & Fonds, 1964). Through the implementation of the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950, racial categories were solidified, communities uprooted to make room for white neighbourhoods, and segregation entrenched with long-term consequences which impact where people live and work in the present (Christopher, 1991; Stevens, Duncan, Canham, 2014). Strict laws were implemented to prevent black people from occupying land designated for white people (Nengwekhulu, 1986), even when this land was obtained illegitimately. White people and their style of living were seen as superior to that of blacks, and black people were relegated to distant townships and largely rural Bantustans (Graaff, 1990; Dubow, 2014). This meant that black people

living in such spaces were subjected to inferior education commonly known as the Bantu Education system (Heleta, 2016). Dube (1985) notes that bantu education was another form of racism targeted at disempowering languagesand culture of the blank community. These laws also restricted black people from congregating or communicating in their own language (Miescher, 2018), as Afrikaans was predominantly used by the oppressors. Segregation was also a preventative measure to guard against, black people from having sexual relations with white or Indian people. This meant that the black population would solely consist of people of the same ethnicities, culture and socio-economic status.

The Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 meant that black education was severely underfunded and produced largely unskilled labour which prepared black people to serve the needs of white communities as cheap labour (Moore, 2015). Moreover, black people from townships experienced very limited and under-resourced healthcare services while most white people in the urban areas were living a luxurious life of comfort and abundant resources (Southall, 2004). Furthermore, the implementation of the Group Areas Act also entailed the enforcement of strict laws that prohibited black people from using or sharing public services/infrastructure such as ablution facilities with white people. Black townships were constantly patrolled by a heavy defence force and police forces would raid houses to check illegal squatting and do head counts. No interactions between different races or public group discussions were permitted, as these were perceived as threats to the white government (Dubow, 2014). Black people would socially congregate in song as means of retaliation against the oppressive government. The quality of education was also an oppressive measure in that it only prepared black people to occupy occupations that solely required unskilled or semi-skilled manual labour as opposed to intellectual capabilities (Swartz, 2019). This further perpetuated power to be only possessed by white people through them keeping the means of production in mines and large companies. Black people maintained their working-class position that is lived through culture, place of residence, and material and symbolic capital. The first generation of middle-class black people came with the emergence of missionary schools that saw an increase of the black population enrolled and receiving quality education (Musyoka, 2018). Apart from allowing black people access to middle-class status, the quality of education also introduced them to traveling and interactions with white people (Jabavu, 1960).

It is against the history outlined above that dog walking by black people should be understood. However, this history does not suggest that black people did not own dogs. The

presence of dogs in literature (e.g. Burchell, 1824; King, 1853; Jabavu, 1960, Jordan, 1980; Peires, 1989) suggests that they have been a part of black lives over many years. According to Van Sittert and Swart (2003) the dog tax was imposed on black people during apartheid is another source of evidence that black people have always owned dogs across social class and geographic spaces. The focus is therefore not on whether or not black people have historically owned dogs as pets, but rather, whether or not they demonstrated care for their dogs through acts such as walking them, and related middle-class preoccupations such as taking them to dog spas, inclusion on medical aid and allowing for indoor living. As stated previously, there are no studies that have explored this phenomenon.

Class and Dog ownership

Ritvo (1986) provides a useful historicisation of the relationship between dog owners and their dogs in Victorian England. He argues that in this period, the English institutionalized their affection for their dogs. A driving feature of this affection was a pride that the English demonstrated for their pedigreed dogs in particular. The breed of dog was a measure of the pride and affection that the English had towards their pet dogs. Pure breed dogs where particularly important markers of prestige for middle-class Britons who had begun to imitate the pastimes of the aristocracy. For example, fox hunting was seen as a sign of class mobility (Ritvo, 1986). The pedigree of the dog and the forms of leisure that pure breeds enabled was a sign of the class position of dog owners. Since South Africa was a British colony, the British settlers in South Africa, I posit that they would have mimicked the fashions of their homeland and the breed of dogs that South African Britons had are likely to have mattered as measures of their own sophistication. Dog pride was closely tied to the affections that owners expressed for their pet dogs. To be clear, domesticated dogs where not a European invention. As Van Sittert & Swart (2003, p. 139) remind us, "each epoch of human-canine interaction produced its own peculiar animal, literally a pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial dog, as well as its dark doppelganger, the wild, 'Kaffir' or stray dog". What is of interest are the dimensions of class that dog ownership often represented. This research posits that while dogs have long been domesticated in Africa (Egyptian paintings show different types of breeds), pedigree and class sensibilities attached to dogs was a British habit brought to South Africa by English settlers and adopted by blacks in their class transitions from working to middle-class. While North Africans and Romans had long demonstrated the link between dog

breeds and class, British colonization imported these ‘tastes’ to South Africa. Indeed, Van Sittert and Swart (2007, p. 144) note that “a new sensibility towards animals emerged among the urban middle-class modelled on Victorian Britain”. McKenzie (2009) also supports the contention that South Africa’s urban bourgeoisie took its cultural cues on taste and style from English society.

Studies on the relationship between humans and dogs in Southern Africa are generally lacking (Van Sittert & Swart, 2007). While Soga accounts for the types of dogs reared among the Xhosa of the Eastern Cape and Bryant describes the dogs that were domesticated in Kwa-Zulu Natal (Van Sittert & Swart, 2007), we know little about the human-dog relations. A number of authors shed light on the differences in dog rearing in rural areas compared to urban spaces. For example, Van Sittert & Swart (2007); Van Sittert (2009); Philo (1995); McKenzie (2009), all give insight into how urban dog rearing became more controlled than rural contexts. Much of these practices were solidified in the second half of the nineteenth century. Using the example of Cape Town, McKenzie (2009) illustrates that as the city self-consciously became more aware of respectability politics, anxiety about the high prevalence of stray dogs increased. The conditions under which dogs would inhabit the city were crafted against this politics of respectability. Both Phillo (1995) and McKenzie (2009) contend that the physical landscape of the city is intimately interwoven with the moral landscape. Taming dogs and eradicating the city of excess wild dogs was a means for the bourgeois class to bring order to the city. For McKenzie (2009), stray dogs were associated with the disorderly underclass. She notes: “At one and the same time, dogs in early nineteenth-century Cape Town were valued members of the respectable household and sources of dirt and disorder on the street. The division was dependent upon the dog’s material location and symbolic associations” (2009, p. 236). However, given the underclass position of black South Africans and the states interest in relegating them to the peripheries of the cityscape and rural areas, they have been omitted from research on human-dog relations. Rather than utility value favoured by black South African (hunting, security, companionship), middle-class white dog owners are said to have bred dogs for their physical attributes and their dogs represented their purchasing power of pure breeds. They thus symbolically represented their class position through their pure-bred pedigree dogs.

The black middle-class

After the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of anti-apartheid political parties, the first democratic election was held in 1994. It ushered a period of policy overhaul towards social and economic inclusiveness. Directed policy interventions to repeal apartheid laws and the introduction of policies such as the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 and the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, No. 53 of 2003, meant that space was created for widening employment opportunities and access to economic participation for the previously excluded black population. With the promulgation and implementation of such legislation, a pipeline to the black middle-class was created from the working class and impoverished. With the South African government's efforts to promote equality, decrease poverty and enhance the quality of life for black people, the black middle-class has grown. However, notwithstanding this growth in the population of the black middle-class, it is relatively small in comparison to the many unemployed people (Khunou, 2015; Du Toit, P., Garcia-Rivero & Kotzé, 2003). A huge segment of the black community continues to inhabit a working class or impoverished status (Canham & Langa, 2017). This class position is predominantly associated with hard labour and occupying underdeveloped areas. It is therefore important to not lose sight of the huge disparities that exist between the lower class and middle-class, which also exposes greater inequality in the country (Garcia-Rivero, Du Toit, & Kotzé, 2003). Unemployment is one of the major determinants of poverty and most forms of inequality within the black community. Nattrass' (2002) study reports that the continued rise of unemployment was a result of the shift from unskilled labour to skilled labour in the farms and mines. Unemployment, poverty and lack of education are all linked to the by-products of struggles faced by the black population in underdeveloped townships by the apartheid government.

According to Marx (1973), class is defined by the ownership of the means of production. The distinction between middle and working classes is observed solely through the lens of the power of controlling the means of production, which is said to be attributed mainly to the middle-class, whereas the working class is identified as the unskilled or semi-skilled surplus labour who produce commodities for consumption (Ngoma, 2016). Ndletyana (2014) defines the middle-class from a salary perspective that includes certain skills and expertise that people possess. Seekings (2010) contends that the middle-class in relation to black people is

distinguished by what jobs the black middle-class occupy, their way of life in the city and their adoption of Western lifestyles. Therefore, for him, 'middle-class' entails some attributes that are associated with Western habits, which can either be certain career paths, places of residence or lifestyle activities. Middle-class remains a slippery concept that is difficult to pin down to a particular number of traits. In this regard, the black middle-class is not only identified by certain occupations but also through the kind of lifestyles that these occupations secure. For Seekings (2008), this kind of lifestyle is one that is embedded with values and meanings that only they can relate to and it includes factors such as living in the suburbs, the sense of style and family life. Black people who belong in this class dress a certain way, live a different family life to that of the working class and are commonly found to inhabit sophisticated urban areas.

The expansion of education to include black people has meant that more blacks have entered this class than ever before, and this has led to many securing better jobs, which will in turn mean improved material life for their families (Butler, 2017). However, access to education by black people may entail sacrifices such as debt through study loans and multiple jobs. Access and improved means of attaining financial loans for study purposes have also positively affected the increase of the middle-class increase in South Africa. Education and subsequent employment appear to be the primary interest of the black middle-class as opposed to entrepreneurship. According to Crankshaw (1996), black people replace the class position of white people as the latter group moves into the upper middle-class and dominate seniority within the workplace. Black people went on further to also occupy former residential areas, estates or suburbs that were previously owned by white people, this comes after the Group Areas Act was relooked in 1991 (Peters, 2016). This depicts a kind of delayed growth from the black community as they are perceived to almost follow behind white success. Social ills faced by underdeveloped areas in the country share close link with class analysis and race to some extent. Garcia-Rivero, Du Toit, and Kotzé (2003) states that the emergence of the black middle-class is narrowed to one predictor and that is access. Access in the form of education, employment and political affiliation are important enablers for class mobility for black people. On the other hand, white people’s class position is bolstered by intergenerational wealth based on a longer history of affluence and social capital enabled by colonialism and apartheid (Canham & Maier, 2018). This history of class portrays the black population from a perspective of requiring certain enablers for class access as opposed to white people who inherit wealth and access to every space (Mangoma & Wilson-

Prangley, 2018). The African National Congress (ANC) played a pivotal reimagining black people into the middle-class status.

