

**A PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE ON CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF DOG
OWNERSHIP IN MPOPHOMENI TOWNSHIP, KZN, SOUTH AFRICA.**

GEORGINA DRUMMOND

213571672

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Submitted in full according to the requirements of the degree of Honours of Social Science in the School of Psychology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

As the candidate's Supervisor I have approved this research project for submission:

Signed:

Name: C. Mitchell

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ABSTRACT:

The influences of dog ownership in South Africa among township children have not been thoroughly researched to date. The domestic dog in Southern Africa has traditionally been kept for practical survival means in that dogs have been utilised by people for hunting and protection reasons. Traditionally, people did not feed their dogs (they were expected to scavenge for their own food) or keep them near their living quarters. The relationship between Southern African people and dogs has not traditionally been a friendly relationship of companionship. Studies conducted on the benefits of pet and dog ownership have reported mixed results. Many, however, have reported that dog/pet ownership is particularly beneficial for vulnerable populations. This study followed a qualitative design and explored how a group of boys from Mpophomeni Township experience dog ownership and their relationship with their dogs. The sample consisted of nine boys who had been active participants with Funda Nenja (a dog training programme) for at least three months, and were between the ages of eight and fourteen years old. Firstly, data was collected via the researcher's observations of four hours of dog training wherein the boys interacted with each other and their dogs. Secondly, data was collected via a focus group (semi-structured interview). The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis. The results showed that this group of boys benefit emotionally and psychologically through their relationships with their dogs. The results also showed that dog ownership provided the boys with a strong sense of safety, protection and belonging.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research project investigated the nature of the relationship that existed between a particular group of children and their dogs, from a psychosocial perspective. It described how these children experience their relationship with their dogs while participating in the Funda Nenja community dog training initiative. In so doing this research hoped to provide in-depth information on this specific group of South African children's experiences of dog ownership so that greater understanding of the implications of dog ownership for this group of children could be gained. This study considered the experiences of a group of eight black South African boys (from Mpophomeni Township) and their relationship with their dogs, as portrayed by the children themselves. Although the results of this research are not generalisable, the researcher aimed to provide other researchers, educators, parents and the children themselves with a resource from which information and understanding could be gained.

Funda Nenja is a Non-Government Organisation based in Mpophomeni Township. The volunteers that run the project interact with 80 – 100 children and their dogs every Friday afternoon. This dog training initiative presented a unique opportunity to explore the relationships children share with their dogs and to better understand how these relationships impact on the lives of the children involved. This area of research is important as the experiences of children's relationships with their dogs have not been well-researched in South Africa. Encouraging dog ownership in children, (and training as a vehicle of enhancing the bond of the relationship) has not been considered in South Africa yet as a potential form of psychological and social support. There is limited research available that considers the impact that dog ownership could have on South African children from underprivileged contexts. Thus, the researcher felt it was important to research the experiences of this specific group of South African children, from the perspective of the children, in order to gain a more holistic picture of dog ownership as a whole. There is also little South African research dedicated to investigating and understanding the influences of a community dog training initiative on South African children. The results of such research could be useful in the South African context. Research that explores different methods of community empowerment programs, such as dog training initiatives, could be valuable in implementing further effective community engagement programmes in South Africa. These results may provide impetus for the implementation of township dog training initiatives in South Africa to positively benefit children's development.

The literature review outlines the research into dog ownership, in summary this has shown that there are both positive and negative outcomes of dog ownership. The positive outcomes seem to outweigh the negative ones though. Positive benefits include physical, health, social, psychological

and emotional benefits. Negative outcomes were related to the factors of extra material cost and responsibility (in time and energy), as well as the physical allergic reactions human beings had to their pets.

Studies indicate that vulnerable groups of people seem to benefit the most from owning a pet, especially a dog. Vulnerable groups included sick, old, marginalised, abused, maltreated and mentally unstable groups of people, or anyone in a vulnerable position of life circumstances. The literature reported that children benefitted from pet (especially) dog ownership in that they learnt emotional intelligence skills and experienced a source of unconditional love and friendship through their relationships with their dogs. It was reported that children learn empathy and compassion, as well as responsibility, through caring for another living being.

This study explored the experiences of dog ownership of a small sample of boys from Mpophomeni Township. This group of boys could be considered as vulnerable due to the fact that they are living in an area that is known to have high levels of violence, crime, unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, and one of the highest rates of HIV AIDS infection in KwaZulu Natal, and therefore the world. These boys live in somewhat impoverished conditions and may come from homes where the traditional family structure is no longer present. Therefore it is of interest, relevance and potential importance to explore how dog ownership might influence these boys' lives.

Research conducted in this area is limited as there is no published research involving South African children's experiences of their relationships with their dogs. There were many studies that investigated the relationships between children and their pets but these all stemmed from developed countries.

The results and discussion highlight the finding that there are benefits of dog ownership for this specific group of South African children. Data was collected via two mediums. The first being the researcher's observations of four hours (four different sessions) of the children participating in dog training. The second medium employed to collect data was a focus group with nine boys, the researcher and an *isiZulu* translator. The focus group lasted one hour and a semi-structured interview schedule was followed. This interview was audio recorded and subsequently written into a transcript. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Through this the common themes and sub-themes that emerged were identified and reported upon. The results contained and reported upon the themes of psychological, emotional and social support that the boys received through their relationships with their dogs via a dog training program.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

“Compassion for animals is intimately connected with goodness of character; and it may be confidently asserted that he who is cruel to animals cannot be a good man.”
(Schopenhauer, 1995).

Van Sittert and Swart (2003) describe the integral role of the dog’s presence in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial societies in Southern Africa. They bring to the fore the dog’s ever-present, yet hidden presence in Southern Africa, and attempt to redefine its important place in South African history. They suggest that the dog can be used as a way to think about human society (Van Sittert & Swart, 2003). This research study is interested in the ways in which animals, specifically dogs, inhabit human society and the ways in which dog and human lives interconnect. This is of interest because human and dog relationships may serve a psychological and social purpose in South African society that has not yet been thoroughly identified through research. More specifically human and dog relationships might serve a supportive function for South African children.

According to Swart (2003), dogs have been entangled in human lives, myths, illusions, and sentiments for at least the last ten to twelve thousand years. The alliance between dogs and humans is the oldest among all the animals, and the relationship is so extensive and intertwined that the story we think of as theirs is often our own (Swart, 2003). It is generally accepted that dogs were domesticated during the hunter-gatherer period in human history, about 12 000 years ago and were well established by the time agricultural villages began to form, 6000 years ago (Swart, 2003). According to Adams (1999), in myths from many cultures, dogs appear as guides, guardians, and healers. Swart (2003) claims that the domestication of dogs was fundamentally a cultural act, and that the historical story of dogs has merged with that of human beings’. Therefore dogs can provide a lens into understanding human society and culture.

Van Sittert and Swart (2003) state that “dogs, like humans, are products both of culture and nature” (p.138). They suggest that dogs connect the wild and the tame as they occupy an ambiguous position in society, on both sides of the opposing spheres of nature and culture: “They occupy warm stoeps, follow their masters at night, track insurgents, patrol borders, sniff out strangers, hunt game, protect homesteads and leave their pawprints all over the archives” (Van Sittert & Swart, 2003, p.138). However, dogs can also be considered as scavengers, only in loose association with human society, foraging at the peripheries of homesteads and nomadic groups, spreading disease and polluting urban streets (Van Sittert & Swart, 2003).

With these opposing viewpoints in mind, this study aimed to investigate the type of relationships South African children experience with their own dogs so to better understand the nature of human-dog relationships in South Africa. This study also aimed to investigate the potential connections between dog ownership and the development of psychosocial skills, such as emotional intelligence (empathy, self-esteem and social responsibility) and competent social interaction, in children. It explored whether dog ownership may contribute towards enriching children's psychosocial well-being, and whether dog ownership influences the participants' lives in any way.

2.1.1 The psychosocial perspective and its connection to children's development

This study investigated how children experience their relationships with their dogs from a psychosocial perspective. For a concept to be psychosocial it means it relates to one's psychological development in, and interaction with, a social environment. It therefore involves aspects of social and psychological behaviour: for example, a child's psychosocial development. For the purposes of this study, the psychosocial aspects of the psychological and social development of a group of children was explored. The term psychological incorporates emotional intelligence and cognitive development and the term social speaks to a sense of belonging and how one interacts with others in society. The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI), which is concerned with the psychosocial well being of children, provides a perspective on this concept. It explains that psychosocial support for children refers to the knowledge that all children have material needs such as food, shelter, health care and education, as well as the right to be cared for, loved, and protected. Therefore, psychosocial support involves support for the emotional and social aspects of a child's life, so that they can live with hope and dignity (www.repssi.org). In utilising a psychosocial perspective, this study therefore focused on the potential connections between dog ownership and the psychological, emotional and social aspects of children's' lives.

It is pertinent to consider the physical and psychosocial environment and context that the children involved in this study are living in. The socio-political-economic context of Mpophomeni Township includes considerably high levels of crime, unemployment and disease. The people living here are mostly from a working class bracket and high levels of poverty exist. REPSSI explains that children and youth who are exposed to the devastating effects of poverty, conflict, HIV AIDS are especially entitled to care for their emotional and social (psychosocial) wellbeing. They argue that "many children in these particular circumstances have lost parents and family, experienced deprivation and abuse, been stigmatized, witnessed atrocities, and suffered overwhelming grief" (www.repssi.org). Research into the potential avenues/sources/supports of psychosocial support and development in South African children is very important due to the long term consequences. REPSSI argues that children need the right support if they are to grow into capable and compassionate adults, and active

citizens engaged in their communities, and that psychosocial support is the right of every child (www.repssi.org). With this in mind, the literature surrounding psychosocial support for children is reviewed.

2.1.2 Psychosocial support for children

According to Berkhout, Dolk and Goorhuis-Brouwer (2010), the psychosocial well-being of children depends on both the emotional and social aspects of development and is a basic prerequisite of emotional, social and academic adjustment to school. Psychosocial skill development in children is very important. Berkhout et al. (2010) suggest that children learn to control their emotions through play activities and social participation. This helps them to develop psychosocial self regulation, which refers to the ability to act in a deliberate, planned manner. Lack of psychosocial regulation is correlated with aggression and lack of social skills, these leading to outbursts and conflicts (Rubin et al., 2006, in Berkhout et al., 2010).

2.1.3 Psychosocial development and emotional intelligence

The development of emotional intelligence is an important factor in an individual's psychosocial well-being. The term Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has become increasingly widely used in both everyday and scientific and academic applications. The acknowledgement that emotional development is as important as developing one's intellect (IQ) is shared amongst many professionals in the field of psychology. As Robertson (2007) states, theorists and researchers have, in recent years, begun to argue that emotions, when managed appropriately, can substantially enhance rather than impede the decision making process. Robertson (2007) points out that Sternberg argues in his book, *Successful Intelligence* (1996), that the correlation between high IQ and real-world success may be as small as 4% to 10%. Therefore this suggests that other types of intelligence account for more than 90% of the success people experience in their lives. The birth of the term emotional intelligence can be attributed to Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 who hypothesized that there must be more to intelligence than merely a high IQ and coined the term *emotional intelligence* to describe what they believed made up for this missing component in the current descriptions of human intellect (Robertson, 2007). Emotional intelligence can be applied to many different areas of human functioning, such as leadership, communication, self-improvement, education, relationships, and the general experience of quality of life. There are many definitions of emotional intelligence but the main components include "identification of one's own emotions, self regulation of those emotions, and the use of this knowledge to successfully manage relationships" (Robertson, 2007, p. 15). Therefore it could be proposed that while IQ helps one get a job, EQ helps one to succeed at it. To take it a step further, it can be suggested that IQ helps one manage through school while EQ helps one manage throughout life. In explanation of this suggestion one can

consider that just as IQ is a way of being academically smart, emotional intelligence (EQ) is another type of intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand, use, and manage our emotions. Understanding and getting along with people helps us be successful in almost any area of life.

Robertson (2007) argues that the skills associated with emotional intelligence can be learned. Research by Schutte and Malouff (1999, in Robertson, 2007) goes on to say that unlike IQ, EQ does not emerge during the earliest stages of development and is, therefore, not fixed by the time an individual reaches the teen years. Rather, the competencies associated with EQ are largely learned in the context of interacting with others, and they continue to develop across the life span. A fundamental part of emotional intelligence is the ability to show empathy and compassion toward another living being, humans and animals alike.

A study by Mavroveli, Petrides, Sangareau and Furnham (2009) that explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and objective socio-emotional outcomes in children stated that the importance of emotions in personality formation, adaptive social functioning and interpersonal communication has been well documented. Mavroveli et al. (2009) went on to report that emotional knowledge, which includes the understanding of emotional situations and expressions, was related to peer likeability in children. They reviewed a longitudinal investigation of children and found that “emotion recognition and emotion labelling accuracy at the age of five predicted later social and academic competence” (Mavroveli et al., 2009, p.261). They cite the findings of Hubbard and Coie (1994, in Mavroveli et al., 2009), who identified several dimensions of emotional functioning that affect children’s competence in social settings. These included the abilities to perceive, express and regulate emotions and to sympathise and empathise. One could suggest that caring for another living being, such as a pet, helps to nurture emotional intelligence skills in children, which in turn benefits children’s social skills.

2.1.4 The benefits of pet ownership

The research investigating the effects of pet ownership on human beings predominantly stems from the Western world; the United States of America, Europe and Australia. In the past, research into the emotional and psychological benefits of pet ownership came about through intuitive and observed phenomenon (Daly & Morton, 2009). Grier (1999, in Daly & Morton, 2006) pointed out that as early as the Victorian era, pets were obtained for children for the positive impact they had on their expression of kindness that continued into adulthood. There were no empirical findings to support such theories at this point in history and therefore the early research into the benefits of pet ownership on children was mostly speculative and should be interpreted with caution.

Although pets can provide their owners with many direct material benefits, such as scaring away burglars and reducing pests and vermin, the research shows that they can provide, psychological, physical and social benefits too (McConnell et al., 2011). Staats and colleagues (Staats, Sears, & Pierfelice, 2006; and Staats, Wallace & Anderson, 2007), have recently been investigating the reasons why people choose to own pets. Whilst reviewing the history of pet ownership, in a 2006 study they investigated the reasons that people give for owning pets. The most common reasons were 1) “My pet helps me keep active”; 2) “I would be lonely without my pet”; 3) “Pet serves a useful function”; 4) “I keep the pet for other people”; and 5) “My pet helps me get through hard times” (Staats et al., 2006).

In further research that looked into the reasons that human beings choose to own pets, Staats et al. (2007) investigated the reasons for companion animal guardianship (pet ownership) from two populations (students and community members.) Whilst reviewing the history of pet ownership Staats et al., (2007) recognise that the human circumstance has changed greatly in the last 5000 years. With advancing technology and cultural change, most humans no longer rely on animals to help them find food or to provide them with physical warmth (Staats et al., 2007). Despite this, animals are still in our homes and residences, which suggests that keeping a pet is a voluntary behaviour, and the survival of this behaviour suggests a strong human-animal bond across time, change and cultures (Staats, et al., 2007). Irvine (2004, in Staats, et al., 2007) suggests that “keeping a pet is a form of behaviour that can meet basic, unchanging human needs, such as the need for companionship” (Irvine, 2004, in Staats et al., 2007, p.280).

The later study by Staats, et al. (2007) aimed to extend upon the above results and it was hypothesized that the keeping of pets to avoid loneliness would be a prominent response in all groups (Staats, et al., 2007). The results of this study showed that for both of the groups, the students and community members, avoidance of loneliness was the most frequently given reason for keeping a pet (Staats, et al., 2007). The second most frequent reason was that a pet helped them through hard times. These examples are in alignment with the notion that pets provide emotional and social support and are at times viewed as a part of the family (Cohen, 2002, in Staats, et al., 2007). Therefore it is assumed that pets can provides the types of social support normally associated with humans (Staats, et al., 2007).

“Young, and old, men and woman frequently report that pets not only help one to cope with a hard time but also help to prevent loneliness” (Staats, et al., 2007. p.287). Staats, et al. (2007), go on to report that in addition to providing emotional and social support, pets may enhance and strengthen the self by internalisation of positive psychological experiences with animals. They make an argument for the continuing ability of pets to provide support against loneliness and to be a support

in hard times, as well as their ability to fill an emerging need of modern humans; that is, to maintain a high level of activity. Further, they suggest that the very belief in the positive effects of pet ownership on health may operate as a mediator of health benefits of pet ownership. They acknowledge that further research is needed to determine the associations of this belief and its role in human health (Staats, et al., 2007). It could thus be suggested that in modern times pets do not serve the same functions as they used to, their function is not related to basic human survival needs (such as hunting for food). Despite this people continue to own pets and therefore they must serve a function and this could be emotional, psychological and social support, amongst other variables.

2.1.5 Pets as contributors to human health and wellbeing

Recently empirical research has pointed “to positive physical and emotional benefits that pets provide for individuals” (Daly & Morton, 2009, p. 372). Daly and Morton (2006) reviewed various studies and reported a number of benefits of dog ownership. These being that the presence of dogs can reduce stress in children, that dog ownership promotes an increase in positive perceptions of individuals, and an improvement in social cohesion amongst schoolchildren was also noted (Daly & Morton, 2006).

The World Health organisation (WHO) defines health holistically, as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948).

There is accumulating evidence that associates pets with each of these physical, mental, and social dimensions of human health (Wood, Giles-Corti, Bulsara and Bosch, 2007).

There are many published studies supporting the claim that pet ownership is associated with enhancements to psychological, physical and social well-being (Wood et al., 2007; Virues-Ortega & Buela Casal, 2006; McNicholas & Collis, 2000; McConnel et al., 2011). The different ways in which pets may positively impact on well-being and health has been documented throughout a wide range of studies. A person’s social well being is connected to their psychological and physical well being, and vice versa. One’s connection in and to society and other people can be considered an important aspect of one’s psychosocial development.

2.1.6 Social support benefits associated with pet ownership

The social benefits of pet ownership have been documented in a number of studies. These studies demonstrate that possessing greater social support improves psychological and physiological health (McConnell, Brown, Shoda, Stayton and Martin, 2011). The studies provide evidence that pets have social benefits for their owners through encouraging social interaction with other people and with other dog owners; giving their owners a sense of belonging; being companions in their own rights in that they are not only linked to the interactions with other people that their presence may

facilitate; and that in some cases pet companionship can be more accepting and unconditional than human relationships.

Evidence shows that pets provide significant social support to their owners because they are considered “close others” in their lives. McConnell et al. (2011) examined people’s beliefs and behaviours regarding their pets and found that pets are considered “close others” in their owners’ lives. This enhances the likelihood that they provide significant social support increases (McConnell, et al., 2011). In a meta-analysis of 81 studies, Uchio et al. (1996, in McConnell et al., 2011) found that greater social support improves cardiovascular, endocrine, and immune functioning. The benefits of social support are also evident in psychological health, where Harter (2003, in McConnell et al., 2011) reported that perceived social support from close others is strongly related to greater self esteem.

According to McNicholas and Collis (2000), “pets may enhance social interactions between people, increasing or strengthening social networks and social provisions thus elevating psychological well-being” (McNicholas & Collis, 2000, p.61). The positive consequences of pet ownership were documented by McConnell et al. (2011), who suggested that pets can serve as important sources of social support, providing psychological benefits for their owners. As it has been mentioned, social support is regarded as an important factor for psychological and physical well being, and in this way it is connected to the centrality of belongingness in our lives: “belongingness is considered a central need for people” (Maslow, 1968, in McConnell et al., 2011, p. 1240). The study found that pet owners had greater self esteem, increased levels of exercise and fitness, and they were less lonely than non-owners (McConnell et al., 2011). In a further study, it was found that owners’ dogs fulfilled needs related to belongingness, self esteem, meaningful existence and control (McConnell et al., 2011). Social connection is a central human need (McConnell et al., 2011) and if dogs enhance the social interactions of their owners then dog ownership may provide a plausible explanation for enhanced well-being via enhancements in social networks (McNicholas & Collis, 2000). Casual social encounters, such as those experienced by most dog walkers, could bring about a sense of social integration for owners. McNicholas and Collis (2000) suggest that some of these encounters could develop into more substantial social relationships, such as friendships, and that such relationships might be “a source of relationship-based social support” (McNicholas & Collis, 2000, p.63.).

In a study by Whitmarsh (2005), the benefits of companion animals were explored. This study claims that companion animals can equal, and even replace human companionship and social support. It goes further, arguing that companion animals can offer more than human support,

“since, unlike most human relationships, they supply unconditional relationships with little conflict” (Whitmarsh, 2005, p28).

