

"We help each other"
Relational patterns
among older
individuals in
Southern African
samples

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Outline of presentation

- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion and contribution



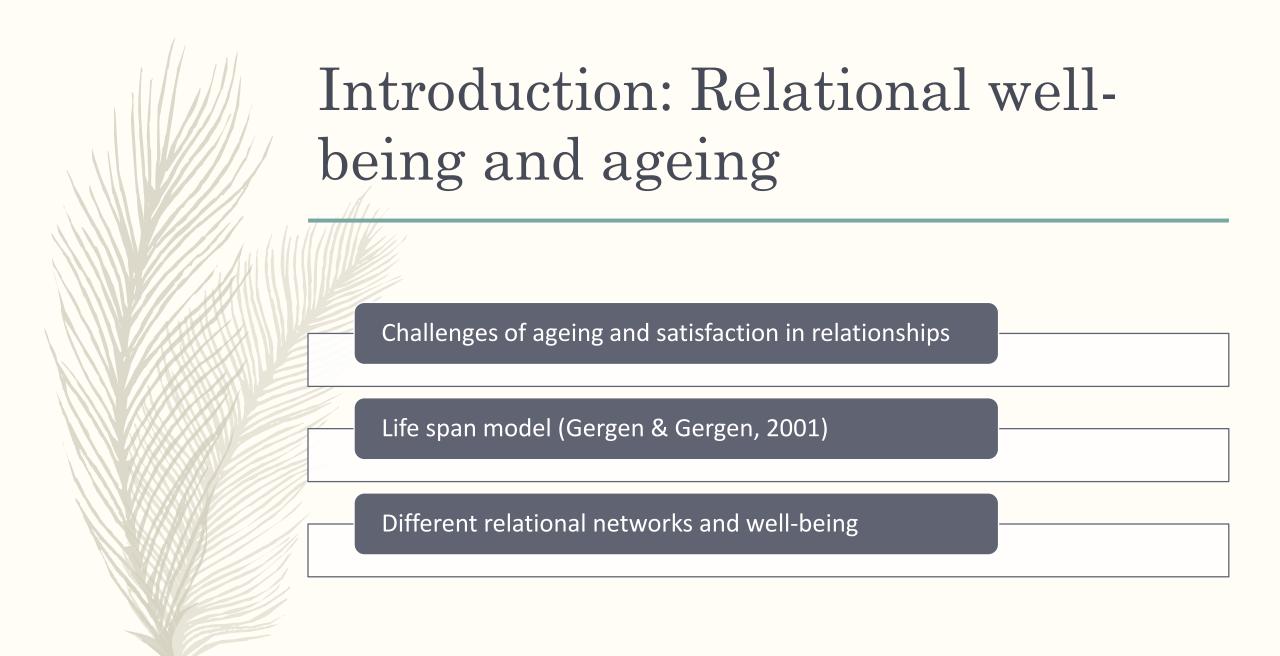
- Ageing: a reflection of our successes but with accompanied challenges
- Psychological well-being and ageing
- Quality of social interactions and well-being (Chipps & Jarvis, 2015)
- What about context?



Introduction: Relational Wellbeing

- Understanding relational well-being
- Extension of self (Aron & Aron, 1996)
- Belonginess (Baumeister & Leary, 1995)
- Positive social relationships and wellbeing (Ryff & Keyes, 1995)
- Indigenous perspectives (McGregor et al., 2003)







Introduction: Context

- Different contexts and different outcomes for well-being (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010)
- Loss of place and social exclusion
- Formation of belongingness across contexts
- Social change and relationships

- Little attention from policy-makers
- Changing family structures
- Relational coping (Roos et al., 2013)
- Family values versus individuality
- Urbanisation and poverty(Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015)



Ganyesa

- Setswana-speak rural community
- 19.1% some secondary education
- 20% household income from 9000 to 19000 ZAR
- 5.4% of population aged 65 years and above

Ikakeng

- Setswana-speaking semi-urban community
- 39% some secondary education
- 23% household income from 19000 to 38000 ZAR
- 4.5.% of population aged 65 years and above



Research aim

The primary aim of the present study was to explore the reasons for important relationships in rural (Ganyesa) and urban (Ikageng) South African contexts as described by older individuals

 A secondary aim of the study was to compare the reasons for important relationships across the urban and rural samples