The black middle-class population in the post-apartheid era was largely comprehended through the employment and education lens (Statistics South Africa, 2011). According to Ndletyana (2014), 66% of the black population is black people, this is quite a gradual increase post-apartheid era. People such as police officers, teachers and nurses were characterized as middle-class. However, the experiences engendered by class status are also important for thinking about class. Writing about the USA, Collins (1983) notes that black discrimination was decreased by income and employability. Similarly, the buying power of the black middle-class in South Africa has enabled black people to secure themselves and their families from the indignities of poverty and discrimination that working-class people are generally vulnerable too.

The ANC's rise to power in the post-apartheid era gave birth to the black bourgeois (black middle-class), introducing a wider inequality gap within the black population while also creating a kind of capitalistic drive within it (Iheduru, 2004; Clark & Worger, 2016). The middle-class status was limited to a small number of black people and created a division that is observable through simple means of access and lifestyle. Southall (2016) calls the black bourgeois, "the consumers of products that are of industrial wealth" who adapt to the ways of the former counterparts within this class but experiment quite excessively through buying flashy items and occupying spaces in gated-communities. However, Garcia-Rivero, Du Toit and Kotzé (2003) note that there have been some positive reasons for the creation of black middle-class such as achieving an inclusive democracy. However, those against Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) can argue against the notion of inclusivity as purely based on political affiliation and not on merit (Canham, 2015). This however disregards the fact that this legislation is also a means of reducing inequality in society. Puwar (2004) notes these feelings as arising from what she terms "burden of blackness", which challenges black people's appointment as influenced by race, merit or equity measures of a particular company.

According to research conducted by Nattrass (2002), inequality is one factor or issue that has not decreased after the demise of the apartheid government and the institution of democracy. Inequality in its purest form in South Africa is inseparable with race and gender to some extent. These two notions of inequality feed the disparities that exist within class. 'Poor' is

economically associated with black people and 'rich' with white people (Adler & O'Sullivan, l996). In addition, race and class positions tend to occupy different settings, with the majority of black people huddled up in informal settings, which experience high levels of violence and poverty. The white population occupies spaces within well-established suburbs with high-end security and well-developed services in their vicinity.

The growth of the black middle-class population was due to strategies by the ANC government that were geared towards reconciliation. These included tactics such as the affirmative action and black economic empowerment. According to Krige (2012), understandings of the black middle-class population in South Africa are found in explanations that are inseparable from Western notions of living such as access to prestige education, going on holidays, occupying expensive households within high-end suburbs and recently now, this act of dog walking. Furthermore, such claims invite different thinking regarding the conception of middle-class, which follows on to state that the black middle-class population came in to existence through Western notions as it is a culture that was ahead and ascribed by the majority of the black population living. The black community lived a life that is termed simple and quite traditional with no influence from the outside (white individualistic culture). Southall (2004) notes that South African historical escapades are purely the source of how racial factors are utilized as determinants to access, as well as the lived experiences of black people, especially during the oppressive era. Khunou (2015) concurs and further states that in the attempt to attain class understanding, it is imperative to explore the history of black people. However, Burger and Zoch (2017), note that while this may be the case, the rapid growth of the black middle-class may also introduce investigations of class that have no affiliation to race. Simply stated, increases in the black middle-class population may also be related to low polarization and marginalizing between the rich and the poor. Most notions about the middle-class are linked to its positive function towards economic growth (Visagie, 2015). Pressman (2007) notes these functions as relationships of domestic consumptions by the middle-class or assisting in the financial usage or saving.

The introduction of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) was aimed at uplifting black people who were historically disadvantaged and came from poor backgrounds, empowering them to occupy places of employment and include black people in white owned businesses (Southall, 2004; Lindsay, 2015). Notwithstanding such efforts, however, Canham and Langa (2017) report that inequality has deepened, creating a greater chasm between the middle-class and the working class. Ndletyana (2014) concurs with the above and further suggests that

inequality exists as a result of apartheid that race-targeted black people and was orchestrated by the government at that time. Hill, O'Neill and Wayne (2017) note that the new century of black middle-class is made up of health and educational professionals that attained social class position through such means. Moreover, the BBBEE policy fails to empower the black majority for its focus is purely on the black elite and the policy is implemented as an act rather than a principle (Malikane & Ndletyana, 2006). The biggest criticism of the BBBEE Act is that it has not benefitted the vast majority of black people and has been perceived as a vehicle for creating a class of black elites (Makgetla, 2006; Ponte, Roberts & van Sittert, 2007; Makgoba, 2019).

Continued limitations within the under-resourced basic education system and expensive higher education mean that the skills base has been insufficient to meet the needs of industry. However, even though the black middle-class is proportionally small, members of this class have been able to move to suburbs in formerly white-only neighborhoods and some have adopted habits associated with middle-class people such as owning high pedigree dogs, which need to be walked and housed.

Modisha (2007) points to the complexity of class mobility for black people. He notes that the black middle-class inhabits this class location ambiguously as it maintains links and relationships to working class and unemployed family and communities in townships and rural areas. This means that they are not divorced from certain cultural practices and commitments. It appears that they still have ties or bonds to the township or rural settlements from which they come. As a result, they inhabit dual psycho-spatial positions. Canham and Williams (2017) add that the black middle-class is hemmed into circumscribed and competing identity performances by the expectations from multiple quarters including the black working class and the white middle-class. The black middle-class identity is therefore considered to be contingent and never settled. Iqani (2015), however, reminds us that while most of the present black middle-class is the first generation of black people to move class, a small black middle-class did exist throughout apartheid and the colonial era. Earlier generations of this class were made possible through missionary education (Iqani, 2015) and inequalities within the former homelands. The spatial location of the new black middle-class in formerly exclusively white suburbs has however enabled new forms of cultural capital made possible in part by travelling global conceptions of success, proximity to whiteness, and cultural exchange.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus is important for the theorization of this project as it enables us to think about class as a performative identity in ways that implicate the stratification of power and space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu elaborates his concept by stating that it is bestowed to the biological being and cannot be solely expressed mentally or through perceptions (Bourdieu, 1990). Habitus is societally inscribed to the individual through cultural interactions and repetitions of ordinary acts over time (Bourdieu, 1983). According to Bourdieu the concept of habitus is embodied and represented through external acts like particular ways of doing things, of talking and of being (Bourdieu, 1990).

As such, these acts are played out as agents that reproduce cultural capital therefore making it possible to define constructs according to what they represent. For instance, in this case, we explore the cultural capital represented in owning pedigree dogs and the performance of walking these dogs. Cultural capital is key in a stratified society for it helps distinguish people according to asset acquisitions, which can be anything from level of education, car ownership or lifestyle (Atkins, 2000). I posit that walking dogs in the suburbs of Johannesburg is a signifier of class. For middle-class black people, walking one's dogs may extend beyond the health-related benefits of this exercise to include particular ways of embodying class. Walking one's dog could therefore be perceived as a way of performing one's social location. It may be understood as a habit that carries particular constellations of meanings.

The prevalence of black dog walkers in the suburban residential areas of Johannesburg may suggest that members of the black middle-class have taken to walking their dogs. In this sense, the dog is seen to occupy a different role of not only being a security guard as it might be for the working class, but also a beloved and pampered pet. Dogs that are owned by middle-class suburban dwellers are generally well taken care of, from the food they eat and the medical treatment they receive with some even added to the animal medical aid. In this regard space informs class versus dog walking and security reasons. Some have dog trainers and regular visits to the vet. The owners are frequently seen in parks walking their dogs in the mornings or afternoons. Following the observations of black middle-class people walking dogs, women are not secluded from this act as they are also invested in walking their dogs. In addition to other representations, these may be interpreted as performances of middle-class affluence. However, class mobility is entangled with negative misconceptions from peers within the same class and race (Iqani, 2017). "Sell outs, imitators of Western culture, traitors and hypocrites," are some of the accusations levelled at the black middle-class for occupying

this class position. As in the case of the former president, these negative attributions may be directed at black middle-class people who walk dogs. Moreover, this act of dog walking is utilized as a parenting style in the family that sees children instilling responsibility and compassion.

Theoretical framework

Dog Walking as Performativity

Walking dogs in suburban settings can be classified as a performative act of socio-economic class. Miller (2007) notes that the concept of performativity is one that has been utilized in many fields of study (science, technology and economics) but for the purpose of this particular study, I make use of the theory from a social perspective. According to Ball (2003), performativity is carried out as repetitive acts that form a particular culture and a governing body that helps infer comparisons that are based on how society views things. For Butler (1988) who developed this theory, performativity is not to be understood as a process that takes place internally but rather as acts which ascribe meaning from society. Therefore, identities can be seen as continuous and fluid with people performing them often in different spaces for different audiences at different times. Performativity is achieved in the presence of an audience that studies and observes repetitive habits or acts in society.

Performance in society may provide a clue of people's class position or role within the community. Performative acts help ascribe meaning and this meaning is continuously reproduced. For one to comprehend a certain act as being a performance, such acts need to be repeated in society to constitute an identity point of reference. Appearance is key to such acts as they help the perceiver formulate what the presenting object is (Butler, 2009). Most socially practiced customs or ways of being are seen as acts that are engraved repeatedly through observations and performances.

South Africa is one place that shares many inter-linked practices that define particular groups of people, which historically are linked to place and time. This is related to the concept of performativity that has been defined as social and repetitive acts that ascribe meaning over time (Butler, 1988). Moreover, these acts or habits that have become mundane to the observer and the actor, work continuously to prescribe a kind of norm that requires subtle conformity from those who ascribe to the norms of the group. Butler (1988) states that performativity is an expression of persistence that needs to be understood as markers of the performance by those watching. Persistent or repetitive acts are imperative when observing social acts that further incur a certain social identity.

Furthermore, for an act to be associated with a particular system, an audience, or daily viewers, need to be present as they make meaning of the performance and ascribe it accordingly in time. Ball (2003) further surfaces the problem of how subjective performance is reduced and is punished by disapproval or alienation from society. Bell (1999) sees identity as an end product of performativity because identities emerge constantly when engaged through daily acts. Further, this theory aims to repair and maintain habits or cultural activities and to some extent is used as a generational tool used to pass teachings through observation of acts. These include daily behaviors adapted from society. However, as culture is a dynamic concept that is embedding with this theory, it is imperative to acknowledge that certain performances are bound to change over time and create new identities in society.