“Many pet owners regard their pet as valued members of the family and may seek them out as a source of comfort at time of stress. The relationship can involve confiding and talking to the pet, a feeling of empathy and a sense of loving and being loved which can combat loneliness and depression, particularly in individuals who feel socially isolated. Pets can also meet an esteem function in providing a ‘need to be needed’. These aspects of pet ownership mirror elements of supportive human relationships that are believed to have important implications for health.” (Lane, 1998, cited in Whitmarsh, 2005, p. 28).

The positive influence of pets on self-concept and self-esteem suggests that pets may be used as a source of support for individuals, and especially for individuals suffering from low self-concept and self-esteem.

2.1.7 Psychological benefits

There is evidence that pets can have positive psychological effects (McConnell et al., 2011). According to a review of a number of studies by Wood et al. (2007), pets have been linked to the reduced incidence of psychological conditions, including depression, stress and grief. Elderly Medicare patients with pets (especially dogs) had fewer physician visits than similar patients without pets (Siegel, 1990, in McConnell et al., 2011), and HIV-positive men reported less depression than similar men without pets (Siegel, Angulo, Detels, Wesch, & Mullen, 1999, in McConnell et al., 2011). In an experimental study, Allen and Blascovich (1996, in McConnell et al., 2011), found that people with severe ambulatory disabilities (such as spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injuries) who were given a service dog, showed well-being improvements in self-esteem and locus of control within six months. This group was compared to wait-listed control individuals who did not show the same improvements. McConnell et al. (2011) emphasise that these studies have focussed on individuals facing considerable life challenges; therefore it is unclear whether pet ownership can lead to better outcomes for a wide variety of people, or whether the benefits of pets may only be revealed for individuals facing highly stressful circumstances.

In another study by Duvall Antonacopoulos and Pychyl (2010), the potential roles of pet ownership, human social support and pet attachment in the psychological health of individuals living alone were examined. It was reported that female pet owners (consisting of university students and seniors) who lived alone with a pet were less lonely than females who lived alone without a pet. The study by Duvall Antonacopoulos and Pychyl (2010) went on to report that people who were

unmarried and did not have children living with them were more likely to report that they owned a pet because it helped them in difficult times and that they would be lonely without it, than people who lived with either a spouse, children, or both (Staats, Sears & Pierfelice, 2006, in Duvall Antonacopoulos & Pychyl, 2010). They went on to suggest that “if pet owners who live alone and lack human social support receive social support through their attachment to their pet, this may be beneficial for their psychological health” (Duvall Antonacopoulos & Pychyl, 2010, p. 39.). This suggestion is supported by previous research by Zasloff and Kidd (1994) and Turner, Rieger and Gytax (2003), where pet and non-pet owners were compared and it was suggested that for individuals who live alone, pets provide psychological health benefits, such as reducing negative moods and loneliness levels (in Duvall Antonacopoulos & Pychyl, 2010). However, a study conducted in Australia by Wells and Rodi (2000) found no evidence that elderly people/seniors who lived alone with a pet were less lonely than seniors who lived alone without a pet. With the exception of the study of seniors, the above studies provide evidence that pet ownership may be beneficial for the psychological health of individuals living alone by reducing individuals’ levels of loneliness (Duvall Antonacopoulos & Pychyl, 2010).

It is important to bear in mind that not all research has demonstrated positive associations between pet ownership and health, and according to Mathers, Canterford, Olds, Waters and Wake (2010), the sampling methods in the studies under review does not take into account causal inferences or underlying, contributory deductions. This means that while these results may not be generalisable or transferable to the general population, they may be applicable to specific population groups. These studies used specific samples of participants that were either small, clinical or specialised, such that the results might not be applicable to the rest of society. The sampled participants in the above mentioned studies were either individuals facing considerable life challenges and severe health impairments; individuals living alone or elderly individuals living alone. It is therefore questionable whether similar results will occur from a sample of healthy and ‘normal’ participants.

To overcome these sampling limitations Mathers et al. (2010) utilised a broader sample to determine whether adolescent health and well-being are associated with having a pet in the household. This study included a quantitative method, incorporating self reports, and the sample was a cross sectional selection of adolescents in a longitudinal study conducted in Australia. The study drew on a large, established, community based sample of adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19 years old. The results suggested that neither owning a pet nor time spent caring for/playing with a pet appeared to be related to better adolescent health or well being (Mathers et al., 2010). However, neither did owning a pet nor time spent caring for/playing with a pet contribute to negative outcomes (Mathers, et al., 2010). They therefore concluded that “while pets may provide

therapeutic benefits for vulnerable adolescent populations, they do not seem to afford the same value to health adolescents in the community” (Mathers et al., 2010, p733-734).

2.1.8 Physical benefits

In addition to the various psychological benefits of pet ownership, other direct and indirect health benefits have been recorded, particularly among dog owners (Whitmarsh, 2005). According to Whitmarsh (2005), a number of studies identify pet ownership as a factor in improved recovery from illness and in improved health in general. Wood et al. (2007) reported that pet ownership has indeed been linked to improved general health and fewer doctor visits, although this relationship is not consistent in all studies. Whitmarsh (2005) claims that by offering companionship, security and support, companion animals act to ease stress responses, resulting in cardiovascular benefits (Whitmarsh, 2005). In alignment with this, Wood et al. (2007) claimed that the physical health benefits associated with pet ownership are well documented with much of the evidence relating to cardiovascular disease risk factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels and physical activity. Whitmarsh (2005) reports that direct health effects in terms of lower blood pressure, heart rate, and even cholesterol levels have been shown to result from stroking an animal. In addition to this the health of dog owners is likely to be positively affected due to increased exercise from regular walking (Whitmarsh, 2005).

However, many of the studies mentioned above are correlational. It is therefore possible that people with predisposed and pre-existing psychological and physical activity tendencies might choose to own a pet in the first place. It was pointed out by Hart (2000, in Whitmarsh, 2005, p. 29) that “people who seek out animal companionship may be more skilled in making choices that maintain their own well-being”. Despite this recognition, there is mounting evidence of the benefits of pet ownership, even in the face of serious disincentives such as cost, time and responsibility. Therefore one can conclude that pets must do something which their owners believe to be beneficial, and what is more, that those benefits must be believed to be substantial (Whitmarsh, 2005).

2.1.9 Dogs as companion animals

The implications of companion animals on human well being has been widely documented, however, this study focuses specifically on dogs as companion animals and pets. The literature on dog and human interactions and companionship is therefore important to review. Veevers (1985, in Whitmarsh, 2005) says that companion animals, and especially dogs, stimulate and facilitate social interaction in a number of ways: by attracting attention, providing a source of entertainment, improving owners’ social confidence and relationship skills and by acting as status symbols. This enhanced social interaction may be especially more pronounced for dogs. In support of this,

McNicholas and Collis (2000) found that the best evidence for the social catalyst effect of pets is from studies involving dogs. It was suggested by Serpell (1981, in Daly & Morton, 2006) that the attentiveness and sociability of dogs positively impacts on the owner. A later study by Serpell (1991, as cited in Daly & Morton, 2006), indicated that both dog and cat owners experienced increased health benefits as a result of pet ownership, but dog owners showed increased changes.

These enhanced findings related specifically to dogs could be attributed to the findings that dog owners rated dogs as being “more playful, more confident and relaxed in unfamiliar environments, more affectionate, and friendlier towards strangers” (Daly & Morton, 2006, p116). Thus, one could deduce that dogs may be more interactive and personal than cats and other pets. Dogs present the opportunity for increased health benefits for their owners. This is due to regular walks, agreeable companionship, and mutual interaction. Daly and Morton (2006) theorised, that increased exercise and meaningful companionship is directly associated with enhanced emotional benefits. Daly and Morton (2003, in Daly & Morton 2009) reported that children who owned dogs were higher in general empathy than those who owned cats or those who did not have any pets. This might be due to the nature of dogs: that they bring forth a highly significant number of social interactions (Daly & Morton, 2009). According to McNicholas and Collis (2000), research has identified a role for pets, especially dogs, as catalysts for human-human interactions which, in turn, might promote a feeling of social integration. It has been suggested that the presence of a dog acts as an ‘ice-breaker’, providing neutral and safe opening for conversation (McNicholas & Collis, 2000, p.62). It was found that guide dogs were as valuable in facilitating social interactions for their owners as they were in the work the dog is specifically trained for (McNicholas & Collis, 2000, p.62).

Research by Adams (1999) studied the relationship between Emily Dickinson and her Newfoundland dog, Carlo. Dickinson was a poet who lived a mostly introverted and reclusive life. The study examines selected letters and poems of the poet, Emily Dickinson in order to understand the relationship between herself and Carlo (Adams, 1999). The findings indicated that Carlo helped Dickinson feel protected, that his presence soothed her anxiety, and that she used the dog as a go-between with other people (Adams, 1999). Adams (1999), reports that the poet came to appreciate Carlo’s silence as a witness to her creative process: Carlo’s quiet presence helped Dickinson transform her inner turmoil into poetry and this suggests the transformative potential possible in a human-dog relationship (Adams, 1999). Although based on a single case study, this research is interesting as it seems to reveal the potential emotional and social support that dogs can provide to their human owners.

2.1.10 Pet ownership and children

Most children are fascinated by animals and feel a natural connection to them (Ross, 2005).

Children can relate to an animal's innocence, vulnerability, and in the case of pets, dependence on others for survival (Ross, 2005). Animals can be wonderful teachers for children, and as suggested by Ross (2005), they make great companions and playmates. Mathers, et al. (2010) discussed the results of a study on pet ownership and adolescent health. It was reported that pets may serve various therapeutic functions while working with young people. In a qualitative study involving thirty-two homeless youths, it was found that thirteen of them identified their pets as companions that provided unconditional love, reduced feelings of loneliness and improved their health (Banman, 1995, in Mathers et al. 2010). Considering this evidence, Mathers et al. (2010) went on to state that the potential benefits of pet ownership in health are of immense relevance to today's adolescents. They suggested that if pet ownership were shown to be beneficial, and the setting or context supportive, this might help achieve healthful behaviour changes in children and adolescents. Ross (2005) said that the unconditional love and acceptance that pets provide builds self esteem in children, and that children who own pets (or have direct experiences with animals) feel more empathy for other people from an early age. This may be because they learn to understand the feelings and needs of animals that are dependent on their owners (Ross, 2005). According to Ross (2005), research suggests that social, emotional, and cognitive development is enhanced when a child cares for a pet. Studies (Daly & Morton, 2006; Hansen, Messinger, Baun, & Megel, 1999) have found that pet ownership can encourage language and communication skills as children tend to talk to their animals by confiding their own feelings, showing affection and giving commands to their pets. It can therefore be argued that through feeding, cleaning and caring for another living being a child's psychosocial learning is enriched, and their emotional intelligence (such as empathy) is enhanced.

Hansen et al. (1999) conducted a study on companion animals alleviating distress in children. The physiological arousal and behavioural distress in children aged from two to six years old, while undergoing a physical examination, was examined with and without the presence of a companion dog (Hansen et al., 1999). Thirty four children (14 males and 20 females) were randomly assigned to either a treatment group or a control group (Hansen et al., 1999). In the treatment group, a therapy dog was present during their examinations, and in the control group the usual paediatric exam was done without a dog present (Hansen et al., 1999). Physiological variables were measured and the children were videotaped during the examination for analysis of behavioural distress using the Observation Scale of Behavioural Distress (OSBD). Hansen et al. (1999) report that there was statistically significant less behavioural distress when dog was present. Interestingly, these findings replicated those of a previous study conducted by Nagengast et al., in 1997. This research found that the presence of a companion dog could lower the behavioural distress of children during a laboratory simulated physical examination. These findings suggest that companion animals may be

useful in a variety of health care settings to decrease procedure-induced distress in children (Hansen et al. (1999).

2.1.11 Pet ownership and the development of emotional intelligence

One of the psychological areas of growing investigation focuses on the development and presence of empathy in children and adults through pet ownership. Early research suggests a child's relationship with a pet has positive results with respect to the development of empathy and compassion (Daly & Morton, 2006). A more recent study by Hergovich et al. (2002, in Daly & Morton, 2006) reported that young children showed an increase in empathy simply as a result of having a dog present in their classroom. This research suggests that children may develop important nurturing abilities through relationships with animals.

Paul and Serpell (1993, in Daly and Morton, 2009) conducted a study that reported that individuals who had kept pets in childhood, compared with those who had not, had more a humane attitude toward other people. Taylor and Signal (2005, in Daly and Morton, 2006) also found that there was indeed a link between human-human empathy and attitudes towards animals. However, an important consideration with respect to existing empirical research is that while an increase in empathy may be a result of pet presence, as stated by Hergovich et al (2002, in Daly & Morton, 2006), lasting effects have not been consistently examined.

2.1.12 Critical perspectives on pet ownership

While a large volume of the literature surrounding human interaction with pets provides positive accounts some studies do report negative outcomes. Not all human beings benefit from owning a pet and there are varying reasons for this. Attachment styles, age, gender, marital status, and physical and mental health status are some of the variables that come into play when researching the effects of owning a pet.

Staats, et al. (2008) propose that there are also varying reasons that people have for keeping pets. These can confound the results of the effects of living with a companion animal. Negative outcomes of pet ownership on human health have been documented in the literature, and in some cases pet ownership can be linked with a hazardous relationship on human health. Irvine (2004, in Staats, et al., 2008) suggested that keeping a pet can be considered as a choice that has moral considerations and consequences because owning a pet is a choice of most humans at some time in their lives, a choice that has costs as well as benefits (Irvine, 2004, in Staats, et al., 2008). One of the main costs is that pets require an expenditure of financial resources. Pet owners are often required to spend money on pet food, housing and care (Staats, et al., 2008). Another resource that pets require is that

of time and attention and in this way pet owners can spend a significant amount of time and energy on them.

Tower and Nokota (2006) researched pet companionship and depression in American men and woman. This study aimed to examine whether or not living alone with a cat or a dog is associated with positive or negative mental health. Their findings revealed that unmarried women who live with a pet have the fewest depressive symptoms, and unmarried men who live with a pet have the most (Tower & Nokota, 2006). These findings suggest that single women benefit from pet companionship, whereas single men may be burdened by it (Tower & Nokota, 2006).

Tower and Nokota (2006) provide some possible explanations for these results, stating that the presence of a pet reduces stress levels, establishes close and unconditional relationships, and eliminates the feelings of loneliness and isolation for women. This might be due to women being generally more oriented towards, and successful with, relationships than men. Therefore the animal can offer opportunities to “tend and befriend” the natural mechanisms of stress management for women (Taylor et al. 2000, in Tower & Nokota, 2006). On the other hand, for unmarried men, having a pet can be stressful because a pet requires extra effort, such as feeding, love, and attention (Tower & Nokota, 2006). It was also suggested that for men, pet ownership might interfere with independence and autonomy for single men, who are more oriented to a ‘separate self’ than to a ‘connected self’ (Pearson et al. 1998, in Tower & Nokota, 2006). However, considering the sample consists of depressed people, the results could be confounded by correlational influences, and therefore not transferable to the general population. It could be that the more depressed men chose to own a dog to try and help them deal with the depression.

In summary it is apparent that the specific conditions under which benefits or risks to mental health are associated with relationships with pets remain unclear. There seems to be a number of confounding variables, which make the clarification of any direct causal pathway, of the effects of pet companionship on human well beings very difficult to infer.

While both negative and positive outcomes are documented in modern research, the concern remains that there is not enough sound research to decide on a definitive pathway. According to Serpell (1991), current evidence for a beneficial effect of pet ownership on human health is inconclusive. Serpell (1991) conducted a study on the beneficial effects of pet ownership on some aspects of human health and behaviour. He concluded that pet ownership is not at present considered to be a significant contributory factor in public health, except as a source of injuries,

allergies and zoonotic diseases. However, although this particular study was based on a limited sample, the results presented in it demonstrate a number of positive health effects from acquiring a companion animal. Despite these findings, it was acknowledged that further research is needed to explore the mechanisms and the areas of particular benefit (Serpell, 1991).

2.1.13 Dog ownership in the South African context

There is a gap in the literature with regards to research in an African context and more specifically the South African context surrounding pet ownership and South African children. The dynamics and potential benefits of dog ownership for South African children have not yet been thoroughly researched. Daly and Morton (2006) argue that pet ownership, particularly dog ownership can positively benefit children's psychosocial development through learning empathy and compassion for another living being. Their research points out that a dog fulfils a means of companionship, offering non-judgemental acceptance, and fosters the development of responsibility (Daly & Morton, 2006). According to Melson (2003, in Daly and Morton, 2006) pets, particularly those that allow for the most interaction on the part of children, such as dogs, provide increased opportunity for nurturance and affection. This research suggests that children may develop important nurturing abilities through relationships with dogs. Therefore, whether dog ownership can contribute towards the psychosocial development or impact on the psychosocial aspects of the lives of children from a disadvantaged context is a pertinent and relevant question to be explored. There is inconclusive evidence about the positive effects of dog and pet ownership. However there seems to be a fairly substantial body of evidence pointing to the benefits of pet ownership for distressed children, vulnerable adolescents and people from vulnerable backgrounds. Therefore a study on dog ownership on disadvantaged children is important. As this study intends to focus on children who are from disadvantaged backgrounds it aims to add to the body of research with this unique perspective.

Serpell (1987) provides a perspective of pet-keeping in the Western world. He explains that throughout history, the world's wealthy and ruling classes have demonstrated a powerful affinity for pets. He states that, in the modern-West there is an association between pet-keeping and material affluence which has helped to create the false impression that pet-keeping is an unnecessary luxury, "a frivolous invention of the idle rich" (Serpell, 1987, p.166), which is of little social or cultural significance.

Serpell (1987), states that there is a prevalent assumption that companion animals serve no useful purpose. However, the practice of capturing, taming and keeping wild animals for companionship is widespread among hunting and gathering and simple horticultural societies, although it has rarely

been studied or even described in any detail, “and explanations for its existence are often strangely contrived” (Serpell, 1987, p.166). Serpell (1987) argues that considerable academic attention has been devoted to the use of animals as adornments, emblems of status, religious symbols, or even as educational toys. However, researchers have not managed to satisfactorily explain why so many non-affluent cultures nurture and cherish companion animals without any obvious ulterior motives in mind (Serpell, 1987). Serpell (1987) explains that research has begun to shed light on the potential social, emotional, and recreational value of companion animals in human society. Serpell (1987) concludes that recognition of the fact that pets are not, after all, entirely useless may help to promote a more open-minded approach to what is a fascinating aspect of tribal culture.

Despite the gap in the literature surrounding modern pet ownership in Africa and specifically South Africa, there is information surrounding the history of dogs in South Africa and some research into pet keeping in modern South African society. According to McCrindle et al. (1999), domesticated dogs in Southern Africa date back to the Iron Age (circa 1430 BP) and were traditionally used for hunting. They go on to say that in some more pastoral societies they played a role in guarding stock (McCrindle et al., 1999). During this era, dogs were expected to forage for their own food and their human owners had no control over their breeding (McCrindle et al., 1999). Dogs were therefore owned primarily for survival enhancing reasons: hunting and protection of their human owners and livestock.

In today’s South African society which consists of a large urban population, the interactions between humans and dogs have changed (McCrindle et al., 1999). McCrindle et al. (1999) conducted a survey of households in Soweto, which is a densely populated urban area in the Gauteng Province. The survey was conducted using a structured interview and non-participant observation. They discovered a dog/human ration of 0.42 dogs per household which according to McCrindle et al. (1999) is not remarkably different from dog populations in urban areas elsewhere in the world. The ways in which human and dog interactions have changed since the Iron Age were noted. McCrindle et al. (1999) reported the reasons people gave in this particular survey for owning dogs: dogs were kept for personal security, as companions, for guarding property and to keep feral cats away (McCrindle et al., 1999). The problems participants/respondents had surrounding owning dogs included: stray dogs in the road, and in their yards, fighting, killing chickens, noise, biting children and animal welfare (McCrindle et al., 1999). Another interesting change is in the awareness of feeding and sterilizing of dogs, which could be attributed to a heightened sense of social responsibility in our modern society. McCrindle et al. (1999) reported that 98.5% of the respondents recognised the names of commercial dog foods and 83.5% knew about sterilization of male and female dogs. However, despite this awareness it was then reported that only 13.1% of

respondents' dogs were up-to-date with vaccinations (McCrinkle et al., 1999). This downfall in actively taking care of animal welfare needs could be attributed to there not being enough support or accessible animal health care provided by the local government body.

McCrinkle et al. (1999) went on to conclude that dog-human interactions in modern African society differ from the historical traditional interactions. The ways in which they differ could be summarised to be that dog owners feed their dogs commercial pet food and are aware of surgery to reduce fertility. The respondents' reported problems with dogs are similar to those in other urban environments.

