

**THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TENANTS LIVING IN A SOCIAL
HOUSING INITIATIVE IN PORT ELIZABETH**

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**THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TENANTS LIVING IN A SOCIAL
HOUSING INITIATIVE IN PORT ELIZABETH**

By

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DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

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DATE: 28 January 2020

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ABSTRACT

Social housing aims to redress the housing crisis that South Africa is currently facing given the backlog that was left in the provision of free basic housing. Research conducted on the low to the middle-income group from which South African social housing tenants originate, suggests that this income bracket experiences social, physical and mental health challenges. They are three times more likely to suffer from depression than their counterparts in developed countries. Little to no literature has been published focusing on tenants who represent low to middle-income groups living in social housing in South Africa. Furthermore, the researcher did not come across literature highlighting the perceptions and experiences of tenants, who represent these low to middle-income groups, and who live in social housing in South Africa. In the context of South African social housing, there is a gap in the literature about the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative.

Guided by the Social Constructionism and Sense of Community theoretical frameworks, the goal of this qualitative research study was to gain a better understanding about the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative in South Africa. An exploratory and descriptive research design was employed, focusing on the tenants of one social housing initiative. A non-probability purposive sampling procedure was followed. Convenience sampling was applied and followed up by volunteer sampling techniques. The sample size consisted of 9 social housing tenants. Individual, semi-structured interviews were conducted by an independent interviewer and used to collect data and analyse themes. Trustworthiness and ethical considerations were adhered to on all levels. This research contributes to a greater understanding of the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative. The study revealed that most tenants experienced an increased sense of safety in the social housing initiative as compared to the surrounding community. The study further revealed that lower-income tenants have concerns about the long-term affordability of rentals in social housing. Among others, the study recommends that social workers advocate

for inclusive social and economic policies to promote greater inclusion of vulnerable groups from low-income backgrounds.

Keywords

Experience, low to medium-income households, perception, social housing initiative, tenants

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1. Introduction and Background

In South Africa, affordable rental or social housing was designed so that upper low-income markets could access economic and social opportunities in cities (Scholtz, 2014: 1). Since independence in 1994, provision of housing has been problematic in South Africa due to the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality fostered during the Apartheid period. Social housing is different to Free Basic Housing (FBH), previously known as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aimed at providing fully subsidised houses to low-income households for ownership (Del Monte and Van der Mey, 2013: 4). Social housing is also different to the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programmes (FLISP) which offers partial financial assistance to lower-middle-income households who can obtain a home loan from a bank to buy a house (Del Monte and Van der Mey, 2013:10).

Government rental, affordable rental or social housing affords underprivileged South Africans who do not qualify for FBH or FLISP, the opportunity to rent high-quality apartments in prime urbanised areas. The housing option is implemented according to the Social Housing Act No. 16 of 2008 whereby a formal partnership is established between the National Department of Human Settlements (represented by the Social Housing Regulation Authority, the SHRA), the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Human Settlements, the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality and accredited Social Housing Institutions (SHIs) such as Imizi Housing Utility Non-Profit Company (NPC) (Lloyd, 2018: 1). In Port Elizabeth, for instance, the process may be implemented in the following manner: Representing the SHI, the Chief Executive Officer of a housing utility such as Imizi Housing Utility would work with a development partner, in this case, the Home Market NPC, and identify parcels of land within a designated restructuring zone for the development of social housing projects (Lloyd, 2018).

Over three million public housing (FBH) units have been delivered in South Africa since 1994 (Robbins, 2017). Nevertheless, the housing crisis remains critical. A General Household Survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (2002-2014) and Census (1996-2011) reveals that 13.5% of households live in informal dwellings. Sipungu and Nleya (2016: 3) emphasise that South Africa has a shortage of rental accommodation that caters for the needs of low to middle-income earners. As a result, these income groups are compelled to live with family or in backyard shacks, informal settlements or in the inner city where they resort to squatting (occupying an abandoned or unoccupied area of land or a building) to be able to access their places of work and opportunities, such as schooling for their children. In contrast, social housing is strategically positioned in more suburban areas with access to major transport routes and amenities, which caters for the needs of employed families.

Social housing aims to redress the housing crisis that South Africa faces because of the backlog left by FBH. According to the Fuller Centre Housing Report on Housing Delivery (2014: 3), the National Housing Department estimated that in 1997, the number of South African families without adequate housing stood at 2.2 million. This number increased by 204, 000 annually due to population growth and rapid informal urbanisation. Social housing aims to include those South Africans who do not qualify for a home loan from a financial institution, but who earn enough to pay for rental accommodation.

Little is known about how tenants in social housing experience their living environment. In October 2017, Power (2018) researched the experiences of 54 tenants in a social housing project in the United Kingdom. The researcher found that the participants liked being social housing tenants and that they valued their landlord as well as their local community. Additionally, Gibson (2015) acknowledges the positive experience of a female social housing tenant in the UK. These research studies were based on experiences of social housing communities in the Northern hemisphere. Adding to the body of knowledge about social housing in South Africa, Malinga (2019) and Stofile (2019) researched the phenomenon of Gender-Based Violence and Gender Security at three social housing institutions in the country on

behalf of the National Association of Social Housing Organisations (NASHO). The research focused on female tenants' experiences in South Africa. It is, therefore, of interest to determine how social housing tenants in South Africa perceive and experience living in a social housing setting.

Abraham Maslow theorised that human beings are motivated by physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness or love needs, esteem needs and a need for self-actualisation (Aanstoos, 2013). Physiological needs refer to the most basic of needs, namely the need for food, water, shelter, air and warmth. In this context, shelter denotes housing which provides security and shelter from the weather and climate (Chavarria, Ticzon, Balmaceda and Cruz, 2014: 6). Housing is not a mere roof over a person's head, but also provides a sense of belonging and security. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25 further states that,

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

The need for housing in Europe, America and South Africa were amplified after the First World War (1914 – 1918) when building costs escalated, and building supplies were limited (Davies, 2016). In the United Kingdom, the first effort to provide social housing was in 1890, which led to the Homes fit for Heroes Act in 1919 (Davies, 2016). The model of social housing was similar across Northern and Eastern Europe because there was a heavy emphasis on state-supported housing construction (Scanlon, Arrigoitia and Whitehead, 2015: 2). Social housing in Europe, therefore, emanated from a general need among the employed in the 1800s and evolving to a more focused need for housing for soldiers returning from the First World War. In contrast, the United States Housing Act came into being in 1937 and aimed to reduce the extreme shortage of decent housing for low-income families (Pappas, 2013).

The implementation of social housing schemes falls short in Africa. In the Africa Report, Agyeman-Togobo, Ampofo and Norbrook (2013) attribute the housing shortage to African leaders disregarding the needs of the poor. On the other hand, Odia (2012) commends South Africa's social housing policy because it is responsive to local housing demand, supports the economic development of low-income communities and operates within the Public Finance Management Act of 1999. The authors describe how rural migrants looking for jobs and urban dwellers starting families, are drawn to booming African cities and towns. Due to the influx of people, there is an upsurge of informal settlements next to highways, under bridges and in marketplaces. Countries such as Ethiopia, Angola and Cameroon have social housing programmes in place, but these are out of reach for most of the population due to affordability (Agyeman-Togobo, Ampofo and Norbrook, 2013). The Moroccan government, supported by a Moroccan construction group, seems to have the most active social housing policy because of state and private funding. Furthermore, the same report highlights that Ghana's government also struggles to keep up with its population growth; hence housing remains a high priority for the country (Agyeman-Togobo Ampofo and Norbrook, 2013).

The report further explores the various investments made into housing across the continent. For instance, the African Development Bank has seen the value in investing in low-cost housing in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia (Agyeman-Togobo Ampofo and Norbrook, 2013). Additional investments were made by a UK based development-finance institution who invested 20 million dollars for social housing in 2012 in Eastern and Southern Africa. The investment was made to create 7, 500 homes and 20, 000 jobs. Biehler, Choplin and Morelle (2015:1-6) discuss the concept of social housing in three cities in Africa, namely, Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, Yaoundé in Cameroon, and Nouakchott in Mauritania. The authors' conclude that social housing in Sub-Saharan Africa addresses the relatively affluent population while remaining out of reach for poorer households. Unlike Europe and the United Kingdom whose tenants' challenges seem to have evolved from a basic need for housing, Africa still seems to be struggling to get the basic model for social housing right.

In South Africa, colonial restrictions were implemented against Asians and Africans in the 1800s and continued until 1948 when they became an Apartheid law (Boddy-Evans, 2019). During Apartheid, Africans were restricted to townships and were not allowed to enter the city unless they had the necessary legal documentation. In the early 1930s during the Great Depression, South Africa experienced the worst drought, which forced nearly 1 million people, including Africans from rural areas, to move to the city. Due to segregation that was based on race, squatter camps were formed—primarily inhabited by Blacks. They could not live in ‘White’ areas, and as a result of Apartheid, housing for Blacks was not a priority for the government. Even though social housing in South Africa was developed in the early 1920s to address poverty after the First World War (The Development of Social Housing in South Africa, n.d), we can presume that it was accessible to Whites only due to the aforementioned legal restrictions against Blacks, Coloureds, Indians and Asians.

Additionally, non-Whites were placed at an economic disadvantage, with townships recording some of the highest unemployment rates (Knight, 2001). This meant that social housing remained unaffordable, rendering the most necessities inaccessible for millions of people. In 1994, there was only one formal brick house for every 43 non-White citizens compared to one for every 3.5 White citizen, with the urban backlog alone estimated at 1.3 million units. It was during the same year that South Africa had its first democratic elections. Non-whites were eligible for Free Basic Housing (known then as RDP), and over 1.1 million government-subsidised houses were built between 1994 and 2001. The delivery of these free houses was slow which meant that the housing backlog was not adequately addressed and that the disadvantaged still did not have access to the proper services and infrastructure predominantly found in urban cities (Huchzermeyer and Karam in Kepe, Levin and Von Lieres, 2016: 90). The poor therefore remained segregated from the cities from which they were excluded during the Apartheid era.

Communicare is situated in Cape Town and is the oldest SHI in the country. It was formed in 1929 and was initially named The Citizen’s Housing League Utility Company (Cape Business News, 2018). The Company was renamed Communicare in 1990 and managed 49 projects with 3, 400 units. Between 1929 and 1990, this

type of social housing excluded non-Whites. It was during this period that non-Whites resorted to living in rural areas, informal settlements and squatter camps. Other examples of older SHIs include Madulamoho Housing Association (in Johannesburg and operating since the 1990s) and the Social Housing Company (SOHCO) that initiated the construction of its projects in the Eastern Cape in 1999 to address the shortage of social housing stock. Post-1994, the Social Housing Policy was approved in June 2005 and implemented within the framework of the Social Housing Act of 2008. This Act defines social housing as,

A rental or co-operative housing option for low to medium-income households at a level of scale and built form which requires institutionalised management and which is provided by social housing institutions or other delivery agents in approved projects in designated restructuring zones with the benefit of public funding as contemplated in this Act (South African Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008).

Social housing became more attractive to previously disadvantaged South Africans, and as the economic playing field began to even out, rentals, therefore, became more affordable. Because social housing aims to integrate indigent South Africans, it is located in urban areas that are near major transport routes and access to resources, unlike FBH, which is far from necessary facilities.

There is, however, an ongoing debate within South African literature around whether it is the responsibility of the government or private sector to deliver affordable rental housing to the 'missing middle'. In the context of social housing, the 'missing middle' refers to individuals who neither qualify for a housing loan from a financial institution nor qualify for free basic housing. In the private sector, this 'missing middle' has struggled to access the formal rental market because it is limited and unaffordable (Bertoldi and Reid, 2010: 4).

In January 2019, there were 12 fully accredited SHIs in South Africa (www.shra.org.za). Three of these SHIs are found in the Eastern Cape. According to the SHRA's Social Housing Institutional Investment Plan 2018/2019, these three SHIs have a combined total of 2, 389 units. Imizi Housing is located in Port Elizabeth and has a total of 1, 259 units. The rest of the fully accredited SHIs are found in

Gauteng (four), Kwa-Zulu Natal (one), Mpumalanga (one) and the Western Cape (two).

Social housing in South Africa brings together people from diverse backgrounds, demographics and cultures. Anecdotal evidence from the researcher's experience has shown that tenants in South Africa view social housing differently. The younger tenants see it as a stepping stone to independence and as a step closer to owning their own home. The older generation finds it a suitable retirement option often after scaling down or at times after losing their life savings. The social initiative under study constitutes 71% Black, 15% Coloured, 14% White and 1% Indian tenants. The diversity, perceptions and experiences represented in this social housing initiative are worth exploring because diverse cultures are brought together and are expected to live harmoniously in a country that experienced racial segregation for many years, only becoming a democratic country as recently as 1994.

Lund, De Silva, Plagerson, Cooper, Chisholm, Das, Knapp and Patel (2011) found that there is a link between mental ill-health and poverty in low income and middle-income countries. The researchers conclude that mental health interventions were associated with improved economic outcomes and improvements in clinical symptoms. The link between mental health and low to middle-income earners living in social housing in South Africa is not known. Therefore, by researching low to middle-income groups that are living in social housing in South Africa, it is possible to deduce and explore a plausible link between the living conditions, perceptions and experiences of these groups and mental health challenges that are common among them. Outcomes of this research can assist social workers at, for instance, Imizi Housing so that they can intervene more effectively in cases where such challenges are experienced, thus improving the quality of life of tenants in social housing. Imizi is one of the few SHIs in South Africa that employ social workers to attend to social challenges experienced by tenants.

Social work has an important role in the social and economic development of populations and increasingly in the housing sector, according to Hohmann (2013) in Sobantu (2020: 63). In his research on women living in social housing in Gauteng,

Sobantu (2020: 72) concludes that challenges around gender and lack of housing, particularly for women, are social work concerns. There is a positive relationship between these aspects and family wellbeing. Women are a vulnerable population and experience poverty, patriarchy and discrimination when they access housing. Therefore, their exclusion becomes a social work issue (Sobantu, 2020: 72). The social work profession has a fundamental role in creating policies towards gender-aware housing delivery as well as influencing social and economic policies (Director & Clark, 2011 in Sobantu, 2020: 72). The Social Work Policy Institute (2006) as mentioned by Manomano and Tanga (2018: 19), highlights that social work is instrumental in providing and creating access to housing for the homeless, refugees and clients in foster care and treatment centres. The provision of social work services assist people to meet their housing needs on a micro and macro level (Manomano and Tanga, 2018).

The provision of social housing responds to man's basic need for shelter, which is linked to a need for belonging, esteem and self-actualisation (Chavarria et al., 2014: 3). The need for belonging is closely associated to a sense of community which Sanborne (2002: n) defines as "a powerful and emotional force that increases [the] quality of life; [...] critical to both our individual and collective well-being." Although community development involving tenants is a significant focus area in social housing, the researcher could not find literature on the perceptions and experiences of tenants in a South African social housing initiative.

A community development framework was developed by NASHO and the Housing Development Agency (HDA) in April 2012. The framework gives direction in terms of focus areas for tenant involvement. However, before intervening with tenants on a macro level, it is logical to establish how tenants perceive and experience their living environment or in this case, their social housing setting in South Africa. This research can contribute to such an understanding. NASHO also developed a Gender-Based Violence Policy for social housing in South Africa. It is possible that the findings of this research study could, therefore, also benefit and contribute towards gender security.

Researching the experiences and perceptions of tenants from different cultures and various age groups, but with similar socioeconomic statuses will contribute towards the body of knowledge in the South African context of social housing and policy development. Furthermore, if the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing are known, social workers will be able to conduct interventions that address the challenges of these tenants. If these challenges are addressed, it could lead to more sustainable rentals which could then enhance tenants' sense of community.

1.2. Review of existing literature

Davies (2016), Martens (2016) and The Canadian Mortgage Company in an article in the Canadian Housing Observer (2011), illustrate a fair amount of literature about the evolution of social housing internationally. From meeting the basic housing needs of families to meeting the needs of those returning from the First World War in the 1900s because their homes were destroyed—social housing presently provides shelter to those who are most in need. These groups include the vulnerable and low-income earners in society (Scanlon, Arrigoitia and Whitehead, 2015: 5). The researchers further assert the ongoing significance of social housing in Europe as it meets the changing community and demographic needs (Scanlon, Arrigoitia and Whitehead, 2015: 11). Initially, social housing was established to address the shortage of houses after the war. Currently, more than three million social homes are needed in England as existing structures are either dangerous, overcrowded or unsuitable for dwelling (Booth, 2019). Although various authors explore the various aspects of social housing in the United Kingdom (Doney, Mc Guirk and Mee, 2013; Forrest, 2014; Martens, 2016; Parsell, Petersen and Culhane, 2017), most recently, Booth (2019) focuses on the current crisis of social housing shortages. In addition to the international evolution of social housing, authors have also explored its history and future, challenges, cost offsets as well as global perceptions about the system.

Several authors have reported the social problems faced by tenants more specifically in social housing in developed countries. Cheshire and Buglar (2016: 729) focus on troublesome tenants in Australia while Martens, Chateau, Burland,

Finlayson, Smith, Taylor, Brownell, Nickel, Katz, and Bolton (2014) write about the poor health of Canadian children in social housing. Flouri, Midouhas and Tzatzaki (2014: 203) report that children in England are vulnerable to emotional problems when they live in social housing. Power (2018), on the other hand, indicates that social housing tenants in England value affordable rent, neighbours helping each other and their experience of a sense of belonging. First World countries are faced with challenges unique to their economies, histories and political landscapes and cannot be compared to those experienced by African countries.

In 1994, 16 million Black South Africans could vote for the first time in the country's history. Following this, most South Africans could decide, without any restriction, where they wanted to live. Before the restrictions were removed, non-Whites lived primarily in squatter camps and informal settlements far from urban areas. This was because the government did not see the provision of houses to Black people as a priority. After 1994, non-Whites could live in urban areas. Social housing, therefore, gained prominence as the urban housing backlog escalated to almost three million with an additional 200, 000 new households each year (Mbembe and Hart, 2016: 87). During the past 25 years, South African researchers have, like their international counterparts focused on the relevance of social housing (Ogunsanya, 2009), policies and Acts (Bertoldi and Reid, 2015) as well as its history (The Fuller Center for Housing, 2014). Samuel Odia, Chief Executive Officer of the Millard Fuller Foundation, has emerged as a prominent researcher on social housing in South Africa and Nigeria. He has commended South Africa's social housing efforts and critiqued Nigeria on their slow progress on social housing deliverance (2016).

The South African Constitution is clear in Section 26 that "(1) Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing." Acts that are relevant to social housing in South Africa, according to the Fuller Center for Housing (2014) are:

- Act 108 of 1996 (Section 26);
- The Housing Act 107 of 1997;
- The Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (PIE) 19 of 1998;
- The Housing Consumers Protection Measures Act 95 of 1998;

- The Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999;
- The Housing Development Agency Act 23 of 2008; and
- The Social Housing Act 16 of 2008.

Those qualifying for social housing come from the upper end of the low-income market as well as the middle-income market. According to research, this income group often experience mental health challenges. The South African College of Applied Psychology (SACAP) quotes a study conducted by the University of Cape Town's Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, which found that one in three women that come from low-income and informal settlements suffer from postnatal depression (Honikman, 2014: 4). The research concludes that poverty is associated with exclusion, isolation, feelings of disempowerment, helplessness and hopelessness, which can lead to chronic insecurity and social mistrust.

Honikman, Field, Meintjies, Kafaar, Evans and Lund are researchers at the University of Cape Town and report in 2010 in The Mental Health and Poverty Project (HD6), that there is a high prevalence of maternal mental health problems in developing countries. The researchers estimate that the prevalence of postnatal depression in Khayalitsha township, Cape Town, is as high as 35%. Seekoe (2007: 163-165) state that a low income is linked to greater exposure to risky sexual experiences and increased occurrences of sexually transmitted infections. By researching on low to middle-income social housing tenants in South Africa, this research study might highlight the probability of the challenges as mentioned above in such a setting. As a result, interventions and services can be more effectively geared towards enhancing the quality of life of tenants in social housing.

Substantial literature exists on social housing in South Africa. Similarly, but not in the context of social housing, a substantial amount of literature exists on the challenges experienced by low to middle-income earners. The researcher, however, did not come across literature that encompasses both the perceptions and experiences of tenants, who specifically live in social housing in South Africa; and who represent these low to middle-income groups.

1.3. Problem formulation and motivation for the study

Social housing is a relatively new concept in the South African context. There is no literature on the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing initiatives in South Africa. International literature suggests that tenants in social housing are exposed to positive living experiences as well as common challenges. Research conducted on South Africans in low to middle-income groups—from which social housing tenants originate—found these groups are more prone to stigma and risky sexual experiences. They are also three times more likely to suffer from depression as compared to their counterparts in developed countries. Therefore, exploring the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing initiatives would assist with planning purposeful social work interventions, programmes and services that are geared towards enhancing tenants' social and living conditions as well as empowering and meeting the needs of these tenants.

1.4. Significance of the study

This body of research will “promote the creation of quality living environments for low-income residents” as outlined in the Social Housing Act 16 of 2008. This research will further “contribute towards providing a sense of belonging and security among residents (and) stabilise the household members” as described in the Department of Human Settlement's Social Housing Policy (2009). Stable households could result in longer rentals which lead to more meaningful and sustainable programmes, interventions and tenant communities. If it is known how tenants perceive and experience social housing, programmes can be more effectively geared towards Gender Security and the prevention of Gender-Based Violence, thus adding to existing research conducted by NASHO. The research can contribute towards the creation of safe spaces in social housing, give insight into the establishment of a sense of community amongst people from diverse backgrounds and increase the quality of life of the low to middle-income groups who would not typically qualify for costly rentals in the inner city. This research will, therefore, add to the body of knowledge of government policies and institutions such as the SHRA as well as guide social work interventions.

1.5. Research question

What are the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative?

1.6. Research goal

The goal of this research study is to gain an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative.

1.7. Research objectives:

- To explore and describe social housing tenants' general perceptions about living in a social housing initiative.
- To explore and describe the benefits and challenges of living in a social housing initiative.
- To explore and describe the perceptions of tenants on how their living experience at a social housing initiative can be enhanced.