Performativity is a theory of meaningful constructions that is continuous in society (Marti & Gond, 2018). As the black population inhabit suburban areas, the act of walking a dog has created a new identity, expressed relationally to class. As expressed earlier, black people have always had lineage of owning dogs as functional pets within the household but without the performativity of walking them in the township or rural settings. These visible daily social demonstrations or behaviours of walking dogs help enact a kind of social class position of middle-class black people within society. Black people within these spaces have now tapped into a middle-class status due to their accumulation of social capital through their education and skills, which cannot be associated with township lifestyle.

Cultural Capital

Ways of life are forever evolving as human beings interact daily. Certain styles of living that are culturally embedded to a particular race or class are relived or experienced through generational teachings and passing down through knowledge. Thus, cultural reproduction is ultimately continuous and participatory (Bourdieu, 2018). According to Willis (1981), reproduction in this sense highlights the important concept of education as a vessel of knowledge as it provides ideal skills and, as Althusser, Jameson, and Brewster (2001) points out, real conditions of existence. This theory of reproduction is key to understanding past relationships of black people in the township and how their class position affected dog ownership. This phenomenon is quite classical in that it somehow feeds in to reproduction as a means for production.

Althusser, Jameson, & Brewster, 2001; Bourdieu, 2018) both note that education is an identifying factor in the reproduction of culture within systems. The relocation of black people to the suburbs and change in lifestyle is determined by the education one has attained. According to Althusser (2006) constructivism yields production, which is a product of reproduction that is vital to the theory in question. In this sense, reproduction may be observed in the same light as repetition in performativity as these forms the foundation of understanding and inquiry. Wolff (2005) notes that cultural reproduction is beneficial in various fields such as marketing, learning institutions and even in churches, in some instances as the concept is not overtly visible or any awareness from the participants within the economic system. Education and the material and symbolic value that it enables one to accrue is seen to be cultural currency. Those with education generally have significant amounts of cultural capital (Nash, 1990; Luke, 2018). These analogies highlight 'power' as being present or absent in relation to class. Power in this light is perceived as which class embodies cultural capital and has means to mitigate negative circumstances (Akom, 2008).

The concept of social capital is one that is difficult to define as it has been used in many fields outside sociology to articulate varies notions. According to Coleman and Coleman (1994) social capital is said to operate at an individual level concerned with in group networks and social structures that are at play. To a certain extent, social capital to some individuals is a value that guides them (Lin, 2017). This concept also draws on notions that are integral to community psychology such as empowerment, sense of community and support within the community and the abundance of information accompanied by resources. As McMillan and Chavis' (1986) core defines sense of community according to their four elements (membership, shared emotional connection, influence, and needs fulfilment), this is an important determinant of social capital within a community. Perkins and Long (2002) further agrees with the latter and also adds another imperative concept; empowerment. Together, these two assist by facilitating active participation from all and positive feelings to one another (Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich & Chavis, 1990). Social capital may be investigated in communities by the level of interpersonal trust individuals between community members and their perceptions of availability of mutual resources (Putnam, 1995). Having black middle-class people existing among one another in the suburbs, social capital is perceived to be high as they share the same resources, participate in the same exercise of dog walking and invite a trusting relationship.

Social capital is made visible by identifiers of class such as location or lifestyle. To some extent this may only be visible according to what Bourdieu terms as repression, as the working class exhibits much of the cultural oppression, and these ways of life are normalized (Bunn, 2015). This theory is useful for exploring the phenomenon under consideration. Black middle-class people have adapted new and unfamiliar means of rearing their pedigree dogs. The act of walking the dogs and exposing them to high-end health care are subtle ways of expressing class as opposed to the traditional ways of utilizing them for security and hunting purposes. Dog walking by black middle-class people may therefore be considered as an expression of cultural capital that accrues through a middle-class habitus.

Bourdieu is said to be one of the leading researchers of cultural capital theory and is considered as its originator. Cultural capital is said to inhabit three forms: the embodied state, how one's mind and body theories come to be; secondly, the institutionalized state, shared values that must that are distinguishable and thirdly, objectified state which is perceived as cultural goods (Bourdieu, 2011). This form of capital was proposed by economists to research how culture and education may have positive impacts on social reproduction, after solely focusing on human, physical and social capital (Throsby, 1999). As noted earlier, education appears to be an important attribute for one to attain greater cultural capital as it provides access to social privileged (Kingston, 2011).

Economic liberation is necessary in order to achieve maximum cultural capital (Yosso, 2005; Gugushvili 2015). Economic participation provides the black middle-class with access. This is visible in the suburbs of Johannesburg as this new predominant class is accustomed to the act of walking dogs. Notably, the black middle-class has its cultural capital invested and expressed in the 'habits of white people' and as such becomes a daily performativity within those spaces and progressively creates a distinct middle-class identity for these black people.

Their cultural capital is reproduced through performative acts that are repetitive and embedded in middle-class habits. Embodiment of cultural capital is thus represented through the black middle-class urban lifestyle as they construct a geographical and economic identity, which can be said to be an objective state of being. In an attempt to restore or maintain cultural capital, an element of consistency in cultural acts that form these identities is key. As Lareau (2001) notes, the concept of social capital is vital in forming strong support structures as it functions by embedding people into systems or networks, which are important to maintain. Within the suburbs of Johannesburg, black middle-class people's habitus varies in

their lifestyles and habits within their environment or field. Thus, this phenomenon of walking dogs and suburb occupancy can be understood as middle-class attributes. Identity then becomes a by-product of black middle-class lifestyle, which is perceived through daily performances.

Identity Constructions

Identity is quite a contested concept in academic scholarship (Iedama & Caldas-Coultard, 2008). It is also frequently misused in its social application. However, its intricacies are often not attended to or addressed adequately during social interactions. Identity is a concept that can be understood with particular reference to sense of place and the emotional attachments that people have in relation to the setting (Stedman, 2002). For example, residents of Johannesburg may understand themselves in relation to the city by calling themselves Johannesburgers. An individual's identity might also be closely associated with their place of birth or place of residence. According to, Barcus and Shugatai (2018), a place of residence plays a vital role in creating an identity for a particular group as human interactions and social relationships are embedded in place and context. With reference to this study, black people living in suburbia can be said to share in the class attributes and social capital that accrues from living there. Furthermore, dog walking could be thought of as one of the performances of middle-class identity.

Sack (1997) states that setting is an agent of self-identity, as both place and self-interact together to form identity. Place attachment theory is vital in unpacking identity constructions as it emphasizes the strong bond between the environment and the people who inhabit it (Moore & Graefe, 1994; Hewitt, 1991). As noted above, identity is a concept that is not bound to a single dimension. For example, the language one speaks determines a place of origin and ethnicity and to some extent music and fashion may be classified as social determinants of identity. Deaux (1992) focuses on identity as a defining character of an individual, which is influenced by place, lifestyle and community contextual issues. Identity derives meaning in its social performance with reference to hermeneutic excess (Gjesdal, 2019, Crowther, Ironside, Spence, & Smythe, 2017).

One important identity theory that is of interest to unpack is place-identity as it is solely related to the environment and has been in existence since the late 1970s (Proshansky, 1978;

Healey, 2017). The contextual element of an individual is of vital importance when identity is under investigation. One's place of refuge has a psychological bond associated with it and remains as such. Proshansky, Fabian and Kamino, (1983) sees identity as an extension of the individual's self-concept into a wider sense of self. Individualism is extended into a greater sense involving other beings (Hogg, Abrams & Brewer, 2017) Representations, concepts, feelings and ideas about the space all form part of the larger self-concept that is incorporated into the larger community. Place-identity may be organized as preconceptions and conceptions that include two clusters, one responsible for cognitive processes and the other focusing on the multiple settings in which people embed themselves (Proshansky & Fabian, 1987; Bernardo & Palma-Oliveira, 2016). Identity may also be viewed as a construct that provides some autonomy and self-introspection yet also identifies itself as one with the larger community (Hauge, 2009). The individual is able to distinguish a sense of self in relation to the larger community.

Identity process theory is a construct that is dynamic in nature and provides some kind of structure and process (Breakwell, 1983, 2015). This theory is also related to memory consciousness that yields social interactions. It also includes content dimension (personal and social identity) and the value dimension (good and bad values of these dimensions). Culture and context are dependent on this concept as they influence one's identity.

Social identity theory relates more to self-concepts that are rooted in the view of sameness and differences that provide meaning for people in society (Hauge, 2007). People construct meaning relating to self as a means of comparison of social categories. Class position within the black population is created through visual notes of black people occupying houses in the suburbs, lifestyle and walking or grooming dogs. According to Tajfel (1982) the concept of social identity is the view of people belonging to a certain social group and sharing similar values and perceptions. Middle-class people invest time and finances in caring for their dogs and walk them as means of dual benefits (exercise for the dog and owner). While dog walking is not a marker of class on its own, when conducted in particular places, it is one of the signifiers of middle-class identity. Turner (1982) further highlights how people tend to view themselves according to their social group. For instance, investing in the kind of clothing worn when walking the dog or the equipment used during this act or habit. According to Lemke (2008), identity constructions are derived from cultural experiences that people share. This can be further explained through multiple contexts that provide one with a sense of identity.

Identity constructions are interchangeable and not static. These constructions are challenged by time and space. Iedema and Caldas-Coulthard (2008) contend that identity cannot be viewed from a singular dimension but is affected by how we consume products, social participation, one's lifestyle, social class and to some degree, levels of education. Identity also gives a sense of belonging or sameness that is evident when a community shares or embodies something that everyone shares (Stolze, 2018). For instance, poverty can be associated of a particular kind of identity constituted by race, class and location (such as townships or rural areas). Butler (1990) further stipulates that identity is a performance of race, gender, class and social status. The black middle-class's identity is also embedded in their investments based on their representations race and social status within their community in the suburbs.

Class, race, environment and habits are perceived as identifiers that categories people's identity. Relocating from townships to inhabiting spaces in the suburban areas of Johannesburg has informed this identity. This expresses the type of class a black person has achieved. The act of owning and walking high pedigree dogs that are well looked after is a new identifier or class marker for newly middle-class black people. Moreover, such identities are only made visible through repetitive acts in society. Therefore, performativity drives the expression of identity (Ball, 2003).

This research explores the extent to which dog walking among the black middle-class can be considered a middle-class habitus and a performance of particular identities. The theories of racialization, class, gender, dog ownership, social capital, habitus and identity as a performance were explored in the literature review and constitute key concepts for the research project. It will further explore how black people imagine themselves as participants in this new phenomenon and how they view themselves.