2.2 RATIONALE AND AIMS:

Rationale:

Due to the lack of research that has been conducted on how South African children experience dog ownership, specifically South African children living in lower socioeconomic contexts, there is a distinct need to collect data regarding the experiences of how these children experience their relationships with their dogs and explore the potential benefits of these relationships. Collecting data from the children themselves is important so that a greater understanding of their experiences and perspectives can be obtained.

There is no known published research in this area in South Africa, and given this diverse and complex society which has limited resources, studies of this nature are essential to potentially help empower communities and maximise children's development (psychologically, emotionally and socially), as well as provide them with a supportive sense of safety and belonging.

This research aimed to provide parents, outreach programs, communities, and researchers with in-depth information around the experiences of a group of children of dog ownership and dog training so that a better understanding of the influences and potential benefits of a township dog training initiative could be gained.

The literature around the subject of children's experiences of pet ownership (especially dog ownership) shows mixed results. However, vulnerable populations are demonstrated to benefit from dog ownership. Thus research on dog ownership amongst children from difficult socioeconomic circumstances is important.

The aims of the study were:

1. To describe and understand how a group of children from Mpophomeni Township experience their relationship with their dog through dog ownership, while taking part in a dog training initiative.

2. To understand and describe the role that dogs play in the lives of the children between the ages of eight and fourteen.

The main research question in this study was:

What are the experiences of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township with their relationship with their dog through dog ownership?

The following sub-questions were also investigated:

1. What kind of roles do dogs play in the lives of the participants?
2. What role does dog ownership play in the experienced quality of life of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township?
3. In what ways does dog ownership impact on the lives of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township, with particular reference to psychosocial factors?
4. How do children from Mpophomeni Township experience their relationship with their dogs while participating in a dog training program?

3. METHODOLOGY:

3.1. Introduction

This section reports on the methodology used for this qualitative study, comprising a voluntary sample of eight black South African boys between the ages of eight and fourteen, collected via a combination of convenience and purposive methods of sampling. The sample population consisted of 30 black South African boys from the Funda Nenja dog training initiative, in Mpophomeni Township, in KwaZulu Natal. The data collection techniques were: 1) a detailed description of the researcher's observations (in the field) of four hours of Funda Nenja dog training, wherein the participants interacted with their dogs; 2) the semi-structured focus group interview session. A thematic analysis was conducted on the collected data.

3.1.1. Socio-economic background of the area in which the research study took place:

This study took place in Mpophomeni Township, in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. Mpophomeni is a town in the Umgungundlovu District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. The time period of the study was between the months of April to October 2013. The socio-political-economic context of Mpophomeni Township includes considerably high levels of crime, drug and alcohol abuse, and unemployment. The people living in Mpophomeni are mostly from a working class bracket and high levels of poverty exist. A very high rate of HIV-AIDS infection exists in the KwaZulu Natal province in South Africa, and Mpophomeni is considered as one of the areas that has the highest rate of HIV-Aids infection in KwaZulu Natal

(<http://sinomlando.ukzn.ac.za/>).

3.2 Research Design

This study made use of a qualitative research design and adopted an interpretive, descriptive approach (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Qualitative research is based on the assumption of the subjective nature of people, knowledge and research methods, with an emphasis on understanding human actions and experiences within the context in which they take place (Babbie & Mouton, 2005; Terre Blanche, Kelly & Durrheim, 2006; van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). This particular type of design was chosen because it was appropriate in facilitating an in depth study that attempted to relay the perspectives and experiences of dog ownership in a South Africa township. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), qualitative methods allow the researcher to gather data and analyse it in depth, in order to understand and make sense of the phenomenon of the research question, this being the boys' experiences with their dogs. Due to the participants' young age and their somewhat limited ability to read and write, a qualitative descriptive approach including a focus group discussion were well suited for this particular study and specific sample of participants.

The focus of the study was on the experiences of the children involved therefore emphasis was placed on the “insider or emic perspective” of the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 271). The ways in which the children experience their relationships with their dogs (as revealed through the researcher’s observations of the children interacting with their dogs in dog training, and the focus group semi-structured interview and verbal discussion) was described in order to gain insight and understanding into these phenomena. In this way, the interpretive approach is appropriate as it involves going beyond mere description to make sense of people’s experiences and actions by providing a position, elaboration or explanation of the account (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The techniques used to gather data allowed the researcher to attempt to go beyond mere description as it included the methods of observation and the verbal accounts of the children’s experiences. By using a qualitative, interpretive framework, this study explored a specific sample of South African children’s subjective experiences, understandings and perceptions of their relationships with their dogs through the lens of a psychosocial approach. The psychosocial approach provided a theoretical framework through which to make sense of and interpret these experiences and accounts by providing a focus on the areas of psychological and social development in children.

3.3 Sampling

This sample population consisted of 30 South African boys, between the ages of 8 and 14 years old, from the Funda Nenja dog training group, all of whom were from a variety of local schools in Mpophomeni Township. The sampling technique that was used was purposive sampling (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The specific sample was chosen due to the fact that a group of 80 children who own dogs, and are actively involved in dog training, already exists in Mpophomeni Township. Participants from the Funda Nenja dog training initiative, who had been involved in dog training for at least three months, were asked to volunteer to participate in the study. Of 30 candidates, 8 volunteered. In this way, purposeful sampling was used in order to attempt to facilitate the generation of information rich cases. The consent forms were taken home, to be signed by a parent or guardian, and then returned again to dog training. This sample was chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is a need for research on South African children’s views and personal experiences of owning a pet dog, and how their relationships with their dogs fit into their lives. Finally, the use of this sample allows one to gain insight into how South African children from underprivileged, impoverished, and lower socioeconomic circumstances experience their relationships with their pet dogs in light of the costs and benefits associated with owning a pet in South Africa.

The limited access to resources and the constrained timeframe involved in an honours research project made this a convenient and easily accessible sample due to the fact that a group of children

from Mpophomeni Township that had been actively involved in a dog training initiative (Funda Nenja) since 2009 already existed.

3.3.1. Sampling procedure

Permission was obtained from the Non-Government Organisation, Funda Nenja, to conduct this study with the children who are involved in the weekly dog training meetings (Appendix 2.5 & 2.6). Ethical clearance was obtained and following this the sampling procedure commenced.

Communications with the Chairperson of Funda Nenja, Adrienne Olivier, clarified which groups of children would be suitable to approach in order to request their voluntary participation: this being children who had been actively involved in the dog training program for at least three months. Prior to the commencement of dog training, the children are categorised into groups according to their and their dogs' level of skill, so the children with more experience were already allocated into similar groups. This made identifying, approaching and communicating with suitable potential participants an uncomplicated task.

Informed consent from parents/legal guardians was obtained via a consent form (Appendix 2.1 & 2.2). Each boy who was willing to volunteer and matched the required profile was given a parental consent form to take home to their parents or guardians; this amounted to 30 volunteers in total who received consent forms. They were asked to return the signed form within the following two weeks. An especially allocated box was left at the Funda Nenja office (in the care of one of the managers of the initiative) wherein the boys could place and return their signed consent forms. Funda Nenja dog training takes place once a week on a Friday afternoon. The number of boys who returned the parental consent forms within two weeks consisted of a group of nine boys. These nine boys created the sample of participants who would form and take part in the research focus group.

The sample consisted of only male participants within the age group of 8 – 14 years old. This is due to the fact that only males have been participating in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative up until very recently. In the past few months, one or two girls have joined the initiative but they did not fit the necessary requirements regarding experience.

3.4 Data Collection

Data was collected via two techniques. These were: 1) observations of the boys interacting with their dogs at weekly dog training over four sessions, 2) a semi-structured focus group discussion.

Observation

The researcher observed four different, one hour long dog training sessions. These sessions take place once a week on a Friday afternoon, on a school field in Mpophomeni Township. They take place from 3pm to 4pm and 70-100 children and their own dogs participate in the training. The

children go home after school to fetch their dogs and then walk to the school field where the training takes place. The children are separated into groups according to their and their dogs' level of skill in dog training. Each group has a volunteer trainer (who is experienced in the field of dog training) who facilitates the children to teach their dog various skills, such as to sit, lie down, stay, roll over, and walk on a lead. The researcher spent time observing the dog training sessions so to enrich her understanding of how the children actively interacted with their dogs. She also observed how the children participated and behaved during the training session and how they interacted with their fellow peers. How the children appeared; their body language, how they were dressed and their perceived levels of energy were also observed. The dogs' behaviour was also observed, as well as the behaviour and interaction of the trainers themselves. The setting and context was observed, as well as the weather on different days when training took place.

Creative Drawing

A creative drawing activity took place first, before the focus group questions began. The children were asked to draw a picture of themselves with their dog. No other structured directions or instructions were given. The children were provided with a piece of A4 paper and a collection of pencil crayons, wax crayons, pastel crayons and khoki pens. They were then asked to write their name on the front of their drawing, and to write how their dog makes them feel on the back of the page. The drawing activity was specifically carried out at the beginning of the focus group so to enable the children to relax, and think creatively about their dog and the relationship they share with their dog. It was implemented to help the children to relax at the outset of the focus group. The children kept their drawings with them until the end of the focus group. The children did not verbally explain their drawings and therefore these drawing were not used for data analysis. The drawings were collected at the end of the focus group interview.

Focus Group Interview

Following the drawing activity, the semi-structured interview questions commenced. The focus group consisted of young boys between the ages of eight and fourteen years old, who had all been actively participating in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative for at least three months. A semi-structured focus group was conducted and the questions were designed to be as open-ended as possible. The interview schedule of questions consisted of 27 questions (Appendix 1.1 & 1.2). The use of a focus group interview consisting of semi-structured questions was specifically chosen to allow the participants to take part in discussions and share their experiences in as informal manner as possible. Their perspectives and understandings of their relationships with their dogs were explored.

Group interviews such as focus groups have received much empirical support (in a number of methodological reviews for research with children) as a more useful approach than asking children directly about their family, home or experiences because this “talking together” is similar to that of the small group setting in classrooms (Horgan, 2009, p. 362). This group setting (as opposed to individual interviews) allows children to interact with and draw on their social partners, and provides a site for children to take control of the discussion and raise issues which they would like to discuss, in a way that is less intimidating than in one-to-one interviews with a stranger (Kellet & Ding, 2004). In this way, the researcher is placed in the role of facilitator rather than interrogator, and the children are enabled to construct their own understandings and accounts by directing the discussions as they choose (Babbie & Mouton, 2005; Horgan, 2009; Sutton, 2009).

This is consistent with the need to take a participatory, child-centred approach in this study. This is because it allows one to focus on doing research *with* children rather than *on* children (Babbie & Mouton, 2005; Sutton, 2009). It was necessary to adopt a child-centred, participatory approach so as to uncover the lived experiences of the participants, consistent with the qualitative research design. The child-centred, participatory approach also allowed the researcher to apply a focus on the psychosocial theoretical framework. It enabled the researcher to indirectly investigate, from the children’s own perspectives, how their psychological and social development might or might not be influenced by their relationship with their dogs. Importantly, Horgan (2009) argues that researchers recognize that reducing power imbalances between the researcher and child participants, combined with the general shortage of knowledge about children’s views of social phenomena, means that qualitative research with children needs to maintain a degree of openness to ensure that children are able to direct the discussion in a manner which reflects their own views, perceptions, and thoughts. Although group interviews such as this may not be successful with older children, as participants may feel less comfortable talking in front of other children, this was not an issue in this study as this study involved young boys and did not attempt to elicit information from the children about their own personal, socioeconomic or family life circumstances.

Once parental consent and assent from the children (Appendix 2.3 & 2.4) had been obtained (to be discussed in more detail below), the study was presented to the children by explaining that the researcher was interested to know “how the children experience their relationships with their dogs since they have been training them with the Funda Nenja initiative, so they would be asked questions about them and their dogs.”

The focus group took place at the Mpophomeni Town Library, in a private meeting room. Upon entering the library in which the study was conducted, the children, translator and researcher were

seated in the focus group circle around a big table. The study was introduced to the children, explaining what was required of them and what procedure would be followed. All communications with the children were done first in English and followed by an isiZulu version (Appendix 2.3 & 2.4). The use of the audio voice recorders was then negotiated with the children, and issues of anonymity and confidentiality were discussed in isiZulu. Two assent forms were provided; an English and an isiZulu version (Appendix 2.3 & 2.4). The assent form was then read in isiZulu to the children and they were asked to sign the form if they were still keen to take part in the research study. Once assent from the children had been obtained (discussed in more detail in the “ethical considerations” section below), the researcher asked the children to gather in a standing circle in the room and an ice-breaker activity was conducted. This consisted of a large bouncy ball being thrown and then caught by each child as well as the researcher and translator. Each child had a turn to throw and catch the ball and upon catching it, said their name and their dog’s name.

The children were then asked to sit back down in a circle (with researcher and translator as a part of the circle). They were offered juice to drink and a piece of fruit to eat, before the interview activities and discussions began. This was done with the intention to refresh their energy for active participation in the focus group. The drawing activity commenced first, followed by the semi-structured interview questions. The children were encouraged to relax, to communicate honestly and enjoy themselves. They were told that there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers and that all answers were welcome.

The researcher first asked the question in English, after which the translator repeated the same question in isiZulu. The children were asked to put their hands up if they wished to answer. The children were again encouraged to share their views and participate actively by answering the questions. The questions were posed to the group of children in as open-ended manner as possible, (although they were semi-structured questions) and each child was allowed to answer in his own way. Each and every boy had a chance to voice his opinion and verbalise his answer. The quieter children were individually and specifically asked at least one question throughout the interview, to which each gave an answer. At the end, the children were then thanked for their participation.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data was processed by translating, transcribing, and subsequently analysing the tape recorded focus group. The collected data was analysed via thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the focus group data. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis offers an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative

data. In this way thematic analysis provides a useful research tool, which can potentially provide “a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 5). Thematic analysis was utilised to analyse the thick descriptions of observations made, as well as the focus group transcript/data. Six steps were followed in carrying out the analysis. These steps were:

- Step 1: Familiarizing oneself with the data. The researcher did this by engaging with the collected data, immersing herself in it by reading and re-reading it, and also transcribing the audio-recording.
- Step 2: Generating initial codes. Once the researcher had read, re-read and familiarized herself with the data, an initial list of ideas of what the data reveals was constructed.
- Step 3: Searching for themes. Once all the data had been initially coded and collated, and a list of the different codes across the data had been identified, the researcher was able to re-focus the analysis towards the broader level of themes. This involved sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes.
- Step 4: Reviewing the themes began once the researcher had devised a set of potential themes. This involved the refinement of these themes.
- Step 5: Defining and naming themes began once the researcher had a satisfactory thematic map of the data. The researcher defined and refined the themes and analysed the data within them.
- Step 6: Producing the report began once a set of fully worked out themes was finalised. This involved the final analysis and write up of the data analysis report.

Thematic analysis was the best and most appropriate approach to data analysis as it offers an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this way thematic analysis provides a useful research tool, which can potentially provide “a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 5). As explained by Braun and Clarke (2006), “thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. It minimally organises and describes the data set in rich detail” (p.79). Therefore it was suited to this study as it offers a systematic, disciplined way of analysing the collected data.

Themes that emerged:

The themes that emerged through the data were:

- Protection and security
- Commitment and responsibility
- Psychological support and benefits

- Emotional intelligence: benefits and skill development
- Dog training benefits

The sub-themes that were embedded within these themes were:

- Social support: protection and security; commitment.
- Psychological support: self-esteem; pride in ownership.
- Emotional intelligence: friendship and companionship; naughty dogs.

Limitations

The limitations that were observed through the course of the study were noted and acknowledged in order to contribute to the integrity and honesty of the study's interpretations. Due to the inexperience of the researcher, the semi-structured interview questions included closed questions as well as open questions. Qualitative research makes use of open questions and unstructured interviews therefore the use of semi-structured questions in this study drew on, but was not completely in alignment with qualitative research methodology. The researcher's native tongue was English and the participants' native tongue was isiZulu. Therefore the issue of a language barrier between the researcher and the participants was a challenge. A translator, who was familiar with the issues that relate to the research, was employed to assist with this challenge. The researcher relied on the translator which might have been experienced as a barrier between the researcher and the children. Therefore the researcher endeavoured to observe very carefully with her eyes, ears (tones of voices, laughter), and intuition as these senses served to be more analytically important, in this particular context, than the answers of the children. There was a possibility that participants would not arrive at the focus group. Therefore a maximum of nine boys were selected to ensure a reasonable focus group size, had some of the participants not arrived.

3.6 Validity, Reliability and Rigour

In the case of qualitative study, trustworthiness, credibility and transferability are considered more appropriate concerns than reliability, validity and generalisability issues (Golafshani, 2003). In qualitative research, "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 2001, in Golafshani, 2003). Therefore, when referring to validity and reliability, the credibility of the research depends on the ability and efforts of the researcher (Golafshani, 2003). The researcher aimed to enhance credibility by making use of triangulation: data was collected via two techniques, and was therefore triangulated via two different forms of media. As already discussed, these were the researcher's observations of the children interacting with their dogs during four hours of dog training; and a semi-structured interview of questions, answers and discussion during the focus group. This

introduces two different levels of collected data and two different levels of analysis to contribute towards validating the data.

The study was cross examined by a number of peers. The researcher's supervisor was an integral part of overseeing the study, and she provided critical advice and guidance. A Ph.D. student at UKZN was asked to debrief the study and she also contributed in the way of critical advice regarding the credibility, trustworthiness and transferability of the content. A retired UKZN senior lecturer and trainer in research methodology, specifically in qualitative methodology, debriefed and assessed the study so to provide another critical overview of the credibility, trustworthiness and potential transferability of the study.

The researcher endeavoured to allow the participants to speak freely without distorting what they said during the focus group (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Triangulation was utilised by combining the methods of discussion (verbal communication) and creative drawing (non-verbal communication) in the focus group interviews. The researcher's observations of four hours of weekly dog training were described to add to the credibility of the data. In this way, notes describing the environment in which the study took place as well as notes on "theoretical memoranda" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 275), such as the researchers' contradictory or supporting observations, were reflected upon. These notes contributed to refining the research design as the study evolved, as research on "humans and their social worlds are anything but static" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 275).

Dependability is an important concern in qualitative research and can be endorsed with an inquiry audit (Golafshani, 2003). The research was subjected to an audit trail through the handing over of all "theoretical ideas, notes, raw data, interpretations" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 276) to an independent examiner who scrutinised the findings and pointed out the incongruencies. The researcher's appointed supervisor acted as the audit trail examiner in this case. The researcher also employed a fellow research student who was not involved in the study, but understood the general objectives, to assist with an objective review of the study. The fellow student (who is also fluent in isiZulu) acted as "devil's advocate" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277), and thereby provided constructive criticism and useful reflection that the researcher took into consideration.

Concerns about the transferability and trustworthiness of this research were addressed by the careful and well documented carrying out of the data collection methods. Transferability was dealt with by providing "thick descriptions" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277) of the data, and context. The trustworthiness of the interpretation was ensured through the researcher's endeavouring to work carefully and closely with the raw data and literature on the topic. Throughout the focus group interview the researcher endeavoured to be aware of the importance of maintaining an objective or

neutral perspective. The researcher also attempted to acknowledge any potential biases through the implementation of reflexivity. The researcher also endeavoured to continuously check with the participants if they had been accurately understood.

Reflexivity

The importance of being reflexive is acknowledged within social science research (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). It has been argued that data analysis methods in qualitative research are not just neutral techniques because they reflect, and are instilled with, “theoretical, epistemological and ontological assumptions – including conceptions of subjects and subjectivities, and understandings of how knowledge is constructed and produced” (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003, p.413). Therefore the researcher needed to acknowledge any subjective assumptions in order to attempt to bracket these when the data was analysed. As explained by Watt (2007) each qualitative study is unique and ultimately the individual researcher must determine how best to proceed. “Reflexivity is thus considered essential, potentially facilitating understanding of both the phenomenon under study and the research process itself” (Watt, 2007, p.82).

The researcher comes from an urbanised, upper class context, whereas the participants come from an informal township context. The researcher therefore assumed that the participants would ‘appear’ poor in both spirit and appearance. She assumed that they would reflect in their demeanours the conditions of poverty and challenging life circumstances. The researcher also assumed that the participants’ level of education would be below average which would make interacting and connecting with the participants a further challenge. Other assumptions that the researcher had about the participants was that they would be shy, somewhat withdrawn, and that their participation in the focus group and answers to the semi-structured questions would be limited. The researcher assumed that the participants would lack confidence due to her assumptions about the context from which they come.