Methods

- Prospective Urban Rural Epidemiology study (PURE-SA; Teo et al. 2009) and the FORT 3 project (Wissing, 2008/2012)
- Ganyesa and Ikaheng communities
- Ganyesa, n = 16 males, n = 34 females
- Ikageng, n = 14 males, n = 36 females
- Mean Age: Ganyesa M= 67 years (SD = 5.31) and Ikaheng M= 70 years (SD = 8.35)
- Semi-structured open-ended questions: Most important relationships and why?
- Thematic analysis





Summary of common themes

Relational support dynamics

- Providing support
- Receiving support
- Mutual support

Spirituality and relational dynamics

- Accountability and sense of security
- Sense of identity and spiritual support

Need for resources and generativity

Relational support dynamics

- "Children.....I love my children very much" (R/P 1, 60-year old female)
- "Neighbours…… Is the first person to respond in good or bad times, and also looks after my house when I am not there" (R/P 5, 63-year old female)
- "Sister....She helps me and I'll always support her" (U/P 1, 60-year old female)

Relational support dynamics

Providing support and mutual exchange

Enacted support

- Independence and utility (Thomas, 2010)
- Identity
- Life opportunities for growth (Feeney & Collins, 2015)
- Improved life conditions (Seidlecki et al., 2014)
- Presence of safety net (Kakwani & Subbaro, 2007)



- "God..... So that He can see the works that I have done, so that when I die He would have seen my works" (U/P 15, 63-year old female)
- "God.... Because when I pray, after a while, I see answers and that life changes for the better" (R/P 11, 61-year old male).



Spirituality and relational dynamics

Accountability, security and expectation of support

Identity and spiritual support

- Recognition of a Higher power
- Interconnectedness between the living and dead (Chilisa, 2011)
- Religious involvement and support (Krause & Hayward, 2014)
- Answers to prayer
- Determination of appropriate behaviours (Chilisa, 2011)

Need for resources and generativity

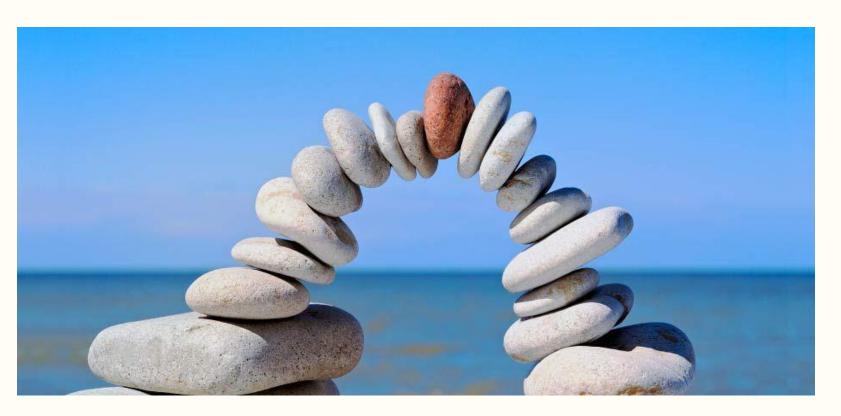
- "Money...I want to be able to support myself and my children because their father passed away" (R/P 10, 61-year old female)
- "Work...I want to work for my kids so they have a beautiful place to live in, I want them to have a bright future" (R/P 10, 61-year old female)



Need for resources and generativity

- Relational coping
- Social investment
- Reciprocal care and interactions across generations
- Importance of in-group members





Cordiality and harmony

"Family......I get along with my family" (R/P 6, 60-year old female)

"Family.....We get along with each other" (R/P 1, 64-year old female)

Balance in responsibilities and negotiated roles (Plug, 2009)



Urban

- Appreciation of Family as Source of Well-being
- "Children.....They are my life and I
 make sure that they fit in the community"
 (U/P 1, 60-year old female)

Rural

- Dependability and Trust
- "Friend....We are like a tooth and a cavity, we trust each other at all times" (R/P 4, 68-year old male)



Conclusions and contributions of the study

- Giving of support and mutual exchange
- Horizontal and vertical relatedness for purpose and identity
- Little difference between urban and rural context
- Dependability and trust in rural contexts
- Nuclear family and urbanisation
- Interdependency: financial stability, respect for elderly, predictability and trust (McCubbin et al., 2013)
- Extension of self

Limitations

- Limited sample in the North West Province
- Degree of urbanisation between communities
- Similar cultural groups





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Thanks for listening & Questions.....

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