Methodology

A qualitative approach is best suited to help answer the identified research questions in the study. Qualitative research has been defined as an approach that is appropriate for the investigation and development of explanations of naturally occurring social phenomena (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 1998; Smith, 2015). It can be seen as distinct from quantitative research, which relies more on numeric representation and some kind of manipulation of social phenomena under observation (Sukamolson, 2007). Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) concur with the choice of using a qualitative approach for it is ideal in engaging the experiences of human participants. According to Patton and Patton (2002) a qualitative approach allows the researcher to observe and note people's sense of identity, which can be made up of perceptions, feelings and opinions.

A qualitative approach usually makes use of semi-structured or unstructured interviews as a data collection method (Whiting, 2008). This method of interviews fits well within a qualitative approach as it is concerned with attaining data from naturally occurring acts in society. Data interpretation is derived from inductive reason, which relies from naturally occurring ideas in social contexts (Morse, 1994). Bernard (1988) notes that semi-structured interviews provide raw and authentic data that emerge from personal interaction. McIntosh and Morse (2015) supports the use of semi-structured interviews as method of collecting data. The study involved black middle-class participants who walk dogs around the suburbs of Johannesburg. They were interviewed at their places of work or study to further support the research approach of the study. The research explored how participants made sense of their role as black middle-class people who walk dogs and the possible identity implications of this practice within middle-class contexts.

Furthermore, the study was also concerned with participant's ideas surrounding dog ownership and how class position shaped their lifestyle and social capital. The research was analysed from a performativity theoretical framework. This is said to work well with a qualitative approach in line with the constructivism paradigm. Meaning is unpacked as it is occurring in context, uninterrupted or staged. The act of walking dogs within these spaces encouraged other black people to join in this act. Themes were identified that interrogated the relationship between class and race, where some refuted and acknowledged the benefits associated with dog walking.

Sample and Sampling

The sample of any empirical study is important for the subsequent meanings and conclusions reached. It is therefore important to engage the sample in order to provide a clear picture of participants (Mason 2004). The study's sample consisted of black middle-class inhabitants of Johannesburg who own and walk dogs. Participants were all over the age of 18 and therefore within the age of consent. The sample constituted of ten black middle-class residents who fit the criteria. Thus, a total of ten interviews were conducted to gather information for the study with a sample of ten participants.

Pseudonym	**Age**	**Suburb**
Gugu	35	Randburg
Mbali	51	Rosebank
Daniel	34	Northcliff
Sbu	40	Parktown
David	30	Randburg
Thabo	31	Melville
Queen	30	Northcliff
Ayanda	39	Northcliff
Mdu	37	Randburg
Mlu	34	Norwood

Figure 1: Demographics table of participants

The figure above depicts the demographics and geographic locations of participants interviewed, it is worth such that they satisfied the class criteria. It further exposes the equal spread of gender across and the sameness of roles performed by each participant. The figure aims to provide a representation of the study's participants and expressing its key concepts that were adhered to thoroughly.

The sample was representative of the nature of the study and adhered to the all-ethical requirements. Participants were all black people, most of which still share ties with rural and township relationships. For the purpose of this study, participants were highly selected due to their geographic location, which were suburbs of Johannesburg and above the age of consent. The group compiled of six men and four women with an average age of 36. Many of the participants occupied senior positions within financial services industry and included a chief executive officer (CEO) and others were in higher educational institutions and in managerial positions. These participants are active dog walkers with a majority of them residing in Northcliff and Randburg. These suburbs are characterised as middle-class and historically known to be inhibited by white people. The houses generally have swimming pools, tall fences with alarm systems and expensive German cars. The majority of the participants share a working-class upbringing and some exposure to dogs.

The number of participants were selected on the basis that the sample size would yield rich data for the study. Coyne (1997) notes that the sample size has a profound significance on the overall quality of the study, as the research derives most of its context from the sampled population that affirms the research questions. While the intention of the study was not to generalise the findings, the sample size and meaning making derived from its data suggested that the theory may inform future studies. The study made use of purposive sampling as the researcher looked for people who fit the inclusion criteria of being black, middle-class people that owned and walked their dogs. The purposive sampling technique was supported by the snowballing method. According to Patton and Patton (2002) snowballing is when research participants are asked to suggest other likely participants that could be interviewed. Noy (2008) identifies the approach as one that produces meaning and is derived from a constructivists notion that is deeply rooted within society. Morrison (1988) contends that the snowballing method is quite effective in collecting data for convenience. Furthermore, the snowballing method helps cut down costs and time in searching for participants. Faugier and Sargeant (1997) supports this type of method as it ideal when identifying hard-to-reach populations. This can be very useful in instances where the researcher encounters difficulties

in obtaining the ideal participants. The sample was identified in the suburban residential areas of Johannesburg. The area was appropriate because anecdotal evidence suggests that pet ownership is high in the suburbs of Johannesburg. Moreover, these suburbs are generally a reliable proxy for class as many residents that own property there are middle-class. This is supported by the cost of real estate in these areas and the lifestyles of the residents.

Participant 01 University of the Witwatersrand Staff Black middle-class, Woman,	Participant 02 Female	
Participant 03 University of the Witwatersrand Staff Black middle-class, Woman,	Participant 04 Man	
Participant 05 University of the Witwatersrand Student (Post-Grad) Black middle-class, Woman,	Participant 06 Man	Participant 07 Man
Participant 08 Participant 03 Absa towers Black middle-class, Man,	Participant 09 Man	
Participant 10 Standard Bank Black middle-class, Man		

Figure 2: Referral Diagram

Figure 2 aims to provide an indication of how the snowballing method transpired. It is evident above that participants were attained traditionally by verbal referrals that sometimes acknowledged the act of dog walking as a class indicator. Most participants in the diagram hold positions of relative seniority in their respective workplaces and have more than one dog. The diagram further represents the efficacy of the snowball method as a means of securing research participants.

Procedure

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviews are ideal for exploring experiences of participants and mostly allow the researcher to gain a better understanding (Patton & Patton, 2002). Interviews encourage the researcher to ask more engaging questions that will produce useful information (Babbie, 2016). Interviews are directed by the aims of the research study and allow for the possible emergence of new ideas by the participants. Having open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews requires the participants to answer in any way they see fit and gives full autonomy to them. In this study, it simultaneously allowed the researcher to prompt interviewees to engage with the key themes that are of interest to the research (Patton & Patton, 2002). This method helped to produce rich data to efficiently assist in answering the research questions.

Furthermore, the interviews were conducted using a deductive approach. A deductive approach involves the use of questions that are informed by existing ideas, theories and constructs (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013). For instance, the research was constructed in the belief that identity is performative (Butler, 1989), but it is open to the possibility that dog walking might not be a performance of class. It is for this reason that the research is interested to explore if this is indeed the case or not.

The researcher explained the aims of the research to participants by going over the information contained in the participant information letter. Participants were then given consent forms upon their agreement to participate in the study. The concept of informed consent was explained for both the interview and audio-recording. Participants were then able to agree or decline to participate in the research. Informed consent provides a sense of autonomy and free decision-making before and during the interviews. Informed consent may also be viewed as a precondition for the protection of human participants in research (Flory, Wendler & Emanuel, 2019). Possible risks and the principle of voluntary participation were highlighted prior to the commencement of the interview and participants were informed of their right to discontinue the interview if they felt like it.

The researcher informed participants that there were no ethical risks associated with participating in this study and that should they refuse to participate in the study, there were no disadvantages or penalties. Participants were informed that beyond the contribution to knowledge, there were no advantages to participation in this study. Since the study was of a

non-sensitive nature, there was no need to provide psychological debriefing. Moreover, the participants were not distressed by their participation and there was therefore no need to refer them to psychological support. They were however; given contact details for Lifeline should the need for psychological services arise. On average, interviews were conducted over approximately 50 - 80 minutes. Interviews were conducted at locations that were mutually convenient for the participants and the researcher. Many of them were held at participants' homes or places of work. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The study made use of thematic analysis to make meaning of the ten transcripts to be generated from the interviews. As proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), six steps are to be followed when analysing qualitative data using thematic content analysis. These include familiarising oneself with the data, coding of data in an organized manner, searching for themes, checking the relevance of themes and personalising them, producing final themes by defining and naming them, and finally producing a report of an analysis of the themes. Beyond the six steps outlined here, it is worth noting that data analysis begins at the point of the data gathering as the researcher begins to assess the data and make meaning of what participants are saying. At the point at which data is transcribed, preliminary meaning making is done and the researcher becomes familiar with the data in both voice and written form. Furthermore, a thematic method of analysis is ideal for such a study as it looks at themes that are socially represented in the world (Parker, 2013). Thematic analysis is appropriate for this study as it is able to tap into perceptions and meanings which are central to addressing the aims of this study.

Reflexivity

Any form of qualitative research that involves the extraction of information from humans, requires trustworthy methods that promote validity and reliability. Shaw (2010) contends that the concept of reflexivity is a hermeneutic reflection that grants the researcher access to conscious awareness. Referring to most qualitative research, Oakley (1998) states that the researcher is imagined as the instrument and therefore the author of interpretations.

Using the concept of 'positional reflexivity', Macbeth (2001) invites researchers to reflect upon and interrogate the process as they navigate themselves through data collection and interpretation. As I reflect on my positionality, social constructions of race, class and gender become reimagined once more. I saw that I bonded well with older women who saw me as an eager scholar and an imagined son and not one that forms part of the many young unemployed black men with no formal education. My race and gender granted me easy access to their homes as they could express themselves in their native language. This was beneficial to some extent. However, it also invited a subtle power dynamic in the room which was associated with class. There were moments when some of the participants' higher-class position was visibilised when they explained dog medical aid, for instance. I considered this data rich in that it partially answered my research questions and challenged me even more. I was granted insight through constant self-reflexivity, which advocates for self-awareness and alertness through the research process as it challenges the researcher to be conscious of hidden cultural ideologies, theories and social discourses that may arise during the research. This tool is vital as it allows the researcher to be conscious of their subjectivity in interpretation. It also enables them to understand the experiences and conversations that occur prior to recording. Furthermore, self-reflexivity encourages authenticity and honesty in the research. For example, because some of the interviews were conducted with their dogs present and while some participants continued with their daily routines, like feeding and patting them whilst conducting the interview. This gave the researcher insight into the relationships that some participants had with their dogs. Moreover, self-reflexivity enabled me to adapt my subjective underpinnings of the research within the space and also equipped me to be flexible in my cognitive stances without being overly bias or oblivious to external phenomena.