Due to these assumptions the researcher planned a fun ice-breaker activity to start the focus group session so to endeavour to loosen any potential barriers due to the different contexts from which the researcher and participants came from. During the course of the focus group interview the researcher’s assumptions were mostly proved to be incorrect. The researcher experienced the participants to be engaging, bright, enthusiastic, confident, sharing wonderful senses of humour, and showing confident levels of pride, self esteem and intellect. The participants showed pride in their relationships with their dogs through their detailed and animated answers. A couple of the participants could communicate fairly well in English and chose to answer in English rather than

isiZulu. One or two of the participants were shy than the others, but for the most part, the participants were all keen to answer questions and the researcher had to allow the participants' to take turns in sharing their answers by asking them to put their hands up. This was an interesting and positive experience for the researcher as the participants did not seem to define themselves by their context and level of apparent poverty.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The participants consisted of children between the ages of eight and fourteen, which made them 'vulnerable'. As they were based in Mpophomeni Township there was the possibility that they came from underprivileged homes, which added another vulnerability factor to be considered. A trustworthy and reliable translator was employed to translate all communications to ensure the comprehensive understanding of the expectations of their participation, and also to allow them to make an informed choice regarding their participation. The children were informed that no personal gain would come from their voluntary participation and that participation in the project required them to donate their free time. They were asked to commit to the project and were informed of the level of commitment that was expected; this being that they needed to volunteer their time to participate in the focus group. This consisted of one hour after school during the week. The participants were vulnerable participants due to conditions where they might not have had a thorough or 'proper' school education. Therefore, thorough attention and effort was paid (via translation; parental consent forms; child assent forms) to ensure that all participants understood the voluntariness of the project.

Confidentiality was assured in that all collected data was kept strictly private and only viewed by the researcher and supervisor. The names of the participants were not revealed in the reporting of the data, instead pseudonyms were used. Once the data was transcribed, all audio and recordings were stored away in a private and safe place and will remain there for five years, on completion of which the data will be deleted. The participants were informed prior to the beginning of the focus group that these stated measures (ensuring their confidentiality) were to be implemented throughout the study.

It was necessary to obtain the permission of the participants' parents or guardians in order for the minors to participate in the study. This was done via a consent form that parents/guardians needed to sign, after which the participants had to return to the researcher. This form was transcribed into isiZulu and an English and isiZulu version of the form was given to each volunteering participant (Appendix 2.1 & 2.2). Formal permission from Funda Nenja's managing director, Adrienne Olivier, was required and obtained. This took place via a request letter from the researcher (Appendix 2.5).

The researcher subsequently received a formal reply, in the form of a letter, from Adrienne Olivier granting permission to the researcher to conduct the study with Funda Nenja members (Appendix 2.6).

The assent of the participants was obtained before the focus group commenced. The nine participants were asked to sign an assent form (transcribed into isiZulu) which explained the nature of the research, the confidentiality agreement, the voluntariness of their participation, the time requirements of the participants, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The translator read the form out loud in isiZulu to the participants to ensure their full understanding of the content (Appendix 2.3 & 2.4). Deception was not used in this study. No cost was incurred for the participants, besides one hour of their time after school, during the week.

Research results will be made available to the participants upon request. The results of the study will be made available to Funda Nenja managing director, Adrienne Olivier: a printed copy of the study will be given to her to keep. The results of the study will only be available to these persons on completion of the project at the end of 2013 or beginning of 2014.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The first section of this chapter will include the descriptive analysis of the researcher's observations of the Funda Nenja children interacting with their dogs during dog training. The second section will include the description and analysis of the focus group transcript.

The participants of the study consisted of nine black South African boys between the ages of eight and fourteen, who were all participating in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative, and were from Mpophomeni Township in the KwaZulu Natal Midlands.

4.1 Researcher observations

“Funda Nenja” roughly translates as “learning with the dog”. Every Friday afternoon about ten volunteers and on average about 80 dogs with their handlers gather to share interspecies and multicultural communication. More recently the numbers of children participating in the Funda Nenja community dog training initiative have soared in that up to 140 children and their dogs have attended a training session. Not all of the children who arrived were allowed to enter the field and these children stayed on the other side of the fence, behind a closed gate. They stayed on the other side of the gate watching the training session take place. In this way, they formed a spectating audience and showed interest and eagerness to be able to partake by hanging on the fence and watching the hour of training. Only children who arrived with their own dogs were allowed to partake in the training.

The theme of poverty was apparent through the children's clothing. The children were scantily dressed, usually very basically, in shorts and a t-shirt. Some wore shoes but many did not. Of those who did wear shoes, very few of them wore socks. This was the case when the weather was cold. The four observation visits took place between May and July 2013, which is winter in South Africa. The KwaZulu Natal midlands are known to experience very cold conditions during winter, and snow has been known to fall in this area. Despite these cold conditions the minimum number of children who arrived to participate in any of the observed dog training sessions was 60. The researcher observed that there were very few overweight or plump children; instead most of them had a lean physical form. Even in cold and rainy weather conditions, the children arrived with their dogs wearing a lead and collar, to participate in the training.

Despite being underdressed for the cold weather, the children (boys) were adorned with other more ‘trendy’ items such as necklaces, hats or caps, and the researcher observed a few boys wearing backpacks throughout their training sessions. Upon closer examination, it was noted that the backpacks were completely empty and had broken zips and straps so that some were tied on with

other pieces of material. The backpacks were therefore not serving any practical function but could rather be thought of as a status symbol used to express unique character, and individuality. The same could be said for the necklaces and hats. These more ‘fashionable’ items point towards the children’s sense of pride in their own individuality. These items could be considered as status symbols that are connected to self expression, self pride and therefore, self esteem. It could be suggested that in this way, the children had stepped out of the assumed ‘poverty’ label that they had been given as they defined and identified themselves via other symbols. Although an outsider might describe these children to be living in impoverished circumstances, the children themselves did not behave in an ‘impoverished’ manner that indicated melancholy or victimhood. A large number of the children wore green t-shirts that display the words “Funda Nanja” and the Funda Nenja label/brand. These t-shirts are the Funda Nenja uniform that the children, trainers, and volunteers wear. The children walk home after school on Fridays to go and collect their dogs, after which they walk back to the training site. Many walk a long distance through the township. That they chose to put on their Funda Nenja green t-shirts speaks of their pride, commitment, and self esteem that being a part of the dog training initiative has instilled in them. It could suggest that the children experience belonging to Funda Nenja as a status symbol, which is a positive association and one that could contribute towards their sense of identity and self worth.

The body language of the children was open and engaging as they appeared proud and excited, as well as full of character in a mischievous and fun-filled manner. This was observed through their interaction with one another and through their communications to and from one another. These communications were loud and often accompanied with laughter. The children actively participated in the training in that they arrived on time (if not early) and once on the field, they quickly moved into their designated groups where they all stood in a line with the group’s trainer on the other side of them. Funda Nenja has been operating since 2009 and many of the children have been actively involved since the beginning. This shows their commitment to the training and also their enjoyment of participating in it. The children were familiar with the routine of getting prepared and ready for the commencement of the training session due to their experience at Funda Nenja, some of whom have been involved for four years now. They did not waste time or fool around. However, the atmosphere was one of focus and excitement as the children connected with friends, exchanged animated and loud greetings, and the dogs connected with other dogs. The dogs were very excited and showed this through barking and other noises, wagging of tails, and pulling their owner forward on their leads. The trainer of each group stood on the opposite the line of children and their dogs and instructed the children on what skill they were going to practice teaching their dogs. The children were very obedient and behaved in a most co-operative manner. They seemed to take their training sessions quite seriously and exhibited an attitude of commitment as they continued to

arrive, despite cold and rainy weather. The researcher observed one particularly young boy who was a part of the puppy training group. This boy had green mucus running from his nose which indicated that he was sick with a cold or flu infection. However his behaviour did not indicate that of a sick child. He gave his puppy to the researcher to hold/watch and he ran around the field greeting other boys and eventually returned with some dog biscuits for his puppy. This shows a sense of friendship and companionship shared between this boy and his dog. It was noted by the researcher that he was not warmly dressed and the weather that day was cold and overcast and it began to rain at the end of the training session.

Quite a number of dog fights broke out during the training sessions. According to the trainers, this is normal considering the large number of dogs all gathered in a relatively small space. The dog fights were dealt with in a courageous, firm and disciplined manner by the children. All dogs have to wear a collar and are on a lead. This enabled the children to pull their dogs towards them and away from the dog fight. The children verbally scolded their dogs, using loud and clear voices and physically pulled their dogs back towards themselves to regain control. This display of aggression and consequent regaining of the power by the children/boys could symbolise the children's relationships with their dogs: how their dogs instil a sense of security and power in their owners. The children did not appear afraid when a dog fight broke out. They appeared to be familiar with this scene and handled it with confidence and boldness. This showed the observer that the children had a strong sense of familiarity, ownership and that they felt confident handling their dogs. They also displayed a sense of care by protecting their dogs from the fight. That the children were responsive of the nature of dog fights shows an enhanced awareness around their dogs' ability to serve as a means of protection and security for their owners. It was interesting to note that the children were not threatened by their own dogs, even if it was their dog that started the dog fight. The children rather displayed a sense of comfort, trust and familiarity (friendship) with their dog.

During the training sessions the children practised teaching their dogs different skills, such as to sit, lie down, put their paw up, roll over, and stay amongst other skills. When the dogs performed the skill correctly, the children patted, stroked and verbally affirmed their satisfaction with their dog. Each child had a small sack of biscuits tied around his waist (given to him from the Funda Njenja management) from which he fed the dog a biscuit as a reward for performing the exercise correctly. This interaction was interesting to observe as the children displayed a sense of pride and joy when their dogs performed correctly showing that they were advancing and developing their skills. The affectionate verbal and physical affirmations the children offered their dogs showed a strong connection between them, reaffirming a sense of companionship and friendship shared between the

child and his dog. During dog training, both the child and his dog are learning new skills together, which adds to the sense of friendship and companionship that was observed.

4.2 Analysis of focus group transcript

The transcript revealed five main themes that emerged through the semi-structured focus group interview. These themes were protection and security, commitment and responsibility, psychological support, emotional intelligence, and dog training benefits. Sub-themes were embedded within some of these themes. In the theme, psychological support, the sub-themes self-esteem and pride, and ownership were revealed. In the theme emotional intelligence, the sub-themes of friendship and companionship and naughty dogs were present. These themes seem to be interconnected, for example an enhanced sense of social support is also psychologically and emotionally supportive.

The nine participants were given the pseudonyms which were shortened into P1, P2, P3, through to P9. At times during the audio recording it was difficult to identify which participant was answering the question and therefore the term ‘a participant/P?’ was used.

4.2.1. Protection and security

The context which these participants live is one that is known to have high levels of crime, violence, a prevalence of gangs and alcohol and drug abuse. A sense of protection and security is therefore an important source of support for children living in Mpophomeni Township. A sense of protection and security could enable these children to feel safer in their society and therefore provide them with an empowered sense of social support and belonging. This enhanced feeling of protection and safety could also enhance the children’s sense of belonging in their society as well as enhance their sense of self esteem and confidence. The results reveal that the children feel empowered socially and psychologically through the sense of protection that their dogs provided them with.

The reviewed literature stems mainly from a Western context and therefore social support in a Western context as compared to this study’s specific context could be experienced differently.

The theme, protection, was very evident in the focus groups. The data revealed that dogs have a very practical function: protection of home, protection of livelihood, protection of family, protection of self from dangers and other dogs. All the children’s comments on protection could also be tied to the fact that these children live in quite vulnerable circumstances and therefore protection and safety are valued highly. These comments seem to be telling us that these children live in circumstances that are perceived to be dangerous and this protective function is of a very high value.

The theme of protection and security came through strongly throughout the transcript. This was exemplified in the comment made by P1 when asked, “why do you own a dog, are there any reasons?” The reply was “because he protects my home.” Another participant answered the same question saying, “Because he protects my family”. When asked if they would choose to own another dog in their lives when they are older, P2 answered, “Yes, I will have it, because a dog protects a home”. Another response to the same questions was “Yes, I will have it when I am older so it can guide me and when other people’s dogs want to bite me, it can protect me”. These examples showed the strong theme of protection and security that the participants feel they receive through owning a dog.

Protection and security emerged as a bi-directional theme in that the dogs provided protection and security for their owners, and that the owners/participants also protected their dogs. This was apparent in an answer to the question, “why did they name their dogs?": “Because if you don’t name him (...) anyone can just say “c” “c” “c” and then they can steal your dog because he does not have a name. If you give him a name then he knows that he belongs to you and you can call him anytime”. This example shows that the participant is concerned with protecting his dog and making sure that he continues to belong to him and is safe. This shows a level of active ownership and commitment to his relationship with and responsibility for his dog.

When asked “what do you and your dog do together when you are not at Funda Nenja”, P4 replied that he “I take my friend and let him climb the gate, then I release my dog to run after him”. This answer could suggest that the participant is practising using his dog as a form of protection which he might be doing because he wants to be able to defend and protect himself. When asked, “what skills have you learned to teach your dog”, P2 replied “I taught him if someone is touching the fence he should bite him”. This shows how the dog can be used as a form of protection for this participant.

When asked ‘has your dog made a difference in your family’ the answers were in alignment with the code, protection and security. The first answer explained “it has made a big difference because it protects us”. This is a direct reference to a sense of safety and protection that the participant receives through owning a dog. It has been suggested above, that a sense of safety and protection within one’s society could be considered as a form of social support. The second said, “Oh, it’s made a difference because I don’t go around and visit other places, I just play with my dog”. This could be interpreted as a positive answer because the participant feels his dog makes it easier and more enjoyable for him to stay at home, where he is safe. A third answer was “Its made a difference because at home we used to plant veggies and the goats used to eat them, but now its just chasing them away”. In this way the dog is protecting the family’s vegetable crop and yard.

When asked “have you changed since you owned a dog”, P1 replied saying, “it really changed me because I did not like to sleep with someone in my bed, but now I sleep with someone in my bed”. This suggests that this child feels safer and more secure in the close company of others, now that he owns a dog. The question, “are there any changes in your life since you started Funda Nenja” received this answer from P, “yes, because my dog protects me”. This participant feels his life has changed because he is now protected by his dog. This could suggest that he feels safer within his society.

The literature reviewed reports more evidence on the psychological, physical and social benefits that pets provide for children. Thus, this study reveals a difference and contribution to the body of research in that the pronounced benefit of feeling protected and safe was a very distinct and highly valued aspect of dog ownership for this group of children.

4.2.2. Commitment and responsibility

The theme commitment emerged in different forms throughout the transcript. The participants’ displayed commitment to the dog training initiative, Funda Nenja, as well as to their own dogs as the children learn about taking responsibility for the well-being of their dogs. When asked why they named their dogs what they named them, P1 replied “because if I don’t name him his name, he won’t sit down”. This displays his level of commitment to the dog training initiative as it is in dog training that they teach their dogs skills such as to sit down. That naming his dog is important to him so that he can teach his dog skills shows a level of commitment and enjoyment in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative.

The participants each answered the question, “how long have you had your dog for”. The number of years that they had owned their dogs showed commitment to the relationship of owning and looking after their dogs. The answers of the participants were, two, three, four, five, four, two, seven, three and one years. These answers show that the participants had owned their dogs for a substantial number of years, one year being the least. This speaks of their commitment to their dogs and perhaps also of a meaningful, lengthy relationship that they have experienced with their dogs.

When asked, “has your dog had its vaccinations?” the responses showed a strong awareness of rabies and around the importance of taking care of their dogs, and society in this way. Commitment to their dogs was also exemplified through the answers. Every participant answered ‘yes’ to the above question. Funda Nenja works in cooperation with the SPCA and they encourage the children to make sure their dogs have had the necessary vaccinations (e.g. rabies). This educates the participants about the importance of vaccinations, the disease rabies and therefore enhances their social responsibility when owning a dog. When asked why P9’s dog had had its vaccinations, he

replied “so that it can protect from getting into people’s skin”. This shows his awareness around the danger of the disease rabies and it infecting a human being. The participants are learning to commit to taking their dogs for vaccinations through the dog training initiative. In this way, they are learning about their social responsibility.

Another answer to the above question, “has your dog had its vaccinations” was, “Yes, because my dog, he was sick and he did not play with other dogs. And I send him to SPCA.” This participant is not answering the question directly but he does show a concern for his dog’s well being and through this is committed to taking care of his dog. He actively took his dog to the SPCA for treatment, and in so doing the dog might have had the necessary vaccinations at the same time. This participant seems to have learned about being responsible for his dog through his commitment to his dog. This is connected to learning about caring for other living beings, which is connected to developing a sense of social responsibility.

When asked the question, “what do you do if your dog is sick?” three participants (P2, P1 and P9) replied saying “I will call the SPCA” and “I will take him to SPCA” and “I send him to SPCA”. A third participant said that “he takes care of him”. These are examples of the participants showing commitment to their dog’s well being and therefore to their relationship with their dog. This shows that they care about their dogs and are committed to ensuring (as best they can) that they are healthy. This points towards an enhanced awareness around actively supporting another living being.

In response to the question, “do you have responsibility for feeding and cleaning up after your dog”, the responses were, “I pick up the dirt that it came with at home and go throw it”; “when there is no grass I take a new grass and build it home so it can stay safely”; “it’s my responsibility that I dish up for my dog”. Most of the participants said that they are responsible for feeding their own dog. Through this responsibility the participants are learning about the commitment involved in caring for another living being. They are thus building skills of responsibility through their commitment to owning and taking care of a dog. Learning to provide food and having to remember to feed their dogs enables these children to be aware of and consider how to prepare for supporting others at a survival level.

The length of time that the children have been participating in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative shows their commitment to their dogs and the program. The participants’ answers to “how long have you been at Funda Nenja” were six months, one year, two years, two years, two years, five years, and six years. Even though Funda Nenja has only been in operation since 2009, four years, the participants were eager to express that they had been attending dog training for a

significant amount of time. This shows their sense of commitment to the project and to the training of their dogs.

This section and theme focused on the benefit of learning the value of commitment and responsibility through owning a dog. Commitment skills were associated with being an important aspect of developing social skills. Through participating in the Funda Njenja dog training initiative (showing commitment) the children are more actively involved in their community and more aware of their social responsibility through taking care of their dogs. Therefore, the reviewed literature did not seem to comment on the issue of commitment, which this study's participants exhibited as an important learning aspect of dog ownership. However, the additional social benefits of dog ownership will be discussed in relation to the below sub-themes of friendship and companionship which has been classified under the theme emotional intelligence skill development. Social benefits speak of relationships which is an inherent part of emotional intelligence too.

4.2.3. Psychological support and benefits

4.2.3.1 Self esteem

A pervasive sub-theme that emerged from the interviews was that of self esteem. This sub-theme was connected to the children's experiences with their dogs as their relationships with their dogs seemed to build and enhance their perceived sense of self esteem and confidence in themselves. Self esteem was evident through the literal interpretation of the comments the participants made. However it was also evident through their body language, sparkling eyes, tone of voice, and in the laughter that the participants shared during the focus group.

The theme of self-esteem came across strongly in the interview through many of the answers that the participants gave. When asked "what do you like about your dog", P1 replied in a confident tone, and smiling that "I like my dog because he listens to me". This answer was expressed with confidence through his body language as he sat up straight and answered clearly and loudly. This shows that the dog performs an important function for the participant in that the dog is a confidant for the participant. The dog is also a source of affirming this participant's sense of self-worth: through its obedience the participant feels positive and confident.

In another question, what do you like about your dog? P3 responded saying, "He only eats when he is given by me". Through this answer his sense of positive self esteem was apparent as the dog shows a strong sense of loyalty towards this participant. One could suggest that the participant feels a sense of pride and enhanced self worth through his relationship with his dog, especially through his dog responding to him in an obedient, loyal and positive way. Considering that there might not

always be food available for these dogs due to the circumstance in which the participants live, the loyalty this dog shows to his owner is profound.

When asked, do your friends like your dog? P5 responded saying, “They like my dog and they also wish they had a dog”. P3 said “They like my dog and we used to play with my dog when it was young with my friends, and they wanted me to show them where I bought my dog and I showed them and they also bought their dogs”. These answers seem to display a sense of confidence and enhanced self-worth through acknowledging their friend’s admiration and approval of their relationships with their dogs.

When asked, how do you feel when you go to Funda Nenja on Friday’s, P7 said, “I feel good because my dog is clever”. This shows that this participant feels happy and confident through his growing relationship with his dog. He associated his sense of feeling good with his dog’s behaviour. This shows too that the participant’s sense of self-esteem is linked to his relationship with his dog.

The question, “are there any changes in your life since you started Funda Nenja?” was answered by P4, and he said, “There is a change because my dog loves me”. This sense of being loved and valued could directly enhance one’s self-esteem, sense of self worth and confidence. This is highlighted through the participant’s awareness and acknowledgement of his dog’s love for him. He boldly and confidently states that his life has been changed because his dog loves him.