1.8. Theoretical framework

1.8.1. The social constructionism theory

Dickerson and Zimmerman (1996) in Galbin (2014: 85) assert that a social constructionist perspective "locates meaning in an understanding of how ideas and attitudes are developed over time within a social, community context." The theory views society as a subjective as well as an objective reality, defined by individuals or groups of individuals (Andrews, 2012). The perspective states that we do not know what is universally true or false and that individuals construct their realities or maps for the same territory. We all have different maps for the same world (Galbin, 2014: 82). In as much as the theory takes different views of reality into account, its critics

claim that it is overly concerned with descriptions rather than the entities that are described (Stam, 2001: 293).

The theory of social constructionism assumes that “taken-for-granted” knowledge is a myth, social constructions are located in historical and cultural descriptions, knowledge is created and perpetuated by social processes and knowledge and social action are closely associated (Goliath, 2014: 15-16).

The demographics of social housing tenants are diverse, and they hail from different social, cultural and educational backgrounds. Some tenants have been exposed to an era where Apartheid (and segregated living) still existed while others were born after 1994 when all South Africans had equal access to resources, services and living areas. These are all likely contributing factors to tenants’ constructions of their reality. With this framework, the researcher aims to develop a better understanding of the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a South African social housing initiative. The Social Constructionism Theory is thus most appropriate for this research study and will, therefore, be applied in conjunction with the Sense of Community Theoretical Framework.

1.8.2. Sense of community theoretical framework

The concept of “A psychological sense of community” was first introduced in 1974 by psychologist Samuel Sarason (Wright, 2004:10). Sarason describes a Psychological Sense of Community (PSOC) as the perception that an individual is similar to others and relies on others in a mutually beneficial relationship while experiencing the feeling of being part of a broader sustainable structure (Wright, 2004: 3). The psychologist laid the foundation for the theoretical framework of a sense of community.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) influenced and contributed extensively to subsequent theories of Psychological Sense of Community (Wright, 2004: 12). They propose a theoretical definition of SOC that consists of concepts such as:

- Membership;
- Shared emotional connection;
- Integration and fulfilment of needs (Reinforcement); and
- Influence (DeVincenzo and Scammon, 2015: 145).

When a sense of community is applied to housing, the housing system becomes more productive and improves because members combine and contribute their skills, physical capital and technological knowledge which could lead to a higher standard of living (Miller, 2015). Through housing, community members can create a home and build links with other members as well as their greater community (Xue, 2013: 5). In social housing, members from various backgrounds and different skills sets, live together in close proximity which could affect their sense of community. A Sense of Community framework is concerned with experiences and therefore seems apt to apply to the experiences of tenants in a social housing setting.

1.9. Definition of key terms

- **Experience:** (the process of getting) knowledge or skill from doing, seeing, or feeling things. In the context of this research, the experience concerning living as a tenant in a social housing initiative (Cambridge Dictionary Online).
- **Low to medium-income households:** Those households falling within the income categories as determined by the Minister (South African Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008).
- **Perception:** An idea, a belief or an image you have as a result of how you see or understand something. In the context of this research study, the perception concerning social housing (Oxford Collocations Dictionary Online).
- **Social housing initiative or institution:** An institution accredited or provisionally accredited under this Act which carries or intends to carry on the business of providing rental or co-operative housing options for low to medium-income households (excluding immediate individual ownership and a contract as defined under the Alienation of Land Act, 1981 (Act No. 68 of 1981), on an affordable basis, ensuring quality and maximum benefits for

residents, and managing its housing stock over the long term (South African Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008).

- **Tenant:** The lessee of a dwelling which is leased by a landlord (Rental Housing Act Number 50 of 1999).

1.10. Research approach, design, and methodology

What people believe in, their experiences and their “meaning systems” are of interest in qualitative research (Mohajan, 2018: 24). According to Cassim (2017: 27), people’s perceptions or observations are valuable in this approach. Fouché and Delport (2011: 65) claim that the qualitative research approach describes or explores a situation, phenomenon, problem or event. A qualitative research approach was applied as the study aimed to describe and explore social housing tenants’ perceptions and experiences of living at an Imizi social housing initiative. This research approach is concerned with people’s beliefs and thoughts about a situation or problem. During this research study, participants’ thoughts, perceptions and experiences about social housing, before moving to the social housing initiative were explored. The study also focused on participants’ thoughts and experiences having lived at the social housing initiative for one year or more.

The research study employed an exploratory and descriptive research design. An exploratory study aims to gain a better understanding of a situation, occurrence, community or person (Fouché and De Vos, 2011: 95). A descriptive study “begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately” (Fouché and De Vos, 2011: 96). Social housing has been researched extensively; however, research about the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a South African social housing setting, is limited. This study explored the perceptions and experiences that tenants have about living in a social housing initiative in Port Elizabeth. No previous research explored how this particular tenant community in Port Elizabeth perceived or experienced their social housing setting. The objectives of this study aimed to explore and describe the initial perceptions tenants had of living in social housing, their current experiences of living in social housing and their perceptions of how their living experience can be enhanced. These objectives were

then broken down into semi-structured interview questions which allowed the researcher to explore the community's perceptions and experiences.

1.10.1. Research methodology

This section outlines the process of selecting the research population, sampling procedure, preparing participants for data collection and the methods employed, verification processes as well as ethical concerns.

1.10.2. Researcher bias

To eliminate researcher bias, the interviews were carried out by an independent field worker on a Saturday and Sunday. The fieldworker has no affiliation with Imizi Housing and is an experienced, mature social worker who has interviewed children and adults during various interventions. Before the study commenced, the researcher briefed the independent fieldworker extensively regarding its purpose, the importance of informed consent, confidentiality and the option of participants to withdraw their consent within two weeks after participating in the study. The researcher would have been subjective had she conducted the interviews. Therefore, the researcher believes that participants felt less restricted and threatened due to the involvement of an independent fieldworker.

The PhD psychology graduate, who was mentioned in the proposal to the Departmental Research Committee and subsequent committees, was unavailable during the time of data collection and therefore did not conduct the semi-structured interviews.

1.10.3. Research population and sampling

Cassim (2017: 69) writes that it would be ideal if data is collected from every person in the target population. The population is all the individuals, events, organisation units, case records or other sampling units with which the problem is concerned (Strydom, 2011: 223). The social housing project has 347 apartments, consisting of

bachelor, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. The project is one of three situated in urbanised areas in Port Elizabeth. It is the first project of Imizi Housing, and it is the most established. It is owned and managed by Imizi Housing Utility which has been operational since 2011. The company is fully accredited with the SHRA and owns a total of 1, 259 social housing units in Port Elizabeth. The Property Manager estimated that the population of the research site consists of approximately 1, 050 tenants, inclusive of adults and children. This number varies every month as people either move in or terminate their lease agreements. The population in this research study will be the tenants of a social housing initiative of Imizi Housing, situated in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

As it is not always possible to include the total population, sampling is more realistic (Strydom, 2011: 224). A sample refers to a section of the population when there is not enough time or resources to study the entire population. It should accurately reflect what takes place in a population and has to be representative of its diversity (Cassim, 2017: 69). "This means the recruitment, selection, exclusion and inclusion of participants for research must be just and fair, based on sound scientific and ethical principles" (South African Department of Health's guidelines on Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures, 2015: 15). The research was thus conducted with a representative sample of the population. The fieldworker was given a list of all the apartments at the project. All participants had an equal chance of being included. The fieldworker made use of the purposive sampling method as it represents most of the attributes or characteristics of the population (Strydom, 2011: 232). The fieldworker employed non-probability sampling, which is synonymous with qualitative research (Palys, 2008:697). The researcher also made use of convenience sampling as well as volunteer sampling to include easily accessible participants (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016: 2). Participants received a letter (Appendix 4), one week before data collection commenced, in their post boxes, informing them and inviting them to participate in the research study. Tenants were also requested to sign a consent form in which they gave their permission to participate in the study (Appendix 5).

The predetermined sample size was a minimum of 10, and a maximum of 15 participants or until the point of saturation was reached. Mohajan (2018: 24)

highlights that qualitative research is concerned with “words” rather than numbers. Hence richness of data is not dependent on the size of the sample, but rather concerned with the quality of the data provided by participants. The fieldworker interviewed nine participants over three days. For this study, some of the criteria on the Imizi application form were used. The sample included primary lease holders and occupants who:

- Lived in a social housing initiative in Port Elizabeth for at least one year;
- Were South African citizens;
- Signed rental lease agreements with Imizi Housing;
- Had the ability to speak and write in English; and
- Were over 21 years of age.

1.10.4. Scope of research and criteria for inclusion

The researcher aimed to include all participants over 21 years of age from various races, gender, ages and educational backgrounds, living at an Imizi social housing initiative, in this study. The fieldworker applied the standard of saturation of information whereby the same data was repeated, and the same information was reported on (Greeff, 2011: 350). A disadvantage of purposive sampling is that it can be subjective and prone to researcher bias (Sharma, 2017: 751-752). To eliminate this, a field worker conducted interviews with the participants in the sample. The fieldworker did not know any of the participants; hence there was no bias as to who was included in the sample.

1.10.5. Entry to the research site

The research proposal was submitted and presented to the Nelson Mandela University Departmental Research Committee for approval. Upon approval, it was submitted to the Faculty Post Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences as well as to the Research Ethics Committee. These committees approved the proposal and issued the researcher with reference number H19-HEA-SDP-008. Even though the researcher prepared a written letter to Imizi Housing’s Board of Directors (Appendix 2) and Chief Executive Officer (Appendix 3) to request entry to

the research site, only the latter's consent was needed to continue with the research study.

1.10.6. Data collection method

This research study focused on the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative of Imizi Housing in Port Elizabeth. The fieldworker is an experienced social worker and has more than 20 years' experience in conducting interviews. She conducted semi-structured one-to-one interviews as a data collection method. The fieldworker had an additional copy of the letter requesting participants to volunteer for the research study—in the event that a person did not access their post box or see the notices at the entrance of the project.

The fieldworker interviewed her first participant after she received a reply slip in the information box, indicating that a tenant wished to participate in the study. As the letter contained her cell phone number, another participant contacted her telephonically for an interview. The last participant approached the onsite Imizi office and indicated that she wanted to participate in the study. The rest of the participants were recruited by the field worker when she went door-to-door to the various apartments.

The fieldworker had to establish rapport with participants before commencing with interviews. This was done by introducing herself, stating that she was a social worker with extensive experience and that confidentiality would be upheld throughout the research process. This meant that they would remain anonymous and that Imizi Housing would not have access to their identities. Participants were reassured that they could contact the field worker in confidence should they wish to withdraw their interviews within two weeks of the interview.

Interviews were conducted in the comfortable and relaxed space of the participants' units; therefore, rapport could be established relatively easy. Before commencement of the interview, the fieldworker clarified with all participants whether they were aware of the research project. She requested their consent to participate in the study as well as to audio record them. She further explained the aim and objectives of the study. Her probing questions provided detailed insight of a participant's beliefs

or perceptions (Greeff, 2011: 351). While probing, the fieldworker made notes of non-verbal behaviour of participants. Although the main language in which the interviews were conducted was English, three participants indicated that they felt more comfortable speaking Afrikaans (Zengele, 2007: 29).

1.10.7. Pilot study

A pilot study is imperative because it allows the researcher to identify potential challenges and obtain feedback to optimise results, methods or procedures (Cassim, 2017: 78). It is a practice-run with a small group of participants that come from the target population to ensure that the interview process flows smoothly (Strydom, 2011: 237). Pilot study participants have to display similar demographic characteristics as the individuals who will form part of the research sample. The researcher initially had two pilot study participants of different gender and age. Notes were made during the interviews. Participants indicated that the questions were not challenging and easy to understand. Unfortunately, the researcher failed to operate the audio recorder, and therefore, these interviews were not recorded. The third interview was successfully recorded and transcribed. The recording was shared with the research supervisor, and permission was granted for the researcher (fieldworker) to proceed with the semi-structured interviews.

1.10.8. Data analysis

Cassim (2017: 138) suggests that interview notes containing the primary data collected in the interviews, be typed up in full directly after each interview. The fieldworker audio recorded the interviews and made notes about the primary data that was collected. Interviews were transcribed at the end of each day after data was collected. Charlesworth's (cited in Cassim, 2017: 138-139) five steps of qualitative data analysis overlaps with Tesch's (in Schurink, Fouché and De Vos, 2011: 404) eight steps of data analysis. The researcher followed these steps by reading the entire transcript and making notes, grouping similar themes together, listing various codes and then abbreviating them, categorising themes, alphabetising of codes, making a preliminary analysis and recoding where necessary.

1.10.9. Data verification (ensuring trustworthiness)

Validity and reliability in qualitative research are often questioned by positivists who rely on scientific evidence (Shenton, 2004: 63). Therefore, the researcher followed Lincoln and Guba's criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research as proposed by both Shenton (2004: 64-72) and Schurink et al. (2011: 419-421):

1.10.9.1. Credibility/authenticity

According to Shenton (2004: 64), credibility means that findings correspond with reality. The fieldworker made detailed written notes and audio recorded participants during the interviews. These recordings were transcribed to reflect data collected from participants. Credibility or internal validity was established since the researcher followed a well-established research methodology. Participants were requested to take part voluntarily and had the option to refuse to partake in the study. The result was that only individuals, who genuinely wanted to participate in the study, were included. This was demonstrated by the participant who left her consent letter in the information box for the field worker to contact her, the participant who contacted the fieldworker via WhatsApp and the participant who notified the Imizi site office that she wished to be included in the study. The field worker, who is experienced, is an instrument of data collection and further lent credibility to the study.

1.10.9.2. Transferability

Transferability or external validity refers to the generalisation of findings to other populations or settings (Schurink et al., 2011: 420). Findings of qualitative research are impossible to generalise to other settings because they are specific to a small number of people (Shenton, 2004: 69). Although this research study represents a larger group or population, transferability is therefore not entirely impossible (Stake and Denscombe in Shenton, 2004: 69). However, a description of the research methodology and the criteria for inclusion of participants will provide information to transfer findings to another setting.

1.10.9.3. Dependability

A study is reliable or dependable when similar results are attained if the study is repeated in the same setting with the same methodology (Shenton, 2004: 71). For this to happen, the research report contains the research design and its implementation, a detailed explanation of the gathering of data and a review of the research process, should the study be repeated in the same or a similar setting.

1.10.9.4. Confirmability

Confirmability or objectivity is when the researcher offers evidence that verifies the findings through auditing (Schurink et al., 2011: 421). The researcher ensured that the findings were a reflection of the participants' contribution or feedback. Detailed written notes were taken; interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed as evidence that the researcher did not influence the findings. In addition to the researcher analysing the data, an independent coder was utilised to corroborate findings.

1.10.10. Ethical considerations

The researcher adhered to the Code of Conduct for Researchers at the Nelson Mandela University and the Nelson Mandela University Policy on Research Ethics, once ethical clearance was obtained. The researcher consulted the South African Department of Health's guidelines on Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (2015: 14-22), The Belmont Report's "Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research – 1979" and Strydom's (2011: 115-126) ethical issues during the research study:

1.10.10.1. Avoidance of harm

Strydom (2011: 115) mentions that emotional harm is a threat and difficult to predict during a research project. The Ethics in Health Research guidelines (2015: 20) state that research should attempt to improve the human condition and that counselling should be made available to the participants if necessary. The fieldworker assured

participants that they would remain anonymous and that their confidentiality would be upheld. Although emotional harm was not anticipated, debriefing services by the on-site social worker were available if any participant experienced any emotional discomfort. The field worker is an experienced social worker and equipped to contain participants' emotions immediately had they experienced any feelings of discomfort. Individual participants expressed their satisfaction with how the fieldworker conducted the interview process.

1.10.10.2. Voluntary participation

Participants received written letters in their post boxes beforehand, requesting their voluntary participation. These letters were displayed at the main entrance, main exit, pedestrian turnstile and security guards' office. The fieldworker had copies of these letters as well when she conducted the semi-structured interviews. She explained that participation was not obligatory and that participants could discontinue the interview at any time without any penalties, should they feel uncomfortable during the process,

1.10.10.3. Informed consent

Written informed consent is also referred to as voluntary participation (Strydom, 2011: 117). Informed consent must take place before research commences and is "the process of providing the necessary information and of engaging with the person before a decision is reached" as per the Ethics in Health Research guidelines (2015). The fieldworker obtained participants' written informed consent before the interview commenced. To further highlight confidentiality, participants could sign the consent form under an alias. The fieldworker showed respect for the rights of individuals by explaining the aim of the research, how long the interview would last, and what would happen during the interview. She furthermore gave an overview of her experience so that participants could fully understand in order to give their voluntary written informed consent.

1.10.10.4. Deception of subjects and / or respondents

Struwig and Stead (in Strydom, 2011: 118) view deception as misleading participants, deliberately concealing facts or not sharing information with participants. The fieldworker was honest and informed participants of the purpose of the research and what the data will be used for. Participants had an opportunity to ask the fieldworker questions about the research if more information was needed. The fieldworker explained that the researcher would have access to the transcripts and audio recordings. She also informed participants that the interviews were conducted on behalf of the researcher to allow participants to express themselves freely and remain anonymous.

1.10.10.5. Violation of privacy / anonymity / confidentiality

The fieldworker protected the privacy and identity of participants, as outlined in the Ethics in Health Research guidelines (2015: 20). Participants used pseudonyms and signed using an alias. During the interviews, participants' names were not mentioned, thus ensuring confidentiality. The fieldworker did not know the participants, which reduced bias towards the inclusion of certain individuals. The researcher drew up a contract with the fieldworker (Appendix 7) to ensure that participants' information remained confidential. Participants were interviewed in the comfort of their own homes which further enhanced confidentiality. The fieldworker conducted the interviews after hours when neither the researcher nor Imizi staff members were on site. Although the researcher also transcribed a few transcripts, an independent transcriber was contracted (Appendix 8) to safeguard the privacy of participants further. This ensured that the researcher did not know who participated in the study.

1.10.10.6. Compensation

The Ethics in Research guidelines (2015: 20) claim that participants should not have additional costs when participating in a research project. Participants were interviewed in their apartments. They were therefore not compensated for any costs incurred, such as transport. Though one participant enquired at the Imizi office

whether he/she would be compensated for partaking in the research project, the participant continued with the research without compensation. The fieldworker was remunerated for the time spent on the research project.

1.10.10.7.Actions and competence of researchers

The researcher is capable, honest and experienced to conduct the research study. Literature from authors and other researchers have been acknowledged to prevent plagiarism. The researcher was aware of her ethical responsibility from the start of the research process until the writing of the research findings.

1.10.10.8.Cooperation with contributors and sponsors

Imizi Housing employs the researcher. Imizi is the primary sponsor of this research project. The fieldworker, as well as Imizi Housing, are acknowledged. Monette et al. (in Strydom, 2011: 124) state that everyone involved in the research process should be included in a written agreement between the parties involved. The fieldworker, the transcriber as well as the independent coder, have a written agreement which states that participants remain anonymous and their information confidential.

1.11. Publication of the findings

The report on the findings should be clear, simple and easy to read (Strydom, 2011: 126). Research findings will be available in written format. A summary of the findings will be published in the monthly newsletter of the social housing initiative. A copy of the findings will be available at the Nelson Mandela University Library for public access. Another copy will be available at the Imizi Housing on-site office for access by the sponsor and participants in the research study.

1.12. Proposed structure of the report

- Chapter One:** Introduction, background and orientation to the research methodology
- Chapter Two:** Literature review
- Chapter Three:** Application of research methodology
- Chapter Four:** Discussion of findings and literature control
- Chapter Five:** Summary, conclusions and recommendations

1.13. Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief background of the origin and relevance of social housing in South Africa. Social housing is an affordable rental option which involves role players such as the Social Housing Regulatory Authority, the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Human Settlements, the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality and accredited Social Housing Institutions. The chapter provides some insight into social housing in an international, African and South African context before it explores the research methodology that was applied during the research study. Ethical concerns are discussed before the chapter concludes with how the findings can be accessed, namely at the Nelson Mandela University library and the on-site Imizi Housing office.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of the Literature review is to examine research relevant to the study and provide an understanding of social housing. This chapter will refer to housing as a fundamental and universal need as well as a human right. The chapter will also explore social housing in an international, African and South African context. Through the lens of Social Constructionism, a narrow focus is applied by exploring literature about the perceptions of low to middle-income tenants living in affordable social housing initiatives around the world. After that, using the Sense of Community theoretical framework, the experiences of low to middle-income tenants in affordable and social housing projects around the globe are explored.

2.2. Housing: A fundamental need and a human right

Our need for physical survival motivates our behaviour. Maslow's theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1943) refers to the following needs:

- Physiological needs including air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, warmth, sex, sleep;
- Safety needs including protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear;
- Love and belongingness needs including friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love, affiliating, being part of a group - family, friends, work;
- Esteem needs including esteem for oneself and the desire for reputation or respect from others; and
- Self-actualisation needs including realising personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.

Once one level of our needs is met, we move to the next level. Mullins, Western and Broadbent (2001: 40) echo Maslow's theory in their study on the causal link between housing and nine socio-cultural factors; namely community, crime, anomie, health, perceived well-being, social exclusion, poverty, employment and education. The researchers conclude that social housing tenants still experience a variety of problems such as unemployment and health challenges even after their housing needs were met.