Ethical Considerations

Since the sample was not from a vulnerable population and they were of consent age, additional protections and consent were not sought beyond the informed consent of interviewees themselves. Therefore, confidentiality and informed consent were the only issues considered. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used as opposed to participant's recognisable names. This was done to protect the identity and privacy of the participants. The identities of participants are known to the researcher and anonymity can therefore not be assured. The researcher, however, reported all data in ways that did not

reveal the identities of the participants. While quotes were used, they were presented in abstraction of the participants in order to ensure that they are not identifiable to readers.

The researcher acquired informed consent through explaining the exact nature and purpose of the research and addressed any questions that participants had. The consent forms outlined details of the interview: duration, location, right to withdraw at any time and a brief summary of the research aims. When there was adequate understanding, participants were asked to complete the consent forms to give the researcher permission to record the interviews. In addition, participants were informed that the research study will be written into a Masters Research report and has the possibility of being written up as a journal article for future use. Participants that are interested in a summary of the research report will be emailed with the information and informed that the full report will be available online through the University of the Witwatersrand's library portal. Lastly, participants were informed that all data pertaining to this study will be stored safely in a password-protected computer. Data will be available to only the researcher and his research supervisor.

Findings

This chapter offers an in-depth thematic analysis of data transcribed from ten semi-structured interviews of black middle-class people who own and walk dogs. Furthermore, accounts of the interviewer's suggested three themes, which are discussed in detail as follows: dog walking as a performance of class, resisting class position, and accounts of dog ownership. The themes were selected simple because they address the research questions, cohere with the debates in the literature and they emerged as preoccupations from the data obtained from the interviews. Moreover, they provide high-level engagement with the issues of interest. While a number of other important issues arose in the data, only three themes were selected based on their relevance for the central concerns of this study.

Dog walking as a performance of class

This section aims to address the following research question: How do black middle-class people make sense of their performance of dog walking? As a result, the emerging theme will aim to address the research question from multiple vantage points as understood from the data. Moreover, this section aims to unpack how middle-class black people perceive dog walking. This interrogates the view that dog walking might be a performative gesture that signifies middle-class identity among black people.

Bauman (2004) states that the concept of identity is contested and is actively researched in academia. Lumby (2009) sees identity as being related to performativity, for it is through performance that identities solidify and evolve with time. In South Africa, the act or performance of dog walking has long been associated with the middle-class. When one who is the owner of a pedigree dog lives in a middle-class suburb and walks their dog/s, this might be seen as a performance of middle-class identity. According to Burke (2006), identity is not a fixed construct and is not static. Therefore, when one transitions from a working-class community to reside in a middle-class suburb, they begin to adapt their habits towards those that are more desirable in the new community of residence. They adopt the middle-class habitus of the community within which they reside. This suggests that black middle-class people may have taken on this behaviour and ascribed it to a middle-class identity. The act of walking one's dog may be interpreted as one of the requisite behaviours necessary to accomplish the new class status.

The following excerpts suggest that participants use pragmatic lenses to think about the practise of dog walking. They do not immediately associate dog walking with a class position but see it as an act of necessity occasioned by the requirements of their place of residence.

> No, no, no, no…we just living in constrained spaces, and we just… yah giving the dogs [inaudible] to exercise and be fit. (Thabo)

> It's more the accessibility to facilities and resources, it's the…like I say, a township dog can go for a walk and come back whenever it feels like, you know. I can't do that in the suburbs the bylaws are different. So, the nature of the environment dictates the lifestyle that one lives. (Mbali)

> There are dogs in the rural areas that eat dog food – it's a question of affordability more than anything else, yah. (Mbali)

In the above excerpts, Mbali and Thabo explain dog walking in relation to pragmatic concerns such as space. In this regard, Thabo notes that because of constrained living spaces in suburbia, it is necessary to walk dogs as a form of exercise. Presumably, this is unlike the space that is available in townships and rural areas where dogs have more space to freely roam around the yard or neighbourhood. It is not unusual to see a dog walking around without a leash in a township or rural area. Furthermore, in rural areas where poverty and traditions are alive, dogs are also utilized for hunting small game, which serves as a source of food for these families. Dogs in this regard are treated according to their role and literally, what they bring to the table-Mbali suggests that the act of dog walking is encouraged by the environment one finds themselves in. These spaces do not allow dogs to roam around and share spaces with other dogs, as there are bylaws at play and motives for this exercise.

David echoes the sentiments expressed by Mbali and Thabo in the preceding excerpts. Like, them, he suggests that suburban spaces and behaviors are more controlled and surveilled for allowable and prohibited actions.

> No, no, no it`s that…. we never used to do it because we had a plenty of space but now you are moving to a suburb where there isn't that much space and there are bylaws that do not allow for dogs to be roaming the streets and stuff whereas where I come from if I don't see my dog the whole day that`s okay, its gone on a jog or on a walk about and I will see it at night, its fine. In a suburb they will call the SPCA on me, yah. Nah…it has nothing to do with wanting to be anything. It's the nature of the

> environment that we find ourselves in. Either you happen to be living in a suburban area with certain bylaws. Abiding by those bylaws doesn't make you white. You can abide all you want, but you can never be white. It doesn't mean you are aspiring to be white or anything. (David)

To live in middle-class suburbs, one has to subject themselves to the norms and habitus of allowable or unallowable behaviours. Suburban spaces are policed based on these norms. For instance, David argues that unaccompanied dogs are likely to be reported to the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty against Animals). He is adamant that operating within the limits of the law is not an indication of a desire for whiteness or the mimicking of white behaviour. In this conception, dog walking should be interpreted at face value rather than as a performative gesture. Following David's contention, if we take dog walking at face value, it is a rebuttal of the former president's assertion, that the behaviours of middle-class black people are a performance of whiteness. However, the theories of habitus and performativity ask us to explore everyday behaviours that appear to be self-evident. As Butler (1988) notes, performativity is an act that is expressed through everyday acts that are ascribed to ways of society. It is therefore important to hold constant both explanatory frames for thinking about dog walking among middle-class suburban dwellers.

In the following excerpt, Sbu uses class to think about why township folk generally do not walk dogs. For him, working class people do not have the luxury of time because of the time that they spend traveling to and from work as well as the long hours that they generally work.

> Umm…I guess it's the time, because nine out ten the working class work live far away from their place of residence and they usually do, mainly do manual labour so yah they would find themselves with the…. not enough time to walk the dog, ja. (Sbu)

There is obvious truth to this statement. However, it is also true that many people in working class townships are also unemployed and they can often be seen on the streets or staying at home. Therefore, while Sbu's contention is correct, it does not explain the nearly absent culture of dog walking in townships. One could go so far as to hazard that not walking dogs in township spaces has the performative value of eschewing middle-class behaviours and perceived pampering of animals in conditions of relative deprivation. Moreover, since working class white people generally walk their dogs, the intersection of race and class is

important to surface in this analysis. This means that race is an important variable for working class black people while it appears less salient for black middle-class people. Constructions of leisure and exercise appear to vary as a function of the class position and living space occupied by black people. Of course, Modisha (2007) has demonstrated that middle-class black people often return to the township to enact leisure activities that are consistent with working class habitus. This suggests that the habitus of middle-class suburbs is only enabling of performances consistent with white middle-class behaviours. Black middle-class people therefore operate and perform their identities between spaces. This is not surprising given that middle-class suburbs have a historical proximity to whiteness as they were the exclusive reserve of white people. Unlike the working class, Garcia-Rivero, Du Toit and Kotzé (2003) contend that black middle-class people are less likely to be in environments that require heavy and strenuous labour from them. Therefore, leisure time for them is taken up by physical activity, which brings about relaxation, hence the act of walking dogs.

A quarter of a century after the end of apartheid, there is now a generation of black people that was born and raised in middle-class suburbs. They have adopted habits of middle-class life early in their lives. Ayanda reminisces about her childhood pet and how this love for dogs has been a consistent part of her life. For her, Misty provides valuable companionship that is consistent with the reason that psychological literature gives for dog walking.

> Well, funny enough I kinda grew up doing it. My late father bought me my first puppy at the age of 6 and I'd walk with him almost everywhere. So, I guess I took over that habit and since then, the love of dogs has never faded. (Ayanda)

> Yep, now it's somehow formal but still fun and exciting. I walk her almost every day of the week as she is very energetic and filled with adventure. So, it has become part of my daily habit and it is always geared with love. I stay alone so walking Misty takes away the loneliness and boredom. (Ayanda)

According to Collis and McNicholas (1998) pet ownership is beneficial as it can help to promote person-to-person relations. Dog walking aids in ensuring that people within a community interact socially and as remarked above, they help decrease loneliness. While Ayanda does not associate dog walking with class, she highlights the emotional connectedness with that dogs enable.

In the excerpt below, Mlu highlights the physical benefits of dog walking. He sees it as an alternative to expensive gym membership.

> Yes, I have a German Shepard. His name is Nelson. He is a symbolic reminder of the oppression faced by my people and also a positive living representation of reconciliation of the struggles faced. I am a mature man not old man that has not the time to exercise at this foreign money-making schemes that are called gyms but dog walking is a great way to get out for me and exercise. (Mlu)

Mlu has named his dog after anti-apartheid leader and human rights defender Nelson Mandela. Here, Mlu highlights the symbolic representation of his dog as a reminder of race-based oppression. He does not refer to the class symbolism of his dog Nelson. It is however inferred through the pedigree of the German Shepard dog. The dog is expensive to look after and it is clearly a middle-class pet. In the preceding excerpt, Mlu is both performing and resisting middle-class habitus. He does the later through invoking struggle against inequality in the naming of the dog. In this instance, he has an expensive critique of inequality. This points to the doubling that is evident in the lives of many contemporary middle-class black people.

Sbu's talk about his dogs suggests a clearer and less ambiguous performance of class. His dogs are high pedigree and he spends a significant amount of money in ensuring that they are fed and covered by medical aid to take care of their health. He contrasts the habits and cost of dog ownership with those of working-class townships where dogs cost less to look after and require less attention.

> My dogs are on medical aid and per month I would say, I roughly spend about (+-) R6000 on them. The big dog eats a lot and the other two small ones are quite picky when it comes to food, so I have to buy a variety and sometimes I have to buy again during the month. But this was not the case growing up in the township, the dog just existed and roamed around the kasi [township] unattended. (Sbu)

Through the accounts of a range of participants, it is evident that while many believe that dog walking is not a performance of a middle-class habitus but a necessity based on suburban requirements, the choices made by participants including the pedigree of dogs they own are informed by a middle-class habitus. Through this performance, they do a double take on identity and complicate how we think about black middle-class people.