The question, ‘what do you like about your dog?’ received an answer from P4, saying “Because if I say go fetch the ball, he go fetch the ball”. The participant is pleased when his dog listens to him and engages with him. It could be suggested that this interaction provides the participant with a sense of confidence and self-worth as his dog shows loyalty and obedience to his owner, hereby impacting on his self-esteem. This example is also connected to the sub-themes of pride, and companionship and friendship.

This study found strong evidence that pointed towards the participants’ relationships with their dogs contributing towards and influencing their self-esteem in a positive way. This is in close connection with the reviewed literature as a common benefit of pet, and specifically dog, ownership was that of enhanced self esteem. The reviewed literature reported that dog owners had greater self esteem, increased levels of exercise and fitness, and they were less lonely than non-owners (McConnell et al., 2011). Another study in the literature explained that the unconditional love and acceptance that dogs provide for their owners builds self esteem in children. In the reviewed literature, Ross (2005) suggested that social, emotional, and cognitive development is enhanced when a child cares for a pet. This research supports the findings in this study as this study found that the participants seemed to benefit socially, psychologically and emotionally through their relationships with their dogs.

4.2.3.2 *Pride in ownership*

This sub-theme, the notion of pride, is connected to self-esteem and confidence, which boost one's sense of self worth. Therefore these results and reflections could overlap with self-esteem, but the researcher felt it was important to speak specifically about pride in connection to dog ownership.

The participants displayed pride in their answers to the semi-structured questions. When asked "what do you like about your dog", a participant answered, "because if you give him the food that is given by another person he won't eat it. He only eats when he is given food by me". This was an aspect that the participant values and 'likes' about his dog. Therefore one could suggest that this shows a sense of pride in his ownership of his dog. It also shows a sense of pride in sharing a close relationship with his dog, wherein the dog belongs to him which could provide the participant with a sense of control. The participant appreciates the dog's loyalty and feels proud because of this reason.

Two different participants gave the same answer to the question, "what do you like about your dog". The answer was "Because he is clever". The participants close relationship with their dogs seems to suggest that they gain a sense of pride through their dogs' good behaviour. It can be suggested that the participants are explaining that they like and appreciate their dogs' capacity to respond to them and learn new skills via dog training (showing their 'cleverness'). This is connected to a sense of pride these participants feel for their dog and perhaps this sense of pride could also be internalised and they might in turn feel proud of themselves for enabling their dog to learn and become clever.

As illustrated in previous extracts, the participants exhibited pride through owning, protecting and controlling their dogs. It also seemed that pride was experienced through attributing, albeit not consciously, their dogs' good behaviour to a positive value in themselves.

When asked, will you chose to have another dog in your life when you are older and why, P4 responded saying, "Yes, so that I can teach my child what I was doing to my dog". This response seems to reflect that he is proud of his relationship with his dog and that he wants to pass his learnings on to his children. This could suggest that his relationship with his dog and all they are learning together is an important factor in his life and something he values highly. This young boy is considering his future, and it includes owning a dog and teaching his child how to take care and train a dog.

The answers to the question are there any changes in your life since you started Funda Nenja, were: P2, "My dog was not listening but now it listens to me" and P8, "Yes because my dog is clever now". These answers seem to reflect development and growth in both the child and the dog as

change has occurred. The participants seemed to be proud of these developments and appreciative of the successful growth that has occurred.

The reviewed literature refers mainly to the development of self-esteem through dog ownership. Pride is closely connected to self-esteem and therefore the literature that reports on self-esteem being one of the prominent benefits of pet ownership is fitting in this section as well as in the above section's discussion. As mentioned above, the literature affirms the connection between dog ownership and the enhancement of pride (or self-esteem) in owners. However, this study is different from all of the reviewed literature as it involves the influences of a dog training program. Therefore, it could be suggested that the current participants experience an even more enhanced sense of pride in their relationship with their dog through actively participating in the Funda Njenja dog training initiative. By learning how to train their dogs, these participants have experienced positive reactions to instructions (obedience and loyalty), and a growth in skills of themselves as well as their dog. Therefore their sense of pride associated with their relationship with their dog may be more pronounced due to their active involvement in a dog training program. This specific factor is not discussed in the literature.

4.2.4 Emotional intelligence: benefits and skill development

4.2.4.1 Companionship and friendship

This theme was evident in the participants' experiences of their relationships with their dogs. It was clear that the participants experience their dogs as 'friends' and 'close others' in their lives. Through relationships such as friendships and the experience of companionship, children learn emotional intelligence skills such as compassion and empathy. Relationships with another living being involve interacting in an inter and intra personal manner. Emotional intelligence (EQ) skills are learned in the context of interacting with others, therefore companionship and friendship is an important area wherein children can develop these skills. The sub-theme of companionship and friendship also refers to the joy of playing with a friend. This is an important part of children's lives as they find relief, exercise and creativity through the playing of games. Therefore it could be suggested that playing with a 'friend' or companion is a healthy outlet for a child.

When asked, "Has your dog made a difference with your friends or in making new friends", P4 replied, "It's made a difference and I now have new friends". This shows that through owning a dog and participating in a dog training program, the participant has experienced enhanced social interactions and has thereby made new friends.

When asked 'what do you like about your dog', P2 replied "I like him because when I come home from school he comes back to me. When I call him, he runs first another way then comes back

straight to me”. This shows a level of companionship and friendship between the participant and his dog in that the participant likes the fact that his dog is excited and happy to see him. There is also a level of bonding through their playful interaction.

When asked, “What are the reasons for owning and keeping your dog”, P1 replied “because I like him, because I like animals.” This showed a sense of affection that this participant felt towards his dog. It could therefore represent a level of friendship and companionship that exists in this participant’s relationship with his dog.

When asked the question, “what do you do if your dog is sick?”, a participant said that “he takes care of him”. This shows his care and concern for his dog which speaks of a close relationship of companionship. It also speaks of this participant learning EQ skills such as empathy and compassion. To the question, are there any changes in your life since you started Funda Nenja, P1 responded, “Yes there is a change because I now love my dog with all of my heart”. This answer suggests P1 feels love, compassion, love and unconditional acceptance for his dog. It could therefore be suggested that in turn, P1 experiences unconditional positive regard and love from his dog which has helped him to develop the feelings of compassion and empathy in himself. This answer speaks of this relationship being one of ‘a close other’ in this participant’s life. One could suggest that P1’s dog is a form of emotional support for him.

When asked, why do you keep a dog, P5 and P3 replied, “Because I like him” and “Because I like animals”. Another question was, will you choose to have another dog in your life when you are older and why? P1 replied saying, “No, because I love the one that I have now”. P4 said, “Yes, because I love dogs”, and P7 said, “Yes, because I like dogs”. These answers show a positive correlation that the participants feel towards their dogs and reveal that they would like to own a dog continuously in their lives. These answers suggest a sense of companionship that the participants feel towards their dogs.

To the question, “how does it make you feel if someone treated your dog badly or your dog got stolen”, P6 replied, “I can feel bad” and P1 said, “I will feel very, very painful because my dog is like my brother”. In this example the participants seem to show a strong sense of companionship with their dogs. P1 is especially close with his dog as he considered him ‘his brother’ and therefore a part of his family.

When asked, have you changed since you owned a dog, P3 said, “It’s changed my life because if my friend are gone after school I take off my clothes from school then play with my dog” and P5 said I don’t go to other people’s places, I just stay at home and play with it”. This seems to speak of a playful and friendly relationship that the participants enjoy so much that they don’t even go out to

other people's houses after school. They are content to stay at home and play with their dog. This suggests that their relationship with their dog fulfils a friendship role. This suggestion is affirmed when the participants were asked, do you see your dog as your friend, to which they all replied, "Yes". It is especially significant to remember P1 saying that "(my dog) is like a brother to me".

The following extracts (1 and 2) represent the friendship and companionship the participants share with their dogs through dog training. They also provide evidence of the playfulness and joy the participants experience in their relationships with their dogs.

R: How do you feel when you go to Funda Nenja on Friday's?

P2: I feel happy because even my dog is pulling me wanting us to go there

P3: I feel happy because when we go there it's jumping up and down, even above me

P4: I feel happy because even my dog barks at me, it jumps up and down and barks at me, and sometimes licks me

P?: I feel happy because even my dog is happy.

One could suggest that the shared emotions of happiness, excitement and enthusiasm are representative of a friendship

R: What do you and your dog do together when you are not at Funda Nenja?

P?: We play tennis with him with balls

P3: I tie him around, and then I hide the bones, then I let him go search for those bones

The participants report participating in the healthy outlet of playing with their dogs.

Through their relationship of companionship with their dogs, and dog training, the participants seem to have learned emotional intelligence skills such as empathy, patience, tolerance and compassion. This is evident in the following extracts:

R: What have you learned at Funda Nenja:

P?: I learned that you shouldn't hit a dog but you should teach him/her until he knows that thing

P7: I learnt in Funda Nenja you become patient with the dog, not to force him or hit him up

P3: I learnt that if the dog doesn't want to sit down you don't have to kick him but you have to be patient with him until he knows how to sit down

R: Has Funda Nenja helped you and how?

P5: It taught me to take care of my dog

4.2.4.2 Naughty dogs

There are also negative associations that the children reported of owning a dog. The sub-theme ‘naughty dogs’ represents the way in which the children identify the bad behaviour of their dogs of which some of these might apply to them and their own behaviour. Therefore acknowledging and thinking about their dog’s bad behaviour through the semi-structured questions, allowed the children the opportunity to reflect on both good and bad behaviours thereby making moral assessments. The bad behaviours were those of fighting, biting, stealing, and making a mess. These ‘bad’ behaviours tie into learning about what is socially acceptable and also allows the children to develop emotional intelligence skills in the assessing of these behaviours and in reflecting on themselves. The children were able to identify bad behaviour of their pets and some of these apply to themselves, therefore they could be learning about ethical and moral behaviour through owning a dog.

The following extract exemplifies the bad behaviour of the dogs that the children recognised:

R: What don't you like about your dog?

P4: Because he takes the dustbins.

P1: And eats chickens (small voice)

P3: He fights with other dogs

P5: He brings bones at home

P9: He 'poo's' a lot at home.

P3: When I wake up in the morning I find napkins at home (from the rubbish bin)

P8: I don't like my dog to bite another dogs.

P3: Because he bites other people's chickens. Another day this other grandmother made him to eat poison because of that, and he died.

This last answer from P3 holds within it a possible consequence for this ‘bad’ behaviour of ‘biting’ (and thereby stealing) other people’s chickens. This was that his dog was poisoned and consequently died.

Through owning a dog the children learn about acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour by observing it in ‘another’. In this way they are reflecting on and making moral assessments about how to behave. It could be suggested that it is easier for a child to learn from observing ‘another’s’ actions, with a more objective perspective, than it might be to learn from one’s own behaviour wherein the subject is subjective and defensive of themselves.

Irvine (2004, in Staats, et al., 2007, p.?) suggested that “keeping a pet is a form of behaviour that can meet basic, unchanging human needs, such as the need for companionship”. The experience of

companionship through dog ownership was evident in this study's results. The literature reports that dogs are companions in their own right and that in some cases pet companionship can be more accepting and unconditional than human relationships. The literature also cited evidence that pets provide significant social support to their owners because they are considered "close others" in their lives. This is connected to the sub-theme of companionship and friendship which the participants experience with their dogs, and there by the theme of social support is also validated. In support of this, the literature suggested that social connection is a central human need (McConnell et al., 2011) and if dogs enhance the social interactions of their owners then dog ownership may provide a plausible explanation for enhanced well-being via enhancements in social networks (McNicholas & Collis, 2000). This was evident in the data in that it was reported that the participants had made new friends through their relationship with their dog and through attending a dog training program. This is further validated in the literature where it was reported by McNicholas and Collis (2000) that casual social encounters, such as those experienced by dog owners, could bring about a sense of social integration for owners. McNicholas and Collis (2000) suggested that some of these encounters could develop into more substantial social relationships, such as friendships, and that such relationships might be "a source of relationship-based social support" (McNicholas & Collis, 2000, p.63.). The theme of companionship and friendship that emerged through the data is connected to the theme of social support which also emerged through the data. These themes seem to be interconnected and in this way the research findings overlap. However this section has focused on the benefits of companionship and friendship, and the development of emotional intelligence skills which are experienced through dog ownership. These benefits seem to be mutually positive in the theme of social support too.

With regards to the development of emotional intelligence, the competencies associated with EQ are largely learned in the context of interacting with others, and that they continue to develop across the life span. A fundamental part of emotional intelligence is the ability to show empathy and compassion toward another living being, humans and animals alike. These findings of the development of empathy and compassion were revealed through the data. Through feeding, cleaning and caring for another living being a child's psychosocial learning is enriched, and their emotional intelligence (such as empathy) is enhanced.

Mavroveli et al. (2009) reported that emotional knowledge, which includes the understanding of emotional situations and expressions, was related to peer likeability in children. This could therefore be connected to the development of social skills that has been reported in this study. Hubbard and Coie (1994, in Mavroveli et al., 2009) identified several dimensions of emotional functioning that affect children's competence in social settings. These included the abilities to

perceive, express and regulate emotions and to sympathise and empathise. One could suggest that caring for another living being, such a pet, helps to nurture emotional intelligence skills in children, which in turn benefits children's social skills. The participants in this study showed evidence of this through their relationships with their dogs.

The data revealed that the participants also learned about making moral assessments on good and bad behaviour through dog ownership. This finding did not appear in the reviewed literature. But it could be considered an important part of children's emotional and social development in that they learn through observation and experience, about what is socially acceptable and what is not, and the possible consequences of not adhering to these moral standards.

4.2.5 Dog Training Benefits

The following extracts report on how participating in a dog training program has influenced the participants and subsequently their lives.

R: Has Funda Nenja helped your dog and how?

P3: I feel happy because if my dog didn't go to Funda Nenja it wouldn't have gone to the SPCA and it would have got rabies.

P4: I am happy because now he will not get rabies.

P1: Yes Funda Nenja helped my dog because my dog didn't know how to sit and dance.

I feel much better because my dog is clever now.

P6: It has helped me because my dog now is clever and I feel good

R: How do you feel when you go to Funda Nenja on Friday's?

P1: I feel happy because Funda Nenja tells me more things about my dog. They tell me to tell him to sit, dance, roll over and crawl.

R: What makes you go back to Funda Nenja every Friday?

P4: We learn things we don't know

P6: It's because they teach my dog and it's clever

P3: It's because I didn't know how to tell my dog to sit down, then I went to Funda Nenja and they taught him how to sit down. And the other day I was dishing for me and he just sat down and looked me in the face.

P2: Because I want to know more about my dog.

Through these extracts it seems apparent that the participants are experiencing an enhanced sense of self-esteem through learning new skills. It could be suggested that they are empowered through being educated in this way.

R: What skills have you learnt to teach your dog?

P1: I teach my dog to roll over, to sit and to crawl

P4: I teach my dog to stay and shake my hand

P2: I learnt to tell my dog to wait for me, I'm coming just now, then I shake him by hands then we go

The collected data revealed many positive consequences and benefits of taking part in a dog training program for the participants. These include the learning of practical dog training skills which enhance the dogs' obedience and enable the owners to exert control over and manage the relationships with their dogs more effectively and efficiently. It could also be suggested that through participating in a dog training program such as Funda Nenja, the participants' relationships with their dogs are enhanced and influenced in a number of positive ways. It seems evident that through being actively involved in this dog training initiative, this study's participants have developed an enhanced self-esteem, sense of self-worth and sense of belonging. The prominently strong theme of safety and protection experienced by the participants through dog ownership could also have been enhanced and influenced through the dog training program. This is due to the fact that the participants' relationships with their dogs are developed (through interaction via dog training) in the ways of trust, loyalty, companionship and confidence. It could be suggested that all of the themes and sub-themes that have been discussed are directly influenced in a positive way through the participants' involvement in the Funda Nenja dog training program. The program seems to encourage increased interaction between the participants and their dogs, as well as between the participants themselves. Through nurturing and encouraging a closer bond with their dogs, the Funda Nenja program enables the development of social support, psychological support and emotional intelligence in the participants. These psychosocial aspects of development seem to be highly valuable in empowering the participants in their lives, as well as contribute towards an enhanced experience of quality of life. The participants seem to be empowered to engage more confidently in their lives through the development of feeling safe and protected, confident and emotionally supported through unconditional companionship with their dogs. It could be suggested that the dog training program is a vehicle through which the children are able to experience a deeper, more meaningful and positive relationship with their dogs which, as revealed through the data, has many positive benefits and influences in the lives of this study's participants, particularly in the psychosocial aspects of their lives.

This study revealed unique findings that were not reported in the reviewed literature. These were the role of the dogs in providing their owners with a strong sense of protection and security, the importance of dogs in developing a sense of commitment and responsibility in this group of children, and lastly the sense of pride the children have in their dogs. These were not mentioned in the literature and they are important insights that are unique to this study.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This section discusses the implications of this research regarding a small sample of children's experiences with their dogs. This section will also consider the limitations of the study, and discuss recommendations for future research.

5.2. Contributions of this study

This study explored a group of South African children's subjective experiences of their relationship with their dogs. A qualitative approach was used and thematic analysis employed as a means of analysing the collected data. The aim of this study was to attempt to understand and describe a group of boy's experiences of dog ownership and dog training by exploring the children's lived and perceived experiences. The research took place in Mpophomeni Township which is a low socioeconomic area, wherein violence, crime, alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment and HIV and Aids infection rates are high. The aim of this study was to explore an area which has not been investigated in South Africa, and more specifically, in a township context.

The methods of observation and a focus group were used to collect data. The focus group consisted of semi-structured questions designed to facilitate the children's discussions of their relationship with their dogs in an open ended manner.

Consistent with the literature on the subject of pet ownership, the results revealed that children from vulnerable or challenging life circumstances benefit in a number of psychosocial ways through dog ownership. The results of this research have indicated different benefits of dog ownership that influence the experiences and potential quality of life of this group of boys. These benefits are the experience and development of psychological, emotional and social support. The development of self-esteem, making new friends, and emotional intelligence skills through dog ownership, that were apparent in this study's participants, are consistent with the reviewed literature.

This study also revealed unique findings that were not apparent in the reviewed literature. The first of these is the strong sense of protection and security that these children received through their relationship with their dog. The second is the importance of dogs in developing a sense of commitment and responsibility in this group of children, and lastly the sense of pride that the children felt through dog ownership. These unique findings could be due to the fact that this group of children come from a specific context in South Africa and face vulnerable and challenging life circumstances. Therefore, the strong sense of protection and safety that they receive through their relationship with their dog is particularly valuable and important to them. The theme of protection

was evident in the focus groups and that dogs have a very practical function: protection of home, protection of livelihood, protection of family, protection of self from dangers and other dogs was apparent. All of the children's comments on protection were also tied in to the fact that these children live in quite vulnerable circumstances and therefore protection and safety are valued highly. This feeling of protection and safety enhanced the children's sense of self esteem and confidence. The results revealed that the children felt empowered socially and psychologically through the sense of protection that their dogs provided them with. This is supported in the research where the benefits of social support are reported to be evident in psychological health, where Harter (2003, in McConnell et al., 2011) reported that perceived social support from close others is strongly related to greater self esteem.

5.3. Limitations

Although this study shows promising results, there are a number of limitations which need to be acknowledged.

The use of a small and single sample limits the conclusions which can be drawn from this data. Although qualitative studies do not aim for generalisability, some element of transferability is desirable. The use of two or more different samples from different relative contexts is likely to have provided a stronger argument for the contextual nature of children's experiences with their dogs. These would have allowed for comparability across different contexts which would show how children's experiences of dog ownership may differ across contexts. Thus, while this study does illustrate the positive influences and benefits of dog ownership for a small and specific group of South African boys, it does not allow one to draw conclusions about how children from different contexts would experience dog ownership.

A further limitation relates to the lack of a comparison group in this kind of design. The responses of the participants in this study could therefore not be compared to the responses of their peers in similar contexts who also own dogs, but are not participating in a dog training initiative. The degree to which the experiences of the study's participants are unique and a function of being actively involved in Funda Nenja dog training initiative is therefore not entirely clear.

Although the particular content of the accounts given by the boys in this study would be contextually bound, it is hoped that this study it could provide some insight into the potential benefits of dog ownership to children living in similar conditions, which are widely prevalent across South Africa. However, further research is needed to establish whether these insights could be relevant for other children living in similar contexts.

Another limitation was that of a potential language barrier between the researcher and the participants. The use of English medium language by the researcher (and the researcher's limited understanding of isiZulu) during data collection in this study is likely to have limited the discussion in the focus groups. In order to assist with this limitation a trustworthy translator was employed. Although this did facilitate the process, and the children were able to communicate in their home language (isiZulu), conducting the focus group and discussions in the children's first language may have provided even richer and more meaningful accounts. If the language barrier did not exist between the researcher and the children in the focus group data collection, it might have provided the children with a greater breadth and depth of expressing themselves as the children may have felt more confident and therefore drawn on more detailed expressions to convey their experiences.