Dean (2016: 57) asserts that Maslow's first level of needs which include shelter or housing affects all areas of our life. The author explains that safety, the next level of the hierarchy, refers to personal, financial and health security in terms of housing. The needs for belonging and esteem equate to integration and social inclusion. If these are experienced positively, a mere shelter becomes a home. Family, culture and emotional connection in a home setting lead to a connection between people and a place, which Dean (2016) defines as Maslow's level of self-actualisation. An individual is, therefore, able to fulfil all their human needs if their need for shelter has been realised. Dean (2016: 56) illustrates the hierarchy of housing needs as follow:

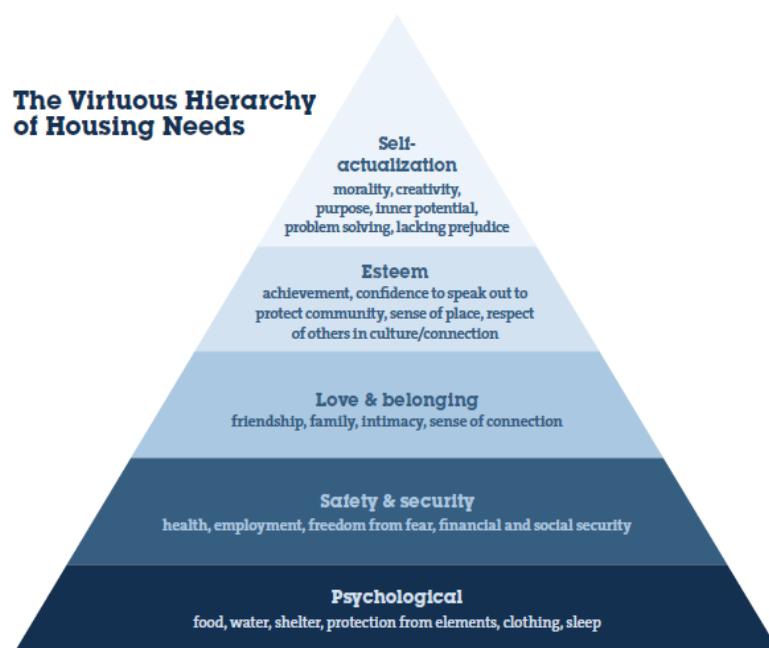


Figure 1 The Virtuous Hierarchy of Housing Needs (Dean, 2016: 56)

At the other end of the spectrum, Murray, Pauw and Holm (2005), developed a conceptual framework which considered how a house facilitates the fulfilment of human needs. Dean's (2016) view slightly overlaps with the conceptual framework of Murray, Pauw and Holm (2005). They believe that a house "is a universal satisfier for human needs..." (2005: n). The authors denounce Maslow's theory of human motivation in favour of development expert Manfred Max-Neef's human needs theory. Max-Neef likens the actualisation of all human needs to improved quality of life. Murray Pauw and Holm, (2005) argue that according to Maslow, if a person receives a house, their need in respect of housing has been met and other needs would therefore emerge. However, Max-Neef proposes that a house facilitates the satisfaction of human needs, meaning that a house enables for a range of needs to be met, thus improving an individual's quality of life.

These views, albeit contrasting, highlight the importance of shelter or housing and for this research study, social housing. At its most basic level, it is a vehicle through which our simplest of needs are met. At its highest level, it leads to our successful integration, sense of belonging and community (Dean, 2016: 56).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25 refers to everyone's right to a standard of living inclusive of housing. The United Nation's Habitat Global Housing Strategy document (2011-2012) supports this understanding and therefore strives towards social integration as well as the elimination of urban divide, through facilitating the improvement of housing and the establishment of inclusive cities. The South African Constitution (1996), Chapter 2: 26 (1-3) echoes these rights stating that "every South African has the right to have access to adequate housing", that the government is instrumental in the realisation of this right and moreover, that evictions cannot take place without a court order. The RDP programme failed to meet these housing needs of the Black urban poor (Sobantu, Zulu and Maphosa, 2019), according to Sobantu and Nel (2019: 284). Patel (2015) in Sobantu and Nel (2019: 284) stresses that the RDP programme was unsuccessful in addressing the consequences of apartheid as well as a growing economy and democracy. The gap in responding to those needs seems to be social housing which takes into account the needs of the urban poor and attempts to restore the housing crisis left by the RDP programme.

The majority of Blacks were excluded from the apartheid government's housing policy which led to poverty and inequality, therefore impacting their human rights (Sobantu, Zulu and Maphosa, 2019: 2). The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) emphasises that the ultimate objective of social development is to bring about sustained improvement in the wellbeing of the individual, family, community and society by reducing or eradicating poverty and inequality. According to the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997), the dimensions of social development include social welfare, health, education, housing, urban and rural development and land reform. Social work has an instrumental role in advocating and lobbying for vulnerable groups to access affordable housing. Families and communities become more stable when they have access to housing (Cohen et al. 2004; Cohen and Philips 1997; Cohen and Pyle 2000; Hartman 1998; Sobantu 2017 in Sobantu, Zulu and Maphosa, 2019). Housing contributes towards social cohesion and social development in communities. In South Africa, the universal and national rights to adequate housing paved the way for the provision of good quality social housing that would redress apartheid spatiality, as outlined in the Social Housing Act of 2008.

2.3. Social housing: International, African and South African views

Governments across the world have failed to resolve the housing need as more than one billion people are renting their accommodation (Gilbert, 2016: 180). The author states that rental remains essential to unemployed migrants because it is a temporary option while they are looking for work or deciding where they would settle. Furthermore, students need a place to stay during their time of study. Immigrants to a new country send money to family in their home country, hence renting is a more affordable option.

Additionally, people who set up a business, and who want to save some capital as well as older people who have sold their properties, rent their accommodation (Gilbert, 2016: 179). According to Peppercorn and Taffin (2013), there will always be people who do not own a home. The latter continues that the rental market is for those who cannot afford a deposit for homeownership. It is also for those whose income is informal and who do not qualify for a home loan. Finally, renting their

accommodation affords those who are employed more freedom to move for better employment opportunities.

According to a 2015 report by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2015) on over 50 countries on social housing; in as much as there is a global need for private, affordable rental housing, the need for social housing has increased because low-income and no-income groups are unable to afford housing and private rentals (UNECE, 2015: 7-8). Hansson and Lundgren (2019: 149) echo the report, claiming that low-income European households find it difficult to fulfil their housing needs, resulting in overcrowding or homelessness. As a consequence, social housing seems to be a cheaper rental housing option for low-income groups. The social housing population appears to be increasing in England, wherein 2016 and 2017, social housing constituted 4 million households, 17% of the total population (Tunstall and Pleace, 2018). Researchers acknowledge the hypothesis that social housing is more affordable than other housing options and that it provides high-quality homes in good locations in the city. However, despite the positives of being a more affordable rental option, renters pay a relatively large portion of their low income on rent, waiting lists are long, and tenants are generally dissatisfied with their neighbourhood as compared to other housing options.

The 2015 UNECE report (2015: 7-8) mentions that the term ‘social housing’ appears to have different meanings internationally. Below are some examples contained in the report:

Table 1: National terms referring to social housing in selected countries in the UNECE region (UNECE, 2015: 7-8)

National terms referring to social housing in selected countries in the UNECE region	
Country	The term used in translation to English
Austria	“Limited-profit housing” or “people’s housing.”
Canada	“Social housing.”
Denmark	“Common housing” or “not-for-profit housing.”
Germany	“Housing promotion.”
Finland	“Government subsidised housing.”
France	“Housing at moderate rent.”

The report mentions that the United States of America uses the term “public housing” for government subsidised housing that was started in the 1930s. The country also uses the terms “affordable” or “assisted” rental housing. Furthermore, countries with new legislation, use the term “social housing”.

The different terms and definitions lead to misunderstandings and make international comparisons and research difficult and challenging. Due to a lack of consensus on a definition for social housing, based on European social housing systems, Hansson and Lundgren (2019: 162) propose the following:

- The target group for social housing is households with limited financial resources. To make sure that the target group occupies the housing provided, a distribution system with that aim has to be in place. Moreover, housing must be provided long term, rather than temporary.
- Social housing systems provide below-market rents or prices and hence are not self-supporting, but need some form of public or private financial contribution (subsidy).

The European definition seems less specific and does not stipulate an approximate income band for prospective tenants, but refers to households with “limited financial resources” (UNECE, 2015: xiv). The definition speaks to a distribution system which needs to ensure that the target group take occupation of the social housing units and does not outline what a distribution system is. However, it acknowledges that social housing systems need to operate on either public or private funding.

The Sub-Saharan African population is growing rapidly. It had 199 million people living in slums in 2005 and had the world’s highest urban growth rate of 4.58% (UN-Habitat in Ansah, 2014). Its total estimated population stood at 925 million in 2014 with 346 million (37%) people living in urban areas (Durand-Lasserve, Schlimmer, Selod and Sylla, 2018). This total is expected to increase to 2.04 billion people in 2050, of which 1.137 billion (55%) will live in urban areas. However, the authors warn that most Sub-Saharan countries are only at the commencement of urbanisation and therefore not prepared to accommodate these large numbers.

Ardonceanu and McLoughlin (2017) quote statistics on the housing deficit in Sub-Saharan Africa, provided by the Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa (CAHF) in 2016:

- South Africa (2.3 million units);
- Kenya (250,000 units annually);
- Nigeria (17 million units);
- Ghana (1.7 million units); and
- Tanzania (3 million units).

It appears that people in developing countries find it difficult to own property due to weak economies; therefore, government-assisted rental housing seems to be most beneficial in densely populated urban areas. Ardonceanu and McLoughlin (2017) resonate with Biehler, Choplin and Morelle (2015), stating that affordable housing does not meet the needs of its beneficiaries and is unaffordable for most of the population in Africa. This statement further supports the 2015 World Bank report on the housing sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, which claims that 80% of Cameroon's citizens cannot afford social housing (UNECE, 2015). The researcher is of the opinion that if sub-Saharan Africa rolls out social housing adequately, the growth of slum communities could be reduced.

Social housing in Africa, the world's second-largest continent, is plagued by various challenges. As illustrated by Biehler, Choplin and Morelle (2015), who cited a study conducted on social housing in Central, West and Northwest Africa, unaffordable social housing is a recurring theme. The study mentions that the aim of social housing in Africa is primarily to support and contribute towards economic growth, combat poverty and eliminate informal settlements or slum communities. However, due to corruption, social housing does not often reach its intended beneficiaries. Miller (2015: 6) and Ardonceanu and McLoughlin (2015) further highlight the unaffordability of government subsidised units in Ghana—75% of Accra's population cannot afford it. According to Omenya (2018: 20), Kenya faces challenges because funding for social housing is still vague, as local governments and the national government are unclear about the scope of social housing. 91% of Kenyans live in

rental accommodation in Nairobi, yet the government is indecisive about delivering pure rental units to these communities (Omenya, 2018).

Similar to other Sub-Saharan countries mentioned, pricy social housing units in Nigeria are also a problem experienced by the country, mainly because social housing was not prioritised in its previous housing policy (Ndubueze, 2009: 57). The country's low-income earners are forced, like in other African countries, to move from urban areas due to the unaffordability of housing options (Ekong & Onye, 2013). It is highly likely that Sub-Saharan Africa will experience rapid urbanisation and a shortage of affordable rental housing soon. A lack of understanding of the concept of social housing will likely further exacerbate the issue and lead to a national crisis.

In South Africa, non-Whites lived on the outskirts of the urban areas and very often in informal settlements. This was as a result of the modalities of Apartheid, a planning system that separated residential areas for different racial groups in terms of the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Sipungu and Nleya, 2016: 6). Blacks, Coloureds, Indians and Whites were categorised in terms of the Population Registration Act of 1950 and had separate access to amenities in terms of the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 (Sipungu and Nleya, 2016). In response to the spatial segregation in South Africa, policies such as 'Breaking New Ground' were developed. It is an extensive housing plan for the development of integrated sustainable human settlements which builds on the housing policy outlined in the 1994 White Paper on Housing (Onatu, 2012). It was launched by the South African government in September 2004 and promoted the development of low-cost housing, medium-density accommodation and rental housing as well as stronger partnerships with the private sector, social infrastructure and amenities (Musvoto and Mooya, 2016). It aims to change the spatial settlement pattern by building multicultural communities in a non-racial society. Its key strategic priorities are:

- Restoring and furthering human dignity and citizenship;
- Improving the quality of housing products and environment to ensure asset creation;
- Ensuring a single, efficient formal housing market; and

- Restructuring and integrating human settlements.

Another policy that supports the elimination of the spatial divide in South Africa is the National Development Plan, 2030. It envisions more urban development and transport opportunities that would help people access employment opportunities and enable them to live closer to work. Housing the poor is part of the South African Human Settlements Vision 2030 (Human Settlements Official Guide, 2017/18). The Guide quotes Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) General Household Survey (GHS) 2017 in that slightly over 80.1% of South African households lived in formal dwellings in 2017, followed by 13.6% in informal dwellings, and 5.5% in traditional dwellings. 13.6% of South African households lived in Free Basic Housing or RDP. However, some residents complained that the roofs and walls of these houses are very weak. Government-subsidised rental units appear to be highly attractive under such conditions.

Contrary to FBH (RDP), a few advantages of rental housing in South Africa, are:

- A clear distinction of roles between landlord and tenant;
- Legal compliance issues are simple relative to other forms of tenure;
- A dispute resolution forum exists in the form of the Rental Housing Tribunal to deal with disputes between landlords and tenants;
- It affords government the option of retaining ownership of its housing stock provided through the provision of institutional housing subsidies; and
- In a context of high unemployment, rental allows tenants to move with relative ease from place to place in search of work or career development opportunities and enhances labour mobility. Tonkin (2008: 116).

Although Tonkin (2008: 23-24) is confident that the South African rental housing sector has the potential to contribute significantly towards urban renewal, restructuring of apartheid cities, poverty alleviation and meeting critical housing needs of people who work in these areas, the author affirms that monthly rentals are unaffordable for poorer members of society and does not meet the needs of the majority of the urban population. As a result, Tonkin (2008) advocates for affordable

public rental housing and making social housing more “social”, since the Social Housing policy is failing its intended beneficiaries. This stance is similar to the views of other authors (Biehler, Choplin and Morelle 2015; Durand-Lasserve et al., 2018) on the unaffordability of affordable housing in Sub-Saharan Africa. Genesis Analytics was appointed by the SHRA to conduct a study on the socio-economic and spatial restructuring impact of social housing. The study found that the social housing sector is of such a small scale that its contribution to national priorities was contextual and dependent on the location of projects. The Genesis Report (2019: 59) recommends that a system is in place to regularly check tenants’ incomes and then to change the rental amounts accordingly. This is to prevent social housing from becoming so unaffordable that it leads to low-income tenants having to exit the initiative.

In the State of the Social Housing Sector Report, 2016, Minister Lindiwe Sisulu asserts that social housing is crucial in supporting South Africa’s move towards an urbanised society as opposed to a community based on migrant labour. Minister Sisulu lauded social housing as providing opportunities to low-income families to access the services they need to enhance their lives. This appears to be an attempt by the government to redeem itself as the ruling party. The African National Congress (ANC) failed to provide affordable quality housing to all its citizens inclusive of the urban poor (Hohmann, 2013; Mosselson, 2017; Noyoo and Sobantu, 2018 cited in Sobantu and Nel, 2019: 284). Nevertheless, the Department of Human Settlement’s social housing programme is a vehicle for the delivery of affordable housing and mainly funded through the restructuring capital grant. The latter is transferred from the Housing Development Finance programme and administered by the Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA). The grant was expected to reach R1 billion by 2018/19 to fund the delivery of 17, 333 social housing units, contributing to achieving the target of an additional 27, 000 social housing units by 2019 (Human Settlements Official Guide, 2017/18). Funding for the provision of social housing increased. However, the delivery of these units is slow, which negatively impacts South Africa’s move towards becoming an urbanised country.

2.4. Theoretical Framework: Social Constructionism Theory

The Social Constructionism theory was developed approximately 30 years ago and has its roots in sociology (Andrews, 2012). Andrews (2012) claims that it influenced the grounded theory and is associated with qualitative research. Social constructionism acknowledges that genetic traits influence an individual's life; however, it focuses more on the effect social influence has on communal or individual life (Galbin, 2014: 82). It is concerned with culture (in anthropology), society (in sociology) and the social aspects of people (in psychology) (Galbin, 2014). Through social construction, "...people make meaning, describe, explain or account for the world in which they live" (Schenck, Nel and Louw, 2015: 55). People tell stories about their experiences and interactions within the groups in the world they live in. Learning takes place because of an individual's interaction with the group. People's perspectives about the world are different and are grounded in their social relationships (Gergen, 2009: 3). According to social constructionists, individuals might go through the same experiences, but their view or perspectives on what it means to them are different. Gergen (2009) bases social constructionism on the following assumptions:

- How we understand the world is not required by "what there is". It suggests there is no truth, and there is nothing we can hold onto and nothing substantial that we can centre our beliefs around.
- How we describe and explain the world are the outcomes of relationship. Relationships contribute towards an individual's understanding of the world, objects and persons. When we meet, we use language to communicate our experiences to each other, therefore creating a picture with words.
- Constructions gain their significance from their social utility. Meaning is derived from how we relate to each other, our words and interactions as well as the different objects, spaces, and environments around us. Any situation can have several possible constructions or meanings with some being more accurate than others.
- As we describe and explain, so do we shape our future. Language originates from our relationships. Relationships are a result of how the broader society interacts with one another. Language is part of our tradition and culture. By

speaking our language, we contribute to creating our future, whether it is positive or negative.

- Reflection on our taken-for-granted worlds is vital to our future well-being. Social constructionism talks about critical reflexivity, which means that one has to suspend what is obvious or what has been taken for granted. We have to question or doubt everything so that we can build a more robust future. This means that we have to acknowledge our traditions as well as others' so that we can reach a collective understanding.

Schenk, Nel and Louw (2015: 55-59) have a similar list on social constructionism as Gergen (2009) and view people and their actions very much the same. Jenkins in Stam (2001: 293) criticises social constructionism for failing to differentiate between content and process. He argues that individuals (content) differ across cultures, but that the processes that create and maintain the individual are common and widespread. In addition to being ambiguous, another negative result of the theory is that the main groups, as perceived by society, might enjoy certain privileges at the expense of others (Gergen, 2009: 20). An example is how masculinity is perceived as rational and in control, whereas femininity is seen as dependent and emotional. The social constructionism theory even views criticism as positive (an opportunity to discuss) as opposed to prohibitive, which further illustrates its ambiguity.

The following sections will discuss tenants' thoughts or perceptions of affordable and social housing through the lens of social constructionism. To reiterate Schenck, Nel and Louw (2015), Social Constructionism is about meaning or understanding the world in which we live. Similarly, perception is about a person's understanding or view of their circumstances and in this case, their perception of life in a social housing initiative. Social constructionism highlights that reality is different for every individual because of their history or background. There are different reasons, hence different realities as to why a person or family move to a social housing initiative. Their perception of social housing might therefore be influenced by their previous home circumstances or living conditions and might differ from person to person. Moving or transitioning to a different housing environment is challenging at times and social work is concerned with the impact of such challenges. How a person views

their circumstances might change based on what is happening in their life at that particular time. Therefore, applying the social constructionist theoretical framework to examine perceptions is appropriate.

2.4.1. The perceptions of tenants before moving into affordable, or social housing

Wiesel, Easthope, Liu, Judd and Hunter (2012) researched the reasons why tenants in Australia choose social housing as well as their experiences within the project. Firstly, Seelig et al. (2008) cited in Wiesel et al. (2012: 18), found that 54.6% of tenants in an Australian public housing initiative moved in from private rental. The high percentage could be due to tenants' perceptions or experiences of private rentals being unaffordable (Yates and Gabriel, 2006, cited in Wiesel et al., 2012: 18). Another 16.9% moved from boarding houses which are likely an indication that tenants view social housing as an option with better housing quality.

Social housing plays a different role in the life stages of individuals. Wiesel et al. (2012) found that childbirth, new relationships or the ending of a relationship might lead to individuals moving into social housing. Additionally, older persons make up over half of all tenants in Australian social housing (Jones et al., 2007, cited in Wiesel et al., 2012). Social housing seems to fulfil a different need at each life stage of an individual. The rental housing option offers a sense of stability due to its affordability as compared to the Australian private rental market.

Social housing is viewed in a less favourable light by tenants living in the social housing initiative and those in other housing tenures. In a study on perceptions of stigma in social housing in Ireland, Carnegie, Byrne and Norris (2017: 50) asserted that social housing tenants themselves as well as individuals not living in social housing, perceived it as unfavourable because of low-income levels and bad media coverage. Some of the tenants who participated in Wiesel et al.'s study (2012) had negative perceptions of social housing before moving in and thought that their application would not be successful. They viewed social housing initiatives as non-transparent, challenging and favouring applicants when it comes to the application process. Similarly, Mattinson, Knox, Downes, Nichols, Van Der Steeg, Wilson,

Langdale and Robinson (2019: 4) allude to social housing being non-transparent in the United Kingdom and allocated to the wrong people who do not qualify, thus leading to the exclusion of those that are most in need. The researchers reported that a drawback to becoming a social housing tenant was the perceptions others have of this rental option.

Furthermore, even though participants in Wiesel et al.'s study (2012) were familiar with the concept of social housing, they were not educated on what it was about. These studies show that tenants went through similar challenges or experiences which shaped how they view social housing. Social constructionism is concerned with these differences in perception of reality which are based on similar experiences.

2.4.2. Thoughts of tenants during their tenure at affordable or social housing initiatives

The 2019 Genesis report found that tenants based their sense of safety on how safe they feel inside the social housing initiative as well as how safe they feel in the area in which the social housing initiative is situated. The report suggests that tenants perceive their current area as safer than the area from which they moved. They viewed security at the projects in a positive light. Female tenants feel less safe than male tenants. However, both male and female tenants feel safer inside their units, their complex and the areas in which they live during the day as compared to during the night.

Participants in the Genesis report (2019) claim that their children's grades improved because they could attend better schools in the area and the living conditions of the project enabled them to have more privacy to study. Due to schools being closer, the tenants' sense of security also improved. This finding is in contrast with the report about the role that social housing has played for children and families in Britain from the Second World War to the present day (Lupton, Tunstall, Sigle-Rushton, Obolenskaya, Sabates, Meschi, Kneale and Salter, 2009). Lupton et al. (2009: 106) postulate that people who moved into social housing as children have the worst outcomes in life. These children seem to have the odds stacked against them as

they are possibly exposed to fewer opportunities and endure stigma, which is all associated with low to middle-income groups.

The Genesis report (2019: 51) mentions that some social housing projects make use of social and community development workers. The social workers become involved when there are challenges such as substance abuse. However, although the involvement of a social worker could contribute to a positive outcome, there is a stigma attached to making use of social work services.