Resisting middle-class categorization

Class is a significant category of identity as it assists government, economists, researchers and policy makers to make meaning of how people are positioned within the economy and what measures might be necessary to advance equality and social upliftment. The aim of policy makers and governments is generally to get as many working-class people into the middle-class. Colonial and apartheid law makers ensured that black people retained a working-class position while they actively advanced the middle-class location of white people. Since the end of apartheid, neoliberal policies have maintained the pattern of race based on inequality (Canham and Langa, 2017). However, black economic empowerment and employment equity interventions have enabled some black people to transition to the middle-class. In spite of the inequalities that characterise South Africa, Kotzè and García-Rivero (2018) indicated that a significant increase in the middle-class has occurred in the post-apartheid period. It is these people that the present study is interested in. However, politically and historically the working class is ascribed to black people which has generally meant that black people are imagined as working class. Since many have working class roots and family members, they have strong solidarities and relationships with the working class. Against this background, this section attempts to address the following research question: What identity constructions emerge when making sense of the relationship between black middle-class and dog walking?

The identified theme seeks to explore the ambiguity faced by black people in relation to occupying a middle-class position. According to Sayer (2005), middle-class black people experience negative judgement or feel miscategorised when they are called middle-class. Canham and Williams (2017) have explored the ambiguity and complexity of being black and middle-class in South Africa. Coupled with working class loyalties and solidarities, there is a lack of precision in the identity category of being black and middle-class. It may be speculated that the reluctance of owning a middle-class identity might be an expression of reluctance to leaving "behind" people with whom they previously shared close ties. Heightening class distinctions may therefore be experienced as a kind of betrayal.

When asked about her middle-class identity, Gugu is reluctant and accepts the label with some reservations. She does not personally identify with the label although she accepts that this is how she may be categorised. She sees this categorisation as imposed. Queen does not invest in class-based classifications.

> I'm told I am, so I guess I just have to agree that I am. (Gugu)
>
> Yah, I don't know…. you know those terms for me they don't really mean much. Ehh…really it doesn't mean much. (Queen)

Similarly, David points to the complexity of class. He applies a common sense understanding when he argues that working hard every day should mean that he is working class.

> Maybe I'm still a working class because I still have to wake up every morning. I work, I work hard I mean for I've got. So, I do know those definitions are quite complex and not easy to define. (David)
>
> Umm…I just happen to be categorised as middle-class so [laughs] so for me it means absolutely nothing but that's how society chooses to describe me. Umm…I don't know what you wanna call it, social status or whatever that one happens to find themselves in. (Mlu)
>
> Well, I don't know the world, not myself I don't define myself anyhow but I think the world define me as middle-class person because I have a job, a decent enough job, I have a house in the suburbs and I don't know, I speak English perhaps. I have a degree so I think that's how the world defines me but personally no. (Daniel)

Mlu and Daniel disassociate from middle-class identification and suggest that they do not have to subscribe to whatever category is assigned to them. While, Daniel recognises some of the performative elements of the middle-class in his own habitus, he contends that he does not subscribe to this category. The historical identification of black people with the working class and the association of the middle-class position with white people may lead some middle-class black people to resist middle-class categorisation. This is similar to Phadi and Ceruti's (2011) reading of the confluence between class and race. Advancement to the middle-class is also a symbolic gesture and some people might struggle with the meanings constituting this symbolism including feelings of betrayal of their working-class identities. Working class identifications appear more acceptable and congruent with black middle-class people interviewed in this study (Maylor & Williams, 2011). However, this requires a disavowal of one's material and symbolic privilege.

In the following excerpt, Sbu is more strident in his views against a middle-class categorization. In his exasperation, Sbu views class as yet another classification used to categories people. Thabo is equally passionate in expressing his "hate" of class classification

and attributes this to his dis-ease at the divisions that the category engenders. This is in keeping with Canham and Williams (2017) contention that race based solidarities among black people are somewhat fractured by class differences. Unlike gender differences, class variations often mean that people live in geographically different locations. In this regard, middle-class people generally reside in suburbs and working-class people primarily live in townships. In addition, black middle-class in the suburbs have closer geographical proximity to white people than they do to working class communities.

> Yes, I hate it, I…it's a …I hate it, it doesn't define who I am. It doesn't mean that by putting me into that category you kind of know how I react to things in life. No, not at all, it just happens to be a…one of those ehh…classifications that human beings have come up with, it was race, it was gender, it was this, now it's a class, so, ja. (Sbu)

> Quite frankly, I would like to think I am not, but in certain spaces I am, or maybe it's a feeling thing. I just hate how we need to be classified according to class, it's still a way of creating divisions and making us fight. (Thabo)

Thabo and Sbu verbalize the anxiety invoked by class and articulate their fear of further division. Class categorizations are imprecise as class is fluid and one can move between classes in a single life time. Moreover, class has a number of intermediate levels such as lower middle-class and upper middle-class. There is a possibility that this might be at play in the reluctance and uncertainty to embrace a particular class location. For example, David asks for a definition of middle-class. At the same time though, it is possible that the disassociation from middle-class identification may be sublimated by claims of ignorance on definitions of class. The later contention is likely given that participants perform middle-classness through occupying spaces that require mastery of class performance.

> I don't know, maybe…what`s a definition of a middle-class? (David)

> It's the society that defines me. Middle-class whatever I mean those levels they don't mean anything to me. I don't know if it`s because I'm 51 years old those things they don't mean anything to me and like I say things have changed. People want to move from lower class as they call it to middle-class I don't know, you define me if you want, but... (Mbali)

Like other participants, Mbali attributes class location to societal definitions while simultaneously removing herself from this. She thus states, "You can define me if you want, but…" The sentence ends with an implicit refusal of class categorization.

Mina [me] I'm just an African woman, who just does the best she can, who is aware that if I have anything, I need to share that with whoever is in need. If I have anything that it's…if I have surplus for example, I just need to share that with anyone maybe my children my relatives, my neighbour, whoever. But again it`s important for me to be happy and how do I define happiness...it`s important for me not to be greedy, to have…It's important for me to have eh…basic needs okay, it's important for me to have good relationships with my children with my relatives, with my colleagues, my neighbors, those things are important to me. Of course, it`s important for me to have a job because without a job, you don't have life. So that's how I define myself. I don't even think of defining myself but since you`ve asked me I would say that's how I define myself. (Mbali)

> Uhm middle-class or working class, ah I'm both [laughs]. (Mlu)

Mbali prefers to see herself as an African woman. Here, she embraces her gender identity but does not see class as an important or salient classification for her. She highlights values of sharing and good neighbourliness, which are typically associated with working class communities. The continuities in working class habitus for some middle-class black people is an important consideration to bear in mind especially for those who have lived significant parts of their lives in working class township spaces. Through this example, we see that class is not a straight line and black people complicate the meanings associated with class. The ambiguities that Mbali experiences are starkly articulated by Mlu who claims to be simultaneously middle and working class. However, those who have made the move to middle-class suburban spaces, have to live with a dual habitus.

> Uhm I would say yes because my profession allows me to, but based my views and contextual realities, I would say I am not. I do not know if it is because I was raised to work hard and appreciate the little things in life. Therefore, I do cherish that and I do not let society define me. I am a working class by heart and soul. I still pay black tax, put my family first and provide for them. Thing is, people will treat them as titles and not see how oppressive stratification is still at play here. You cannot work hard and achieve without being labelled. I may not be a miner but I earn my salary after so many hardships faced. (Mdu)

Here, Mdu is seen accepting his class position but he differentiates his material status from his "heart and soul" which he describes as working class. He expresses his emotional attachment to his working-class background, which he associates with black solidarity. Like many black middle-class people that continue to have working class family, Mdu asserts that he pays "black tax". The payment of "black tax" distinguishes the black middle-class from most white middle-class people. Black tax signals a continued commitment to financial and social responsibility to extended family members that are impoverished and those that remain working class. The constitution of family among black South Africans is broadly defined to include extended family members beyond the narrowly conceived of nuclear family.

Of the participants in this study, Queen bucks the trend by asserting that she is proudly middle-class. She attributes her pride to her having earned this classification through hard work. However, she also suggests that some black people living in townships may also be middle-class as they have the material trappings of the middle-class. In her conception, class is not only signified by geographical location but also by what is enabled by having a disposable income.

> Of course, I am. I can say that so proudly because I have earned my way here through hard work and sleepless nights. My parents still stay in the kasi (township) but I would consider them middle-class though as they have decent jobs drive nice cars and took us to expensive schools and universities. (Queen)

> I normally go on holiday twice a year, uhm at first such was a problem, like I did not know who to leave my dogs with and if I can trust that human being. But fortunately, the dog minders, which is a service that looks after your dog while you are on holiday, and they feed and attend to its medical needs. So now, I really enjoy my holiday [Laughs]. (Sbu)

Without claiming a middle-class identity, Sbu's account of dog minders that enable him to go on holidays is a clear performative gesture of middle-class identity. The ability to go on holiday twice a year is a clear signal of his middle-class position. In the following quotes, Mbali and Gugu also demonstrate middle-class sensibilities in their references to the diets of their dogs and levels of intimacy, hygiene and etiquette that they practice.

To some, owning middle-class is envisioned to be an achievement that is mostly tied with hard work. Hard work in various forms such as through education or entrepreneurship. According to Warnock, Hurst, Barratt and Salcedo (2018), education is categorized as an

enabling agent of middle-class. Education allows for an upward class transition and gives access. However, as noted above, education does not always necessarily require a change in location to experience a middle-class lifestyle. Research conducted by Richards and Langa (2018) on *Izikhotana*, a subculture found in the townships that promotes middle-class life that is fueled by materialistic acquisitions and class association. Some black middle-class people therefore live in townships.

> Yes, believe it or not she has a set of clothes, which we get her often and we've had to sterilize her ayi uhm there too many babies and random dogs at night.
>
> My baby (dog) stays indoors, she sometimes sleeps with me that's if I had been away, that's when she misses me [laughs]. (Mbali)
>
> Uhm let me say, they are on balanced diets and would not eat at all times of the day.
>
> We also have domestic lady who is also tasked to clean the dog kennels once a week, like removing the dog faeces and sometimes giving them a bath. (Gugu)

The preceding extracts by Gugu and Mbali signify the emotional and performative habitus of class that are often associated with white people. For example, dressing dogs and sharing one's bed with them is generally seen as indulgent behavior that white people engage in. These accounts diversify the possibilities of doing black middle-class identity. It is not one thing.

To conclude then, while the focus of this study is dog walking by black middle-class people, the matter of class is highly contested. This necessitated substantive engagement with class and the ambiguities that class surfaces. The implications for dog walking are that the performative elements of this practice are sublimated and denied. This requires an interpretative frame that does not take participants views at face value but rather one that engages with the nuances of duality emerging from an embrace of a working-class identity while materially and spatially living a middle-class life.