The relative inexperience of the researcher was also a limitation, in that the pictures that the children drew could have added another source of data, if the researcher had used the pictures to stimulate discussion or as a talking point.

5.4. Recommendations for future research

Although this study has made important contributions to an area of research that has not been explored in the South African context, there is a definite need for further research into the potential benefits and influences of dog ownership for South African children from a low socioeconomic, township context. It is thus recommended that further research be conducted in this area in South Africa.

It might be beneficial to consider the experiences of children from different contexts and circumstances. For example it might be beneficial to explore how children (from a similar context) who are not participating in a dog training initiative experience their relationships with their dogs. This could provide further insight into the (beneficial) influences that such an initiative (Funda Nenja) is having in township children's lives, and thus potentially provide impetus and direction for the implementation of additional similar initiatives. An investigation into the beneficial influences and outcomes may further provide the initiative itself, as well as the supporters it relies upon, with essential information when considering the positive outcomes and potential of such a community program which aims at empowering its participants.

Although gathering information from the children themselves is imperative in understanding their experiences, these experiences form part of a larger system, such as the family. It would therefore be beneficial to conduct a study that considers the views of the participants' parents or caregivers with regards to their children's behaviour and perceived quality of life.

Using a semi-structured interview schedule allowed the researcher to gather in-depth information from participants. However the use of creative drawings as a method of collecting data was not thoroughly utilised. Therefore creative drawings as a means of collecting data could be useful and should be considered for future research. This is because children's drawings have the potential to provide the researcher with additional insight into the emotional experiences of dog ownership which this study's participants may not have verbalised in the semi-structured interview.

Conducting a quantitative study that looks at a larger number of children from the dog training initiative and their experiences of dog ownership is recommended. This could contribute towards future research findings that further explore this topic.

Although the aim of this study was not to provide generalisable results for South African children as a whole, it has provided an in-depth account and analysis of the experiences of a specific group of boys' relationships with their dogs, while taking part in a dog training program. This study has shown that a township dog training initiative can be successful in contributing towards positive experiences and benefits of dog ownership for the children taking part in it. This study has provided an understanding of a group of boys' experiences of dog ownership (while participating in dog training) and hopes to be a resource for researchers, educators, and parents who are interested in community empowerment programs.

This study hopes to have also provided insight for the boys' themselves into their own experiences and benefits of their relationship with their dogs', thus helping them to appreciate what they have learned and how they might have developed in a positive and healthy way.

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<http://sinomlando.ukzn.ac.za/>

7. APPENDICES:

Appendix 1.1: Interview Schedule

Creative drawing:

1. Draw a picture of you and your dog together.
2. Write your name and your dog's name on the front and write how your dog makes you feel on the back.

Nature of relationship with the pet dog:

1. What is your dog's name?
2. What do you like about (your relationship with) your dog?
3. What you don't like about (your relationship with) your dog?
4. Why do you keep your own dog? What are the reasons?
5. How long have you had your dog for?
6. Will you choose to own another dog in your life when you are older? Why?
7. Do you take your dog for vaccinations and sterilisation? Why?
8. What do you do if your dog is sick?
9. How would you feel if someone treated your dog badly?

Relationship of the dog to level of felt competence (self-esteem):

1. Has your dog taught you anything? What have you learned from your dog?
2. What do you and your dog do together when you are not at training?
3. Has your dog made any difference in your family?
4. Has your dog made any difference with your friends and making friends?

Impact of the dog on psychosocial aspects:

1. Have you changed as a since you owned your dog? How?
2. Do you have responsibility for feeding and cleaning up after your dog on a regular basis? Is this your decision or part of household chores?
3. Do you see your dog as a friend?
4. Do your friends like your dog? Do your friends who don't have a dog also wish to have one?
5. Does your family like your dog?

Relationship with dog connected to Funda Nenja:

1. How long have you been training your dog at Funda Nenja?
2. How do you feel going to Funda Nenja on Friday's?
3. Why do you go back to Funda Nenja every Friday?

4. What have you learned from Funda Nenja?
5. What skills have you learnt to teach your dog at Funda Nenja?
6. Are there any changes in your life since you started at Funda Nenja?
7. Have you made any new friends at Funda Nenja?
8. Has Funda Nenja helped you? How?
9. Has Funda Nenja helped your dog? How?

Focus Group Schedule:

Introduction:

1. Researcher introduces herself.
2. Research topic is explained: “How do the children experience their relationship with their dog?”
3. Informed assent from children obtained. Confirmation that they understand the topic and nature of the focus group gained and the option of participating or not given. They are informed that they can withdraw if they want to.
4. Audio recording explained.
5. Children told that they should relax and enjoy themselves. They will be encouraged to express themselves honestly and told that there is no right or wrong answer. Children will be thanked for being a part of the study.

Ice-breaker activity:

1. Informal and unrelated fun activity to encourage participants to relax. It will consist of a game with a bouncy ball. Each child will have a turn to throw and catch the ball and say their name and their dog’s name.
2. Children are offered juice to drink and some fruit before the interview begins to refresh their energy for participation in the discussions.

Focus Group Discussion:

1. Children asked to sit in a circle (with researcher and translator as a part of the circle) and the focus group interview starts with the drawing activity followed by the semi-structured questions will commence.

Appendix 1.2: Interview Schedule (isiZulu)

Ishedula lemibuzo-Mpendulwano

Ukudweba:

1. Dweba isithombe sakho neNja yakho kanye nezinto enizenza ndawonye.
2. Ingane ngayinye izocelwa ukuba ichaze ngomdwebo wayo.

Isimo so budlelwano nomdlwane wenja:

1. Uban igama lenja yakho?
2. Ikwenza uzizwe kanjaniinja yakho?
3. Chaza ukuthi yini oyithandayo (ngobudlelwano benu) ngenja yakho.
4. Chaza ukuthi yini ongayithandi (ngobudlelwano benu) ngenja yakho.
5. Iziphi izizathu ezikwenza ugcineinja yakho/ube nenja yakho?
6. Sekuyisikhathi esingakanani unenja yakho?
7. Ingabe uzokhetha ukufuya enyeinja yakho uma usumdala? Ngobani?
8. Uyayisainja yakho ukuyogoma no kujova? Yini indaba?
9. Wenza njani umainja yakho igula?
10. Yini into enzono kakhuluinja yakho eyake yakwenzela yona?
11. Uzizwa kanjani uma omunye umuntu engayiphathi kahleinja yakho? (lesisiqephu sithathelwa kwimibuzo yesiqephu sesi-14 kuya ku-11)

Ubudlelwano benja ngokwezinga lokuzwakala koqhudelwano:

1. Ingabeinja yakho iseke yakufundisa into ethize? Yini oseke wayifunda kwinja yakho?
2. Yini wena nenja yakho eniyenzayo ndawonye uma ungaziqeqeshi?
3. Ingabe zikhona izinto osukwazi ukuzenza ngenxa yenja yakho? (chaza).
4. Ingabeinja yakho iseke yawenza umehliko empilweni yakho ekuqeqesheni umzimbawakho (kwimidlalo), esikoleni sakho noma nabangani bakho? (lesisiqephu sithathelwe kusukela kwimibuzo yesi thupha (6) kuya kweyesikhombisa (7))

ukuthinteka kwenja ngokwesimo sengqondo:

1. Ungazichaza kanjani wenza njengomuntu?
2. Useke washintsha empilweni ngokobuntu bakho esikhathini esidlulile sukela watholainja yakho?
3. Uyakwazi ukunakekela nokumelainja yakho mayelana nokuyinikeza ukudla, ukuhambanayo, noma ukuyiqoqela ngasonke isikhathi? Ingabo ukuzikhethela kwakho noma kuyingxenye yemisebenzi wasekhaya?

4. Uyayibonainja yakho njengomngani?
5. Ingabe abangani bakho banazo izinja?
6. Ingabe abangani bakho bayazithanda izinja?
7. Ingabe umndeni wakho uyayithandainja?

Ubudlelwano nenja obuxhumeke kwi-Funda Njenja:

1. Sekuyisikhathi eingakanani uqeqeshainja yakho kwa-Funda Njenja?
2. Iziphi izizathu ezikwenza ukuthi uze kwa- Funda Njenja njalo ngolwesihlanu?
3. Imaphi amakhono osuwafundile ukuze ufundiseinja yakho Kwa-Funda Njenja?
4. Ingabe lukhona ushintsho empilweni yakho kusukela ekuqaleni kwakho ukuza kwa-Funda Njenja?
5. Usubenzile abangani abasha kwa-Funda Njenja?
6. Ingabe u-Funda Njenja ukusizile wena nenja yakho? Kanjani?

Appendix 2.1: Parental Consent Form (English)

Request for your child's participation in a Psychology study

Dear parent/guardian,



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Purpose and Background:

My name is Georgina Drummond and I am a student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in Pietermaritzburg. I am doing my honours degree in Psychology and as part of my course I am doing a project investigating how children experience their relationship with their dog and if this has affected their lives in any way. I will be working with the Funda Nenja dog training program and I am interested in looking at how the children experience the program. I am asking your permission for your child to participate in this project. I also will ask your child if s/he agrees to participate in this project.

Title of the Study: The experiences of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township, in KZN South Africa, of dog ownership and training, from a psychosocial perspective.

Requirements: If your child participates, he/she will be involved in a group discussion with seven other children. The group meeting will take place on a Friday afternoon in the Mpophomeni Library. The group discussion will not be longer than 90 minutes and I will work with an isiZulu translator. The children will be asked questions about their relationship with their dog and how it has affected their lives. The children will also be asked to draw pictures of themselves and their dog. They will not be asked any questions about their personal life circumstances. With your permission, I will record the group sessions so I can later type a written record of what was talked about during the discussions.

Benefits and Risks: If you choose to allow your child to participate in this study it will be greatly appreciated, but unfortunately I cannot offer you or your child any direct benefits. However, your child might benefit indirectly in that they will find the experience enjoyable as it will encourage them to reflect on their relationship with their dog, which could enhance the quality of this relationship. There are no possible harms or risks for you or your child and no deception (trickery) will be used in this study.

Confidentiality and Privacy: During this research project, I will keep the information from the group discussions strictly private. Only my UKZN supervisor and I will have access to the information. When I report the results of my research project, I will not use your child's name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your child. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by ensuring that the signed consent forms are stored safely by the researcher and are not accessible to anyone apart from the researcher and her supervisor. All consent forms from the study will be kept by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked drawer and will then be destroyed via a paper shredder machine. All audio recordings will be deleted after a period of five years. The results of this study will be written into a report (which will form part of my Honours Degree) and may be presented at conferences in the future. The information from this study might also be used for further research or possibly published. No personal information about your child will be used in any of these areas of reporting the results, and since the informed consent forms will be destroyed, no information will be traced back to your child. If you would like a copy of the final report, please feel free to contact me at the number listed at the end of this consent form.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research project is voluntary for both you and your child. Your child is not being forced to participate in this study. The choice of whether you would like your child to participate is yours and your child's alone. I encourage you to speak to your child about this study and talk about whether s/he would like to participate, before you sign this form. If your child becomes uncomfortable or stressed by being involved in the project, s/he can withdraw from the project at any stage. The aims of this study and what is required from your child will be explained to your child on the day of the group discussion. Your child will not be forced to participate in any tasks or discussion if s/he doesn't feel comfortable and they may excuse themselves from the group at any time.

If you have any questions about this study please feel free to contact me or my supervisor at any stage:

Name & contact details of researcher: Georgina Drummond. Tel: 084 664 3661. Email:

georgi.drummond@gmail.com. **Name & contact details of UKZN supervisor:** Ms Carol Mitchell. Tel: 033 260 60 54. Email: mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za.

If you have any concerns about the nature of the study or the treatment of the children or any further ethical issues in this study at any point, you may contact the Research Ethics Committee at 031 260 3587 or ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Thank you for considering this request. Please keep this consent form for your records.

If you choose to give your child permission to participate in this study, please sign the following and give it to your child to return to Funda Njenja dog training on Fridays.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT:

I voluntarily give permission for my child _____ (print name) to participate in the research project entitled, "*The experiences of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township, in KZN South Africa, of dog ownership and training, from a psychosocial perspective*". I understand that in order to participate in this project, my child must also agree to participate. I understand that my child will not be forced to participate in this study, and that my child or I can change our minds about participation, at any time, by notifying the researcher of our decision to end participation in this project. I have read the above description of this study and I understand what the study involves.

ADDITIONAL CONSENT TO AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING:

In addition to the above, I hereby agree to the audio recording of the group discussion in which my child participates for the purposes of data capture. I understand that no personally identifiable information or recording of my child will be released in any form, and that the identity of my child will be kept confidential in transcripts, reports and future publications and will not be traced back to me or my child.

Parent/Guardian's signature

Date

Please note that only a PARENT or LEGAL GUARDIAN may consent to allow their child to participate in this study.

Appendix 2.2: Parental Consent Form (isiZulu)

Imvume yomzali:

Isicelo sokuba Ingane yakho ingenele ucwaningo lesifundo sezenqondo.

Sawubona Mzali/Mnakekeli wengane.



Imininingwane Ngami Nenjongo Yocwaningo: Igama lami ngingu Georgina. Isibongo ngingowakwa Drummond. Ngingumfundi enkundleni ephakeme okuyiNyuvesi yakwaZulu Natali eMgungundlovu. Ngenza iziquzobudokotela wenqondo. Injongo yalelo lucwaningo iwukuqonda ukuthi ubudlelwano okwenzeka phakathi kwengane nenja, nokuthi ubudlelwano kuyithinta kanjani ingane ngokwezininga lempilo yalo. Ngizobe ngisebenza nenkampani eqeqesha ngokusebenzisa izinja, ebizwa ngokuthi : I Funda Nenja dog training program. Futhi ngizimisele ukuzwa ukuthi loluhlelo lakwa Funda Nenja dog training program luyithinta kanjani ingane yakho. Ngicela ungi phe imvume yokukuba umntwana wakho angenele lolu hlelo noma lolu cwano. Ngizophinde ngibuze ingane yakho ukuthi ingabe yona iyavuma noma cha ukungenela lolu hlelo noma ucwaningo.

Isihloko socwaningo: Ingabe uyini umthelela wokuba nobudlelwano nenja ezinganeni zase segodini saseMphophomeni, kwaZulu Natali eNingizimu Afrika ngokombono wezonhlalakahle zengqondo?

Okudingekayo: Uma ingane yakho izongenela lolu hlelo, izofakwa eqenjini lezingane eziyisikhombisa. Umhlangano weqembu ngalinye uzoba ngoLwesihlanu emini yantambama emtwapweni wolwazi wase Mphophomeni. Izinxoxo eziyoba khona eqenjini lezingane ngeke ibe ngaphezu kwemizuzu eyisishagalombili (90), ngizosebenza nomuhumushi wesiZulu. Iziningane zizobuzwa ngobudlelwano obubakhona phakathi kwazo nezinja zazo, kanye nokuthi lobudlelwano kuzithinta kanjani isimo sempilo yazo. Ingane izocelwa ukuthi idwebe izithombe zazo nenjayazo. Ngeke zibuzwe ngesimo sempilo yazo somuntu siqu noma esibucayi. Ngemvume yakho, ngizozophisa imihlangano yamaqembu esizobanayo ukuze ngihumushela esiNgisini ebekade sikuxoxa besengikubhala phansi.

Iminkomelo ne zingozi: Ngijobabula kakhulu uma uyivumelile ingane yakho ukuba ingenele loluhlelo noma ucwaningo, kodwa ngaxolisa ukuthi ayikho imikomele eqondile eyozuzwa yingane yakho. Nokho, ingane yakho ingane yakho ingazuba ngokutholwa umuzwa ojabulisayo njengoba izoququguzeleka ukuthi ibonise ubudlelwano obuqhubekayo phakathi kwayo nenja yayo, okuyokwenza lobudlelwano ukuthi buqabuleke. Akukho ubungozi obulindelekile noma inkohliso mayelana nalolu cwano kuwena kanye nengane yakho.

Imfihlo: Phakathi nalolu cwano ngizolugcina luyimfihlo lonke ulwazi onguluthola engxoxweni yethu yemihlangano yamaqembu. Umhloli wami wasenkundleni yakwaZulu Natali kanye nami kuphela abantu abazoba negunya phezu kwalolu lwazi. Uma sengibikezela imiphumela yalolu cwano ngeke ngilisebenzise igama lengane yakho. Kunalokho, ngiyosebenzisa igama eliyisidlalisano okungalona elangempela. Imfihlo izophishekelwa ngokuthi yonke imigcwaliso magama izovalelwa kahle umdidiyeli noma umseshi futhi ngeke abonwe noma ubani ngaphandle komsheshi nomhloli wakhe. Onke amafomu emvumo azobekwa umseshi okwesikhashana esingangeminyaka emihlanu ngemva kwalokho izolahlwa icikelelwe phansi ngomushini wamaphepha obizwa ngokuthi ipaper shredder machine. Imiphumela yalolu cwano izobhalwa kwiliphothi okuyinxenye yeziqumfundo yami ephakeme (Honours Degree), futhi izobikezelwa kuzinkonfa ezizayo ngaphambilini. Ulwazi lwalolu cwano lungasetshenziswa ukhumushelwa. Ayikho imininingwane eyokhishwa phecelezi ngengane yakho uma sesikhipha lemiphumela. Ngaphezu kwalokho, amafomu emvume izolahlwa noma acikelelwe phansi ngakho ayikho imininingwane ngengane yakho eyokhishwa noma etholakale endaweni ethize. Uma ungathanda ngikunike iphepha eliqoshiwe lemiphumela etholakele ngemva kocwaningo, ngiyacela ukhululeke ukungithinta kwinqanaba yami ebhalwe ekugcineni kwalelifomu.

Ukuzibandakanya ngokuzithandela: ukungenela noma ukuzibandakanya nalolu cwano noma uhlelo phakathi kwenu nobalili wena nengane yakho lungokokuzithandela. Ingane yakho ayiphokelekile ukuba ingenele loluhlelo. Isinqumo sokuthi uyavuma ukuthi ingane yakho ingenele loluhlelo luphakathi kwakho

nengane yakho kuphela. Ngikukhuthaza ukuba ukhulume nengane yakho mayelana nalolu hlelo ngokuthi iyathanda yini ukungenela lolu hlelo ngaphambi kokuba usayine lelifomu. Uma ingane yakho izizwa ingakhululekile noma ikhungathazekile ngokungenela loluhlelo inelungelo lokuzikhipha kulelo hlelo kunoma isiphi isigaba. Injongo yalolu cwaningo kanye nalokhu okulindelekile enganeni yakho kuzochazelwa ingane yakho ngosuku lamaqembu. Ingane yakho ayiphoqelekile ukuba ingenele lolu cwaningo noma ingxoxo yeqembu, uma izizwa ingakhululekile ingacelwa ukukhululwa noma ngasiphi isikhathi eqenjini.

Uma kunemibuzo ngalesi sifundo ngicela ukhululeke ukuxhumana name noma umhloli wami noma ngasiphi isikhathi: **Igama nezinombolo zikamseshi:** Georgina Drummond. Tel: 084 664 3661.

Imeyili: georgi.drummond@gmail.com. **Igama nezinombolo zikaMhloli waseNyuvesi yakwaZulu Natali:** Ms Carol Mitchell. Tel: 033 260 6054. Imeyili: Mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za Uma unezinkinga, izikhalazo ngalolucwaningo noma mayelana nempatho yengane yakho moma-ke ukuphathwa ngokwenhlonipho kulolucwaningo noma isiphi isikhathi ngizocela uthintane nekomidi lezokusesha ngokuphathwa lwezokuhlonishwa okusemthethweni (Research Ethics Committe) Ku: 031 260 3587 noma ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Ngiyabonga ngokucabangela isicelo sami. Ngiyakucela ukuba uligcine leli fomu lemumo ngesizathu sezinto eziqoshiwe.

Uma ukhetha ukunikeza ingane yakho imvume yokungenela noma ukuzibandakanya kulolu cwaningo, ngiyakucela usayine okulandelayo ebese ukunikeza ingane yakho ibuyenakho ngoLwesihlanu kwezoqeqesho lakwaFunda Nenja.

Imvume YoMzali/ Umnakekeli:

Ngokuzithandela ngiyavuma ukunika ingane yami _____ (igama lengane) ukuba ingenele ucwaningo olubizwa Ngokuthi “*Ingabe izingane zaselokishini laseMphopheni KwaZulu Natali eNingizimu Afrika zizizwa kanjani ngokubanezinja zazo ngokombono wezonhlalakahle*” Ngियाqonda ukuthi ingane yami izongenela lolu cwaningo, ingane yami kumele nayo ngokwayo izwakalise ukuthi iyavuma ukuzibandakanya. Ngियाqonda ukuthi ingane yami ngeke iphoqwe ukungenela lolu hlelo, futhi nginemvume yokukuyekela ingane yami noma thina sobabili siyekele ukuzibandakanya nalolu cwaningo noma ngasiphi isikhathi, ngokutshela umseshi ngesinqumo sethu ekugcineni kwalolu hlelo. Ngifundile ngachazeleka ngalolu cwaningo noma uhlelo, ngियाqonda ukuthi lolu cwaningo luhlenganisa yini nokuthi yini elindelekile.

Enye Imvumo yokuqopha Ucwaningo noma eyokuthatha isithombe:

Ngaphezu kwalokho, ngiyavuma ukuthi iqoshwe ingxoxo ezobe iseqenjini engane yami ezobe izibandakanye kulo ngesizathu sokuqopha ulwazi. Ngियाqonda ukuthi ulwazi oluyimfihlo noma lomuntu siqu oluyokhishwa lona litholakale kunoma iyiphi ifomu. Futhu, abukho ubudedengu okuzokwenzakala noma kutholakale mayelana nengane yakho konke kuzogcinwa kuyimfihlo kakhulukazi imiphumela ezotholakala, kakhulukazi kwimiphumela, noma ezincwadini ezizohumushwa phambilini futhio ngeke zigujwe noma zicubungulwe ngami noma kwingane yami.

Ukusayina koMzali/ uMnakekeli

Usuku

Ngiyacela uthathe ukunaka okukhulu ukuthi ngu Mzali noma uMnakekeli osemthethweni okumele anike imvume mayelana nokuthi ingane ingenele loluhlelo.

Appendix 2.3: Child Assent Form (English)**Title of the Study:**

The experiences of a group of children from Mpophomeni Township, in KZN South Africa, of dog ownership and training, from a psychosocial perspective.

My name is Georgina Drummond. I am trying to learn about how children feel about their relationships with their dogs. I am doing this because I am a student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in Pietermaritzburg, and for my study program I have to do a project. The project is also about the Funda Nenja dog training program and I am interested in how you feel about the program. If you would like to, you can be in my study/project.

Project Tasks: If you decide you want to be in my project, you will take part in a group activity with 7 other children. The group activity will be on a Friday afternoon, after school, in the Mpophomeni Library. It will not be longer than 90 minutes and an isiZulu translator will be there to help. You will be asked to talk about your relationship with your dog, and you will be asked to draw pictures of you and your dog. You will not be asked any questions about your private life. If you say it is OK, I will record the group sessions so I can later write down what we talked about.

Benefits and Risks: If you choose to be in my project I will be very thankful, but sadly I can't offer you any benefits/prizes. But you might find the group activity enjoyable as we talk about you and your dog in a fun way. You will be safe and I will be honest with you at all times in this project.

Privacy: Other people will not know if you are in my study. I will put things I learn about you together with things I learn about other children, so no one can tell what things came from you. When I tell other people about my research, I will not use your name, so no one can tell who I am talking about.

Your parents or guardian have to say it's OK for you to be in the study. After they decide, you get to choose if you want to do it too. If you don't want to be in the study, no one will be upset/angry with you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that's OK. You can stop at any time.

Call 033 260 5853 if you have questions about the study or if you decide you don't want to be in the study any more.

I will give you a copy of this form in case you want to ask questions later.

Agreement: I have decided to be in the study even though I know that I don't have to do it. Georgina Drummond has answered all my questions.

Signature of Study Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix 2.4: Ifomu Yokuvunyelwa Kwengane



Isihloko Socwaningo:

Ukuthinteka kweqembu lezingane zase Lokishini laseMphophomeni, KwaZulu-Natali eNingizimu Afrika, ngokuba umphathi wezinja nokuzihlola ngokwesimosenqondo.

Igama lami ngingu Georgina Drummond. Ngizama ukufunda ukuthi izingane zizizwa kanjani ngokuba nobudlelwano nezinja zazo. Isizathu sokwenza lokhu yingoba ngingumfundi waseNkundleni ephakeme yaKwaZulu-Natali eMgungundlovu, ngakho bekumelwe ngenze lolucwaningo njengenxenywe yemfundo yami yamabanga aphezulu. Ucwawano lumayelana ne *Funda Nenja dog training program* okuwuqeqesho lokuFunda Nenja futhi nginendaba mayelana nokuthi uzizwa kanjani ngaloluhlelo locwaningo. Uma uthanda ungabayingxenywe yocwaningo lwami.

Imisebenzi Yalolucwaningo: Uma uhlela ukuthi ufuna ukuzibandakanya nokuba yinxenywe yalolucwaningo, uzoba yingxenywe yeqembu lezingane eziyisikhombisa (7). Umsebenzi weqembu uzoba ngolwesihlanu emini yantambama, ngemva kokuphuma kwesikole, emtapweni wolwazi eMpophomeni. Ngeke ibe ngaphezu kwemizuzu eyisishagalolunye futhi umhumushi wesizulu uzobe ekhona ukuzosiza. Uzocelwa ukuba ukhulume ngobudlelwano bakho nenja yakho, futhi uzobe usucelwa ukuba udwebe izithombe zakho kanye nenja yakho. Ngeke ubuzwe noma iyiphi imibuzo ngempilo yakho efihlekile. Uma uthi uyavuma, Ngizozophisa izingaba zamaqembu ukuze phambilini ngibhale phansi esixoxe ngakho.

Imikomelo neZingozi: Uma ukhetha ukuba yingxenywe yohlelo noma yocwaningo lwami Ngiyojabula kakhulu, kodwa ngeshwa ngeke ngikwazi ukunikeza imikomelo/iziphoo. Kodwa ungase ukuthole kujabulisa ukuba yingxenywe yemisebenzi ezobe yenziwa eqenjini njengoba sizobe sikhuluma ngawe nenja yakho ngendlela ejabulisayo. Uzovikeleka futhi ngizothembeka kuwe ngasosonke isikhathi salolucwaningo.

Imfihlo: abanye abantu ngeke bazi ukuthi uyazibandakanya noma uyingxenywe yaloluhlelo. / ucwaningo lwami. Ngizo hlanganisa / ngizoxuba izinto engizifundayo ngawe ndawonye nezinto engizifundayo ngezinye izingane, ukuze kungabibikho obonayo ukuthi iziphi izinto eziqhamuka kuwe. Uma ngitshela abanye abantu ngohlelo lwami, ngeke ngisebenzise igama kakho, ukuze kungabibikho umuntu ozokwazi ukuthi ngikhuluma ngobani.

Abazali bakho noma umgadi kumelwe asho ukuthi kulungile ukuba ube yingxenywe yocwaningo . ngemva kokukhethela, uthola ukuzikhethela ukuba uyafuna yini nawe. Uma ungafuni ukuba kucwaningo, akekho ozokucasukela noma abe nenkinga nawe. Uma ufuna ukuba kucwaningo manje futhi uphinde ushintshe umqondo ngemvakwalokho, kulungile. Ungayekela noma ngasiphi isikhathi.

Ungangifonela (033-260 5853) uma unemibuzo ngocwaningo lwami noma uma ukhetha ukuthi awusafuni ukuzibandakanya nocwaningo/ uhlelo. Ngizokunikeza umfaniswano walelifomu uma kungenzeka unemibuzo ofuna ukuyibuza ngokuhamba kwesikhathi.

Isivumelwano: Sengikhethile ukuba yingxenywe yohlelo noma ngabe ngazi ukuthi akumelwe ngikwenze. uGeorgina Drummond useyiphendulile imibuzo yami.

ukuSayina kozongenena uhlelo.

Usuku

Ukusayina komcwaningi

Usuku

Appendix 2.5: Letter of permission to the organisation, Funda Nenja



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Georgina Drummond
Psychology Honours student
Discipline of Psychology

School of Applied Human Sciences
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
Pietermaritzburg campus
Email: georgi.drummond@gmail.com

Supervisor: Carol Mitchell
Email: mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 033 260 6054

Adrienne Olivier
Chairperson
Funda Nenja
P.O. Box 845
Hilton
3245

Request to conduct research at Funda Nenja Dog Training Initiative

Dear Adrienne,

My name is Georgina Drummond and I am doing my honours degree in Psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal in Pietermaritzburg. This letter serves to request your permission to conduct my honours research project with the voluntary help of Funda Nenja and the children involved. My research project will investigate how a group of children from Mpophomeni Township, in KZN South Africa, experience dog ownership and training from a psychosocial perspective.

If you grant me permission to conduct this research with Funda Nenja and the children involved, I will send informed consent letters home with the children requesting permission from their parents/guardians to allow them to participate in this study. A copy of this parental/guardian consent letter is attached for your interest. The children's participation in this study is completely voluntary and of their own free will, with their parents' consent.

I will be doing a qualitative study which is an in depth, descriptive style of study. The objective of the study is to develop an understanding of the children's perceptions of their relationship with their dog and to gain insight into the children's perceptions and experiences of the Funda Nenja program. I would like to make use of two groups (i.e. focus groups) of eight children in each group. Each group would participate in one focus group sessions each. The focus groups will not be longer than 90 minutes each and I will work with a translator. The focus groups will involve the children taking part in discussions and they will be asked questions about their relationship with their dog and how it has affected their lives. The children will also be asked to draw pictures of themselves and their dog. They will not be asked any questions about their personal life circumstances.

I would like to request to conduct the research focus groups on Friday afternoons when the children usually gather for dog training. I will provide all the necessary equipment and supplies, and I will conduct all aspects of the study myself. I will conduct the focus groups in the Mpophomeni Library which is in walking distance from the grounds where the Funda Nenja dog training takes place. I suggest that the focus groups take place from 2pm – 3.30pm so that the children do not miss the dog training session.

The sample of sixteen will consist of children who have been actively involved in the project for at least 6 months. I will ask the children if they would like to **volunteer** to participate in the project. I will then take

the volunteered names, divide them into 2 groups according to their ages (Group 1: 8-13yrs; Group 2: 14-18yrs) and randomly draw eight volunteers from each group to participate in the focus groups. I will record the group sessions' using a digital audio-recorder, so I can later type a transcript of what was discussed during the interview.

Benefits and Risks: I believe there are no direct benefits to the participants of participating in this research project. However, the children might benefit indirectly in that they will find the experience enjoyable as it will encourage them to reflect on their relationship with their dog, which could enhance the quality of this relationship. There are no possible harms or risks for the children and no deception (trickery) will be used in this study. If, however, any child becomes uncomfortable or stressed by being involved in the project, he/she can withdraw from the project at any stage.

Confidentiality and Privacy: During this research project, I will keep all data/information from the focus groups private. Only my UKZN supervisor and I will have access to the data. When I report the results of my research project and in my typed transcript, I will not use the names of any children or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym for the participants. I will provide you with a copy of my final report.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research project is voluntary. Participants can choose freely to participate or not to participate.

Dissemination of the research findings: The results of this study will be written into a report (which will form part of my Honours Degree) and may be presented at conferences in the future. The information from this study might also be used for further research or possibly published.

If you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0846643661 / georgi.drummond@gmail.com, or my supervisor, Carol Mitchell on 033 2606054 / mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za. If you have any concerns about the nature of the study or the treatment of the children or any further ethical issues in this study at any point, you may contact the Research Ethics Committee at 031 260 3587 or ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Thank you for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

Georgina Drummond

Appendix 2.6: Letter of response from Funda Nenja

funda nenja

A TOWNSHIP DOG TRAINING INITIATIVE

Adrienne Olivier
Chairperson
Funda Nenja
P.O. Box 845
Hilton
3245

11 March 2013

Georgina Drummond
Psychology Honours Student
Discipline of Psychology

School of Applied Human Science

University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

Request to conduct research at Funda Nenja

Dear Georgina

Thank you for your letter requesting permission to conduct your honours research project with the help of Funda Nenja and its young participants, as well as outlining how you intend going about this research.

I am very pleased to confirm that we are happy for you to go ahead provided you abide by the guidelines you indicated in your communication with us. We are willing to assist you in any way we can and look forward to learning the results of your work.

Regards

Adrienne Olivier

Chairperson

Funda Nenja

033 3472915

083 636 0891

www.fundanenja.co.za

Appendix 3: Transcription of Focus Group

**Transcription of Focus Group: Wed 28th August
Mpophomeni Library 3-4pm**

Researcher (R): Georgina Drummond

Translator (T): Cynthia Xulu

Participants: x9 boys who were actively participating in the Funda Nenja dog training initiative, and have been doing so for at least 3 months prior to the study took place.

Pseudonyms: Tom, James, Siphon, Thabo, Vusi, Alex, Brad, George, Linda.

Tom: P1

James: P2

Siphon: P3

Thabo: P4

Vusi: P5

Alex: P6

Brad: P7

George: P8

Linda: P9

R: I'm going to ask you some questions now and you can put your hands up if you want to answer. Everybody can answer if you want to. You can answer in isiZulu or English, whatever is easier for you.

R: Ok so, you have told me your dog's names, I want to know why did you call it that name? Is there a reason?

P4: I said its name was scorpion but I made a mistake and I want to say Bester.

Question 1

R: Why did you call your dogs what you called your dogs? What is the reason?

T: Okay ningitshelile ukuthi obani igama lezinja zenu ngithanda ukwazi ukuthi yin indaba izinja zenu nizibize ngalelo gama?

P6: Ngoba ngithanda udlala imarbles

T: Because I like playing marbles.

P3: Ngoba...Mangayiqambi igama bonke abantu abadlulayo bazoibiza bethi "mc" "mc" "mc" besebeyayinsthontsha....

T: Because if you don't name him the name you give to him, anyone can just say "C" "C" "C" and then they can steal your dog because he does not have a name he just used to say "c" "c" "c", and then if you give him a name then he knows that he belongs to you and you can call him anytime.

R: I like that, so you want to keep him safe?

R: Okay, P7?

P7: Ngoba ngiyalithanda igama elithi striky

T: Because I like the name 'Stricky'.

R: Okay, anybody else? P5, what did you call your dog?

P5: Puppy...

R: Puppy, why?

P5: Ngamqamba lelo gama ngoba wayesamncane

T: I named him that name because he was still young.

P6: Tiger

R: Tiger, why?

P6: Ngoba waye thanda ukuluma abantu

T: I said Tiger because he likes biting people.

P1: Yingoba mengingay'bizingegama layo ngeke ize ifune ukuhlala phansi

T: Because if don't name him his name he won't sit down

R: Ah, nice. Anybody else?

P6: Ngamqamba lelo gama ngoba uyathanda ukuluma ezinye izinja, unolaka ezinjeni(in a small voice)

T: Because he likes biting other dogs, he is cruel to other dogs (speaking softly).

R: What is his name?

P6: Scorpion

Question 2

R: Okay! Now I want to ask everybody, what do you like about your dog? (Enthusiastic)

T: Manje ngicela ukunibuza , yini oythandayo ngenja yakho

R: Yes! P1

P1: I like my dog because he listens to me. (Confidence)

R: He listens to you, wonderful! (Echoing / affirming what the speaker said)

R; Yes, P2

P3: Ngijatshuliswa ukuthi uma umnikaokunye ukudla okuphuma komunye umuntu angeke akudle , ukudla mekuphuma kimi kuphela.

T: Because if you give him the food that is given by other person he won't eat it. He only eats when he is given by me.

R: Oh? That's why you like him?

P3: Yes.

R: Who else? Why you like your dog?

T: Yin'ndaba uthandainja yakho?

R: P9?

P9: Ngoba ihlakan'phile. (Speaking softly).

T: Because he is clever.

R: Because he is clever, yes!

R: P3?

P3: Yingoba mmmh. mang'buy'eskoleni...iqhamukanje kusekudenasekhaya mangiyemeza iyagijima ize ifike kimina. Iqal'igijime iziphind'ibuye.

T: Because when I come from school he comes back to me. When I call him, he runs first another way, then comes back straight to me. (Enthusiastic)

R: Ah, that's so nice (smile).

R: Anybody, else? Why do you like your dog?

P5: Ngoba..ihlakan'phile.

T: Because he is clever.

R: Because he's clever.

R: Okay! Anybody else who wants to answer?

R: Yes, P4.

P4: Ngyay'thanda ngoba muthi ay'ham'yolanda ibhola iyalilanda!

T: Because s if I say go fetch the ball, he go fetch the ball.

R: Ah, he listens to you?

P4: Yes

Question 3

R: Okay, now I must ask you all, what don't you like about your dog?

T: Okay! Manje ngcela ukunibuza nonke: yini ongay'thandi ngenja yakho?

R: Yes, P4?

P4: Icosh'obhim.

T: What did you say?

P4: icosh'obhin.

T: Because he takes the dustbins.

(Laughter from other boys): Hahahahahahahahahahaha!

R: Oh, naughty!

R: Yes, P1?

P1: And eats chickens. (Small voice).

(Laughter from other boys): hahahahahaha!

R: Next, what can you tell me? P3?

P3: Ulwa nezinja

T: He fights with other dogs.

R: Fighting with other dogs.

R: Anybody else? Why you don't like your dog?

P5: Iletha amathambo ekhaya.

T: Okay, he brings bones at home.

R: Ah!

R: P9?

P9: Ukuth..ithoy'letha..kakhul'ekhaya.

(Laughter in the room) Hahahehehehe!

T: He poo's a lot at home.

R: Thats naughty hey! (laughter):

P3: Ukuthi mang'vuk'ekseni ngfic'amanab'keni anamasimba laph.

T: When I wake up in the morning I find napkins at home.

R: Ha! From the rubbish bin?

P3: Ya.

R: Okay, anybody else? Why don't you like your dog?

(Silence, hands go up)

R: P8

P8: I don't like my dog to bite another dogs.

R: Yes, okay. It bites other dogs.

R: Yes, P3?

P3: Into engingaythandel' yona ilum'iznkukhu zabanti. Yafikeyaluma inkhukhu yabantu. loyagogo wayibulala. wayidlisa ukudla yafa.

T: Because he bites other people's chickens . Another day this other grandmother made him to eat poison because of that, and he died.

R: Ah, shame (sympathising) Ah, that's sad.

Question 4

R: Now I must ask you, what are the reasons that you keep a dog? Why do you keep a dog?

T: Ngicela ungilalele, yin'ndaba ube nenja yakho, yini ekwanz'ukuthi ugcineinja yakho.?

R: Yes, P1

P1: Because he protects my home.

R: Wonderful , he protects your home.

R: Yes?

P5: Because I like him.

P3: Yingoba ngthand'izilwane.

T: Because I like animals

R: You like animals?

P3: Yes.

P?: Because he protects my family

Question 5

R: Okay, the next question I want to know from each of you is, for how long have you had your dog?

T: Okay, ngifun'ukubuza ukuthi sekunesikhathi esingakanani unenja yakho?

R: Starting with P5.

Answer: 2 years

Answer: 3 years

Answer: 4 years

Answer: 6 months

Answer: 5 years

Answer: 4 years

Answer: 2 years

Answer: 7 years

Answer: 3 years

Answer: 1 year

Answer: 6years

R: Six years? Some of them are old!

Question 6

R: Okay, next question, listen to me. Will you chose to have another dog in your life when you are older and why?

T: Okay, omunye umbuzo: ungakhetha ukuba nenye inja , ngaphezukwale onayo? Futhi yin'ndaba?

P1: No, because I love that one that I have now.

P3: Ngiyathanda ukuba nezinja ezimbili ngoba ngyazi mekufa le enye ngyazi kuzosala le enye

P6: I like two dogs because if this one dies the other one will remain.

R: So, if your dog you've got now gets old and it dies, would you get another dog? That is my question.

P6: Yes

R: Hands up. Yes, P4?

P4: Yes

R: Why?

P4: Because I love dogs

P7: Yes, I will get a new one

R: Why?

P7: Ngoba ngiyazthanda izinja

T: Because I like dogs.

P8: Because I like dogs

R: When you are married one day, well that's a long time, but when you older are you going to have a new dog?

T: Uma usumdala uzoba nayo inja?

R: Let's hear, P2?

P2: Yebo , ngzoba nayo

T: Yes I will have it

R: Why

P2: Ngoba inja iyavikela ekhaya

T: Because a dog protects at home.

P4: Yes, khona ngizofundisa ingane yami what I was doing to my dog

T: Yes, so that I will teach my child what I was doing to my dog

P3: Ngizobanayo mesengimdala ngiy'treyne ukuthi ingigade ukuze abantu uma befuna ukungishaya ingivikele.

T: I will have it when I am old so it can guide me and when other people's dogs want to bite me it can protect me.

Question 7**R: Okay, another question is has your dog had its vaccinations his year?****T:** ok, omunye umbuzo: ingabe ionja yakho iyajova yini for amarabiukuze ivikeleke**R:** Hands up. Yes or no?**R:** P9?**P9:** Yebo.**R:** Why?**P10:** Ukuthi ivikele amarabo ukuze engangeni kuyo**T:** So that it can protect from getting into people's skin.**R:** Ok, anybody else? Who has had their dog's vaccinated ?**R:** P1?**P1:** Yes, because my dog, he was sick and he did not play with other dogs. And I send him to SPCA**R:** Oh, so you are keeping him safe?**P1:** Yes**R:** Anybody else? Put your hands up or say yebo if you take your dog for its vaccinations.**Answer from everyone:** Yes, yebo! Yes.**R:** Ok, P5, P3, P2, P4, P7...okay, so all of you send your dogs for their vaccinations.**Question 8****R: Another question, what do you do if you dog is sick?****R:** Let's hear from P2?**P2:** Ngingafonela abakwa SPCA**T:** I will call the SPCA**R:** Ok, P1, what do you do if your dog is sick?**P1:** I will take him to SPCA.**R:** What else? Does anybody do something else if your dog is sick?**T:** wenzanjani umainja yakho igula?**Answer:** ngyanakekela.**P?:** I take care of him.**R:** You take care of him, nice.**P9:** ngiy'hambisa ku SPCA

T: I send him to SPCA

R: SPCA, ok that's good.

Question9

R: How does it make you feel if some treated your dog badly or your dog got stolen?

T: ungazizwa kanjani uma kukhona umuntu ohlukumezainja yakho noma uma ainja yakho itshontshiwe?

R: Yes, P6?

P6: I can feel bad.

R: You'll feel bad? Ok.

R: Anybody else, how do you feel if someone kicks your dog, or hurts your dog or if someone steals your dog?

P?: Ngzomfaka impama

T: I will slap him

R: Mmm I see. It makes you angry?

P?: Yes.

R: Ok, yes P1

P1; I will feel very, very painful because my dog is like my brother.

T: He says he will feel very painful because his dog is like his brother

Question 10

R: OK, next question. I want you to think carefully. Has your dog taught you something? What have you learnt from your dog?

T: yini osuyifundile kwi-Nja yakho?

R: Everybody put your hands up. I want to hear from P8 and from P7. But let's hear P1 first.

R: So, the question is what has your dog taught you or what have you learned from your dog?

P1: I learned that when he is hungry he is so slow

R: Ah! So he's teaching you when he's hungry?

R: Anybody else? What is it that you have learned from your dog? P6?

P6: ngifunde ukuthi mina uma ilambile ifuna ukungiluma

T: If he is hungry he wants to bite me.

R: Ah, good. Ok, P4?

P4: Ngifunde ukuthi milambile aying'jabuleli mengibuya eskoleni ivesane ihambe kancane.

T: I learned that when it's hungry it's not happy to see me it just goes slowly

R: Mmmmm.

R: Ok, yes, P3?

P3: May'lambile ngiy'bona ngokuthi ihambe iyothatha amathambo emzini yabantu bese izowabeka ekhaya

T: If he's hungry he just goes to collect bones from other people's houses.

R: Ah, he brings them inside?

P3: Yes.

Question 11

R: Ok, another question: what do you and your dog do together when you are not at Funda Nenja?

P?: ngidlala nayo iteni

T: udlala nayo ini?

P?: Iteni

T: Yini iteni?

P?: Ibhola

T: Oh, we play tennis with him with balls.

P3: Ngyay'bopha ngithathe ama cubes ngiwagqibe emgodini besengiyay'dedela ihambe iwabheke ize iwathole

T: I tie him around and then I hide the bones, then I let him go search for those bones.

R: (Laughs, smiles) Okay that's nice. Ok anybody else what do you do together with your dog? P4?

P4: Ngithatha umngan wami ngimbeke e geythini kube sengathi ukotele isango bese iyamjaha

T: (laughs) I take my friend and let him climb the gate, then I release my dog to run after him.

R: yes, P1, what do you do with your dog?

P1: I take a ball and throw it then I say fetch then he runs and he comes with it.

R: Mmm, that's so clever! And you, P7? What do you do with your dog?

P7: I play with him a ball

R: Nice. Yes, P3?

P3: Ngiydlalisa ngeteni ngitshele ukuthi ihambe iyojika kulona bese iyabuya.

T: I throw the ball then I tell him to fetch it and he fetches it then brings it to me.

R: Okay

Question 12

R: Okay guys, now I must ask you another question. Has your dog made a difference in your family?

T: Ingabeinja yakho iwenzile umehluko emndenini wakho?

P?: It has done a difference in my family

R: What difference?

P?: Iwenzile umehluko omkhulu ngoba ehena iyas'vikela.

T: It has made a big difference because it protects us.

R: Ah! Nice. Yes, P4?

P4: Iwenzile umehluko ngoba angazuli sengidlala nenja yami

T: Oh, it's made a difference because I don't go around visit other places I just play with my dog.

R: Ah, that's nice. So you stay at home?

P4: Yes.

R: Cool. Yes, P3 then P2.

P3: Iwenzile umehluko ngoba sasthalile ekhaya engadini sambile siseskoleni izimbuzi zidla khona manje isikhona isiyazigxosha.

T: It's made a difference because at home we used to plant veggies and the goats used to eat them but now it's just chasing them away.

R: Ah, that's good. Yes, P2?

P2: Asizangeni izinkukhu

T: There are no chickens coming inside home

R: I see. So, who else wants to tell me? P1 has your dog made a difference in your family?

P1: Yes, some of them in the family the dog did not like them

R: Ah so they are a bit scared?

P1: Yes

R: So not everyone in your family really loves the dog?

P1: Yes

R: Okay thank you.

Question 13

R: Has your dog made a difference with your friends or in making new friends?

T: Ingabeinja yakho iwenzile umehluko kubangani bakho noma ikwenze wenza abangane abasha?

R: Okay, P4?

P4: I wenzile , futhi ngibe nabangane abasha

T: It's made a difference and I now have new friends

R: Mmm, wonderful.

R: Yes, P1?

P1: He wants to bite my friends.

R: So he wants to bite your friends?

P1: Yes.

R: Ah, and is that good or bad for you?

P1: It's bad

R: It's not good. Okay thank you.

Question 14

R: Next question: have you changed since you owned a dog? Have you changed as a person since you owned your own dog?

T: Okay, omunye umubuzo. Ingabe wena usushintshile since unenja yakho?

R: Yes, P3, P2?

P3: Ay ngeke! Ishintshile impilo yam ngoba umangabe behamba abangane bami ngihamba ngyokhumula ngizidlalele nenja yami

T: It's changed my life because if my friends are gone after school I take off my clothes from school then play with my dog.

R: Ah! Nice. P2?

P2: Angsazuli manje sengidlala nenja yami

T: I don't go visit other places I just play with my dog.

R: That's good? That's safe? I see. P5, then P1, then P4.

P5: Iwenzile umehluko ngoba angsalokhu ngizula ngintanta imizi yabantu sengidlala nayo

T: I don't go to other people's places I just stay at home and play with it.

R: OK, and P1?

P1: It really changed me because I was, I did not like to sleep with someone in my bed but now I sleep with someone in my bed.

R: Oh? That's good. Who do you sleep with? Is your dog in your bed with you?

P1: No

R: Ok? So is your dog close to you?

P1: No he still sleeps outside

R: Outside. Ok, that's interesting.

R: Ok boys, we are more than half-way through. Thank you for being patient.

Question 15

R: Now I want to know, do you have responsibility for feeding, and cleaning up after your dog? Is this your decision or this is your mom telling you?

T: Okay, omunye umbuzo, ingabe unawo umsebenzi wokuthi ufunzeinja yakho uyinikeze ukudla uhambe nayo izindawo noma uyiclinele

R: Yes P4?

P4: Ngiyaqoqa, odoti labo esuke izenabo besengiyobalahla

T: I pick up the dirt that it came with at home and go throw it.

R: Ah nice. Yes P3?

P3: Mangathi utshani sebusukile lapha phansi noma idabule ingubo, indlu ngiyayidlibhiza la kade ihleli khona besengifuna utshani bangabe busikiwe besengiyabundlala khona namaphepha besengiyayakha.

T: When there is no grass I take a new grass and build it home so it can stay safely.

R: I see. You are taking care of it. Yes, P1?

P1: Sometimes my mom to clean up my dog mess and tell me to feed him

R: Ok, so you are feeding him?

P1: Yes.

R: P4?

P4: Inja yami ngithatha udoti ngiwubeke eduze kwayo maqede ngiyisondeze ime yawudla ngyatshela ukuthi ingaphinde iwudle.

T: I tell my dog to take it to the bin, I take it near the bin if it eats it I tell him to not eat it again

R: Yes, P5?.

P5: Kuyiresponsibility yami ukuthiinja yami ngiyiphakele

T: It's my responsibility that I dish up for my dog

R: Ok, so can I ask you all, are you looking after your dog with regards to feeding it?

All: Yes.

R: So you are all feeding your own dogs, that's very good.

Question 16

R: Do you see your dog as your friend? Is your dog your friend?

All: Yes.

R: Oh that's nice. Everybody sees their dog as a friend. And P1 told us he' like a brother to him.

Question 17

R: Do your friends like your dog? Do your friends who do not have a dog wish that they did have a dog?

T: Ok, ingabe abangani bakho bayayithandainja yakho noma ingabe abangane bakho abengenayp izinja bafisa ngabe banenja?

R: Ok, let's hear from P5.

P5: Bayayithandainja yami nabo bayafisa ukuthi babe nezinja

T: They like my dog and they also wish they had a dog

R: P9, yes?

L: Bayayithanda nabo bayafisa ukuba nenja

T: They like my dog and they also wish they can have a dog.

R: Ok. P3, then P4, then P1.

P3: Bayayithandainja yami futhi isencane sasiyidlalisa nabangani bami omunye owayevakashile wacela ukuth ngimtshengise lapho engayithenga khona wahamba eseyithengile.

T: They like my dog and we use to play with my dog when it was young with my friends, and they wanted me to show them where I bought my dog and I showed them and they also bought their dogs.

R: Nice, thank you. Yes, P4?

P4: Bayithanda injayami ngoba sonke sinazo izinja sidlala sonke sizifundisa sonke izinja zethu

T: They like my dog because we all have dogs. We play with our dogs, we all teach our dogs.

R: Yes, P1?

P1: Sometimes they like my dog and sometimes they did not like my dog because he bites them.

R: Ok, thank you.

Question 18

R: Does your family likes your dog? We can start with P1?

P1: Yes, they love my dog and when I am in school and I come back from school they give him food and he eats it.

R: So they are looking after him also?

P1: Yes.

R: Yes P5? Does your family like your dog?

P5: Yes

R: Okay, thank you.

Question 19

R: How long have you been at Funda Nenja?

P5: 1 year

P?: 2 years

P?: 6 months

P?: 2 years

P1: 5 years

R: But Funda Njenja has only been going for 4 years? So you've been going there for a long time there?

P1: Yes

R: How old are you?

P1: 13

R: So you were going since you were nine?

P1: Yes

R: Ok how long have you been at Funda Njenja

P?: 2 years

P?: 6 years

R: 6 years?

R: But Funda has been going for 4 years, how can you been there for 6 years?

P?: I don't remember

R: So do you mean you have been at Fubda Njenja since it started in 2009?

P?: Yes.

R: Ok, thank you.

Question 20

R: Now I want to know, how do you feel when you go to Funda Njenja on Friday's?

T: okay uzizwa kanjani uma uya kwaFunda Njenja on Fridays?

R: P2?

P2: Nhizizwa ngijabulile ngobainja yami isuke ising donsa ijahe siyekhona

T: I feel happy because even my dog is pulling me wanting us to go there.

P3: ngizizwa ngijabulile mesengifika khona ihamba ingigxumela ingikotela

T: I feel happy because when we go there it's jumping up and down even above me.

R: Oh nice! P4?

P4: Ngizizwa ngijabulile ngobainja yami mesesengifika iyangikhonkotha

T: I feel happy because even my dog barks at me.

T: Iyakukhonkotha?

T: It barks at you?

P4: Yes

R: Ah, that's nice, that's how your dog feels. How do you feel when you go at Funda Nenja on Friday?

P4: Ngoba mengiyezamthuli iyangikotela ingikhothe ebsweni

T: It jumps up and down and barks at me, and sometime licks me.

R: How do you feel, you yourself?

T: Uzizwa kanjani wena, good or bad?

P4: I feel good

R: Ok, so who else can tell me, how do you feel when you go to Funda Nenja? What is it like for you?

P?: Ngizizwa ngihappy ngobainja yami ihlakaniphile futhe ngelinye ilanga siyezamthuli yangigqashula ngayifika khona

T: I feel happy because even my dog is happy.

R: P1?

P1: I feel happy because Funda Nenja tells me more things about my dog. They tell me to tell him to sit, dance and roll over.

R: That's nice. Can you say that again, I want to make sure I heard you properly?

P1: I like to go to Funda Nenja because if I go there they tell me many things about my dog. They tell me how to tell him to sit, roll over and dance.

R: Awesome. P5, how do you feel when you go to Funda Nenja on Friday?

P5: I feel so happy.

R: Nice. P7?

P7: I feel good because my dog is clever.

R: Yes. And P8?

P8: I feel happy because my dog listens me.

R: Ok, he listens to you.

P8: Yes

Question 21

R: Ok thanks guys for your answers, I'm so happy. Now we've got few more questions. We are nearly finished.

I want to know, why do you keep going back to Funda Nenja every Friday? What is making you go back?

T: Yini ekwanza ulokhu ubuyela kwaFunda Nenja njalo ngolwesihlanu?

R: Okay P1, then P4, then P6.

P1: Because my dog learns many things

R: Ok so he learns new things. Yes, P4?

P4: Ngoba sifunda izinto esingazazi.

T: Because we learn things we don't know.

R: Oh nice. Yes P6?

P6: Ngobainja yami bayayifundisa futhi ihlakaniphile

T: It's because they teach my dog and it's clever.

R: Wonderful. Yes P3?

P3: yingobainja yami yayingakwazi ukushaya useat ngayezamthuli ngathi ngelinye ilanga sengizoyiphalkela yavesane yashaya useat yangibuka emehlweni

T: It's because I didn't know how to tell my dog to sit down, then when I went to Funda Nenja and they taught him how to sit down. And the other day I was dishing for me and he just sat down and looked me in the face.

R: Ah, he's too clever. Okay who was next? P2? Why do you go to Funda Nenja every Friday?

P2: Ngibuyela ngoba ngifuna ukwazi more ngenja yami

T: Because I want to know more about my dog

R: That's wonderful. Anybody else? Yes, P5?

P5: Ngibuyela hona ngoba bayangifundisa ukuthi ngiphathe kanjani injayami

T: I go back because they teach me how to treat my dog

R: Wonderful.

Question 22

R: Next question, what have you learned at Funda Nenja?

T: ufunde ini kwaFunda Nenja?

P?: Ngifunde ukuthiinja kumelwe ungayishayi kumelwe uyifundise ize ikwazi

T: I learned that you shouldn't hit a dog but you should teach him/her until he knows that thing.

R: Ok. Yes, P6?

P6: Inja yami mayigula ngiyisa kwaFunda Nenja.

T: If my dog is sick I send him to Funda Nenja

R: Nice. P1?

P1: I learnt to not feed my dog before I go to Funda Nenja, because he will listen to me because he will be hungry and eats all the food.

R: Nice. Yes P7?

P7: I learnt... ngifunde ukuthi kwaFunda Nenjainja iyancengwa ayi ukuthi uyidonse mase uyayishaya. Uyayincenga

T:I learnt in Funda Nenja you become patient with the dog, not to force him, or heat/hit him up.

R: That's so nice. Yes, P3?

P3: Ngifunde ukuthiinja mangabe ingakwazi ukushaya usithi akufukanali uyikhahlele kufanele uyincenge ize ikwazi.

T: I learnt that if the dog doesn't want to sit down you don't have to kick him but you have to be patient with him until he knows how to sit down.

Question 23

R: Okay wonderful! So what skills have you learnt to teach you dog. What can your dog do now?

T: Yini oyifundiseinja yakho, yiniinja yakho ekwazi ukuyenza?

P?: Sit down and stay.

R: Ok. Anything else?

P1: I teach my dog to roll over, to sit and crawl.

R: That's so clever, to roll over! P4?

P4: I teach my dog to stay and xhawula.

T: I teach my dog to stay and shake my hand.

R:P2?

P2: Ngifunde ngiyitshela ukuthi ayingilinde , ngyabuya, ngihambe ngiyendleni besengiyabuya ngiyayixhawula besesiyahamba.

T: I learnt to tell my dog to wait for me, I'm coming just now, then I shake him by hands then we go.

R: Let's hear P7, your hand was up? No, ok. P1

P1: I teach my dog that I do not give him a treat if he did not do anything.

R: So you give him a reward when he is listening to you?

P1: Ya.

R: Yes, P3?

P2: Okunye engay'fundisa kona ukuthi umuntu methinta ucingo imlume.

T: Another thing I taught, him if someone is touching the fence he should bite him.

R: Ah, good.

Question 24

R: Ok, another question: Are there any changes in your life since you have started Funda Nenja?

T: lukhona ushintso empilweni yakho , since uqale kwaFunda Nenja?

R: P1?

P1: Yes, there is a change because I now love my dog with all of my heart.

R: P5?

P5: Yes. There is a change.

R: Can you tell us what change?

P5: Because my dog protects me

R: P4? Are you going to tell us your answer?

P4: There is a change because my dog loves me.

R: P2? Is there a change in your life since you started Funda Nenja?

P2: Yes, injala yami ibingalaleli manje isiyalalela

T: My dog was not listening but now it listens to me.

R: That's great. So anybody else? Is there a change in your life since you started Funda Nenja?

P8: Yes because my Dog is clever now.

Question 25

R: Have you made any new friends at FundaNenja?

T: Usunabo abangani abasha kwaFunda Nenja

R: Yes, P5?

P5: Yes

R: How many?

P5: Three.

(Go around the circle and each participant answers the question)

P?: Six

P?: Two

P?: Two

P?: Two

P?: 10

P?: 4

P?: 1

P?: 1

Question 26:

R: Has Funda Nenja helped you and how?

T: ingabe u Funda Nenja ukusizile futhi kanjani?

R: P1?

P1: Yes, it helped me to give food to my dog

R: P7?

P7: Yes, ngobainja yami yayingakwazi ukushaya u seat manje isiyakwazi

T: Dog couldn't sit but now it can sit.

R: Nice. And P5?

P5: Ingfundisile ukuthiinja yami ngiy nakekele

T: It taught me to take care of my dog

P2: Ingfundisile ngibainja yami uma iserank ngiyayitshela ukuthi ayihambe iye endlini bese iyahamba

T: Funda Nenja helped me because if my Dog is at the rank I can be able to tell him to go and it goes.

R: Anybody else, has Funda Nenja helped you?

R: P4?

P4: Ungsizile ngobainja yam ayisabacoshi odoti

T: Yes it helped me because my dog does not pick up dirtsin the dust bin.

Question 27

R: Great, and our last question: has Funda Nenja helped your dog and how?

T: Umbuzo wokugcina, ingabe UFunda Nenja uyisizileinja yakho futhi kanjani?

R: Yebo, P1?

P1: Yes, Funda Nenja helped my dog because my dog didn't know how to sit and dance.

R: And how does that make you feel?

P1: I feel much better because my dog is clever now.

R: That's wonderful. Yes, P6

P6: Ingsizile ngobainja yami isihlakaniphile manje.

T: it has helped me because my dog now is clever.

R: And how does that make you feel?

T: Kuzenza uzizwe kanjan lokho

P6: Ngizizwa kahle

T: I feel good

R: Is there an isiZulu word for proud?

T: Ngiyaziqhenya

R: Is there anybody that feels this fits with them?

T: Ingabe uyazizwa engathi uyaziqhenya ngaloknow

All: Yes.

R: Ok, P3?

P3: Ngizizwa ngihappy ngobainja yami kuthiwa inja yami ayaziye kwaFunda Nenja ngabe izinarabi ngabe iziyagula futhi ngabe angizange ngazi ukuba ayilitholanga ithuba lokuya kwa SPCA

T: I feel happy because if my dog didn't go to Funda Nenja it wouldn't have gone to SPCA and it would have got rabies.

R: Mmm, great. P4?

P4: Ngizizwa ngijabulile ngobainja yami ngabe isingenwe amarabi yafa.

R: I understand, yes I understand that. I am happy because now he will not get rabies?

R: P1, u wanted to say something?

P1: No.

R: No. Okay abafana, ngiyabonga kakhulu for your time and for your answers.

T: Ok, siyabonga kakhulu ngesikhathi senu, izimpendulo ezinhle.