The majority of social housing tenants, who participated in Mattinson et al.'s (2019) study on the current state of social housing in England after the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, were happy with their neighbourhood and the affordable rentals as compared to the private rental sector. Although affordable, participants perceived social housing as becoming increasingly unaffordable. While tenants were generally happy with their neighbourhood, the negative behaviour of other tenants led to their dissatisfaction. The study found that the quality of the units in which social housing tenants live are declining. Overcrowding was found to be a challenge, as well. In South Africa, even though the intent is for social housing initiatives to be close to amenities, the Genesis study found that tenants spend more money to get to work, school and other conveniences than the areas they hail from. This could have an impact on the payment of rent as it seems that tenants have less disposable income because they spend more to get to work when public transport is not easily accessible. School fees in the area of the social housing project might also be more expensive than their previous neighbourhood and if the project is close to a mall, it might not be within walking distance which means that additional money is spent on transport. These factors could contribute towards the perceived unaffordability of social housing as cautioned by Tonkin (2008).

2.4.3. Factors contributing to tenants' exit from affordable or social housing initiatives

Wiesel, Pawson, Stone, Herath and McNelis (2014: 21) emphasise that there is no single motivating factor for moving out of social housing. Wiesel et al. (2012), Wiesel et al. (2014) and Wiesel and Pawson (2015) emerged as prominent researchers on

the pathways of Australian tenants in social housing. International literature is abundant on the movement of people into and out of social housing; however, South African studies about social housing focusing on these pathways seem to be non-existent.

The main reason why social housing tenants exit a social housing initiative is due to unhappiness with the neighbourhood, specifically stigmatisation (Anderson, 2008 cited in Wiesel and Pawson, 2015). Wiesel and Pawson (2015: 401) cited Kearns and Parke's (2003) study which mention dissatisfaction with the rental unit in addition to the project and the neighbourhood as factors contributing to the exit of tenants.

Physical violence, verbal abuse or sexual harassment by a neighbour are more reasons for exiting social housing. This is according to a study conducted by Wiesel and Pawson (2015: 405) on Australian social housing tenants in New South Wales and Victoria. Perceptions of their neighbourhood as less safe, thus leading to a sense of vulnerability, were elements that led to moving out of social housing. Break-ins, substance abuse and dealing in substances at the project or in the neighbourhood, violence and noise were mentioned as additional reasons. Single participants, mostly females, ascribed their children's safety as the main factor for moving out. The size, design and condition of the rental unit were further contributing factors. The study also found that social housing tenants moved out to live with partners or when they leave their partners; they do so to be closer to, or with family members or to buy a home.

2.4.4.Theoretical Framework: Sense of community theoretical framework

In order to describe the Sense of Community Theory, it would make sense to discuss what a community is first. Weyers (2011: 54) defines it as,

A social system which originates when a population of individuals (social dimension), localised in a specific geographic area (spatial dimension), establishes and utilises structures and relationships to deal with impediments (functional dimension) and at the same time develops a sense of communal thinking, identity and activities (cultural-symbolic dimension) (Weyers, 2011: 54).

In other words, it refers to a group of individuals who interact with the resources in their environment in order to meet their needs. By doing so, they develop a sense of cohesion or interrelations. Gusfield in McMillan and Chavis (1986) view a community either as a territory or geographical area (neighbourhood, town or city) or as the quality of the bond between humans. On the other hand, Durheim, also in McMillan and Chavis (1986) assert that community originates around shared interests and talents.

Abraham (1992) in Agulanna (2010: 288-289) describes community, in Africa, as “a sacral unity, which comprises its living members, its dead (who survive in a less substantial form) and its as yet unborn children.” Menkiti (1984: 174) further adds that the community of departed spirits is perceived as continually interacting with the community of living men and women. Community in Africa, therefore, transcends geographical location to include the otherworldly and gravitates towards common values, a sense of belonging and a sense of identity.

In the South African context, the Nguni expression ‘umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu’ means ‘a person is a person through other people’ (Bolden, 2014: 1). It encapsulates Ubuntu which speaks of cohesion, care and community, respect, a sense of belonging and harmony between individuals. Ubuntu or sense of community refers to the indigenous interdependence, inclusivity and inter-subjectivity between individuals and their community, which is unique to South Africa. It is not limited to a physical setting. In contrast, Motlatsi Khosi, interviewed by Chibba in 2013, states that Ubuntu only exists in settlements and poor rural areas where it is most needed, while Louw (2010) in Chibba (2013) describes how it can be used as a target against others such as xenophobic attacks. During these attacks, Louw (2010) cited in Chibba (2013) stated that Ubuntu was warped as the community overvalued themselves, which led to hurting others all in the name of the community. As much as a community has its positive attributes, it has the potential to turn inward to the detriment of other external communities.

Psychology, social work, community development and sociology provide evidence that communities contribute towards an individual’s resilience (Pretty, Bishop, Fisher

and Sonn, 2006: 3). Additionally, communities offer a sense of identity and care that is derived from those close to, or important to them. A strengthened sense of community is the answer to alienation and loneliness. Sanborne (2002) explains that a sense of community is “a powerful and emotional force that increases the quality of life; it is critical to both our individual and collective well-being.” The concept of “A psychological sense of community” was first introduced in 1974 by psychologist Samuel Sarason (Wright, 2004: 10). Sarason describes a psychological sense of community (PSOC) as the perception that an individual is similar to others, relies on others in a mutually beneficial relationship and experiences the feeling of being part of a broader sustainable structure (Wright, 2004: 3). The psychologist laid the foundation for the theoretical framework of a Sense of Community.

Building on Sarason’s PSOC, McMillan and Chavis (1986) influenced and contributed extensively to subsequent theories of Psychological Sense of Community (Wright, 2004: 12). The authors defined Sense of Community (SOC) as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to being together” (Wright, 2004: 12).

McMillan and Chavis (1986) cited in De Vincenzo and Scammon (2015: 145), propose a theoretical definition of SOC that consists of concepts such as:

- Membership;
- Shared emotional connection;
- Integration and fulfilment of needs (Reinforcement); and
- Influence.

Membership is a feeling of belonging that motivates members to act in ways that support their membership (DeVincenzo and Scammon, 2015: 145). As much as membership is an overall positive concept, it has negative connotations to it as well. Boundaries in membership are when communities protect their personal space against a threat, reject or isolate other members, or use deviants or scapegoats to create even more solid boundaries (McMillan and Chavis, 1986: 9). Other attributes

of membership are emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment and a common symbol system such as dress or language (Wright, 2004: 12). Emotional safety refers to the security that group members provide to each other. A sense of belonging means that the member feels that they have a place and are accepted by the group. Personal investment denotes the work that a member has done, resulting in them feeling that they have earned their place, which will make membership more meaningful and valuable. A common symbol system contributes towards maintaining group boundaries. It leads to smooth functioning and integration into a diverse community's social life.

A shared emotional connection refers to a shared history or the ability to identify with each other's history. The participation of members in shared events and the specific aspects of the events may help or hinder the strength of unity (McMillan and Chavis, 1986: 16). For example, South Africa experienced Apartheid, and even though not all South Africans have been exposed to Apartheid, it somehow shaped the countries culture and country. Members' shared emotional connection is increased when members put themselves at risk or make sacrifices for the values of the group (DeVincenzo and Scammon, 2015: 145).

According to McMillan and Chavis (1986: 13-14), shared emotional connection refers to:

- Contact hypothesis: The more people interact, the more likely they are to become close.
- Quality of interaction: The more positive the experience and the relationships, the greater the bond. Success facilitates cohesion.
- Closure to events: If the interaction is ambiguous and the community's tasks are left unresolved, group cohesiveness will be inhibited.
- Shared valent event hypothesis: The more important the shared event is to those involved, the greater the community bond.
- Investment: Investment determines the importance to the member of the community's history and current status. Persons who donate more time and energy to an association will be more emotionally involved. Intimacy is another form of investment. The amount of interpersonal emotional risk one

takes with the other members, and the extent to which one opens oneself to emotional pain from the community life will affect one's general sense of community.

- Effect of honour and humiliation on community members: Reward or humiliation in the presence of community has a significant impact on attractiveness (or adverseness) of the community to the person.
- Spiritual bond: This is present to some degree in all communities. Often the spiritual connection of the community experience is the primary purpose of religious and quasi-religious communities and cults. It is also called the "community of spirit." (Bernard in McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

Integration and fulfilment of needs also referred to as reinforcement, means that people in communities meet others' needs while fulfilling their own (McMillan and Chavis, 1986: 12). When members experience reinforcement, they may feel a sense of competence and success which may increase cooperative behaviour. Similarities between a member and other group members lead to bonding and symbiotic relationships between community members. Status, competence and shared values are concepts associated with integration and fulfilment of needs. According to Messick and Brewer (1983) in DeVincenzo and Scammon (2015: 145), the downside of reinforcement is that individuals may put the group's interests ahead of their own needs which could prevent social problems from being resolved. Status or group success can bring group members closer together and act as reinforcement. Competence means that members are attracted to groups who offer the most rewards and whose skills can benefit them in some manner. Shared values refer to our values that are derived from our culture and our families. People with shared values have similar needs, priorities and goals. Reinforcement comes from joining together to satisfy their individual needs.

Peterson, Speer and McMillan (2008) in DeVincenzo and Scammon (2015: 145) define influence as "a sense that one matters, or can make a difference, in a community and that the community matters to its members." Communities are more appealing to members when they feel that they have some influence (McMillan and Chivas, 1986: 11). According to the authors, influence occurs when:

- Members are attracted to a community in which they feel that they are influential.
- There is a significant positive relationship between cohesiveness and a community's influence on its members to conform. Thus, both conformity and community influence on members indicate the strength of the bond.
- The pressure for conformity and uniformity comes from the needs of the individual and the community for consensual validation. Thus, conformity serves as a force for closeness as well as an indicator of cohesiveness.
- Influence of a member on the community and influence of the community on a member operate concurrently, and one might expect to see the force of both operating simultaneously in a tightly knit community.
- It is noteworthy that these elements of a sense of community framework overlap with some of the needs in Maslow's theory of motivation, namely the need for safety, love and belonging and esteem. This could indicate that members' needs are met when they form part of a community.

Communities who experience a good sense of community, do not always have positive experiences (Mannarini and Fedi, 2010 in Fremlin, 2012). Fremlin (2012) explains that a small group's strong sense of community can be damaging to the larger group and its individual members. The latter might experience lack of personal freedom and be involved in power struggles. McMillan and Chavis (1986) confirm that group cohesiveness can result in loss of freedom and individuality. Examples of small groups that could be detrimental to a broader community are gangs and racist organisations. Another example of a negative sense of community is when the Australian society assumed a protective stance against the threat of terrorism and international turmoil and created a community that excluded those that are different (Pretty et al., 2006: 3). Despite these adverse outcomes, a sense of community is necessary and essential (Fremlin, 2012).

This section explored a sense of community at large. However, when it comes to shelter and particularly housing, communities are more productive when the housing system improves because members combine their skills, physical capital and technological knowledge which could lead to a higher standard of living (Miller,

2015). Through housing, community members can create a home and build links with other members as well as their greater community, according to Xue (2013: 5). In social housing, members from various backgrounds and different skills sets, live together in close proximity which could affect their sense of community. The latter comes about through experience. A Sense of Community framework, therefore, seems apt based on tenant's experiences in affordable and social housing projects.

2.4.5. The experiences of tenants living in affordable and social housing initiatives

A limited body of research exists about the experiences of tenants living in social housing initiatives in South Africa. The researcher will, therefore, explore the literature on the experiences of low to middle-income groups in both affordable and social housing initiatives. These experiences will be discussed against the backdrop of the elements of a sense of community, namely, membership, shared emotional connection, integration and fulfilment of needs (reinforcement) and influence.

Welch (2005: 24) cited in Pretty et al. (2006: 3), observe that an attractive feature of a housing development is a sense of community as experienced by Australians in Melbourne. In the context, it included social interaction such as walking, resource sharing, children playing together and living near pleasant neighbours with the same background and ambitions. The Genesis report (2019: 57) found that tenants who lived closer to the social housing project before moving in experienced their integration into the community more positively as compared to others who were previously not from the area. These examples contribute to an individual's sense of belonging (membership) and a shared emotional connection between community members or tenants. An initial negative sense of community might be experienced by those who need time to get used to their new environment.

Mullins, Western and Broadbent (2001) conducted a study on housing and its link with the community, crime, anomie, health, perceived well-being, social exclusion, poverty, employment and education. In their study of a Melbourne public housing suburb, Bryson and Thompson (1972) and Bryson and Winter (1999) cited in Mullins Western and Broadbent, (2001: 10), found that social cohesion was enhanced when

women from different neighbourhoods put their efforts together to advocate for inadequate childcare and schooling. A lack of resources can contribute towards social cohesion because members identify with each other in their fight against the absence of services. These women experienced reinforcement or integration and fulfilment of needs because not only were they fulfilling their own needs, but also the needs of others. The researchers add that ethnic diversity leads to social cohesion in the sense that it connects people living in different public housing units with each other. Although a sense of community should be promoted when there is racial or ethnic diversity, Rochira (2017: 1) cautions that it should not be to the detriment of cultural differences. Mullins Western and Broadbent, (2001: 11) suggested that social cohesion was essential in low-income communities because they could depend on each other in challenging times.

Low-income neighbourhoods and affordable housing projects, inclusive of social housing, though not all, have high crime rates and concentrations of residents with criminal records, according to research conducted in the United Kingdom (Burby and Rohe, 1989 cited in Mullins Western and Broadbent, 2001). These crimes include less serious offences such as vandalism, being rowdy or littering. As a result, tenants who commit these offences could experience a negative sense of community due to the broader tenant community excluding them socially. This alludes to the influence a tenant community has because its members matter to each other.

An earlier study in Melbourne, Australia on the level of satisfaction in public housing (Bryson and Thompson, 1972 cited in Mullins Western and Broadbent, 2001) suggests that respondents were pleased with the housing and the area in which they lived. Mattinson et al. (2019: 157) suggests that communication between neighbours, safety and the provision of leisure activities for children, could lead to an enhanced sense of community. As a result, members might experience a shared emotional connectedness and a sense of belonging due to them sharing standard views or experiences of their living environment.

Williams (2016: 2012-222) researched low-income residents' sense of community in post-1994 housing developments in South Africa. The researcher did not distinguish

between the different types of affordable and social housing during her research. Depending on the locality of the project, she concluded the following:

- Residents were more likely to experience high levels of safety, social trust, attachment and pride based on the location of the housing where children could play freely outdoors. Feeling safe has a direct correlation to the longevity of the housing project.
- Offences such as burglaries, rape, speeding cars and gang violence have a negative impact on the social wellbeing of low-income residents. Community members work together against the gangsters to keep each other safe.
- A housing development that was built before the end of Apartheid offers the best sense of community compared to the other sites of this study.
- Social trust between community members was high because the project was close to the city centre, the area in which it was situated was safe and fulfilled the social and personal needs of residents.
- A sense of community is enhanced if residents are involved in the construction of the project if they can see children playing as well as see each other coming and going in the project.
- Proximity to town, churches, schools, services and jobs as well as the spatial layout of the development are essential to enhancing a sense of community.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) believe that all four elements of a sense of community need to be present to experience an enhanced sense of community. Therefore it can be assumed that when low to medium-income tenants experience enhanced social cohesion (membership) in their neighbourhood, a sense of pride in their area and their place of abode (indicating a shared history which refers to shared emotional connection), greater safety as communities stand together against crime (influence) and fulfilment of needs in their community, it will lead to a heightened sense of community.

2.5. Conclusion

Using Maslow's theory of human motivation and Max-Neef's human need theory as a foundation, Chapter Two explored housing as a basic need and universal right. In a more focused approach to housing, literature examined the phenomenon of social housing on an international scale before it was discussed in the context of African countries such as Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and more specifically, South Africa. After that, the perception of tenants around the globe about living in social housing was discussed through the lens of Gergen's Social Constructionism theory. Finally, the chapter reviewed the experiences of tenants in social or public housing initiatives by making use of McMillan and Chavis' Sense of Community theoretical framework.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Cassim (2017: 6) emphasises the importance of research design and methodology, stating that it should be written clearly and in a manner that would make it easy for another researcher to repeat the study. The author further states that the design, data collection methods and the ability of the research objectives to answer the research question, depend on the relationship between these concepts. Research methodology, therefore, serves as a map for future researchers to replicate the study. Unlike Chapter One, where research terms were defined and decisions were justified with literature, Chapter Three focuses on explaining the research methodology that was followed during the research study. The chapter reviews the research approach and design, how participants were selected for the study and outlines how the researcher gained entry to the research site. An explanation of data analysis is provided and consideration is given to ethical concerns before the chapter concludes with a discussion on the publication of the findings.

3.2. Research approach

A qualitative research approach was applied as the study aimed to describe and explore social housing tenants' perceptions and experiences of living at an Imizi social housing initiative. This research approach is concerned with people's beliefs and thoughts about a situation or problem. During this research study, participants' thoughts, perceptions and experiences about social housing, before moving to the social housing initiative were explored. The study also focused on participants' thoughts and experiences having lived at the social housing initiative for one year or more. The qualitative research approach was most appropriate for the study because participants could explain their thoughts and experiences about the social housing initiative during individual interviews. This allows for richer data. Through the participants' explanations, the researcher could identify similarities in their

perceptions, thoughts and views about living in a social housing initiative — the qualitative research design is concerned with these.

3.3. Research design

An exploratory and descriptive research design was used. Literature suggests that the phenomenon of social housing has been researched extensively, both nationally and internationally. Social housing is, therefore, a “well-defined subject” which the researcher attempts to describe accurately (Fouché and De Vos, 2011: 95). The explanation of this phenomenon makes this study descriptive.

An exploratory research design aims to gain a better understanding into a situation, occurrence, community or person (Fouché and De Vos, 2011: 95). This study explored the perceptions and experiences that tenants have about living in a social housing initiative in Port Elizabeth. No previous research known to the researcher explored how this particular tenant community in Port Elizabeth perceived or experienced their social housing setting. The objectives of this study aimed to explore and describe the initial perceptions tenants had of living in social housing, their current experiences of living in social housing and their perceptions on how their living experience can be enhanced. These objectives were then broken down into semi-structured interview questions which allowed the researcher to explore the community’s perceptions and experiences. The exploratory and descriptive research design was most applicable to the research study.

Social housing in South Africa is well researched. The South African Social Housing Act is very clear in its explanation of its aims. Additionally, various writers have researched social housing in South Africa. However, what makes this research study novel, is that the perceptions and experiences of social housing tenants in South Africa and in particular at this social housing initiative, have not been explored. The latter makes this design exploratory as no previous research known to the researcher exists on these perceptions and experiences.

3.4. Entry to the research site

The research proposal was submitted and presented to the Nelson Mandela University Departmental Research Committee for approval. Upon approval, it was submitted to the Faculty Post Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences as well as to Nelson Mandela University's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher had to make some minor corrections to the proposal and after approval from the Ethics Committee, was issued with reference number, H19-HEA-SDP-008. The researcher received a proposal approval letter which indicated that she had one calendar year from the date of issue to collect the data. Following this, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Imizi Housing gave written consent (Appendix 3) for the researcher to enter the research site. The research study could continue without approval from Imizi Housing's Board of Directors (Appendix 2). After the CEO approved, the researcher recruited participants one week before data collection, by posting a written letter (Appendix 4) in each prospective participant's post box. The letter was also displayed at the main entrance, main exit, pedestrian turnstile as well as the main office of the security guards at the project. The voluntary participation of tenants was requested. Tenants were informed that an experienced social worker that was not in the employment of Imizi would conduct interviews the following weekend. Before this could happen, tenants were requested to sign a consent form in which they give their permission to participate in the study (Appendix 5).

3.5. Researcher bias

To eliminate researcher bias, the interviews were carried out by an independent field worker on a Saturday, Sunday and Friday. The on-site office is closed, and no Imizi staff is on duty during weekends. The fieldworker has no affiliation with Imizi Housing and is an experienced, mature social worker who has interviewed children and adults during various interventions. Before the study commenced, the researcher briefed the independent field worker extensively regarding its purpose, the importance of informed consent, confidentiality and the option of participants to withdraw their consent within two weeks after participating in the study. The researcher was of the

opinion that participants would have felt less restricted and threatened if an independent fieldworker conducted the semi-structured interviews, rather than the researcher who is employed by Imizi Housing. The researcher could have been subjective had she conducted the interviews. The participants' responses might not have been as truthful if the researcher posed the questions because of her affiliation to Imizi and fear of consequences if they said "the wrong thing."

The initial plan was that a PhD psychology graduate would conduct the interviews with the participants due to his extensive research experience. He was unavailable during the time of data collection; hence the social worker/fieldworker conducted the interviews with participants.

3.6. Research population, sampling procedure and sampling techniques

The research population refers to all the individuals with which the problem is concerned. The social housing initiative where the research study took place has a total of 347 apartments. The Property Manager of Imizi Housing estimated that these units are occupied by approximately 1, 050 tenants, inclusive of adults and children. This total represents the research population.

As there was not enough time to study the entire population, the research was conducted with a representative sample of the population. The fieldworker was given a list of all the apartments at the project. The layout of the project is of such a nature that the apartments are divided into 29 blocks that consist of 3 levels. The list that was given to the fieldworker contained the unit numbers and the duration of the tenants' stay at the project. There was no indication of race, gender, age or educational background which meant that all participants had an equal chance of being included. The independent fieldworker arrived at the research site on a Saturday. She had a voice recorder, copies of the consent forms for participants to sign as well as the copies of the letter that was placed in each letterbox informing all tenants about the research study. The fieldworker checked for reply slips in the information box in front of the on-site office.

One female tenant left a reply slip and the fieldworker contacted her telephonically. After the interview with this tenant, the fieldworker walked around the project to scout for participants. She knocked on doors, but tenants were reluctant to participate and said that they were either busy, did not have the time or were on their way out. By walking around the 29 blocks, the fieldworker came across a female tenant who was sitting in front of her unit. She interviewed the tenant outside her unit in the wind, on her balcony. Two more participants were married and were interviewed together. A total of five participants were interviewed on that Saturday.

After conducting the interviews on that Saturday, the fieldworker received a cell phone call from a visually impaired tenant who indicated that he wanted to form part of the study. The tenant obtained the fieldworker's contact number from the initial letter that was left in his post box. Notifying tenants of the research study and requesting their participation placing the letters in their post boxes, paid off in this case. The fieldworker returned the next day (Sunday) and interviewed the participant. She spent an afternoon at the project and managed to interview two more participants.

During the two days, eight participants were interviewed. The ninth participant enquired about the study during the following week. The fieldworker interviewed the female participant one week after the initial interviews. Data saturation was reached because the female participant's responses were similar to most of the participants who participated in the research study.

Through volunteer sampling, participants could decide out of their own free will whether they wanted to participate in the research study. For this research study, it seems as if volunteer and convenience sampling were, to some extent not useful in the selection of participants. Although participants were selected based on their convenience and availability at the time the fieldworker was on-site, it was extremely challenging to get participants who were willing to form part of the study. The reason for this could be that tenants were apprehensive about participating due to lack of trust and in fear of the consequences. Another reason is that there were no

incentives for participation. Participants had nothing to gain from participating in the study.

Additionally, tenants possibly felt more comfortable declining to participate as they were in familiar surroundings and not under any obligation to form part of the study. From her list of leaseholders, the fieldworker selected participants who lived at the project for one year or longer. The assumption was that participants who lived at the project for one year or more were able to provide richer information. This non-probability sampling method reduced the population from which the sample could be drawn. Perhaps tenants who lived at the project for less than a year had meaningful experiences that could have contributed towards the research data.

3.7. Data collection method

The fieldworker conducted semi-structured one-to-one interviews as a data collection method. The fieldworker had an additional copy of the letter requesting participants to volunteer for the research study – in the event a person did not access their post box or see the notices at the entrance of the project. She also had copies of the consent forms for participants to sign and copies of the interview schedule with her.

The fieldworker had to establish rapport with participants before commencing with interviews. This was done by introducing herself, stating that she was a social worker with extensive experience and that confidentiality would be upheld throughout the research process. She familiarised herself with the content of the letter that was issued to tenants a week before data collection. The content of the letter was explained to all participants in the study. She reassured everyone that they would remain anonymous and that Imizi Housing would not have access to their identities. The fieldworker clarified with all participants whether they were aware of the research project beforehand. She requested their consent to participate in the study as well as to audio record them. She explained the aim and objectives of the study.

Furthermore, the fieldworker emphasised that she could be contacted in confidence should they wish to withdraw their interviews within two weeks after giving consent. Interviews were conducted in the comfortable and relaxed space of the participants'

units; therefore rapport could be established relatively easy. Her probing questions provided detailed insight into a participant's beliefs or perceptions (Greeff, 2011: 351). While probing, the fieldworker made notes of non-verbal behaviour of participants. The researcher found the fieldworker's interview notes helpful as she could better understand the context of a participant's response.

Although the primary language in which the interviews were conducted was English, three participants indicated that they felt more comfortable speaking Afrikaans. The fieldworker has command over both English and Afrikaans. It would have been more ideal if the fieldworker could speak all the languages of the participants. This would have allowed participants to express their thoughts and experiences easily and allow for even richer responses.

At the end of the interview, the fieldworker evaluated participants' experiences of the interview process. The fieldworker asked each participant what their thoughts were about the questions that were asked. Every participant responded that the questions were easy to understand. Some participants expected the questions to be challenging to answer but had a sense of relief because of the simplicity of the questions. Most participants said that they felt relaxed and non-threatened by the field worker. The latter clarified with all the participants whether they felt comfortable with the questions and if they had any additional information they wished to add. In most cases, the participants said that they were satisfied with the questions and how the fieldworker interacted with them. In the remaining cases, participants did not comment. Utilising an experienced female fieldworker, was conducive for the research study. She had a non-threatening nature, was non-judgmental towards participants and could establish rapport reasonably easily.

The fieldworker and the researcher would meet at the end of each day to discuss significant observations during the interview process with participants. These discussions were valuable because the researcher was able to determine whether or not data saturation was reached.

3.8. Pilot study

A pilot study allows the researcher to establish whether the data collection instrument needs to be adjusted or whether changes need to be made to it. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with two pilot study participants of different gender and age. The pilot study participants were representative of the target population. The researcher made notes of non-verbal behaviour and significant observations during the interviews. Participants indicated that the questions were straightforward and easy to understand. Unfortunately, the researcher failed to operate the audio recorder and therefore, these interviews were not recorded. A third interview was then arranged and successfully recorded and transcribed. The recording was shared with the research supervisor and permission was granted for the researcher (and field worker) to proceed with the semi-structured interviews.

The researcher is familiar with most of the population of the social housing initiative. This meant that she was also familiar with the pilot study participants. It is the researcher's perception that the participants in the pilot study were either reluctant to express themselves fully during the questions, or they expressed themselves with the aim that their concerns will come to the attention of management. Making use of an independent fieldworker was beneficial because the research process could have been hampered resulting in unreliable data.

3.9. Data analysis

The fieldworker audio recorded the interviews and made notes about the primary data that was collected. The researcher and fieldworker discussed the notes and observations that the fieldworker made during the interviews, at the end of each day. The fieldworker alerted the researcher to participants' non-verbal behaviour which the audio recorder could not pick up. The recorded interviews were forwarded to a transcriber at the end of each day after data was collected. As a result, the researcher could familiarise herself with the content of the transcribed interviews

much quicker. The transcriber had to sign a form indicating that she would not divulge any of the information shared by participants during their interviews.

The researcher followed Charlesworth's (cited in Cassim, 2017: 138-139) five steps of qualitative data analysis which overlaps with Tesch's (in Schurink et al., 2011: 404) eight steps of data analysis in that:

- **Step 1:** The researcher read and reread all the transcripts to obtain an overall image of the responses of participants. While reading the transcripts, the researcher highlighted specific phrases and wrote down observations in the margins. The researcher and the research supervisor analysed the first transcript together to ensure that the correct process was followed.
- **Step 2:** Each transcript that contained the responses of the participants were highlighted in a different colour. The use of different colours ensured anonymity. Phrases, summaries of the responses of the participants and several key words of a similar nature or theme were grouped, leading to several different subgroups. The researcher made use of stick-it notes and flip chart to have a visual representation of a subgroup. Each subgroup was given a name, based on its theme, sub-theme and categories.
- **Step 3:** A list was made of all the themes or topics. The researcher clustered similar themes or topics. Various codes that emerged from all participants' responses were listed. Codes that covered similar issues were put together, creating a broader code, in order to make the analysis easier. Categories were then defined for each code, into which data could easily be assigned.
- **Step 4:** The researcher applied the list of themes or topics to the data. The themes or topics were abbreviated as codes, which are written next to the appropriate segments of the transcripts. The researcher tried out this preliminary organising scheme to see whether new categories and codes emerged.
- **Step 5:** The researcher found the most descriptive wording for the themes or topics and categorised them. Lines were drawn between categories to show the relationships.

- **Step 6:** The researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetised the codes.
- **Step 7:** The data material belonging to each category was assembled, and a preliminary analysis was performed;
- **Step 8:** The researcher re-coded existing material where necessary after consultation with an independent coder who coded the same transcripts.

By following these steps of data analysis, the process of formulating themes and sub-themes became much more manageable.

3.10. Verifying findings

Validity and reliability in qualitative research are often questioned by positivists who rely on scientific evidence (Shenton, 2004: 63). The researcher followed Lincoln and Guba's criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research as proposed by both Shenton (2004: 64-72) and Schurink et al. (2011: 419-421):

3.10.1. Credibility / authenticity

The fieldworker made written notes of significant observations and non-verbal behaviours of the participants in the study. The researcher and fieldworker discussed the process of each interview at the end of the day. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed to reflect data collected from participants. Credibility or internal validity was established since the researcher followed a well-established research methodology. Participants were requested to participate voluntarily and had the option to refuse to partake in the study. There were no incentives to participate in the study. The result was that only individuals who genuinely wanted to participate in the study were included. This was demonstrated by the participant who left her consent letter in the information box for the field worker to contact her, the participant who contacted the fieldworker via WhatsApp and the participant who notified the Imizi site office that she wished to be included in the study. The fieldworker, who is experienced, is an instrument of data collection and further lent credibility to the study.

3.10.2. Transferability

To replicate the exact population might be a limitation of the study and might hinder transferability in line with qualitative research. However, the description of the research methodology and the criteria for inclusion of participants will provide information to transfer research findings to another setting.

3.10.3. Dependability

To enhance dependability, the research report contains a detailed description of the research design and its implementation. A thorough explanation of how data was gathered and a review of the research process was given should the study be repeated in the same or a similar setting.

3.10.4. Confirmability

Confirmability or objectivity is when the researcher offers evidence that verifies the findings through auditing (Schurink et al., 2011: 421). The researcher ensured that the findings were a reflection of the participants' contribution or feedback. Detailed written notes were taken, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed as evidence that the researcher did not influence the findings. In addition to the researcher analysing the data, an independent coder was utilised to corroborate findings.

3.11. Ethical considerations

Once ethical clearance was obtained, the researcher adhered to the Code of Conduct for Researchers at the Nelson Mandela University and the Nelson Mandela University Policy on Research Ethics.

The researcher consulted the South African Department of Health's guidelines on "Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures" (2015: 14-22), The Belmont Report's "Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research – 1979" and Strydom's (2011: 115-126) ethical issues during the research study:

3.11.1. Avoidance of harm

The Ethics in Health Research guidelines (2015: 20) state that research should try and improve the human condition and that counselling should be made available to the participants if necessary. None of the participants were harmed during the process of data collection. The fieldworker assured participants that they would remain anonymous and that their confidentiality would be upheld. Although emotional harm was not anticipated, debriefing services by the on-site social worker (not the researcher) permanently employed at the project, were available if any participant experienced any emotional discomfort. The field worker is an experienced social worker and equipped to contain participants' emotions immediately had they experienced any feelings of discomfort. Some participants expressed their satisfaction with how the fieldworker conducted the interview process. Some were complimentary of the respect and dignity the fieldworker displayed towards them. None of the participants indicated that they experienced emotional trauma and therefore were not referred to a counselling professional.

3.11.2. Voluntary participation

To the researcher's knowledge, participation in this research study was completely voluntary. Participants received written letters in their post boxes beforehand, requesting their voluntary participation. The letters contained the contact details of the fieldworker. One participant dropped her reply slip in the information box. Another participant contacted the fieldworker on her cell phone to indicate that he wanted to participate in the study. The last participant approached the Imizi office and said that she wanted to form part of the study. These are indications that participants volunteered to form part of the research study.

3.11.3. Informed consent

Written informed consent is also referred to as voluntary participation in Strydom (2011: 117). The fieldworker obtained participants' written informed consent before the interview commenced. The participants had a week to familiarise themselves with the content of the letter before giving their informed consent. The fieldworker

explained the content of the letter to the participants at the beginning of the interview. Participants were thoroughly informed before signing consent. The fieldworker showed respect for the rights of individuals by explaining the aim of the research, how long the interview would last and what would happen during the interview. She furthermore gave an overview of her professional experience so that participants could fully understand in order to give their voluntary written informed consent. To further highlight confidentiality, participants were encouraged to sign the consent form under an alias.

3.11.4. Deception of subjects and / or respondents

The letter that was issued to participants beforehand explained that the researcher was researching the perceptions and experiences of tenants at the social housing initiative. It stated that the fieldworker would collect data and conduct interviews on behalf of the researcher. The fieldworker was honest and informed participants of the purpose of the research and what the data will be used for. At the beginning and end of each interview, participants were asked if they had any questions about the research should they need more information. The fieldworker explained that the researcher will have access to the transcripts and audio recordings, but that they would remain anonymous. Therefore, the participants were not deceived in any manner.

3.11.5. Violation of privacy / anonymity / confidentiality

The fieldworker protected the privacy and identity of participants as outlined in the Ethics in Health Research Guidelines (2015: 20). Participants could use pseudonyms and could sign using an alias. During the interviews, participants' names were not mentioned, thus ensuring confidentiality. The fieldworker did not know the participants which had less impact on bias towards the inclusion of specific individuals. The researcher drew up a contract with the fieldworker (Appendix 7) to ensure that participants' information remained confidential. Participants were interviewed in the comfort of their own homes which further enhanced confidentiality. The fieldworker conducted the interviews outside working hours when the researcher and Imizi staff members were not on-site. Although the researcher also transcribed a

few transcripts, an independent transcriber was contracted (Appendix 8) to safeguard the privacy of participants further. This ensured that the researcher did not know who participated in the study.

3.11.6. Compensation

Participants were not compensated for participating in this research study. As per The Ethics in Health Research Guidelines (2015: 20), participants should not have additional costs when participating in a research project. Participants were interviewed in their apartments and did not incur any costs such as transport. Though one participant enquired at the Imizi office, whether they would be compensated for partaking in the research project, the participant continued with the research without compensation. The fieldworker was remunerated for the time spent on the research project.

3.11.7. Actions and competence of researchers

The researcher is capable, honest and experienced enough to conduct the research study. Literature from authors and other researchers have been acknowledged to prevent plagiarism. The researcher is aware of her ethical responsibility from the start of the research process until the writing of the research findings. Though the possibility exists that the researcher will be able to identify participants based on the transcripts of the interviews, the anonymity and confidentiality of each participant will be upheld.

3.11.8. Cooperation with contributors and sponsors

The researcher is employed by Imizi Housing. Imizi is the primary sponsor of this research project. In an agreement between the researcher and Imizi, it was outlined that the latter is responsible for registration and tuition costs. The researcher funds all the other additional costs in fulfilment of the Master's degree. The fieldworker as well as Imizi Housing are acknowledged in this dissertation. Monette et al. (in Strydom, 2011: 124) state that everyone involved in the research process should be included in a written agreement between the parties involved. The fieldworker, the

transcriber as well as the independent coder, have a written agreement which states that participants will remain anonymous and their information confidential.

3.12. Publication of the findings

Research findings will be available in written format. A summary of the findings will be published in the monthly newsletter of the social housing initiative. A copy of the findings will be available at the Nelson Mandela University Library for public access. Another copy will be available at the Imizi Housing onsite office for access by the sponsor and participants in the research study.

3.13. Conclusion

Chapter Three outlined the research journey that was followed during the research study. It described the rationale for a qualitative approach and exploratory and descriptive research design. The research approach and design proved more suitable for this study. The chapter continues to describe in detail how the fieldworker went about recruiting participants for the study. The participants were representative of the research population and formed part of non-probability sampling. The former participated voluntarily, and the fieldworker employed convenient sampling. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Ethical factors impacting on participants, such as informed consent and confidentiality, were discussed. In conclusion, participants of the study will be able to access the findings at the on-site Imizi office and the library of the Nelson Mandela University.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter, chapter three, elaborated on the data collection and analysis procedures adopted in this study. This chapter thus presents and interprets the findings resulting from the data collected following the procedures outlined in chapter three. The interpretation is carried out to understand the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative.

To accomplish this goal, the following objectives needed to be achieved:

- To explore and describe social housing tenants' general perceptions about living in a social housing initiative.
- To explore and describe the benefits and challenges of living in a social housing initiative.
- To explore and describe the perceptions of tenants on how their living experience at a social housing initiative can be enhanced.

The findings will be presented in themes, sub-themes and categories. Themes refer to phrases which describe broader ideas and present data on an interpretive level (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017). While categories group together codes that are similar in content or context. Codes are phrases or words that represent a single idea in one or two words (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017).

4.2. Demographic information of participants

Nine participants (three Black females, one Black male, two White males, one White female and two Coloured females) took part in the research study (Table 2.). Their ages range from mid-twenties to above 80 years of age. All participants had been living at the social housing project for more than one year. Participants above 50 years of age have lived at the project since its inception in 2012 and receive a government pension. Three participants are physically challenged and included a

visually impaired male, one physically disabled female and one male who used a wheelchair. These participants all live in ground floor units and have been living at the project since its inception phase.

Table 2: Demographic information of participants

Race		
Black 4 (3 Female, 1 Male)	White 3 (2 Male, 1 Female)	Coloured 2 (2 Females)
Persons with disability living in ground floor units		
1 Physically Disabled Female	1 Visually Impaired Male	1 Male who uses a wheelchair
Unit Size		
Bachelor 1	One Bedroom 1	Two Bedrooms 7
Age		
21 – 30 3	31 – 49 2	Above 50 4

4.3. Outline of emerging themes, sub-themes and categories in this study of the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative

Table 3. Indicates that three themes emerged during data collection. Theme One looks at factors that impacted tenants' move to the social housing initiative, while Theme Two captures the general perceptions and experiences of tenants about living in an SHI. Theme Two is in response to Objective One, which is similar. Theme Three covers tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at the SHI and is akin to Objective Three.

Table 3: Themes, Sub-themes and Categories

THEME	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES
1. Factors impacting on tenants' move to the social housing initiative	1.1. Influence of acquaintances or circumstances of tenants before moving to the social housing initiative	1.1.1. Family and friends as referral systems
		1.1.2. Relocation
	1.2. Tenants' knowledge about social housing before moving to the social housing initiative	1.2.1. No knowledge versus informed
		1.2.2. Misconceptions about social housing
	1.3. Previous living conditions of tenants	1.3.1. Space
		1.3.2. Affordability versus unaffordability
2. Tenants' general perceptions and experiences about living in a social housing initiative	2.1. Benefits of living at a social housing initiative	2.1.1. Sense of Community
		2.1.2. Cultural diversity
		2.1.3. Experiences of services in general
	2.2. Challenges of living in social housing initiative	2.2.1. Community or Societal challenges
		2.2.2. Racism
3. Tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at social housing initiative	3.1. Services available to tenants at social housing initiative	3.1.1. Perceptions of services in general
		3.1.2. Maintaining current services levels
	3.2. Personal experiences	3.2.1. The expectation of rent to own
		3.2.2. Humane versus inhumane approach to tenants

4.4. Theme One: Factors impacting on tenants' move to the social housing initiative

Individuals are prompted to become tenants of social housing for several reasons. Whether single, in a relationship or a family living in a shelter, different motives lead to people choosing social housing as a rental option.

Theme One emerged in response to the objective which explores and describes social housing tenants' general perceptions about living in a social housing initiative. This theme comprises of three sub-themes, namely 'the influence of family', 'acquaintances or circumstances of tenants' as well as 'tenants' knowledge about social housing before moving to a social housing initiative'. The third sub-theme focuses on the previous living conditions of tenants.

4.4.1. Sub-Theme 1.1: Influence of acquaintances or circumstances of tenants before moving to the social housing initiative

Various factors led to participants choosing social housing as a rental housing option. Friends and family members influenced research participants, while the circumstances surrounding the location of their homes took a preference for others. The prospect of a safer living environment, moving out of a shelter and the opportunity to move from the rural areas to the city were some of the other catalysts to living in a social housing initiative.

4.4.2. Category 1.1.1: Family and friends as referral systems

Participants' mentioned that their children either lived at the project already or recommended that they apply for accommodation at the project:

A.8. "And my daughter was here, and she said they got social housing and I must try. So, I came through, and I was fortunate enough to get it. I've been here six years now; I can't believe it!"

D.88. "Look, we stayed at first at the thing...uhm...Vistarus. We stayed there about twelve years...And then my daughter heard...about this place and then we came here."

Coulter and Scott (2015) propose that older individuals move home because of family and friends, health and retirement. Wiesel et al. (2012: 46) emphasise that the reason for these moves are to be closer to family.

Another participant's family member also influenced their decision:

F.2. '...it's only when my sister's child uhm moved. (Researcher: Okay.)...So, he, he came and he, he got a flat here, and he was staying here and he said it's nice, it's quiet.'

Acquaintances of participants had a role in them deciding to move to social housing:

E.74. "It was just a word upon word hearing from somebody who says, no I know of a friend who lives in (Project Name) Link and you would (inaudible). Oh, I've heard about this place."

Family, friends or acquaintances had an impact on participants' decision to move to affordable rental housing. Wiesel et al. (2012: 3) mention further factors that influence individuals to apply was a shortage of affordable housing, referrals from others as well as positive comments about social housing. The influence of relatives on residential mobility seems to be a global phenomenon as highlighted by Inchauste, Karver, Kim and Jelil (2018: 95) when they explore housing, mobility and welfare in their World Bank Report on countries in the European Union (inclusive of Northern Europe, Continental Europe, Southern Europe, Central and Eastern Europe). Participants are more likely to trust the opinion of family or friends because a trust relationship has been established. Jaffe (2018) believes that due to trust, people want to be part of a relationship and are, therefore, willing to depend on each other. In this instance, participants rely on the input of family and acquaintances, possibly because they wanted to maintain the relationship that had been formed. According to the Sense of Community Framework, trust is one of ten attributes for building and rebuilding of the community (Gardner, 1991 in Wright, 2004: 21). Maslow's hierarchy of needs is apt in this context as the participants' social needs (belonging, love, family) are met through their interaction with family (Aanstoos, 2013).

4.4.2.1. Category 1.1.2: Relocation

The presence of gun violence led to one participant choosing social housing as a place to live:

B.196. "And, the mere fact it's uhm in the western side of Port Elizabeth. Uh, we know, I'm not judging the Northern Areas but life; you can't even stand by your gate anymore. There's shootings and thus far everything, your safety is under control here."

If participants were exposed to crime in the areas where they used to live, the level of safety at the social housing project played a role in their decision to move. Personal security is often compromised when living in affordable private rentals, mainly for older single persons (Wiesel et al., 2012: 35), hence proper safety measures in social housing are seen as a draw card for tenants.

The opportunity to stay closer to work influenced participants' decision to apply to live at a social housing initiative.

D.95. "...And it is nearer to work. And she works just here, here at Food Lovers Market. Uh, Seventh Avenue. Then we came here, and we got a place immediately."

B.8. "Uhm, I think uhm especially in a prestige area having uhm, uh low-cost housing in a prestige area. I think that was a wonderful idea and also the mere fact that it was centralised, that it was on route with the shops and the, and the uhm the shopping centres. I think that was a brilliant idea."

Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008 (viii) states that social housing should promote, "The suitable location of social housing stock in respect of employment opportunities." Furthermore, the Act 2008 2 (1)(b) seems to respond to the need of participants in the low to middle-income group in that it "supports the economic development of low to middle-income communities by providing housing close to jobs, markets and transport and by stimulating job opportunities..."

How far away the social housing project is located from perceived crime areas, impacted participant decisions to live at the project. Participants seem more likely to choose social housing if it is safe and further away from high crime areas. Ngwenya's (2016: 96) study of the population of Diepsloot and Mamelodi in Gauteng, found that 87 percent of the respondents were willing to move to social housing if it was safe and of better quality. Moreover, participants are attracted to the affordable rental option if they can identify with tenants from their ethnic group or if there are people they know from where they lived previously. This housing option also becomes more appealing if participants are near their place of employment, malls and shopping centres. According to Aanstoos (2013), these elements form part of Maslow's hierarchy of needs - a sense of security (safety, a steady job, insurance). These different reasons for moving to social housing link to the social constructionism theory which emphasise that a person's reality is influenced by their history.

4.4.3. Sub-theme 1.2: Tenants' knowledge about social housing before moving to the social housing initiative

In spite of the draft Social Housing Policy of May 2005 and the Social Housing Act Number 16 being gazetted in November 2008 and thus in the public domain, participants' knowledge levels about social housing before they moved to the project, varied. Participants' level of knowledge was either non-existent or low. Only two participants knew exactly what social housing was before they became tenants.

4.4.3.1. Category 1.2.1: No knowledge versus informed

Some participants had no previous knowledge about social housing before they moved into the social housing project:

A.4. "I had no thoughts I'd never even heard about it."

F.2. "No, I didn't know about the, a... about the thing..."

E.78. "So, I was like no okay, let me take a step forward coming here and finding out myself because nobody knows what's going on."

Social Constructionism (Galbin, 2014) asserts that people's reality comes from learning through social interaction in groups. Their knowledge is shaped by their history and the culture of their people. Therefore, their reality is formed by their relations with others. Hence knowledge and reality will evolve continuously. Participants' knowledge levels shifted from no knowledge to more knowledgeable as they obtained more information about social housing. Various sources of information affect the knowledge level and perception of social housing of participants. As their knowledge levels shift, so does their reality which makes the Social Constructionism framework appropriate in this context.

Other participants' knowledge level about social housing was slightly higher:

C.12. "I mean, I had like glimpses of it, it's like that I knew what, the motive or why was it created. I didn't know that at first, but I had like glimpses of things..."

D.10. "Uhm, it's for uh housing is for people that don't have enough money."

This level of knowledge is similar to the participants of Wiesel et al.'s (2012: 50) study. Many had little knowledge about how social housing works and where to obtain information about it.

Only two participants demonstrated an understanding of the concept of social housing, which the Social Housing Act 16 of 2008 (b) describes as "a rental or co-operative housing option for low to medium-income households at a level of scale and built form which requires institutionalised management and which is provided by social housing institutions or other delivery agents in approved projects in designated restructuring zones with the benefit of public funding as contemplated in this Act":

B.2. "What I understood about it was that it was low-cost housing."

G.4. "I knew that it's actually uhm for a lower income group of people."

Social Constructionism states that individuals learn from each other. Therefore, participants with no or minimal knowledge of social housing might gain a better understanding when they interact with others who are more knowledgeable in their community, thus contributing towards an increase or evolvement of their understanding of social housing. Low knowledge levels about the concept of social housing could be attributed to social housing policies, not reaching people at a grassroots level. Sipungu and Nleya (2016: 2), in their research on the dysfunctionalities within the social rental housing sector in East London, found significant discrepancies between the official policy of social housing and the implementation thereof. It could also be that the mediums which national, provincial and local government structures as well as the social housing initiative use, to create awareness around social housing, are not effective in reaching its intended beneficiaries. Consumer education appears to be ineffective.

4.4.3.2 Category 1.2.2: Misconceptions about social housing

The Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008 is very clear that social housing is an affordable rental housing option for low to middle-income groups. Participants have misconceptions about social housing, predominantly about ownership. These misconceptions might be exacerbated by their lack of knowledge, as outlined in the previous category. Some of the misconceptions expressed by participants include:

B.4. "The rent will not go up every year uhm, and finally after a certain period of time living here, these flats will become our flats, but that never transpired."

B.32. "...And, there was also, a document stating that uh after a certain number of years, people will get these, these flats but then I think it was the CEO, I'm speaking under correction. But, somebody that was high up said, no, they never mentioned anything like that."

E.242. "So, it's, it's not fair to allow old people to rent at least because we see that most of the people that we're dealing with, it's old people. People

with families, people who want to create their lives, people who want to be independent.... If we are gonna keep on renting this, where are we gonna belong?"

G.88. "We don't wanna give it to you. So, what we're going to do is, for you guys that's low-income people, that qualifies for a government subsidy, let alone an RDP or whatever [noise in background] - you've already uh rented here for ten years...Let's say they must put a timeframe to it.... Let us own this."

Participants seem to perceive social housing as a rent-to-own option. This perception creates an expectation which might lead to dissatisfaction. Ndinda, Hongoro, Mustapha and Davids (2013) conducted a case study on a social housing initiative in Atlantis, Cape Town. Individuals in the case study who qualified for social housing were to rent the unit for four years from the Housing Association of Blaauwberg (HAB) before they could apply for a loan to purchase it. Due to 85 percent of tenants defaulting on their rental payments, many did not qualify for a loan. Tenants who did not pay rent, influenced others not to pay, which led to a rent boycott. This need for ownership is further highlighted in the Genesis Analytics (2019) report. A large proportion of the participants in the social housing study conducted by Genesis Analytics (2019: 40-41) wanted to own their units. The researchers caution that the desire for ownership coupled with political influence, could lead to rental boycotts.

One participant was under the impression that she would not qualify to live at the project because of the perceived higher quality of tenants' living standards. The Social Housing Act, 16 of 2008 1(c), seems to succeed in its promotion of, "the creation of quality living environments for low-income residents."

E.60. "Oh, I thought it was for others, for people who can afford it, people who, who, who are in high places."

4.4.4. Sub-theme 1.3: Previous living conditions of tenants

This section refers to the different housing types that tenants lived in before moving to social housing and the higher rentals they paid despite having less space. Before they became tenants of the social housing initiative, one participant lived in several different flats in different provinces, and one shared a house with others, another lived in student accommodation, a family's abode was a shelter while another family stayed in a school building that was converted into a block of flats. Social housing appears to attract people from different spheres of society.

F.76. "Yes, uh I used to stay uhm, what is the flat next to the Edward Hotel?... (Researcher: The Donkin Reserve?) That, old that school, that place used to be a school, it looks like a church, it's also next to the Edward Hotel..."

A.26. "...my husband liked to move around. We've been to lots and lots of different places and lots of different kind of places uh to stay in."

D.88. "Look, we stayed at first at the thing...uhm...Vistarus. We stayed there for about twelve years..."

Most participants view their previous living conditions as less affordable than their present circumstances at the social housing initiative. At the time of moving to the social housing initiative, the rental amount seemed more affordable as compared to their former place of abode. Though the increasing rental of social housing is of concern to tenants, it seems more affordable and more spacious for the rental amounts they are currently paying.

4.4.4.1. Category 1.3.1: Space

Most participants are impressed with the bigger size of their current units at the social housing initiative as compared to less space at their previous place of abode.

A.24. *“...my husband liked to move around. We’ve been to lots and lots of different places and lots of different kind of places uh to stay in. But this was my first time ever, and I was so impressed when I got here. To see it’s big and spacious...”*

D.110. *“That is a small place. There we paid for one, one bedroom, one five, neh? One bedroom because they divided the two bedrooms into the kitchen and then they had a small living room. This is much, much more because the rooms are big and comfortable. It is everything.”*

Low to middle-income group earners are less likely to afford spacious private rentals due to financial limitations (Wiesel et al., 2013). Most participants had less space at their previous place of abode than at the social housing initiative. Yet the rental amount at their former accommodation was more than what they paid at the social housing project.

4.4.4.2. Category 1.3.2: Affordability versus unaffordability

Some participants expressed that their previous place of abode was unaffordable:

E.10. *“So, it was not a problem for me; I applied here. It took me about a month to get approved. For me, it was a little bit. The amount is too much because at times when you are renting under a landlord...They...constantly want you to move out as soon as possible.”*

One participant could not find affordable private accommodation before moving to social housing:

A.38. *“As I say - my daughter - I was living with her in East London, it was on my last move, was going overseas, and I had to find a place, and I couldn’t find anything that I could afford to buy, I mean not buy to stay.”*

Participants mentioned that the unaffordability of their previous rentals led them to apply for a unit at the social housing project. At the time of application, the rental

amount at the social housing initiative seemed affordable for some participants. While rentals at the social housing project seemed previously accessible, participants have different perceptions about whether the rentals of the social housing units are affordable at present.

Some participants are of the strong opinion that rentals in social housing are reasonably priced.

A.38. "The concept is fantastic because what I like about it, maybe it's changed but when I started what I learned these flats are not priced per flat, they're priced per your salary. So what I pay for mine, my neighbour might not pay the same, might pay less or more depending on the income, and that is very, very fair. I think that's absolutely amazing because, uhm you know everywhere else your flats are that much, finish and klaar, your houses are that much now they take your bank statements, they find out what kind of money you get and they say well this is what it'll cost you, a lovely surprise."

E.88. "Right now that I'm in the social housing, I'm actually grateful because so many people that I meet they get helped, for instance, people who were retired. You know? They, they deserve at least to get an amount where they say, okay this is at least affordable because outside, in our outside world, the real outside world is extra expensive in everything that we do. So, at least right now, it, it accommodates everyone even if you are not rich, actually those ones who are in the lower class. They are the one that actually be able to say now, okay at least now I have a home, you know?"

Ramphal (2000:16) conducted a case study on the Hawaii apartments relating to social housing as a means to low income housing in the Durban inner city. Eighty percent of the participants between the ages of 21 and 40 found that social housing was affordable to them. The research concluded that monthly rentals were affordable as compared to previous private rentals, participants were able to afford more due to reduced rentals, and their cost of living was lower than before. Ramphal (2000), however, noted that the limitations to his study were that participants were not

honest about their income, the number of people living in the unit as well as other questions about them.

Although its affordability was a drawback, participants indicated their present concern about the increasing rentals in social housing might lead to them becoming too expensive and unaffordable, thus forcing tenants to move out:

B.38. "My thoughts only changed in the way that the rent goes up. Every year that is my concern...And, I'm just asking myself the question, some people that are pensioners...Finally, if it goes on at this rate, eventually these people will have to move out and look for something else. And, nowadays rent is expensive. So, that is my concern for now."

D.4. "...I'm telling you, it's expensive, ja. I thought it will be much cheaper. But, really it's expensive."

D.20. "The way the rent is now, it's more than your pension now."

G.196. "But, the fact remains is, this is a social housing project, but your rent still goes up every year. So...what's gonna happen; you're basically gonna, after a while you're gonna move yourself out of the place. Because you won't be able to afford it anymore."

Most participants viewed their previous rentals or places of abode as unaffordable and as a result, applied for the perceived 'affordable' social housing. Low income, according to Wiesel et al. (2012: 3) is a determining factor when applying for social housing. Some low-income participants could likely afford the rental amount when they first moved in, which made it more affordable. It is also probable that the earnings of low-income groups do not increase at the same rate as their rental; hence social housing becomes unaffordable after living at the initiative for a more extended period. Khakhi (2009) in Sipungu and Nleya (2016) believe that no housing is affordable for lower income groups, unless it is at no cost to the recipients. In the research conducted by Sipungu and Nleya (2016: 18), the authors noted that a

number of the participants complained about the unaffordability of rentals. They attribute this to "... fewer working hours, unemployment, illness, rent increases and unexpected utility bills" (Sipungu and Nleya, 2016: 19). Onatu (2012: 186) previously claimed that the trend from permanent to contract employment and the HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) pandemic impact on the defaulting, and thus unaffordability of rentals.

Social Constructionism is evident when participants discuss their contrasting views regarding their present affordability (or unaffordability) of social housing. Most participants perceived their previous rentals as unaffordable which prompted the move to social housing. Participants' view on the affordability of rentals seems to be affected by their personal experience, perceptions or employment status. Those who are employed are more inclined to afford the rental, whereas pensioners or recipients of social grants find it unaffordable. There seems to be a perception among participants that rentals in social housing should not increase and thus remain affordable. Participants have moved from unaffordable private rentals to more affordable social housing which then, in turn, became increasingly unaffordable the longer they lived at the initiative.

4.5. Theme Two: Tenants' general perceptions and experiences about living in a social housing initiative

Theme Two looks at participants' thoughts and their experiences after taking occupation of their social housing rental unit. Although differently motivated when they chose social housing, participants' current perceptions and experiences of living at the social housing initiative appear to be very similar.

Theme Two attempts to answer the objective which explores and describes the benefits and challenges of living in a social housing initiative. It comprises of two similar sub-themes, namely the benefits and challenges experienced by tenants living in a social housing initiative.

4.5.1. Sub-theme 2.1: Benefits of living in a social housing initiative

Participants generally have positive experiences of living at the social housing initiative. Individuals have their own unique living experiences but refer to similar aspects or features of the project when discussing the benefits in their living environment. Wright (2004:62) found in his research on a psychological sense of community in living-learning programs and a university as a whole that participants felt more attached to the community if they benefit as a community member from it.

4.5.1.1. Category 2.1.1: Sense of Community

Most participants experienced a sense of safety at the project. When expressing their satisfaction with the level of security, participants mentioned it concerning personal safety, the trust that they have in their neighbours and that children could play in a secure environment.

E.46. "Uh, security. First things first, it's very secured. Uh, even though in the washing line it's written "you, you hang on your own risk". I can say the people that I stay within the building they, they, they are so trustworthy that nobody takes anything from the, from the washing line. So, it's much safer than that, like that, and I can leave my windows and go to work, I'll come back, everything is still, is still secure."

E.94. "It's safe for me to be in a place where I feel at home, and it's neat..."

Upon the researcher enquiring about the sense of safety at the project, one participant responded:

A.66. "I think so, yes you'll get the odd person who will have a fight, and you'll get the odd person who'll maybe get drunk but that's everywhere... But here I found it very pleasant..."

A sense of safety contributes to a sense of community. Chavis, Hogge, McMillan and Wandersman (1986) discussed four elements of a sense of community, namely

membership, influence, integration and fulfilment of needs, as well as a shared emotional connection. These elements were featured in Chapter Two. Membership comprises of boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment and a common symbol system (Chavis et al., 1986). Of relevance is emotional safety, which, according to McMillan and Chavis (1986:10), cited in Dalton (2000: 39) can "...be considered as part of the broader notion of security." Participants in Dalton's (2000) study about factors that influence a psychological sense of community for students living on campus, mentioned the importance of physical security which is linked to emotional safety. Gibbs, Puzanchera, Hanrahan and Giever (1998) cited in Dalton (2000: 7) found that environmental issues such as safety, had a direct effect on emotional well-being. If individuals' personal needs, such as safety and security, are met, they are more inclined to experience positive wellbeing, which in turn leads to an increased sense of community.

Some of the participants' comments on safety include:

B.48. "I love living here. It's a nice place; it's a safe place. Uhm, the people are friendly, the place is child-friendly. I cannot complain. Uhm, we are uhm in a safe environment..."

B.82. "Because there's no gangsters that can hurt me inside of this place...Because there's cameras and this place is well lit."

C. 68. "You have a, a lot of protection. And uhm, in terms of like, basically the whole thing of, of, of people being safe inside..."

The physical elements of the building or the layout of the place and its location can contribute towards an individual experiencing or perceiving a sense of community (Plas and Lewis, 1996 cited Pretty et al., 2006: 11).

One participant, even though concerned about a series of break-ins and an alleged sexual assault, still experienced a sense of safety:

G.170. *"It offers us a safe environment. I, I got uh very concerned at the stage when they started breaking the flats at the back, one year. They started breaking in continuously, but I must say, the safety factor it...makes me feel safe but now also there's another thing that happened which I would like to bring up...There was a story, and I don't know if there's any truth in it. Right?). Last year that a girl was raped in this complex do you know that? (Researcher: No, I don't.) Now, there was a story going between the tenants and I immediately took my phone at the office and I...phoned (Imizi manager) and I asked her...is there any truth in this? And, she couldn't tell me - obviously she had to keep people's uh business confidential or whatever, but I feel it was up to them that they had to call us in for a meeting and say, guys, we can't mention names, this is what happened, and this is what we are doing about it. There was nothing said."*

Although he is concerned about safety, the participant seems to have a shared emotional connection with the community because he remained a tenant after these incidents. When an individual sacrifices their personal comfort for the good of the community, it is an indication of a shared emotional connection with the community (DeVincenzo and Scammon, 2015: 145).

Wiesel et al., (2014: 34) in their research on tenants' motivations for leaving social housing, found that female participants, mostly single parents, moved out because they were concerned about the safety of their children. The researchers added that some participants also exit because of physical violence, verbal abuse or sexual harassment (Wiesel et al., 2014: 33). Though the participant mentioned that he felt safe at the social housing project and that he was uncertain whether the alleged rape took place, a consequence of the story and the break-ins is that other tenants' sense of safety and thus sense of community could be affected which could lead to them moving out of the project.

4.5.1.2. Category 2.1.2: Cultural diversity

Participants have experienced cultural differences in a positive manner:

A.40. *"...I also like the idea there's no uhm culture differences. We've had lots a meetings; we had prayer erh... I only went to one prayer meeting where they had uhm I think it was a Muslim in his long coat, there's been Afrikaans, there was that, there's been a Xhosa it's amazing..."*

A.46. *"I've got Black people, living upstairs. I've got a funny old man living next door. But uhm I rarely had uhm Indian as I say I'm sure he's Muslim. There's another Indian family that I've met here. Uhm there's lots and lots of toffee-nosed English people here too I believe I met one of them. So, it's versatile, and it's lovely..."*

G.22. *"...you learn to deal with so much different people... it becomes, it becomes interesting...but it also teaches you a lesson as to train yourself and even your kids who to deal with and who not to deal with and, and, and, how to actually live in a complex like this.....you have to be how can I say, obser... observing or, and you must be open-minded to take in what's going on around you because you're dealing with different people, different cultures, different ways of doing things."*

Scheepers (2010: 161) argues that "ethnic and cultural intolerance is still alive and well in post-Apartheid South Africa", which is in contrast to how most participants feel about the different cultures and the cultural diversity that presents itself at the social housing project. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) during the 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, defined culture as,

the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, and it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (Del Pilar Riofrío, 2014: 3).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) further expands on culture in that Chapter 2 (31) states that:

1. Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community;
 - (a) to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language; and
 - (b) to form, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society.

Participants in the study generally embraced the different cultures in their community which means that tenants can enjoy practising their culture and religious beliefs without fear of discrimination. The Genesis Analytics (2019: 9) report emphasises that social housing aims to have various races and income levels in the tenant profile so that cultural diversity at a neighbourhood level is promoted.

Commenting on her spiritual life, a participant shared:

B.74. "My spiritual life has grown in this place. I've met a lot of people from different denominations. I've met a lot... uh, a lot of different races. And uh, the mere fact that we can get together on a weekly basis and interact with one another."

McMillan and Chavis (1986: 14) cited in Wright (2004: 16-17), list seven elements of shared emotional connection in the Sense of Community, namely contact hypothesis, quality of interaction, closure to events, shared valent event hypothesis, investment, the effect of honour and humiliation on community members and spiritual bond. The latter can also refer to community members' spiritual connection and is found in some form or another in all communities, denoting "community of spirit" (Bernard, 1973 cited in McMillan and Chavis, 1986:14).

4.5.1.3. Category 2.1.3: Experiences of services in general

Responses from participants regarding their experiences with the client services, property management and community development departments appear to be positive. Most participants reflected on good personal experiences. One participant had the following to say about the property management department:

A.58. "Yes, no I, I think it's absolutely amazing and then of course when they came in with the fingerprint erh security, uhm it must be terrible for these poor old security guys because they gotta contend with all of us (giggles). No, I really enjoy it here... keeps asking me to move, because of my age."

Another participant reflected on their experience with the client services department:

B.110. "I'm happy with the other services. The mere fact that uhm they have the Social Worker...Wonderful lady. Uhm, the mere fact that they have these uh care groups where they uhm get, where the ladies get together...And, you get to know one another. And, that they have activities for, part-time activities for the children. I'm happy with that. Uhm, the client services I cannot complain about that...Because those ladies are on the ball. When you go to the office, and you report something, they're on the ball. They assist you wherever they can. So I, I don't have a problem with that. Uhm, the value that it adds to my life is uhm that I'm in a, I'm in a, in a, in an area where I know I am safe."

The following participant shared their experience regarding their interaction with property management and the on-site social worker:

D.200. "Look here the office people are very friendly and if you, if you go to them with a problem, they solve it and all. They have, they care for the people that live here...The service is very good."

D.280. "Yes, they helped me with my daughter, my daughter...she works outside, then she is here weekends – she became a problem, and then I

went to (the social worker) and (the social worker) sorted it out and everything. And then I told her, okay get yourself a flat, she applied for the flat, and she got a flat...So, yes she stays there, it's also here inside. So, they helped me when I went to the social workers, they spoke to her and told her that she should leave us alone because she was a problem actually. A big problem. But they sorted it out because she had to write a letter about why she went on like that. Now, I do not know what she wrote there, then the other social worker...she said to me that they gave her that flat because they want to monitor her. She is very aggressive, but they help nicely..."

One participant was not aware of the social work services, but could mention services that were coordinated by the social worker:

E.140. "Uh, I know that on a Tuesday we have uh a clinic...Mobile clinic. It comes here. I know that it's for kids, but I know they have uh after classes for people, for kids who have to go for, for aftercare, something similar to that. I think that's as far as I know."

When the researcher enquired about social work services:

E.146. "I only heard from you so, ja."

G.240. "I never have a problem, and I don't know why other tenants say, 'We're struggling to get hold of them, we this, we that', because why you're supposed to build a relationship with them. I'm here since ... 2012 already."

These positive examples can contribute to participants experiencing an enhanced sense of community and social wellbeing. The integration and fulfilment of needs in the Sense of Community theory, not only refers to needs but also suggests those elements desired and valued by individuals (Wright, 2004: 15). In this case, participants valued the services they received from the different departments at the project.

4.5.2. Sub-theme 2.2: Challenges of living in a social housing initiative

All the participants experienced challenges while living at the project; hence a category is dedicated to the discussion thereof. Some participants were cautious about sharing their individual problems with the researcher. Fear of possibly being identified is a likely reason for the hesitance.

Most of the issues experienced by the participants are similar. They relate to problems within the social housing project as well as its surrounding areas.

4.5.2.1. Category 2.2.1: Community or Societal challenges

The following participant was fearful to mention her concern about drug use by youth at the project and gestured to the researcher that she did not want certain sections of the interview to be recorded on audio. She did mention the following:

B.142. "The only challenge that I experience in this place is uhm the guys that have started uh congregating. Congregating and ja (yes) and...Uhm, youngsters, messing up their lives uhm being ensnared in, in drugs. That is a concern."

According to the Genesis Analytics (2019: 51) report, substance abuse is a concern at several social housing projects and is becoming more acceptable since marijuana laws in South Africa have changed.

Participants are satisfied with the level of safety in the project. However, they expressed their worry about the incidents of crime in the area in which the project is situated:

D.151. "They rob you there at the small gate...the small gate as you come in...because they put up the big gates. Because we heard the taxis would go through...And if they go to Walmer Park, then they come through here, but now all of a s...the, gates are closed. Now the people that stay inside

(Project Name), if they go outside, it is very unsafe, just for the transport. Outside where the houses are, there at the houses.”

The participant's experience is per the findings of the Genesis Analytics (2019) report, which states that most social housing projects are often located in high crime areas and are therefore placed close to a police station. This is the case with Imizi Housing project.

Noise is a problem for most of the participants:

A.86. “One of the challenges is, depending on what type of person you are, because if you uhm don't like to meet people, you can feel that there's too many people around and then and things like that, but uhm luckily uhm I am a people person. And I can relate to anybody. If you're hoity toity person or just a little bigot in the street, I can talk to them all, and there, that's me. But I can see it could be a problem for some people. Uhm I used to have a neighbour that get so angry with the children's noise 'don't play here go play that side' (imitating the neighbour's angry voice) children are children they will make a noise you know, but then again I've been lucky I've had sometimes up to thirteen children here.”

D.208. “It is just the noise. The [Laughing] the neighbours here...they do not worry about the people that are here. We, we do not sleep at night. Here at the top, we do not sleep because the children play marbles...Throughout the night, you see the house here at the top? They move wardrobes or don't know what they are moving, furniture, like now, it is quiet...The adults next door, they start on a Thursday, and then they play that music doof-doof music very loud...And that door is open, and then they sing very loud until 3 o'clock in the morning.”

Wiesel et al. (2014) attribute substance abuse, noisy neighbours and violence between neighbours in public housing projects as some of the factors impacting on tenants' tenure at a housing project.

Poor cell phone and internet connection were pointed out by participants:

E.24. "It's the fact in, in, in this building, actually in my room, I don't have network at all when it comes to MTN. So, when, in terms of like I'm getting calls from job interviews and whatever, I don't get them until I'm out of the premises."

G.68. "Uhm, the the cell phone networks is terrible we haven't got phone lines uhm, ja (yes) just to, just to mention a, a few things, ja... you can't; you can't like install Wi-Fi or anything because there's no infrastructure when it comes to that."

In addition to written communication, the social housing initiative often communicates important announcements or upcoming awareness programmes by sending messages (SMS') to tenants' cell phones. If participants experience problems with the network, valuable information could be lost, which could impact negatively on the flow of communication.

The issues mentioned by participants seem to reflect challenges experienced by South Africans on a societal level as the country has some of the highest reported crime statistics in the world (Bhorat, Lilenstein, Monnakgotla, Thornton and Van Der Zee, 2017: 1). It can, therefore, be presumed that the problems experienced by participants are representative of a broader community, hence the sense of community theoretical framework is apt. McMillan and Chavis's (1986: 10) sense of belonging and identification is relevant in this context because participants might feel accepted and that they fit in with each other because of the similarities of the challenges that they experience.

4.5.2.2. Category 2.2.2: Racism

One participant shared his experience of racial discrimination.

C.216. "There's a lot of racist people...There's a lot of racist people [laughing softly], I mean it's, it's, I feel like it's not uhm, it's not a thing that they can

help inside here. But there, there are people, racist, you know. I feel like sometimes it, it's, it's...I don't think a lot of people they go out to tell the people at the office that there's racist people and all that blazzy blah, you know, but I feel like they should try to check for that...".

The researcher probed and asked how, and in what form the participant experienced racism:

C.232. "And uhm, the names are worse though. Names...K...er...Uh, monkeys like, you know. (Researcher: Directly called to you?) Yes."

The experience of the participant supports Scheepers's (2010: 161) statement that ethnic and cultural intolerance is entrenched in South African society. Harrison, Huchzermeyer and Mayekiso (2003: 2) are concerned that government policies on housing and urban development contributed towards racial fragmentation and segregation as the projected urban change was hampered by the apartheid legacy of South Africa. This is in direct contrast with Category 2.1.2. (Cultural Diversity) and the South African Constitution (1996) Chapter 1 (1) (b) which promotes non-racialism and non-sexism. Pretty et al. (2006: 18) suggest that a sense of community can include harmful elements of social life as well. The consequence of which can be the exclusion of minority groups which can result in unpleasant social interaction and negative social cohesion.

4.6. Theme Three: Tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at a social housing initiative

Theme Three speaks to the objective about exploring and describing the perceptions of tenants on how their living experience at the social housing initiative could be enhanced. Living in their community, participants are the experts of their own lives and could provide valuable input on how their quality of life can be improved. The social constructionism theory is concerned with these different perceptions.

This theme explores the two sub-themes of participants' perception of services and their opinions around their experiences and how these could be improved.

4.6.1. Sub-theme 3.1: Services available to tenants at social housing initiatives

Knowingly or unknowingly, tenants make use of the services at the social housing project daily. These services include maintenance which requires repairs to the apartments of tenants, problems concerning sanitation, electrical and plumbing issues. Services extend to a tenant exiting the project where the security guards assist with their biometrics to disposing of refuse when a service provider removes the refuse containers or accessing assistance from the social worker or lease administrators, regarding their contractual obligations, at the on-site office. These are a few examples of services available. Participants were vocal about their thoughts on the improvement of existing facilities.

4.6.1.1. Category 3.1.1: Perceptions of services in general

Participants, based on their individual experiences, shared their thoughts on how services could be improved. Participants in the study had some practical suggestions:

A.98. "Ja. You know we used to have our meetings, the poor old cleaners they had to clean the erh erh refuse area, and we had meetings there. They had built a tiny little hall yes onto their little offices, so that it's part, it can be controlled kind of stuff. That's the one thing I really felt was unfair to the workers because if they're having a meeting, there's these huge big things that all have to be brought out, floor washed tables erh chairs put out when finish all have to go back again. It's a lot of extra work. Where if they had a tiny little community entry, say, hall. It doesn't have to be big, just to be able to take we're average about maybe fifty people who come out here and meeting."

One participant suggested the following to reduce the cost of her Uber service when she gets dropped off at the project:

B.224. "[Sighs deeply] There's one thing that, that concerns me uhm sometimes you take an Uber - not everybody have cars. And, you uh, you

buy your groceries, and you need them to bring you in. And, it's time-consuming because the security guards sometimes, yes, you can understand they're busy but sometimes it's also deliberate - and you have to wait and wait and you tell them it's an Uber because we all know that an Uber takes money. You know? And, by the time you get to where you need to be you, you pay like quite a, a bit of money. So, if they could uhm maybe provide maybe a security for, you know, situations like that where you can just say, this is an Uber, this is my unit where I stay, can I quickly go in? Because the securities knows most of the people here..."

Another participant promoted entrepreneurship for those who wish to start their own business when they experience financial difficulties:

G.40. "There's one other thing that I uhm can't get my head around of is, is the following - is that you're not allowed to do anything from your house...my wife comes out of the catering industry...She's got a convection oven in her flat and she can't in the sense of if a neighbour wants a birthday cake or wants a tray of cupcakes or whatever...She can't bake it and sell it to them. I think that social housing... housing should actually allow people inside the complex to uplift themselves..."

To address unsupervised children at the project as mentioned, one research participant suggested a workshop for parents:

G.126. "...There's kids running around in this complex, ten, eleven, twelve, one o'clock in the night. There's no control over that. I uh maintain, there must be uhm more social workshops for the parents. To help them, a lot of the parents in this complex is young people. They don't know everything. So, guide them to, to become better parents, and I always say, your child is my child."

Research participants' suggestions are practical and seemed to be based on personal observations about gaps in the services that they receive. The role of the

Social Constructionist approach is significant as all participants provided suggestions to improve service delivery. However, their views and focus are different because of the influence of various other factors in the past.

4.6.1.2. Category 3.1.2: Maintaining current service levels

Participants were generally satisfied with existing levels of service at the project:

A.94. "If they come here they're gonna have a clean place, they gonna have good security, uhm they going to look, you will find something to moan about if you're looking for something to moan about."

B.186. "I would recommend it. Uhm, reason being that it's a safe environment. It's a clean environment. Uhm, it's child-friendly. It's people-friendly, you feel safe within the place itself."

E.218. "So, I try by all means to help those who are in need. To alert them that there is a better future. There's a better place where you can feel at home and bring your family, you know? Because, they say when you see something with beauty, you don't keep it away from other people or keep it for yourself. Because you need to help others; also, you understand? And, also there's like, for instances, there's a friend of mine who might be moving in maybe next week because he was approved uh two weeks back. So ja, I spread the word a lot."

Participants primarily referred to safety and the cleanliness of the project when asked about their service satisfaction levels. Safety links with the Category 1.1.2. on relocation which states that individuals choose a social housing project based on the sense of security that it offers. A sense of safety leads to an increased sense of community and social wellbeing.

4.6.1.3. Sub-theme 3.2: Personal experiences

This sub-theme focuses on participants' personal views about issues that are unique to their circumstances. Some participants due to their financial situation and increasing rental amounts are adamant that the tenants should own the units. Based on their individual experiences, other research participants expect more empathic responses from the staff at the social housing initiative.

4.6.1.4. Category 3.2.1: Expectation of rent to own

The Social Housing Act 16 of 2008 is very clear that social housing units are for rental only. In spite of this stipulation participants still, have hope for ownership:

B.212. "Well, if I can put it like that, getting my flat for free [laughing softly], that could enhance my living here. Knowing that it's, it's finally, it's my place. We're getting older, we're not getting younger. I still have fifteen years to go before I go on pension so, I really need to know that something positive is gonna happen in my life. [Laughing softly]."

For clarification, the researcher asked the participant whether she wanted security in terms of ownership:

B.222. "Yes, yes, ja."

E.232. "If only they would allow us to rent to stay... to rent to own. For instance, there are people who stay here for about uhm six years when this whole Imizi thing started. And, you find if you calculate that amount of every day, if you count it maybe for a bond, you'd feel that, okay maybe by this year maybe they, they've made quarter or half of the amount of buying the, the... You know? The apartment. So, it's, it's not fair to allow old people to rent at least because we see that most of the people that we're dealing with, it's old people. People with families, people who want to create their lives, people who want to be independent... those people they don't need to be

like, okay this is our country. This is our own space. If we are gonna keep on renting this, where are we gonna belong?"

These expectations of ownership could be linked to the category on misconceptions about social housing. Should participants be able to own their units, it could lead to an enhanced sense of security and belonging, which could have a positive effect on their sense of community (sense of community theoretical framework). The possibility of ownership can also lead to rental boycotts as described by Ndinda, Hongoro, Mustapha and Davids (2013) in their study on a failed social housing initiative in Atlantis, Cape Town. Maslow's theory of human motivation seems appropriate in this context. At one level, the need for shelter was fulfilled for participants. After this need was met, the next level of needs arose. These refer to ownership which equates to Maslow's love and belongingness needs.

4.6.1.5. Category 3.2.2: Humane versus inhumane approach to tenants

Participants differed in their opinion about the quality of service they received from the staff. One participant who has a disability, believed that the office was more lenient towards him and his circumstances:

G.142. "Look, I must say, uhm from Imizi's side, right, I must come up for them already...There was a time... for, for two years of our marriage it didn't work. And (my wife) was not working either. And, I fell behind with my rent continuously and I don't know why they don't do it for other people because I normally tell them when there's a problem. Every time I go to that office, they kept on telling me, we won't throw you out, it's okay."

G.252. "I was taken to a lawyer once by them. But they did, they never threw me out."

Although generally satisfied with the services, this research participant had a bad experience when she was seeking assistance from the on-site office:

F156. "Uhm one day, I was feeling sick. Feeling sick and uhm I was feeling, my stomach and everything...and I went there to the office, I went to ask. I said I don't have air time and you know (mos) when, when you, you, you're feeling sick. Your brains don't work. You don't really think, and I didn't have money to phone and uh I went to ask to phone, I need to phone my home. I need to phone my doctor because I'm not feeling well. That lady, she said to me, my fees, I didn't pay my rent. I said, no I paid my rent, I paid it up to date. She say she don't see it. She said now I must come here to the house and get the thing and I came, I went to her, I took it. It (kanti) it was a, I think two months before to the time...She said no, this is not like June it's, this is like April. And, uhm I looked and I said ja (yes), I saw and I came for the third time on the day, that day the wind was blowing. And, I came and I looked and I found the right one and I went, and she looked, she said, oh here's it and after that she told me, no you can't use the phone."

Similarly, the following participant viewed their experience in a less positive light:

E.24. "And, one of the things is that there was this other time, actually I think it was last year, they didn't tell me that I was supposed to renew the lease. So, I was close to be taken out, to be thrown out, but I was not aware of that. It's just that my working hours are very awkward. I couldn't even go to my post box to check what's there and what's not there."

E.34. "We are all human, at least, the least you can do is to try better, if ever you can't get hold of somebody over the phone you come and try and knock at my door maybe..."

Gergen (2002) in chapter two alludes to Social Constructionism not having a truth or something definite which we can hold onto. These participants' views are shaped by their individual interaction with the staff at the on-site project office. According to Social Constructionism, their views will change in future based on the type of service or interaction they have with the office staff. Even though these participants refer to

these incidents and the feelings that emanated from them, their perceptions may change according to the Social Constructionism theoretical perspective.

4.7. Conclusion

Chapter Four discussed the research findings after the data that was collected from the research participants were analysed. Three themes emerged from data analysis. These are factors that prompted tenants to move to social a housing initiative, tenants' general perceptions and experiences about living in social housing and lastly, tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at the social housing initiative. Various reasons led to tenants perceiving social housing as an affordable rental option. Family, acquaintances, the location of the project and the perception of less crime and improved safety contributed to the decision to move to a social housing initiative. While living at the project, security and a sense of cultural diversity appear to contribute positively to tenants' stay at the project, perceived racism and crime in the area were some of the drawbacks to living at the project. Following is Chapter Five which will focus on the summary, recommendations and conclusions of the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

Chapters One and Two introduced the rationale for the research study and reviewed the literature on social housing nationally and internationally. The suitability of the selected theoretical frameworks was explained. Chapter Three followed and examined the research methodology and how the research design was implemented. In the preceding chapter, the research findings were discussed extensively within the context of a literature control. In response to the goal and objectives outlined in Chapter One of the study, Chapter Five, will summarise the overall findings, draw conclusions and provide recommendations.

The goal of this research study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative. The research objectives were to:

- Explore and describe social housing tenants' general perceptions about living in a social housing initiative.
- Explore and describe the benefits and challenges of living in a social housing initiative.
- Explore and describe the perceptions of tenants on how their living experience at a social housing initiative can be enhanced.

Based on each emerging theme and sub-theme, the chapter will provide a summary, conclusions and recommendations. In closing, the chapter presents an overview of the research methodology and explains the significance and limitations of the research study.

5.2. Overall summary, conclusions and recommendations

The first research objective explored and described social housing tenants' general perceptions about living in a social housing initiative. Though the initial perception of all tenants was that social housing is affordable, annual rent increases impact on the ability of tenants to continue to afford the payment of their rentals. Pensioners and those who have been renting since the social housing initiative's inception are adversely affected. Most tenants feared that the annual rental increases would exceed the annual growth of their incomes or pensions, which will force them to exit the project. Tenants were under the impression that the social housing units were rent-to-own. This perception likely created an expectation that they would remain at the social housing project for a more extended period in anticipation of ownership. This, in turn, affected the affordability of rentals as it increases yearly and disproportionately to the incomes of tenants.

In response to the second research objective, namely exploring and describing the benefits and challenges of living in a social housing initiative, findings revealed that tenants perceived and experienced high levels of security. However, tenants felt unsafe once they exited the premises on their way to work and other amenities or when they had to walk to access public transport. This research finding indicates that the presence of security has a considerable impact on social housing tenants experiencing a sense of safety. Tenants appear to have a sense of control in terms of their safety in the social housing project as compared to their external community. One tenant was fearful of reporting on youth who used substances at the project. This could have an impact on her sense of safety. The majority of tenants experienced the culturally diverse tenant community as having a positive influence on their spirituality and sense of community. Being part of a culturally diverse community, allowed tenants to learn about other cultures, become closer as they discover common interests and practice their religion with the support of others. One tenant perceived and experienced a negative aspect of diverse cultures at the social housing project. He was exposed to racism which contributed to an unfavourable experience that affected his perception of other races at the project.

The third objective explored and described the perceptions of tenants on how their living experience at a social housing initiative could be enhanced. Tenants provided practical recommendations pertaining to infrastructure and family wellbeing programmes.

As a result of the findings, the researcher recommends the following about the social housing industry:

- Social workers to advocate for inclusive social and economic policies to promote greater inclusion of vulnerable groups from low-income backgrounds.
- The Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) to recognize the vital role of social workers in the roll-out of social housing and delivering preventative and psycho-social services to vulnerable tenants.
- Social work programmes to be multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary in order to advocate and lobby for broader community safety measures that would benefit social housing tenants as well as surrounding communities.
- The SHRA, the SHI, social workers, South African Police Services, community and local municipality to actively work together on crime prevention strategies that would benefit the community at large.
- The SHRA to increase the delivery of social housing units to benefit more vulnerable groups.
- The SHRA to create platforms whereby low to middle-income earners can easily access comprehensive consumer-education workshops or information, during which the concept of social housing and its non-ownership is explored and explained.
- Social workers and tenants to implement tenant-led community development programmes that would promote a sense of community, entrepreneurship, a sense of belonging and encourage cultural diversity.
- The SHI to support social workers in promoting and providing accessible social work counselling and support services to all tenants who are experiencing personal or family challenges.

- Social workers to facilitate mediation between neighbours who are involved in disputes brought about by high levels of noise or other social challenges in the tenant community.
- The SHI to enable the establishment of a neighbourhood watch group led by tenants in collaboration with the South African Police Service, local security service providers and the surrounding community.
- Social workers to enable the organisation of parent workshops facilitated by tenants and the Department of Social Development that would address parental responsibilities, boundaries and safety risks of minor children in a social housing initiative.
- Social workers to networking with Non-Governmental Organisations and relevant stakeholders to provide substance abuse awareness and prevention programmes focusing on the youth.
- The SHI to implement periodic tenant-led community safety audits in conjunction with the surrounding communities, the South African Police Services and the local municipality to assess and address levels of crime in the area in which the social initiative is situated.
- The SHI to utilise different channels of communication to disseminate relevant information to all tenants.
- Staff of the SHI to practice empathy and consideration to vulnerable low-income groups such as pensioners who perceive the annual social housing rent increase as unaffordable. The same applies to individuals or families who consider social housing to be a more affordable rental option, but who spend more on transport due to infrequent accessible public transport which then impacts on the affordability of their rent.
- All tenants to receive fair and equal treatment from all members of the social housing initiative. Regular customer service workshops for staff will benefit the SHI as well as the tenant community.
- The SHI to have a dedicated on-site resource centre accessible to and managed by tenants where community activities could be practised.

5.3. Summary of research findings, conclusions and recommendations

Three themes in correlation with sub-themes and categories emerged based on the data that was analysed. These themes are summarised below and contain relevant conclusions and recommendations.

5.3.1. Factors impacting on tenants' move to the social housing initiative

Various factors and sources of information led to tenants deciding to move to the social housing initiative. No single factor can be singled out as a primary reason for moving to the social housing project.

5.3.1.1. Influence of acquaintances or circumstances of tenants before moving to the social housing initiative

Family members influenced most tenants' decision to move to a social housing initiative. Older parents wanted to be closer to children who either lived at the project already or who worked near the project. Friends or acquaintances who lived at the project affected tenants' decision as well. Tenants can, therefore, collaborate with community development workers at the social housing initiative to promote a sense of family and belonging which could enhance the emotional wellbeing and the quality of life of tenants. One tenant moved to the social housing initiative due to high crime levels and violence in the area where she previously lived. Two tenants' decision was based on the social housing initiative being close to work. It seems that the social housing initiative succeeded in complying with Social Housing Act Number 16 of 2008 (viii) whose aim is for social housing to be located centrally so that employment opportunities could be accessed.

5.3.1.2. Tenants' knowledge about social housing before moving to the social housing initiative

Tenants' knowledge about the concept or purpose of social housing was either non-existent or low. Only two tenants knew exactly what social housing was before they became tenants. Low knowledge levels about the concept of social housing could be

attributed to social housing policies, not reaching people at a grassroots level. Sipungu and Nleya (2016: 2) found significant discrepancies between the official policy of social housing and the implementation thereof. Some tenants perceived social housing as a rent-to-own option; such an expectation could have severe consequences for social cohesion at the project. A recommendation is that consumer education and the marketing of social housing should be conducted by the Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) on different platforms and in communities that do not have access to social media or printed information.

5.3.1.3. Previous living conditions of tenants

This section refers to the different housing types that tenants lived in before moving to social housing and the higher rentals they paid despite having less space. Before they became tenants of the social housing initiative, one tenant lived in several different flats in different provinces; one shared a house with others, another lived in student accommodation, a family's abode was a shelter while another family stayed in a school building that was converted into a block of flats. Most tenants perceived the space of their previous accommodation as smaller than what they have at the social housing initiative. Tenants viewed their social housing rental as more affordable than previous private rentals. Although affordability was a drawcard to live in social housing, tenants indicated their present concern about the increasing rentals in social housing which might become too expensive and unaffordable, leading them to move out.

5.3.2. Tenants' general perceptions and experiences about living in the social housing initiative

According to the findings, tenants' current perceptions and experiences of living at the social housing initiative appear to be very similar. Findings reveal that safety, cultural diversity and a sense of community are perceived in a positive light by most tenants.

5.3.2.1. Benefits of living at the social housing initiative

When expressing their satisfaction with the level of security, tenants mentioned it concerning personal safety, the trust that they have in their neighbours and that children could play in a secure environment. Three tenants attributed their enhanced spirituality to them living in a community with different races, ethnicities and religious denominations. Findings indicated that all tenants were happy with the services they receive from the social workers in the Community Development Department and the staff from the Property Management and Client Services Department.

5.3.2.2. Challenges of living in the social housing initiative

Findings revealed that most of the challenges experienced by tenants are similar. These issues relate to problems within the social housing project as well as its surrounding areas. One tenant was fearful of exposing the drug use of the younger tenants in the project. Although most tenants are satisfied with the security levels at the project, safety as they exit the project, is of concern. Tenants experience high levels of safety in the project as compared to where they lived previously and compared to their surrounding community. High noise levels after hours and during weekends are experienced by most of the participants. Two tenants experienced poor cell phone and internet connection at the project as challenging. Findings also revealed that one participant experienced racism.

5.3.3. Tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at the social housing initiative

Based on their living experience at the social housing project, tenants offered several positive suggestions. Findings revealed that most of the recommendations from tenants were based on existing services that they receive at the project.

5.3.3.1. Services available to tenants at the social housing initiative

Findings revealed that tenants offered resourceful and practical recommendations on how current services at the project could be improved. One tenant suggested that

the social housing initiative build a small community hall for meetings with tenants. Another tenant suggested that entrepreneurship be encouraged at the project. Tenants are not permitted to run businesses from their units. A third tenant recommended that parent workshops are conducted due to many children being unsupervised on the premises late at night. One tenant felt that payment for the Uber service increased if they had to wait for the security to access the project. A conclusion can be drawn that paying more for their transport has a negative impact on their finances and thus affordability. Most tenants are satisfied with existing service levels pertaining to safety and the cleanliness of the project.

5.3.3.2. Personal experiences

Findings suggest that tenants generally experience life at the social housing initiative differently. Some tenants, inclusive of pensioners, are adamant that they should own the units due to their financial situation and an annual increase of rental amounts at the social housing project. One tenant who was disabled expected more empathic responses from the staff at the social housing initiative when she needed medical assistance. Another tenant felt that her lease agreement was going to be cancelled after she delayed signing a new lease due to circumstances beyond her control. These tenants expected a more humane approach to their challenges.

5.4. Summary of methodology and research design

5.4.1. Research methodology and design

This qualitative research study employed an exploratory and descriptive research design in its attempt to answer the research goal and objectives. The purposive sampling method, synonymous to qualitative research, was used and executed in the forms of non-probability sampling, convenience sampling and volunteer sampling. Before the research study commenced, research participants, inclusive of the pilot study participants were informed and invited to take part. All participants, except for one, gave their written informed consent to form part of the study, in the comfort of their own homes.

The researcher conducted the pilot study to ascertain whether the questions for the semi-structured interviews needed to be amended. No adjustments had to be made, but the researcher was more cautious during the audio recording of the final pilot study participant as she failed to operate it previously. To eliminate researcher bias, a field worker conducted semi-structured interviews with the rest of the research participants who met the inclusion criteria and gave their consent to participate in the study. The fieldworker used an interview guide and collected data from nine participants until the point of saturation. The data that was collected through audio recordings were transcribed and coded. Themes and sub-themes emerged. To achieve this, the researcher followed Charlesworth's (cited in Cassim, 2017: 138-139) five steps of qualitative data analysis which overlaps with Tesch's (in Schurink et al., 2011: 404) eight steps. An independent coder confirmed the analysis.

5.4.2. Trustworthiness

The researcher followed Lincoln and Guba's criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research as proposed by both Shenton (2004: 64-72) and Schurink et al. (2011: 419-421). The criteria include **credibility**, **transferability**, **dependability** and **confirmability**. Credibility was displayed when the field worker made detailed written notes and audio recorded participants during the interviews to reflect reality. Some participants also volunteered to form part of the study without being incentivised. Transferability will be enabled if the description of the research methodology and the criteria for inclusion of participants are followed. The research report contains a detailed description of the research design and its implementation, thus contributing to the dependability of the research study. Confirmability was achieved when audio recordings were transcribed as evidence that the researcher did not influence the findings. Interviews were peer-reviewed and provided thick, rich descriptions of the research process, contributing to the trustworthiness of the study. Furthermore, an independent coder was utilised to corroborate findings.

5.4.3. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations about the research participants in this study referred to avoidance of harm, voluntary participation, informed consent, non-deception and

confidentiality. All participants had access to written communication beforehand that informed them of the study. They were also informed verbally about the study in the comfort of their units. Participants could, therefore, consent, decline or withdraw from the study if they no longer wished to participate. Participants remained anonymous and semi-structured interviews were conducted after-hours and during a weekend when no Imizi Housing staff were on duty. Participants could access debriefing services afterwards from the on-site social worker (not the researcher) if they felt any discomfort. None of the participants accessed debriefing services.

Upon the research supervisor's approval of the research report, the transcribed interviews will be kept in a safe place for five years for auditing purposes. The researcher experienced an internal struggle to present the findings objectively. It was a challenge not to misrepresent data as the researcher is partially sponsored and employed by Imizi Housing. The researcher discussed her feelings with her supervisor and reminded herself of her values and social work principles, namely being open, honest and showing respect towards the participants by accurately reflecting the data presented by them.

5.5. Value and limitations of the study

This research will “contribute towards providing a sense of belonging and security among residents (and) stabilise the household members” as described in the Department of Human Settlement's Social Housing Policy (2009). It allows social housing tenants to express the benefits and challenges of their living environment, which could contribute to the development of programmes that would enhance their quality of life. The research enables the social housing sector to anticipate the challenges experienced by social housing tenants and as a result, put appropriate measures in place.

The following limitations were identified in the study:

- The study focused on the perceptions and experiences of adult tenants in a social housing initiative. The thoughts and experiences of children living in social housing were not included. The exploration of the perceptions and

experiences of both children and adults, who live in a social housing initiative, will present valuable information to provide a comprehensive service that would improve tenants' quality of life.

- Most tenants, including the tenants who participated in the pilot study, seemed to think that their responses would be brought under the direct attention of Imizi's management. However, some participants were apprehensive about participating in the study due to possible victimisation. Although participants were assured of confidentiality, their responses might have been influenced by these underlying assumptions.
- The fieldworker could comfortably converse in English and Afrikaans. Some of the participants' first language was neither English nor Afrikaans. The possibility, therefore, exists that these tenants were unable to fully express their views during the study, which could lead to the omission of valuable information for research purposes.

5.6. Future research

Based on the findings of this study, the following areas for future research have been identified:

- Studies to explore vulnerable groups such as pensioners' experiences of living in a social housing initiative.
- The development of a community development programme designed to promote and enhance cultural diversity among social housing tenants.
- The development of a programme that outlines how social workers can provide counselling, preventative services and support to tenants who experience challenges and who are living in a social housing initiative.
- Studies to explore to what extent the provision of social housing in South Africa enhances the quality of the lives of their tenants.
- Studies exploring how social housing policy and the design (layout) of social housing initiatives can contribute towards the enhancement of a sense of community and safety.

- Studies to explore the evolving needs of social housing tenants after their basic need for shelter has been fulfilled.
- Studies to explore the minimum standards required for the successful implementation of the Community Development, Property and Client Services Departments.

5.7. Concluding remarks

The perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative were explored in this study. Tenants had an opportunity to express how they perceived and experience their living environment. Tenants were influenced to access social housing through family, children and acquaintances. The findings revealed that tenants experienced high levels of security at the social housing project as compared to where they lived previously and compared to their surrounding community. Findings also suggest that the concept of social housing is not entirely understood by tenants which makes consumer education among low to middle-income groups necessary. Although racism was experienced, cultural diversity afforded tenants the opportunity to enhance their spirituality as they came in contact with various races, cultures and ethnicities.

This study has contributed to the development of recommendations that inform and strengthen social housing practice pertaining to the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing. Recommendations for future research have been made as well.

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APPENDIX 1: PROPOSAL APPROVAL LETTER



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa mandela.ac.za

Summerstrand South
Faculty of Health Sciences
Tel. +27 (0)41 504 2630 Fax. +27 (0)41 504 2574
Zoleka.Soji@mandela.ac.za

Acting Chairperson: Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee (FPGSC)

Ref: [H19-HEA-SDP-008] / Approval]

26 June 2019

Ms N Mansvelt

Faculty of Health Sciences

Dear Ms Mansvelt

Primary Responsible Person (PRP):	Ms N Mansvelt
Primary Investigator (PI):	Ms D Konstabel
Student number:	190248030
Qualification:	Master of Social Work Research
Title:	THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TENANTS LIVING IN A SOCIAL HOUSING INITIATIVE IN PORT ELIZABETH

Your above-entitled application served at the Faculty of Health Sciences Postgraduate Studies Committee meeting for approval. The study is classified as a negligible/low risk study. The ethics clearance reference number is **H19-HEA-SDP-008** and approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. The immediate completion and return of the attached acknowledgement to Marilyn.Afrikaner@mandela.ac.za, the date of receipt of such returned acknowledgement

- determining the final date of approval for the study where after data collection may commence.
2. Approval for data collection is for 1 calendar year from date of receipt of above mentioned acknowledgement.
 3. The submission of an annual progress report by the PRP on the data collection activities of the study
(form RECH-004 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) by 15 November this year for studies approved/extended in the period October of the previous year up to and including September of this year, or 15 November next year for studies approved/extended after September this year.
 4. In the event of a requirement to extend the period of data collection (i.e. for a period in excess of 1 calendar year from date of approval), completion of an extension request is required (form RECH-005 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
 5. In the event of any changes made to the study (excluding extension of the study), completion of an amendments form is required (form RECH-006 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
 6. Immediate submission (and possible discontinuation of the study in the case of serious events) of the relevant report to RECH (form RECH-007 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events observed during the course of the study.
 7. Immediate submission of a Study Termination Report to RECH (form RECH-008 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) upon unexpected closure/termination of study.
 8. Immediate submission of a Study Exception Report of RECH (form RECH-009 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any study deviations, violations and/or exceptions.
 9. Acknowledgement that the study could be subjected to passive and/or active monitoring without prior notice at the discretion of the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee (FPGSC).

Please quote the ethics clearance reference number in all correspondence and enquiries related to the study.

We wish you well with the study.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Z Soji: Acting Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee (FPGSC) Chairperson

Faculty of Health Sciences

Nelson Mandela University

Appendix 1: Acknowledgement of conditions for ethical approval

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONDITIONS FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

I, Ms N Mansvelt (PRP) of the study entitled, THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF TENANTS LIVING IN A SOCIAL HOUSING INITIATIVE IN PORT ELIZABETH (H19-HEA-SDP-008), do hereby agree to the following approval conditions:

1. The submission of an annual progress report by myself on the data collection activities of the study by 15 November this year for studies approved in the period October of the previous year up to and including September of this year, or 15 November next year for studies approved after September this year. It is noted that there will be no call for the submission thereof. The onus for submission of the annual report by the stipulated date rests on myself.
2. Submission of the relevant request to RECH in the event of any amendments to the study for approval by RECH prior to any partial or full implementation thereof.
3. Submission of the relevant request to RECH in the event of any extension to the study for approval by RECH prior to the implementation thereof.
4. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events.
5. Immediate discontinuation of the study in the event of any serious unanticipated problems, serious incidents or serious adverse events.
6. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of the unexpected closure/discontinuation of the study (for example, de-registration of the PI).
7. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of study deviations, violations and/or exceptions.
8. Acknowledgement that the study could be subjected to passive and/or active monitoring without prior notice at the discretion of RECH.



Signed: _____

26 June 2019

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION LETTER TO GATEKEEPER



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Date: 28 June 2019

IMIZI HOUSING

Metro Plan Building

7 Upper Dickens Street

St Georges Park

Port Elizabeth

6001

Dear Mr Clive Felix and Members of the Imizi Board

Application for Permission to Conduct Interviews with the tenants of an Imizi Social Housing Initiative

I am currently completing my Masters in Research in the Department of Social Development Professions at the Nelson Mandela University. I therefore request the permission of the Board of Directors to conduct audio recorded, individual, semi-structured interviews with the tenants of Walmer Link during July 2019.

In this study, I am investigating the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing. The purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding of how tenants perceive and experience living in a social housing initiative such as Imizi Housing.

As I am currently employed by Imizi Housing, researcher bias will be eliminated because data collection will be conducted by an independent field worker. The field worker is a PhD graduate with 8 years research experience. The involvement of a field worker will ensure participants' confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. Participation is voluntary and participants will be required to give written consent to take part in the study. An example of a consent form is attached. Participants can withdraw at any stage during the research study. The Imizi Board, staff, participants and tenants will have access to the research findings on completion of the study.

I would be grateful for the Board's support and permission for this research study. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my research supervisor, Mrs. N. Mansvelt at 041 504 4101 for any further enquiries.

Yours faithfully,

D. Konstabel

084 357 1320

S190248030@mandela.ac.za

APPENDIX 3: PERMISSION LETTER TO GATEKEEPER



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Date: 28 June 2019

IMIZI HOUSING

Metro Plan Building

7 Upper Dickens Street

St Georges Park

Port Elizabeth

6001

Dear Mr Tony Lloyd

Application for Permission to Conduct Interviews with the tenants of an Imizi Social Housing Initiative

As you are aware, I am currently completing my Masters in Research in the Department of Social Development Professions at the Nelson Mandela University. I therefore request permission to conduct audio recorded, individual, semi-structured interviews with the tenants of Walmer Link during July 2019.

In this study, I am investigating the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing. The purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding about the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative such as Imizi Housing.

As I am currently employed by Imizi Housing, researcher bias will be eliminated because data collection will be conducted by an independent field worker. The field

worker is a PhD graduate with 8 years research experience. The involvement of a field worker will ensure participants' confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. Participation is voluntary and participants will be required to give written consent to take part in the study. An example of a consent form is attached. Participants can withdraw at any stage during the research study. The Imizi Board, staff, participants and tenants will have access to the research findings on completion of the study.

I would be grateful for your support and permission to conduct this research study. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my research supervisor, Mrs. N. Mansvelt at 041 504 4101 for any further enquiries.

Yours faithfully,

D. Konstabel

084 357 1320

S190248030@mandela.ac.za

APPENDIX 4: WRITTEN INFORMATION PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE RESEARCH PROJECT



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Dear Sir / Madam

Roslyn McGregor, an experienced social worker, will conduct interviews on behalf of Desiree Konstabel as part of her Masters in research in the Department of Social Development Professions at the Nelson Mandela University. Ms Konstabel is investigating the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative. The purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding about the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing.

You are invited to participate in this research study in the comfort of your home. To ensure complete confidentiality and anonymity, an independent interviewer will conduct random interviews on a Saturday and Sunday at Walmer Link during July 2019 when the offices of Imizi Housing are closed. The dates are 6 and 7 July 2019. Ms Konstabel has the permission of Imizi Housing to conduct this research. As the interviews will be random and not all tenants will be included in the research project, you have the opportunity to be included should you wish to contribute towards the study. Mrs. McGregor has extensive social work experience. Should you wish to participate in the study, you may contact her confidentially on 072 878 3567 or you can drop your contact details in the information box in front of the on-site office, before interviews commence. Only the independent interviewer will have access to the information box. Additionally, all tenants will have an equal opportunity to be included in the research as the interviewer will conduct random visits to units.

There are no anticipated risks from participating in the study. It is assured that your participation and responses will remain completely private, anonymous and confidential. You have the right not to participate in this study and also the right not to complete the whole interview. Your name is not asked for during the interview either. You can use a false name to further conceal your identity. I will be using the data obtained from the interviews to write up my thesis. Although the Imizi Housing Community Development Department will have access to the transcripts, participants will not be identifiable.

Your written permission will allow the researcher to electronically record an audio of your responses. A summary of the research findings will be provided to the Department of Social Development upon your written consent and request and will also be published in the monthly newsletter of Imizi Housing. On completion of the study, the research findings will also be made available at the library of NMU.

This research is conducted in accordance with NMU's Policy on Research Ethics and is funded by Imizi Housing.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my research supervisor, Mrs. N. Mansvelt at 041 504 4101 for any further enquiries.

Thank you very much for your interest and participation.

Yours faithfully,

Desiree Konstabel (Researcher)

Roslyn McGregor (Independent Interviewer)

* **Pseudonym** * Alias or fictitious name

Permission for Independent Interviewer to contact Participant

I (**Pseudonym**).....from Block....., Unit.....give permission for the independent interviewer, Roslyn McGregor, to contact me on my cellular number for inclusion in the research project on tenants' perceptions and experiences of living in a social housing initiative.

APPENDIX 5: CONSENT FORM

The perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a Social Housing Initiative



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Consent to take part in research

- I **(Pseudonym)**..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves my perception and experience as a social housing tenant living at a social housing project.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the researcher's dissertation.

Pseudonym

Date

Signature of Independent Interviewer

Date

APPENDIX 6: PERMISSION FORM FOR AUDIO RECORDING



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Name of the researcher: Desiree Konstabel (S190248030)

Name of independent interviewer: Roslyn McGregor

Contact details:

Address: _____

Telephone no: _____

Declaration

I (**Pseudonym**).....consent to the following:

- That the nature of the research and the nature of my participation have been explained to me verbally and in writing.
- I agree to participate in an interview and to allow audio-recordings of these to be made.

Pseudonym

Date

Signature of Independent Interviewer

Date

**APPENDIX 7: AGREEMENT BETWEEN RESEARCHER AND INDEPENDENT
INTERVIEWER**

Iagree that I will not disclose the identity of the participants interviewed by me during 2019 and that I will uphold their confidentiality for the research study on the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative.

Independent Interviewer

Date

Researcher

Date

APPENDIX 8: AGREEMENT BETWEEN RESEARCHER AND TRANSCRIBER

Iagree that I will not disclose the identity of the participants whose interviews I transcribed and that I will uphold their confidentiality for the research study on the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in a social housing initiative.

Transcriber

Date

Researcher

Date

APPENDIX 9: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University
Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa, www.mandela.ac.za

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Roslyn McGregor, an experienced social worker. I am conducting interviews as communicated in a letter that was posted in your post box a week ago.

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed as part of Desiree Konstabel's Masters research in the Department of Social Development Professions at the Nelson Mandela University. Ms Konstabel is investigating the perceptions and experiences of tenants living in social housing. The purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding about tenants' perceptions and experiences of living in a social housing initiative. Ms Konstabel has the permission of the funder, Imizi Housing, to conduct this research and will not know what specific interviewees have said.

Your written consent is important before I can proceed with the interview. I have several questions that I would like to ask you. I assure you that your responses are completely confidential and anonymous. In other words, you can use a false name to conceal your identity. I will record the interview and will be taking notes. This research is conducted in accordance with NMU's Policy on Research Ethics. You will have access to the findings at NMU's library on completion of the research project. A summary of the findings will also be published in the monthly newsletter of Imizi Housing. You have the right not to participate in this interview and also not to complete the interview, if you do not wish to do so. Do you have any questions regarding the project before we begin?

I would like to know:

1. What were your thoughts about social housing before moving to Imizi?
2. Now that you have moved to this social housing project, what are your thoughts?
3. How has your life been affected since moving to Imizi?
4. How do you experience living in a social housing project?
5. What adds value to your stay at Imizi?
6. Would you recommend social housing to others?
 - 6.1 If yes, why?
 - 6.2 If no, please elaborate.
7. What could enhance your living at Imizi?

Table 1: National terms referring to social housing in selected countries in the UNECE region (UNECE, 2015: 7-8)

National terms referring to social housing in selected countries in the UNECE region	
Country	The term used in translation to English
Austria	"Limited-profit housing" or "people's housing."
Canada	"Social housing."
Denmark	"Common housing" or "not-for-profit housing."
Germany	"Housing promotion."
Finland	"Government subsidised housing."
France	"Housing at moderate rent."

Table 2: Demographic information of participants

Race		
Black 4 (3 Female, 1 Male)	White 3 (2 Male, 1 Female)	Coloured 2 (2 Females)
Persons with disability living in ground floor units		
1 Physically Disabled Female	1 Visually Impaired Male	1 Male who uses a wheelchair
Unit Size		
Bachelor 1	One Bedroom 1	Two Bedrooms 7
Age		
21 – 30 3	31 – 49 2	Above 50 4

Table 3: Themes, Sub-themes and Categories

THEME	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES
1. Factors impacting on tenants' move to the social housing initiative	1.1. Influence of acquaintances or circumstances of tenants before moving to the social housing initiative	1.1.1. Family and friends as referral systems
		1.1.2. Relocation
	1.2. Tenants' knowledge about social housing before moving to the social housing initiative	1.2.1. No knowledge versus informed
		1.2.2. Misconceptions about social housing
	1.3. Previous living conditions of tenants	1.3.1. Space
		1.3.2. Affordability versus unaffordability
2. Tenants' general perceptions and experiences about living in a social housing initiative	2.1. Benefits of living at a social housing initiative	2.1.1. Sense of Community
		2.1.2. Cultural diversity
		2.1.3. Experiences of services in general
	2.2. Challenges of living in social housing initiative	2.2.1. Community or Societal challenges
		2.2.2. Racism
3. Tenants' perceptions on how their living conditions could improve at social housing initiative	3.1. Services available to tenants at social housing initiative	3.1.1. Perceptions of services in general
		3.1.2. Maintaining current services levels
	3.2. Personal experiences	3.2.1. The expectation of rent to own
		3.2.2. Humane versus inhumane approach to tenants

Figure 1: The Virtuous Hierarchy of Housing Needs (Dean, 2016: 56)