Accounts of dog ownership

According to Siegel (1995), pet ownership positively contributes to a healthy and improved quality of life. Petersen, Kennedy, and Sullivan (1991) emphasize the benefits such as reduced stress and enhanced social presence of community members. These benefits may

inform the growing numbers of pet owners. Beck & Meyers (1996) note that many dog owners go on to develop an even greater relationship with the dog such that it is perceived as a member of the family. However, there is some class-based contestation as to whether or not dogs are primarily for enhancing security or companionship. Of course, dogs could serve both roles. I explore the reasons that black middle-class people give for why they keep dogs in this theme.

A number of interviewees indicated that their dogs performed an important security function.

> It's important to have a dog I mean my property is quite huge and so I need a kind of a security ehh…like Amber [inaudible] to feel secure because when I'm in the kitchen and somebody is at the gate, it takes me like two minutes or a minute to get to the gate, but I mean, with her she's sensitive to sounds and you know it's quite safe. (Gugu)

The above extract illustrates that dogs may serve the role of a security guard in the household. Gugu notes that her dog also alerts her of the presence of visitors or possible intruders. According to Carlisle (2014) dogs assist in the protection of humans through violent performances that shows their territorial dominance. Feng *et al.* (2014) further supports the role of protection provided by dogs in a study conducted on a family living a crime engulfed neighborhood who reported low symptoms of fear associated with crime. People are somehow kept safe by the presence of dogs in the household and therefore invest more time in bonding with them.

> For me, it`s exactly the same role that a dog would play in the rural area, to protect the family, keep kids company umm…it will alert you if there`s any danger about to befall the family or anything like that, it`s pretty much the same umm…it`s pretty much the same. (David)

David highlights security and companionship as important attributes of dogs. He sees these roles as similar to those of dogs in rural areas. We can infer that the rural setting is likely to be a working class one. Therefore, dogs play a similar role in working class and in suburban settings. Cutt, Giles-Corti, Knuiman, and Burke (2007) note that in terms of safety, dogs may also assist in signalling or communicating danger to children or their parents. Apart from the safety role that dogs provide, the above interviewee is also noting the comparison between suburban and township roles of dogs and contends that they are the same throughout. This

significant role of protection of dogs within the house somehow remains regardless of the family's relocation from township to the suburbs.

> It could be for health reasons because you want to exercise and it's safe for you when… I mean, when you walk around with the dog, and for me as a woman I feel safe during those times. (Gugu)

The preceding excerpt makes reference to the health-associated benefits of dog walking but also highlights the gendered aspects of the practice. The prevalence of gender-based violence in Johannesburg means that an everyday practice such as walking for exercise can pose a high risk to women and girls' safety. The company of a dog can therefore enhance safety for women.

Exercise and safety appear to be the primary reasons attributed to dog walking by black middle-class people. Sbu and Thabo highlight the benefits of exercise that come with dog walking. Dog walking is seen as a positive contributor towards the dog's health. Brown and Rhodes (2006) highlight the health benefits associated with exposing the dog to fresh air and open spaces like parks during walks. As a result, this is expressed as a mutually beneficial relationship where both the dog and owner benefit from this act. For Thabo, dog walking also improves the dog's health and enables one to "own" the streets. Street ownership is an important performative act which enables black people to assert their presence in spaces from which they were previously forbidden (Puwar, 2004).

> In the past people never had the need to go to a gym, we were healthy, and I mean if you had a dog it was safe. I mean, it was not a gated community, a dog would run around. (Sbu)

> It can also exercise – it's good for a dog`s body and saving money to spend on medical bills for the dog and it`s also refreshing it gets me to own the streets. (Thabo)

Gugu highlights an element that other interviewees did not raise. For her, the family ritual of bonding occurs around the dog. The family walks the dog together. Ayanda suggests that walking her dog Misty enabled her to meet a potential romantic partner. In these instances, dog walking enhances social bonds of middle-class dog walkers.

> I'm helping them with the picking up of the dog, yah it has become a family thing now we all take a walk and… (Gugu)

> It is like you are one with the animal, you feel its joy and frustrations. Misty will want to cover the whole park. But interestingly enough, I met my potential someone walking misty and I must say I might change my relationship status soon to "in a relationship". (Ayanda)

> The dog is well looked after by the kids, which is also beneficial for them in terms of learning to be affectionate as they are boys and instils discipline and responsibility. They love Nelson, I am sure you saw the pictures of him in the passage, walking Nelson also helps him get out and meet other dogs. You know, living in such constrains spaces, one finds it difficult to become acquainted with our neighbors but Nelson has somehow created a bridge for such and I know most of them. [Laughs] the little things, the little things. (Mdu)

Mdu amplifies the value and role of dogs and dog walking in his middle-class household. Nelson occupies an important place in the family and can be seen in a family portrait in the house. Mdu believes that the dog is good for his sons as it teaches them responsibility and helps them to learn to be affectionate. Moreover, walking the dogs assists them to get to know the neighborhood as well as other dog walkers. The dogs act as a conversation starter and build relationships between people that might otherwise not talk to each other.

Through the exploration of this theme, it is apparent that dogs serve multiple functions for black middle-class people living in the suburbs. Among these are physical exercise, companionship, familiarity with neighborhood, creating relationships, instilling values of responsibility and enhancing affection. Dogs also allow black middle-class people to perform their middle-class identities. This is expanded in earlier themes engaged by this project.

Discussion

Three major themes emerged in this study. These were dog walking as a performance of class; resisting middle-class categorization; and accounts of dog ownership. These were engaged in the findings section of this report. In the discussion, I read these themes in relation to each other and the extant literature and theory already outlined in earlier parts of this report.

Dogs and dog walking are not a common sense measure of class. In South Africa where class position is tenuous and contested (Mangoma & Wilson-Prangley, 2018), the association of dog walking with class status is confounding. Indeed, the relationship between black middle-class people and their dogs has not been a subject of sustained study for these very reasons.

However, when former president Jacob Zuma made the assertion that black middle-class people behaved like "wannabe" white people as evidenced by their treatment of their dogs, this brought the association into more focused view. Testing this view with black middle-class dog walkers provides a complex picture. For instance, many black middle-class people that were interviewed contested their categorization as middle-class. This is in keeping with research findings among those categorized as black middle-class in South Africa and elsewhere (for instance, Canham & Williams, 2017; Khunou & Kriege, 2013; Maylor & Williams, 2011; Vincent, Rollock, Ball & Gillborn, 2013; Thomas, 2015). Many of these studies concluded that there was a general hesitation to occupying a class location and that interviewees repeatedly demonstrated that there was "no one way to be black and middle-class" (Canham & Williams, 2017, p. 26).

The reluctance to accept the "objective measures" of middle-classness (such as the ownership of property in middle-class suburbs) could be understood as a discursive maneuver to signal extant loyalties to the black working class backgrounds and communities from which many of the participants hail. Indeed, many participants referred to familiar knowledges of working-class life. Most of the participants occupy dual habitus, which is to say that they were raised in the townships or rural areas and now occupy suburban spaces (Modisha, 2007). However, when compared to the working poor and the unemployed, participants of this study live privileged middle-class lives. I suggest that the disavowal of middle-class status may be one way of not engaging the guilt of having materially and geographically transitioned and possibly abandoned the black working class. One has to however

concurrently hold the views of Lopez and Weinstein (2012, p. 21) who contend that the middle-class is "a working social concept, a material experience, a political project and a cultural practice – all of which acquire meaning only within specific historical experiences and discursive conditions." As a political project, it is apparent why black middle-class people prefer solidarity with their working-class peers and families. However, as a material and cultural project, their suburban lives can be described as middle-class.

In this study, dog walking is understood as a middle-class cultural and social practice. This act is then a marker of class. Participants noted that dog walking does not regularly occur within working class spaces. There was some consensus that dog walking is a suburban phenomenon. Most of the participants however fell short of calling this a middle-class habit. Instead, they gave several reasons for why they walked their dogs in contrast to their township or rural based peers. One of these is the matter of city by-laws which they stated – prohibits unattended dogs that are not on a leash. Presumably, this is unlike township spaces where dogs roam more freely despite the fact that townships are governed by similar by-laws (see By-laws Relating to Dogs and Cats, 2016). Participants were however reluctant to consider the possibility that in addition to the necessity of walking their dogs, they were also adopting a middle-class habitus. The practice of dog walking is therefore also about adapting to the habits of the suburb. For those who own dogs, dog walking is both a necessity and a performance of class location. They are nevertheless performing a middle-class habitus. Habitus invites a lens that is able to view class as a performance in nature and one that is externally exhibited throughout time and space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Furthermore, habitus is captured through the essence of one's ways of being and is shared as cultural capital. Cultural capital in this regard is key in distinguishing society according to class indicators or the type of environment one dwells in. In this case, cultural capital is best depicted by owning high pedigree dogs. Importantly, this phenomenon of walking dogs within the suburbs by black middle-class people is a performance of class and suggests the social location for these black middle-class people.

The performative elements of dog walking are most evident where the interviewees talk about the pedigree of their dogs. For instance, the owner of a German Shepard pointedly resists middle-class associations while simultaneously gesturing to the pedigree of his dog Nelson. Similarly, another interviewer indicated that his dogs are on an animal medical aid cover, he leaves his dogs with a dog minder when he travels on holiday, and that the cost of his dog food is exorbitantly high. Middle-class dogs appear to serve different functions

within the household as opposed to those of the working class in township settlements. In suburban environments, the dogs are pampered and showed affection in various ways. This is evident in some dogs being given dental care and other healthcare services, which is indicative of class performance. Security and protection roles are secondary benefits to these households. Dog clothing, holiday care, and dental work are performative middle-class trappings. A minority of participants conceded that how they looked after their dogs could be said to be middle-class behaviour. However, when asked about the former president's statement about dog ownership and care as a form of performing whiteness, participants where equivocal that this was not true. One can therefore surmise that black middle-class dog walkers are discursively separating race from class or suburban habitus. They are laying claim to middle-class habits while simultaneously rejecting the accusation of white mimicry. This is to claim that black people can care for their dogs without the ethic of care being associated with whiteness – which is that white people care for dogs more than they do for black people.

Iedama and Caldas-Coultard (2008, 6) are instructive in making us think about identity in generative ways. They conceive of identity as:

> …realized as representational enactment (meaning), as interpersonal experience (feeling) and organized performance (acting), and as a controlled distribution (who has access to such enactment? Who are legitimate producers/consumers/over-hearers, and so on of these enactments?). Identity is not beholden to one particular dimension of being, but corresponds to anything that actors (or analysts) treat as significant.

Following the preceding definition, it is clear that identity is complex, multifaceted and "not beholden to one dimension of being". Black middle-class people make sense of dog walking in particular ways that foreground exercise and other benefits. They sublimate the dimensions of dog walking as an organized performance. I posit that this is a means of resisting their class position. Identity can therefore also be a defensive posture if we take seriously that it is also a controlled process that gate keeps who has access to particular enactments (Iedama & Caldas-Coultard, 2008). This is to say that black middle-class people might not see themselves as legitimate producers of middle-class habits such as dog walking. This can be read in relation to the historical tropes of white people's preferences for their dogs and their ill treatment of black people. Therefore, admitting that they pamper their dogs could possibly lend credence to former president Zuma's accusation. In addition, as the interviewer, some

participants might have seen me as unfit to "over-hear" this dimension of their being as I could be seen as a witness of their class "treason". Furthermore, black middle-class people might resist middle-class categorization in order to hold onto the unstable identity of being black since black is historically working class. For them, a middle-class identity unsettles given ways of being black and leaves them in a tenuous position of not being "really" black or middle-class. This leaves little room for complexity and change. Black middle-class dog walkers are therefore caught in the confluence of dynamic social conditions, old ways of being, loyalties to working class places of origin, solidarity with working class family members, the need to perform respectable ways of being black and the reality of being able to accumulate material and cultural capital.

Participants appeared to find it easier to talk about themes that did not challenge their sense of self and their place in the world. They therefore spoke at length about the positive role that dogs play in their lives. Therefore, exercise, companionship, familiarity with the neighbourhood, inculcating a sense of responsibility for children, and health were given as some of the reasons for keeping dogs and walking them. Some only gestured towards the habituation and occupation of space outside of the home enabled by dog walking. This is to suggest that dog walking enables a claim to geographical space and signals presence of black bodies in these spaces. Dog walking is simultaneously a practice of conforming to middle-class habitus and a disruption of traditionally white middle-class suburban spaces. Its repetitive performance will likely normalize black middle-class dog walking (Butler, 1988). The performance has hermeneutic excess. It is more than what meets the eye and some of the discursive possibilities are possibly more than the research participants are conscious of or indeed, beyond what they are ready to contemplate (Stolze, 2018). Here then, the interpretation of the act of dog walking transcends the participants own words in order to make meaning of the multiple permutations of their actions. Hermeneutic excess posits that the origin of meaning is uncovered in experience and this phenomenology invites further creative investigation (Crowther, Ironside, Spence & Smythe, 2017).

Conclusion

This study centered the discursive relationship between dog walking, class and race. The point of departure arose from a provocation by former president Jacob Zuma who asserted that black middle-class people (or clever blacks) mimicked white people to the extent of caring for their dogs in ways associated with white people. This provocation led me to seek to understand how black middle-class people living in the suburbs of Johannesburg made sense of their practice of dog walking and ownership. I began by attempting to historicize black people in relation to class by noting how colonialism and apartheid overdetermined black people's class location by consigning most of them to the working class. Alongside this narrative, apartheid spatial planning ensured that black people resided in rural areas and townships beyond the parameters of the city. In this context, while dogs served as guards and companions, they were not walked and generally had relatively unconstrained space to exercise. With democratization and opportunities for black people, the black middle-class has grown and many have moved to middle-class suburban areas where they live alongside white people. These spatial moves enabled by a class transition have had the effect of unsettling identities.

The findings that emerged from this study suggest that an exploration of class through the lens of dog walking exposes the complexity of identity and the provisionally of categorization. For instance, many participants expressed discomfort with middle-class categorization and expressed the view that it did not accurately capture their experience. Like previous studies cited in this study, is was apparent that the participants had deep loyalty to working class communities from which they themselves had transitioned and still maintained close relationships with. The obligations to working class family members is captured by the concept of "black tax." However, even as participants resisted middle-class categorization, their dog rearing and walking habits strongly suggested performances of middle-class tendencies. Living in formally white suburbs where by-laws are generally closely adhered to means that black middle-class people generally practice habits that are at odds with working class communities. The concept of habitus was important in thinking through how suburban space regulates behaviours of black middle-class people. However, some participants recognized the ways in which their presence as middle-class dog walkers sometimes disrupt suburban spaces beyond the high walls of suburbia.

Participants were more comfortable about talking about the roles that dog played in their lives. This talk coheres with studies in health psychology. Dog walking serves the needs of exercise for both the walker and dog; it is a form of companionship; it assists young people to take responsibility; and the practice assists black people to explore their neighbourhood and meet other people. In addition, dogs fulfil the function of security. However, the pedigree of the dogs and care practices such as animal medical security, diet, and dog clothing suggest that dog rearing and walking is more than what it is. It is also fundamentally classed. Black middle-class people in suburban areas therefore live with a double consciousness of working-class solidarities and forms of identification while materially and symbolically engaging middle-class habitus.

The implications of this study are that we should consider innovative ways of thinking about identity in societies in transition. It is important that we keep the malleability of class identity in mind when researching class. This is particularly important in contexts such as South Africa where the majority of people are newly middle-class.

Further research will be important in advancing these ideas with a broader sample of people across different age cohorts. An important under researched community of dog walkers is black working class hired dog walkers that we see walking the dogs of other people. This will assist us in remaining vigilant to class inequality and the relationships between middle-class people and their employees in the domestic sphere.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Consent format

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Interview Consent Form

_____

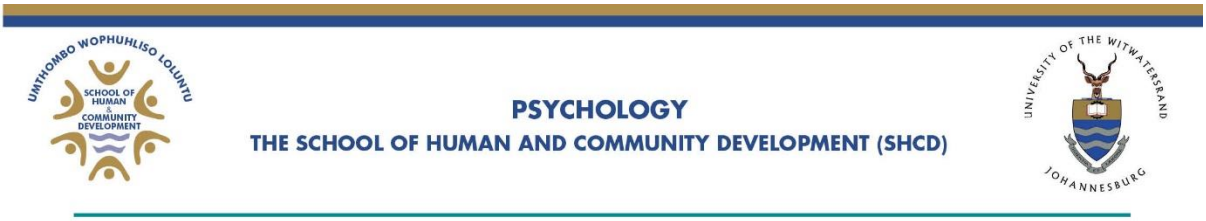
I_____ hereby consent (i.e. agree) to participating in this study. I hereby declare that I have read the information and understand what my participation involves.

I also understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary and I am not forced to participate. And I can pull out of this study or refuse to take part at any time that I wish without any negative consequences.
- During the course of the interview, I can refuse to answer any question at any time if I feel uncomfortable.
- I am guaranteed that all identifying information I give throughout this research study will remain confidential and no identifying material will be used in order to protect my identity in the reporting of the results of this study.
- There are no advantages or disadvantages associated with choosing to participate in this research or in refusing to participate.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Consent form (audio-recording)



Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Consent Form (audio-recording)

I_____ hereby consent (i.e. agree) to my interview being audio-recorded.

I also understand that:

- The audio recording and transcripts will not be seen, heard or processed by anyone, other than the researcher and his supervisor
- All the information obtained by the researcher will be stored securely in a password protected computer My name or other identifying information will not be used in the research report and a pseudonym will be used in its place in order to ensure that I am not identifiable in all reports
- I consent to the researcher's use of direct quotes from the interview in the research report and any future articles that might come from this research. These quotes will be used in ways that do not reveal my identity.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Participant Information sheet

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Benedict Mhlongo. I am currently a Masters student in Community-based Counselling in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining this degree. The purpose of my research is to explore the perceptions of dog walking in the imagination of black middle-class in Johannesburgers. I would like to invite you to participate in this study. Participation will involve you being interviewed by me. The interview should take approximately 1 hour. Participation is voluntary. Everything you say during this interview will be kept confidential. The interview will be audio-recorded and only I and my supervisor will have access to the recordings. The audio-recordings and transcripts will be kept in a password protected computer. Although I will know who you are, confidentiality will be maintained by not disclosing any information that is of a personal nature in the report. I will assign a pseudonym to your information in the report, for example, Participant A or Respondent B. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. You also have the right to refrain from answering any question should you wish to do so. A feedback sheet in the form of a one to two page summary of the study and its findings will be provided to you upon request after approximately eighteen months of the interview. You may e-mail or phone my supervisor or myself if you would like to receive this. Our contact details appear at the bottom of this letter.

Before beginning the interview I will request that you to read through and sign the accompanying consent forms which ask your permission to interview you and to audio-record the interview. The forms confirm that you are aware of everything that we have discussed concerning confidentiality, feedback and privacy.

Yours sincerely

Benedict Mhlongo Prof Hugo Canham

Mhlongo.ben@gmail.com@gmail.com

0793189672 hugo.canham@wits.ac.za

MA Candidate Supervisor

Appendix D Interview guideline

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

BLACK MIDDLE-CLASS SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Would you define yourself as middle-class? If so, how long have you identified yourself as being middle-class?

2. How long have you lived in the suburban area where you currently reside? Do you also have township or rural origins or have you always lived in the suburbs?

3. How does 'middle-classness' feel for you? How is it different from the working class?

5. How would you define your role and position at work?

6. Would you say that walking dogs is an old practice of the middle-class?

7. Do you walk your family dog yourself? If so, how often and why?

8. What are your thoughts about walking dogs?

8. Do you think owning a dog and walking it, may be attributed to a sign of being middle-class? If so, how?

9. President Jacob Zuma said that black people that walk dogs are imitating white people. What are your thoughts about this?

10. What do you think that other people that see you walking your family dog think about you while you are walking the dog?

11. Do you think that other people know that you are the owner of the dog that you walk or do you think they think you are hired to walk the dog? Why?

12. Would you rather that someone else other than you, walked your family dog? Why?

13. What about you makes you think that other people identify you as middle-class or misidentify you as working class?

14. What do you enjoy most about walking your family dog?

15. What do you dislike most about walking your family dog?

16. Do you have anything you would like to add?

17. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?

Appendix E: Ethical clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MACC/17/003 IH**
PROJECT TITLE:	"An exploration of perceptions of dog walking among middle class black people that walk dogs"
INVESTIGATORS	Mhlongo Nkululeko
DEPARTMENT	Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	06/06/17
DECISION OF COMMITTEE*	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 06 June 2017

CHAIRPERSON
(Dr Hugo Canham)

cc Supervisor:

Dr Hugo Canham
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

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

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2019

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES