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# Need Fulfillment and Happiness in Botswana

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# NEED FULFILLMENT AND HAPPINESS IN BOTSWANA

CAROLYN MOE

109 Pages

Happiness has been an important aspect of people's lives spanning centuries and continents; as such, it is a widely researched area. A current prominent theory in happiness research is Needs Theory which has the premise that there are universal human needs and having these needs met would lead to a person's happiness. Most often, the needs referenced are those presented by Abraham Maslow including needs of physiology, safety and security, love and belonging, esteem, knowing and understanding, aesthetics, self-actualization and transcendence. However, some studies have found that there are individuals who do not fit this theory either through having their needs met and not being happy or by not having their needs met and being happy. This study identified people falling into both categories and conducted interviews to determine what other factors may be influencing their happiness or lack of happiness. Of the eight participants, seven were not happy despite having their needs met and one participant was happy despite her needs not being met. Interviews with these participants found three areas of exception to Needs Theory. Firstly, some participants had a need met in one way but not met in another way. Secondly, some participants had needs that were partially met. Thirdly, there were factors that influenced happiness that were not explained by the Maslow Needs. These factors included past traumas, transitional periods, negative thought cycles, repeated failures, unmet expectations, comparisons, practical barriers and empathy which affected Needs Met, Not Happy participants. Equally, non-Maslow factors that affected the Needs Not Met, Happy participant

were having fewer expectations, an optimistic perspective, incorporated strategies to improve happiness and resilience. Due to the presence of these factors, it was determined that relying solely on need acquisition for assessing happiness is incomplete. As an alternative, looking at the balance between positive and negative factors as well as a person's perspective and ability to cope with such factors is a more important determinant of happiness.

**KEYWORDS:** Happiness; Maslow; Need Fulfillment; Botswana

NEED FULFILLMENT AND HAPPINESS IN BOTSWANA

CAROLYN MOE

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NEED FULFILLMENT AND HAPPINESS IN BOTSWANA

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Throughout history there has been an ongoing pursuit of happiness dating back to the times of Confucius, Plato, Aristotle and our own American forefathers (Desan et al. 2010; White 2006). If the men who founded our country thought the ‘pursuit of happiness’ was righteous enough to be put in the Declaration of Independence, there must be something important about it. The subject of happiness has gained increasing popularity in the last 50 years (Veenhoven 2014). According to Fowler and Christakis (2008), “happiness is a fundamental object of human existence”, but it is also something of great desire that so many people are trying to obtain (Diener, Suh, Smith and Shao 1995; Veenhoven 2014). As such, happiness has been a highly researched topic with noteworthy results.

Happiness has been a heavily studied subject and there is good reason for it. Not only is happiness an almost universal desire, but it has been linked to health (Steptoe, Deaton, and Stone 2014), community development and economics. A goal for hundreds of years has been finding the secret to living longer. There has been considerable success in increasing human life spans; up to an additional 30 years of life is now expected in many countries as compared to previous generations (National Institute on Aging 2015). Now that people are living longer, there has been a shift in focus from the quantity of life to the quality, in other words, the happiness of one’s life. As health is an important quality of life, happiness is as well. In fact, the World Health Organization has been emphasizing happiness as a component of health (Folwer and Christakis 2008; De Gargina 2004). One explanation for this could be the research that suggests, “subjective well-being might even be a protective factor for health, reducing the risk of chronic physical illness and promoting longevity” (Steptoe, Deaton, and Stone 2014: 641). This is an

important topic because it is an area that can have a positive impact on people's lives around the world.

As more research is done on happiness, the results can be used to guide development strategies at local, national or global levels. Happiness is a universal topic of interest and thus has been the consideration of many governments around the world. Bhutan has even implemented measures of Gross National Happiness (GNH) in contrast to how most countries measure national success in Gross National Product (GNP), an economic measure. Research on happiness has been used as a tool to evaluate the success of developmental programs such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and how they complement happiness (Schimmel 2009). There has even been research showing that, "economic development, democratization, and increasing social tolerance have increased the extent to which people perceive that they have free choice, which in turn has led to higher levels of happiness around the world" (Inglehart, Foa, Peterson and Welzel, 2008: 264). For these reasons, happiness research is compelling for the purposes of community development and political undertakings.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Since happiness is related to many desired effects like health, longevity, more productivity, and better relationships (Diener and Chan 2011), the question arises of 'what makes people happy?' This question is designed to understand the situational factors that lead to happiness in order to better create environments from which happy populations can grow. There are many theories regarding the nature of happiness. One of these is Needs Theory, in which it is assumed that there are universal human needs and that by meeting those needs, a person will be happy. A commonly known framework of universal human needs was created in 1943 by Abraham Maslow. Although it was entitled, A Theory of Human Motivation, it is more

commonly referred to as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, due to the hierarchical structure that Maslow described. The original work is comprised of five universal needs: physiological, safety and security, love and belonging, esteem and lastly, self-actualization. However, few people know of the additional three needs that he added years later. These were cognitive, aesthetic, and transcendence. With all eight, the ordering became physiological, safety, love, esteem, cognitive, aesthetics, self-actualization and transcendence at the top. It should be noted that Maslow did not develop Needs Theory. He created a list of universal human needs based on human motivation. Due to the popularity of Maslow's theory, many researchers investigating Needs Theory have used the needs outlined by Maslow.

### **Concepts for this Study**

According to multiple sources, happiness is related to quality of life, life satisfaction, optimal experience and functioning (Ryan and Deci 2001; Schimmel 2009; Steptoe, Deaton and Stone 2014). My study of need fulfillment and happiness in Botswana, is informed by the definition created by the Center for Bhutan Studies and Gross National Happiness (GNH) research: "subjective happiness generally pertains to feelings or perceptions of contentment or joy; the overall experience of pleasure, well-being and meaning in life" (2015:73). As this definition contains multiple components, this research will give attention to the aspect regarding 'the overall experience of well-being in life' which will serve as our definition for happiness.

Physiological needs can be defined as having adequate amounts of food, water, air, etc. to maintain physiological equilibrium. Once these have been met to a certain extent (no longer starving), then safety and security become a priority. These include not only physical safety but emotional well-being as well. Therefore, the needs of safety and security can be described as having a relatively orderly, predictable life that is free from events, people, or other beings that

threaten one's physical or emotional self. Next are the needs for love and belonging which can be expressed as having a source to give and receive affection, most often in the form of friends, family, romantic relationships, children, etc. Following the need for love is esteem, which was defined by Maslow as, "a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect or self-esteem and for the esteem of other" (1943: 381). This has two parts in which a person has high regards for themselves as well as feeling respected by others.

After the initial four basic needs comes the need for knowing and understanding, also known as the cognitive need. This can further be described as having a source of explanation, knowledge or meaning. As people tend to be innately curious beings, having a source of meaning and explanation can provide comfort and support. Subsequently is the need for aesthetics which is having sources of beauty, balance and form. It can often be satisfied through natural beauty but also in experiencing or partaking in forms of expression.

The remaining two needs are similar in many ways and are closely related. Self-actualization can be expressed as realizing one's full potential, self-fulfillment, and the seeking of personal growth. This is a necessary step in the path to transcendence although it is inherently contradictory. Transcendence is initially described as having moments of realization that provide clarity and change one's outlook on life in some way. However, it is further explained as becoming more connected with things beyond yourself or "peak experiences often led the self-actualizing individual to transcend the personal concerns of the very self that was being actualized" (Koltko-Rivera 2006). In this way, people go beyond self-actualization and their meaning in life to see their connection to others. This is why transcendence is often seen as helping others. Overall, transcendence can be stated as going beyond personal concerns to having a connection with others.

### **Sociological Connection**

Although Maslow was by trade a psychologist, the scope of this study is undoubtedly social psychological. Not only does it have sociological implications in that the acquisition of needs such as how food and shelter can be affected by social phenomena like race, class, gender, sexual orientation and nationality, but the needs themselves are also innately social. Maslow himself said in his book *Religion, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, “as a matter of fact, I can say much more firmly than I ever did, for many empirical reasons, that basic human needs can be fulfilled only by and through other human beings, i.e., society” ([1964]1970:xiii). Therefore, although Maslow was studying human motivation on an individual level, he discovered that human motivation is greatly influenced by society.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are many theories surrounding happiness: what it means to be happy, what it takes to be happy, what you get if you are happy. This study is focused primarily on the question of what it takes to be happy or what factors affect happiness both positively and negatively. There are theories both on what it takes to be happy as well as on factors that influence happiness. Some noteworthy theories are outlined below.

### **Theories**

There are traditional theories as well as current theories that are utilized often when referencing happiness. The main traditional theory is Set-Point Theory stating there is a baseline of happiness that doesn't change. Through further research this theory was challenged and additional theories arose. The current theories include Comparison, Goal, Culture, and Needs Theory. In addition to theories on happiness, there is research supporting each of the Maslow needs with happiness.

### **Traditional Theory**

There are some traditional theories of happiness, one of the most notable being Set-Point Theory. This theory posits that there is a base level of happiness for each person that cannot be changed, initially found by Headey and Wearing (1989) when participants tended to keep returning to their own baselines over time. Additional research showed that although there can be substantial deviations from the baseline, a person can be happier or less happy, people tend to fall back to their set-point (Lykken and Tellegen 1996; Braungart, Plomin, DeFries, and Fulker, 1992; Tellegen et al., 1988; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade, 2005). This baseline is determined by both biological and environmental factors from which the individual came (Kassin, Fein, and Markus, 2013). However, Headey (2006) later found that over a 15-20 year



period, there were some who experienced a substantial change in their set-point levels of happiness.

Other researchers also investigated finding ways to increase happiness by embellishing set-point theory and including other factors affecting happiness. It should be noted that this is not short-term unhappiness that someone might feel after a breakup or loss of a loved one because it has been shown, people tend to revert back to a constant level of happiness after extreme events (Braungart, Plomin, DeFries, and Fulker 1992; Lykken and Tellegen 1996; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade 2005; Tellegen et al. 1988) but rather long-lasting happiness.

Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade (2005) said that there are three major factors that affect happiness: a genetically determined set point for happiness, happiness-relevant circumstantial factors, and happiness-relevant activities and practices. In their study, they attempted to see how happiness could be increased and sustained long-term. Studies have shown that activities like exercising regularly and being nice to others are related to improving well-being (Keltner and Bonanno 1997; Magen and Aharoni 1991). They conclude that intentional activities offer the best potential route to higher and sustainable levels of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade 2005).

### **Current Theories**

Currently, there are four prominent theories of happiness: Comparison Theory (also known as Relative Standards), Goals Theory, Culture Theory and Needs Theory. Comparison Theory states that happiness is dependent on a comparison of other possible conditions (Diener and Lucas 2000; Schyns 1998). There are three main comparisons that people can make which affect their domain satisfaction. These are comparisons to relevant others, to one's past standings, and to one's aspirations, expectations, or one's ideal self (Diener and Lucas 2000;

Michalos 1985). One study that supports this theory was done by Frank (2006) who found that people would choose to make less total money (\$100,000/yr.) when other people around made comparatively less (\$85,000/yr.) rather than more total income (\$110,000/yr.) when others around made more (\$200,000/yr.). People are willing to sacrifice total consumption for better relative position. This relative position can be stated as 'status' within a community. However, this could fall under the category of esteem within Maslow's Hierarchy and thus under the consideration of Needs Theory.

The Goals Theory is a variation of the Relative Standards model in that it focuses specifically on the expectations that an individual sets for themselves. Goals reflect the aspirations of a person's life and often affect behavior. This theory is preferable to relative standards because it is suggested that people might use goals as a standard for comparison more frequently than past experiences or social comparisons because of their relative importance to the individual (Diener and Lucas 2000). Also, it has been shown that goals have more consistent effects on happiness than when using the other two comparisons. However, there are some difficulties in using this theory. Emmons (1986) found that progress toward one's goal led to higher subjective well-being (SWB) and not achieving goals led to lower SWB; but simply having goals was correlated with higher SWB. Additionally, Kasser and Ryan (1993) found that goals that were not compatible with intrinsic human needs could be detrimental to subjective well-being (happiness). Limitations of this theory are that progress toward goals does not ultimately lead to higher SWB, there may not be a causal relationship between goals and SWB, and there is a lack of explanation for differences between countries.

Culture Theory suggests that much of who we are, what we think and feel, and how we act is determined by the culture in which we live (Diener and Lucas 2000). Support for this

comes from studies surrounding the ideal amount of pleasant and unpleasant emotions. It was found that pleasant affect was experienced more in cultures where it is valued (Diener and Lucas 2000; Schimmack, Radhakrishnan, Oishi, Dzokoto, and Ahadi 2002). Schimmack et. al. (2002) looked at two individualistic countries and three collectivistic cultures and measured extraversion, neuroticism, hedonic balance and life satisfaction and found hedonic balance was a strong predictor of life satisfaction in individualistic rather than collectivistic cultures. However, there are findings that place doubt on the certainty of a purely cultural model. For instance, within many nations there is a strong correlation with income and happiness which places doubt on the idea that happiness is affected solely by culture. In addition, there have been findings of relative standards which are difficult to explain through culture. The difficulty in this theory is finding differences in happiness that can be explained solely by cultural factors.

Lastly, as described by Diener and Lucas, “Needs Theory rests on the assumption that there are universal human needs and that people will experience feelings of subjective well-being to the extent that these needs are met” (2000:42). Some researchers have looked for the needs related to happiness but often the universal needs described by Abraham Maslow are used or referenced in talking about this theory. One of the main limitations of Needs Theory is that most studies do not have direct measures of need fulfillment. For instance, Diener et. al. (1995) assess basic need fulfillment using safe drinking water, infant mortality, life expectancy, calories available per capita and sanitary toilet facilities when looking at nations. This is obviously not a complete assessment of the fulfillment of needs. There are also critiques about the hierarchical nature of Maslow’s theory indicating that it may not be necessary for the needs to be obtained in their hierarchical ordering. Moreover, when looking at the separation between higher and lower

needs that Maslow described in *Motivation and Personality*, the hierarchy between the individual needs is less important (Maslow, 1970).

### **Selection of Needs Theory**

The above four theories can co-exist. There are many interactions between them such as the relationship between relative standards (comparison theory) and the need for esteem.

Additionally, some goals may result from innate human needs. In this case, Goals Theory and Needs Theory have similar predictions. Furthermore, in a way, Goal Theory is a subset of Comparison Theory in that achieving or not achieving one's goal can cause positive or negative results in comparing to where one was before meeting or not meeting one's goal.

Additionally, Veenhoven (1989) attacked the claim Easterlin made that, "happiness depends largely on social comparison" (p.9). He believed that comparisons are not completely indicative of happiness due to the relationship between economic fluctuations and happiness within countries. Needs Theory addresses this issue through the connection between income and need fulfillment. A study done by Kahneman and Deaton (2010) found that there is a positive relationship between income and happiness up to an annual income of \$75,000 USD. Above this amount, income isn't as indicative of happiness. This is due to the benefits money provides such as housing, higher social status, and being able to spend time with friends; in other words need acquisition. Having money better allows individuals to fulfill their needs up to a certain point. This connection between income and need fulfillment with relation to happiness was also found in a study by Diener, Horwitz and Emmons (1985).

Although Culture Theory is not directly addressed through Needs Theory, there are some significant critiques of this theory. A study by Schyns (1998) found that Needs Theory predicted the pattern of happiness they found quite well whereas, "the relation between culture and

happiness proved to be spurious” (p. 3). Schyns found that in rich countries there was a positive correlation between culture and happiness but in the free countries they found a positive correlation between happiness and economic prosperity. This indicates that culture is indicative of happiness after economic prosperity is achieved. Additionally, if culture is the only thing indicative of happiness, then how can people from different cultures experience the same positive and negative influences on happiness?

Needs Theory seems to be the most overarching and the most explanatory of happiness of the four theories and thus it was selected as the model for this study. It should be noted that this study is designed to look at an inconsistency within Needs Theory and thus supports other researchers’ assessment that none of the four theories are complete explanations of happiness (Diener and Lucas 2000). However, Needs Theory has the strongest base of empirical support and therefore deemed a logical model to work from especially as it seems that two of the other theories are integrated within Needs Theory. Since Culture Theory did not fit as nicely under the umbrella of Need Theory, questions regarding culture and its influence on happiness were also asked during the interviews.

### **Empirical Research**

There is research on the connection between happiness and each individual need. However, the amount of research on each need’s relationship to happiness varies. For instance, there is a lot of research on the connection between social relationships and happiness, but there are not studies that specifically address the cognitive need, only proxy studies which do not directly measure the need but provide insight. Below are brief descriptions of some of the research looking at happiness and individual needs.

## Physiological

Physiological needs are described as those things needed to maintain homeostasis within the body. There is a large array of possible elements, consisting of any kind of minor nutritional deficiency but usually physiological needs are thought of as the need for food, water, and air. Maslow also includes the physiological needs that are not homeostatic like sleep, sex, physical activity and maternal behavior. These are not quite the same as food and water, but do contribute to motivating behavior which is an urge that people will act upon for a certain result. If the things necessary for a human to maintain physiological balance are missing, for instance in the case of hunger (this being extreme hunger and not appetite), then a person is consumed only by thoughts of food and satisfying the need of hunger. This was demonstrated in what has been dubbed The Minnesota Starvation Experiment but ultimately published as *The Biology of Human Starvation* where participants were fed a specific diet which was incrementally reduced over 24 weeks in order to gain information on how to counteract the malnourishment of starvation for those returning from WWII. Additionally, two studies have shown that eating foods, one talking about breakfast and the other about apples or chocolate, leads to feelings of more contentment or joy than not eating anything (Macht and Dettmer 2006; Smith, Kendrick, Maben and Salmon 1994). Desmet and Schifferstein (2008) also found that eating a variety of sample foods and recalling previous food experiences is more often associated with positive emotions. There have also been studies done on the impact of sleep on happiness which found that earlier bedtimes, the quality of sleep, and shorter times to REM sleep are all associated with cheerfulness the following day (Berry and Webb 1985; Totterdell, Reynolds, Parkinson and Briner 1994). Consequently, those who slept normally had greater positive affect than those who were sleep-deprived (Franzen, Siegle and Buysee 2008).

## **Safety and Security**

Safety and security can be slightly abstract in the way that it not only includes physical safety but also mental and emotional safety. For this reason, protection from threat of illness or death is important, but also having consistency, freedom, choice, and an orderly and predictable world, make up the requirements for this need. In support of the need for safety and security, a study found that residents in denser places felt less safe, were more depressed, and had less satisfaction (Oliver 2006). These findings are also supported by a study done by Rosenbaum and Harris (2001), who looked at families who moved from high poverty areas to low poverty areas which they presumed were safer and found that there were improvements in the families' well-being. Sense of safety being linked to happiness has even been found at an international level. Diener, Arora and Diener (2009) found that a sense of safety was strongly correlated with life satisfaction in 145 countries. One study looking on a global level found a link between free choice and happiness through regression analysis on data from representative national surveys carried out from 1981 to 2007 (Inglehart, Foa, Peterson and Welzel, 2008). As such, connections have been made between free choice and the political system, specifically democracy. Multiple studies have been done to determine the connection between political regime type and happiness. Inglehart et al. (2006) found a strong correlation between happiness levels and measures of democracy. In this way, there has been support between the political freedoms one receives and one's level of happiness.

## **Love and Belonging**

There have been countless studies showing links between social networks and happiness (Acock and Hurlbert, 1993; Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick and Wissing, 2011; Folwer and Christakis, 2008). One concluded that a person's happiness depends on the happiness of those

who surround them (Fowler and Christakis, 2008). That is, happiness can spread through networks. Interestingly, the effect of social networks on happiness differs by marital status, as those who are single tend to rely more heavily on social networks for their happiness (Acock and Hurlbert, 1993). Likewise, loneliness results in a significantly lower quality of life (Bramston, Pretty and Chipuer, 2002). Among life domains, family and social relationships are prominently associated with happiness and meaningfulness (Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick and Wissing, 2011). Globally, it was found that high levels of social support and trust are associated with increased life satisfaction (Calvo, Zheng, Kumar, Olgiati and Berkman 2012; Chan and Lee 2006; Kuroki 2011; Tokuda, Fujii, and Inoguchi 2010). Moreover, Antonucci and Akiyama (1987) found that the quality of relationships is more indicative of happiness than the quantity. Additionally, in a 75-year longitudinal study called the Harvard Study of Adult Development or the Harvard Grant Study, a common theme in the quality of life was having quality relationships. This aspect of the study was talked about in a TED talk by Robert Waldinger (2015) who was the fourth director of the Harvard study. He stated that people who have more social connections to friends, family and community are happier, physically healthier and live longer.

### **Esteem**

The esteem need is characterized by both self-esteem as well as esteem or respect from others. Happiness has been found to be highly correlated with a sense of high self-esteem and high status (Diener and Diener 1995; Furnham and Cheng 2000). Additionally, there are studies that show reduced well-being in low-status members of society as compared to those of a higher social status (Simon, Steptoe and Wardle 2005; Ross 2000). Likewise, in an experimental study, it was found that participants who were assigned the role of “manager” were perceived more highly by co-workers, enjoyed their job more and had a higher self-rating of their performance



(Humphrey 1985). Unexpectedly, a study on relative location found that people in more affluent communities had lower levels of self-efficacy and esteem, and were less satisfied with life than those in less affluent communities (Oliver 2006). This was partially due to the lack of community feel and position within the community. Additionally, there was a study that found that among individuals who had initially been rejected by a social group, there was increased well-being when they were reminded of their group affiliation (Knowles and Gardner 2008). This shows that being part of a group and gaining esteem from peers is beneficial to one's happiness.

The esteem from others also encompasses one's status in society. This relationship has been shown in a few of studies. As mentioned before, a study by Frank (2006) found that people are willing to sacrifice total value for a better relative position, meaning that they would rather have more than their peers even if that means less total value. Similarly, Luttmer (2004) observed that there were similar decreases in individual happiness when individual income decreases while a neighbor's income increases. Additionally, Graham and Felton (2005) looked at this from an international perspective and very similarly there were distinctions based on relative situation in society. Wealthy people from Honduras (the poorest Latin American country) were happier than the poor Chileans (wealthiest country) even though the average poor Chileans' wealth was twice as much.

### **Cognitive**

The cognitive need is the need for knowing and understanding. Some sources used to answer questions and gain deeper understanding of a life include religion, science, and higher education. There have been many studies done linking religion to happiness. For example, one study that looked at college students found that higher scores on the Francis Scale (a measure of

religiosity) were associated with higher scores on the DHS or Depression-Happiness Scale (French and Joseph 1999) meaning greater happiness. Others have also found a relationship between religion and life satisfaction (Aghababaei and Blachnio 2014; Dufton and Perlman 1986). For education, there have been studies that show a connection between schooling and happiness. A study conducted by Hartog and Oosterbeek (1998) found that although there was no correlation between IQ and happiness, there was between schooling and happiness. This supports the idea that filling one's need for knowledge increases happiness.

### **Aesthetics**

Aesthetics is described by the need for and appreciation of beauty, balance, form, etc. Although this may be an abstract concept, there is some research connecting aesthetics in terms of environment to happiness. Research done by Brereton, Clinch and Ferreira (2007) found substantial importance in the role of the spatial dimension in determining happiness. This study looked at variables including precipitation, wind speed, high and low temperatures, as well as proximity to landfills, hazardous waste facilities, coasts, beaches, rail stations, and airports. The results showed that many spatial variables were related to happiness. They even mentioned that there is increased satisfaction with increased rain, but that this could be due to more scenic beauty in wetter areas. There were also studies that showed increased happiness with sunshine (Güven 2009; Kampfer and Mutz, 2011). This helps to support the relationship between aesthetics and happiness. Additionally, there are studies showing connections between other environmental variables like noise pollution (Van Praag and Baarsma 2005), air pollution (Welsh 2006), climate change (Frijters and Van Praag 1998; Rehdanz and Maddison 2005) and environmental attitudes (Ferrer-i-Carbonell and Gowdy 2007) to well-being. For example, Rehdanz and Maddison (2005) predicted that the increase in temperature due to climate change

will positively affect the well-being of people in high latitude countries and negatively affect the well-being of those in countries currently experiencing high summer temperatures.

### **Self-Actualization**

According to Maslow (1943), self-actualization was a term first coined by Kurt Goldstein which refers to the desire for self-fulfillment. It is becoming actualized with one's own potential. It can also be referred to as finding your purpose or meaning in life. Purpose in life has been a widely studied area in happiness research. Reker, Peacock and Wong (1986) found life purpose to predict psychological and physical well-being. Likewise, a study done with college students found a strong positive relationship between purpose in life and happiness (Robak and Griffin 2000). Similarly, a study found that meaning in life and self-actualization have a positive effect on happiness (Cohen and Cairns 2011).

### **Transcendence**

Transcendence is a need talked about in Maslow's ([1964] 1970) book, *Religion, Values and Peak-Experiences*. He described it as having realizations that change your outlook on life. These moments of realization are mainly described as peak experiences although there are plateau experiences as well. Peak experiences are those where great insight comes from confrontations with experiences like 'death, postsurgical vision, etc.' (xiv) or winning the lottery (Maslow [1964] 1970). Both peak and plateau experiences can lead to a deeper understanding or outlook on life and thus transcendence or a form of it. In the way that you transcend, you are becoming more connected with things beyond yourself or as Kolotko-Rivera (2006) put it, "peak experiences often led the self-actualizing individual to transcend the personal concerns of the very self that was being actualized" (p. 304). People go beyond self-actualization and their meaning in life to see their connection to others.

This idea of going beyond oneself is often referred to as altruism. A study looking at altruistic parents found that altruism had a relatively large effect on parents' subjective well-being (Bruhin and Winkelmann 2009). Another study found that voluntary work lead to greater happiness even when controlling for status (Borgonovi 2008). In a review of the recent research on altruism, Post (2005) reported that "a strong correlation exists between well-being, happiness, health, and longevity of people who are [altruistic]" (p.66). The studies he used for support included one on retirees that found volunteers had significantly higher life satisfaction (Hunter and Lin, 1981). Another showed that families who decided to donate their recently deceased loved one's organs reported a psychological benefit (Batten and Prottas 1987). Furthermore, in a study of 2,106 members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, Schwartz et. al. (2003) found that giving help was significantly associated with better mental health than receiving help. All in all, there is a lot of support for the connection between altruism and happiness.

### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Happiness**

Although research has been conducted on the needs individually, there has been much less research done looking at multiple needs and their relationship with happiness. However, there has been some and the findings are relatively consistent in that need fulfillment is linked to increased happiness. Betz (1984) looked at Maslow's hierarchy and women's life experiences and found that, "a significant relationship was found between need fulfillment and life satisfaction" (p. 204). Similarly, Rojas and Guardiola (2016) found that not having needs fulfilled played a role in depressing people's well-being.

Another in-depth study looked at the relationship between fulfillment of needs and subjective well-being (happiness) around the world. Using data from the Gallup World Poll, Tay and Diener (2011) assessed need fulfillment and subjective well-being (SWB) in 123 countries.

Overall, they have some very useful findings. First, they state that there are universal need predictors of well-being and “the fulfillment of needs was positively related to higher SWB across all world regions” (p. 358). Their findings indicate that the deprivation or fulfillment of needs is closely linked to positive or negative emotions. They also found that the society in which one lives has a strong association to whether those needs are met. At a societal level, they submit that nations where most people have basic needs met tend to have higher life evaluations. They also suggest that basic needs are strongly influenced by society whereas psychological needs appear to be more individual. They propose that this could be why poor individuals can still report relatively high levels of SWB.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

There are four gaps within the literature that this study addresses. Firstly, there has been no research found to this date that has looked at Maslow’s hierarchy of needs with the inclusion of the three additional needs. The following three gaps were outlined by a study conducted by Tay and Diener (2011). They stated that, “more research on the causal effects of need fulfillment on SWB in various cultures is required” (p. 363). Additionally, they thought it would be beneficial to have measures that do not depend on self-report survey items. In general, there has been little qualitative research both in studies of happiness as well as Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.

Lastly, there is little research on those whose combination of needs and happiness falls outside of what Needs Theory would suggest. Based on the research done by Tay and Diener (2011), it was indicated that there may be more to happiness (measured through life evaluation) than the fulfillment of needs as described by Maslow’s original five needs. They stated, “however, having all needs fulfilled was insufficient for high life evaluations because only 14%

of those with high need fulfillment fell into the top categories, and one-third of those with their needs met fell in the low life evaluation categories” (p.359). This suggests that there are individuals throughout 123 countries that have the majority of their needs met and aren’t happy.

Therefore, in taking a qualitative approach to look at individuals who fall outside of the predictions of Needs Theory in Botswana while using Maslow’s complete hierarchy of needs, this study addresses the above outlined gaps within the literature.

### **Research Questions**

Needs Theory is based on the overarching premise of how having one’s needs met relates to human happiness. The theory then states that through the fulfillment of needs, people will experience increased happiness. However, there have been critiques of this theory and research findings that suggest that further insight into the relationship between need fulfillment and happiness should be done (Diener and Lucas 1999). For this reason, my research questions focus on subgroups of the population that do not fit the theory (increased need fulfillment leading to increased happiness) and interviews to ascertain why this may be. The theory would predict that having one’s needs met would result in happiness and not having one’s needs met would result in unhappiness. The subgroups that do not fit this theory would then be people who have their needs met and are not happy, and people who do not have their needs met but are happy.

Through email correspondence with Ed Diener, who has published over 300 articles on the topic and has been dubbed, “Dr. Happiness”, he has affirmed the possibility of the two subgroups of people who do not fit within Needs Theory. The first subgroup consists of individuals who do not have the majority of their needs met, but are nonetheless still happy. In support of the use of this group, he stated,

We certainly know of individuals who have not met the needs and yet are happy. For example, Monoj in the movie “Happy” is someone we know, and he is a happy guy living in

tough circumstances. We know from our Gallup data that quite a few people around the globe have really what we would think of as very difficult lives, without food sometimes etc., and yet enjoy life (Diener 2016)

Through the insight of this prolific happiness researcher, it can be seen that there are a great number of people throughout the world who fit this description though there is little in the way of published research articles.

Conversely, the opposite group of study would be individuals who have the majority of their needs met but are not happy. In response to this Diener added,

At the other end, I am sure there are people who have needs met but who are unhappy, but we have never taken a close look at them and maybe we should. Do not think the Gallup data would be adequate because the things that make them unhappy are probably not captured in the Gallup World Poll” (Diener, 2016)

Due to this inconsistency with polling or survey data, I have incorporated interview questions to explore what factors may be making people unhappy. Additionally, as was discussed earlier in Tay and Diener’s research, one-third of individuals with fulfillment of needs had low happiness (Tay and Diener 2011). In response to this they concluded that there may be other relevant factors in addition to Maslow’s hierarchy saying that, “people require all needs to be fulfilled for higher evaluation of life, but it is not enough-additional factors are relevant” (p.359). Therefore, it can be seen that there are factors affecting individual’s happiness that fall outside of the Maslow Needs and there are individuals that fall outside of the expectations of Needs Theory.

This thesis explores how having needs met relates to human happiness in the following ways:

RQ1: How do people explain the absence of happiness when the majority of needs are met?

RQ2: How do people explain the presence of happiness when the majority of needs are not met?

## CHAPTER III: DESIGN AND METHODS

I chose a qualitative approach incorporating the use of interviews. The Needs model assumes that with greater acquisition of needs a person will have greater happiness and well-being. In order to understand both the absence of happiness when needs are met as well as the presence of happiness when needs are not met, this study was designed to look at people who do not fit this model; that being individuals who have their needs met but aren't happy and individuals who do not have their needs met but are happy.

### **Design**

In order to gain insight into the role that happiness plays in the lives of Batswana (the people of Botswana), I conducted in-depth interviews. To find participants in each category, I developed a screening questionnaire to assess the happiness and level of need acquisition of each participant. Once the screening questionnaire was completed, participants were categorized into four groups: 1. Needs Met, Happy, 2. Needs Not Met, Not Happy, 3. Needs Met, Not Happy and 4. Needs Not Met, Happy. Those falling into the first two groups were individuals whose happiness could be explained through Needs Theory and thus were not of interest for this study. Those falling into the remaining two groups were asked if they would be interested in participating in an interview.

Botswana is a desirable country of interest due to its designation as a middle-income country in Africa. The majority of happiness research has been done in western countries including the United States, Canada, and European countries (Veenhoven 2016). Little research has been done in Botswana in regards to happiness (Veenhoven 2016). From the screening questionnaire, there were individuals who fell into all four of the categories. The vast majority of participants had their needs met but there were still a number of participants who did not.



## Sample

Two hundred and four Batswana filled out the questionnaire. These participants ranged in age from the reported ages of 18 to 69 although some participants did not fill in their age. They were all native Batswana with no cognitive disabilities. Only adults were interviewed due to ethical concerns. Likewise, individuals with obvious cognitive disabilities were excluded as they could have different needs and different perceptions of happiness. For instance, one study found that 99% of the people with Down Syndrome that they interviewed were happy (Skotko, Levine and Goldstein 2011). This is far higher than other populations.

Of the 204 Batswana who filled out the questionnaire, 40 were men, 162 were women, and 2 declined to indicate gender. From the four groups described earlier, 145 participants fell into the category of Needs Met, Happy (group 1), 24 were identified as Needs Not Met, Not Happy (group 2), 32 were Needs Met, Not Happy (group 3) and 2 were Needs Not Met, Happy (group 4). Of the 32 participants in group 3, seven were asked if they would like to participate in an interview and all agreed. These participants were interviewed as they were the first to fall into group 3 and agree to an interview. More interviews in this group were not conducted due to time constraints and in focusing on finding more participants who fell into group 4. Of the 2 participants in group 4, only one agreed to an interview. There was another participant who was originally identified as Needs Not Met, Happy and was interviewed. However, it was discovered during the interview that her questionnaire had been filled out incorrectly by her friend since she was illiterate. The answers to the questionnaire were altered to fit her actual responses and her grouping was changed to group 1.

Sampling took place in Eastern Botswana in the Palapye sub-district primarily in Palapye and Radisele. Palapye is the largest village in the Palapye sub-district and the most urban. Urban

areas tend to have increased income and access to goods and services (Wheaton 1977) and thus higher need fulfillment as opposed to rural areas. Radisele is a smaller village within the sub-district selected in an attempt to find additional participants falling into group 4.

### **Data Collection**

Before data collection began, approval was obtained from the Ministry of Health of Botswana, the Illinois State University IRB (Institutional Review Board) and the Paramount Kgosi (head chief) of Palapye. Botswana has both traditional leadership as well as a parliamentary system. Much of everyday village life revolves around the Kgotla or traditional law court (Smith, Maphane, Pillion and Arcand 2016). Therefore, it was important to gain approval not only from the Ministry of Health but also the Kgosi.

During the process of obtaining approval, the screening questionnaire and consent forms were translated into Setswana by a team of LCFs (language and cross-cultural facilitators). Additionally, interview translators were located through community connections. Two were identified and completed CITI online ethics training for Social and Behavioral Research for Human Subjects Research. Two interviews were conducted using translation, but one was not utilized due to the error in filling out the questionnaire.

After approval was gained, participants were located in two ways. Some participants were found through door-to-door inquiry. Most participants, however, were located at communal gathering places. They were asked if they would like to participate in the study by completing the screening questionnaire in either English or Setswana. Every participant first read through and signed a consent form in the language they preferred. All participants were provided with a printed copy of the questionnaire, a writing utensil and a hard book or clipboard to write on. After they completed the questionnaire, it was scored to determine which group they fell into. If

they fell into groups 3 or 4, they were asked in person or by phone if they would like to participate in an interview.

The screening questionnaire was first coded for happiness. There are three questions assessing happiness using a 5-point scale. Individuals who had a score of 10-15 were coded as being happy; those with a score of 3-9 were coded as not happy. Subsequently, each 'need' was assessed to see whether they were met. There are three questions for each 'need' that use a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Individuals who score 10-15 were coded as having that need met and those who scored from 3-9 were coded as not having that need met. If a person had 6 or more of their needs met, they were categorized as having the majority of their needs met. If they had 4 or fewer of their needs met, they were categorized as not having their needs met. Their designation of being happy or not happy and having their needs met or not was used as the selection criteria for the interviews.

The screening questionnaire was developed based on questions used in previous surveys. Questions used to assess acquisition of needs were derived from The Need Satisfaction Inventory (Lester 1990), the survey used by Strong and Fiebert (1985), questions from the Gallup World Poll from the core questions and from Sub-Saharan Africa (2008), The Flourishing Scale (Diener, Wirtz, Tov, Kim-Prieto, Choi, Oishi, and Biswas-Diener 2010), the Self-Actualization Index (Jones and Crandall 1986) and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Assessment (1965). Two or three questions were selected to address each of the eight needs. Three questions for assessing subjective happiness were selected from the Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky and Lepper 1999) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin 1985). The Cronbach's Alpha for these scales range from 0.77 to 0.89. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The criteria for participation in the interviews fell in two categories: individuals who have all or most of their needs met but aren't happy and individuals who have none or very few of their needs met and are happy. Interviews were used to further explore the deviation from the Needs model. Questionnaire participants were continually sought out in hopes of finding four to five participants from each criteria. Only two were identified in the Needs Not Met, Happy group. Further pursuit of these individuals was cut short due to time constraints. Interviews were done as soon as possible after the questionnaire was completed. All data collection ended September, 2018. Analysis was conducted after all interviews were completed. These interviews were confidential and took place in a location determined by the participant such as their yard or the office where I worked.

Interviews were done face-to-face, as opposed to via phone or Skype. An audio recorder was used to record 8 of the 9 interviews. One participant did not want to be recorded and so thorough notes were taken during the interview. Participants were given the option of whether they wanted a translator present or not. Two participants opted to have the translator. Questions were asked about happiness, namely what they define happiness as, what kinds of things make them happy, etc. as well as questions regarding their lifestyle and the extent to which their needs have been met. These questions can be seen on the interview guide (Appendix B). Interviews were transcribed using the voice recording. Due to insufficient resources, no money was given for participation.

### **Data Analysis**

All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim using word processing of the audio recordings, Temi online audio transcription, and Express Scribe Transcription Software. After transcription, coding was done through meaning categorization (Kvale 1996). Interviews were

coded for positive and negative influencers in happiness, coping mechanisms and what participants said they would need to be happy. The positive and negative influencers were then categorized as related to one of the Maslow Needs through the denotation 'Maslow' or something that falls outside of Maslow's need with the denotation of 'Not Maslow'. Those categorized as 'Maslow' were then broken down into the 8 needs (i.e. physiological, safety, love, esteem, cognitive, aesthetic, self-actualization and transcendence). Those categorized as 'Not Maslow' were broken down into sub-categories including past traumas, transitions, negative thought cycles, repeated failures, expectations, comparisons, practical barriers, empathy, perspective, coping and resiliency. Factors participants felt they still needed for happiness were also split into 'Maslow' and 'Not Maslow' distinctions.

After coding, themes for the presence of certain needs, the relative importance of each, and the frequency of topics or needs was looked for. In comparing the interviews, I checked for similarities or differences in the acquisition of needs, definitions of happiness, and in what respondents related to happiness and what makes them happy. Furthermore, anything related to why someone may or may not be happy that cannot be explained by the acquisition of needs was assessed.

### **Ethical Concerns**

In any research, there is the potential for harm. Therefore, it is ethical to reduce the potential of harm as much as possible as well as informing participants of any potential harm, the purpose of the research and their role. In order to conduct an ethical study there must be informed consent (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011:61). For this, a letter of informed consent was used as well as a verbal reiteration before the interview took place (Appendix C). The letter of informed consent was given in advance so that there was ample time for it to be read. It was also

read aloud prior to the interview as a reminder and in the event the participant was unable to read. All participants signed (via signature) the consent letter prior to the start of the interview.

During the interview, it is important to reduce any possible harm. The primary area of potential harm in doing an interview is through emotional harm from talking about sensitive issues. Although there was one participant who was happy, the majority of participants were not. For this reason, it was necessary to be sensitive to the information that they were presenting and in the questions being asked. On one occasion, a participant became noticeably upset and the interview questions were redirected to another area. Additionally, participants were reminded throughout the interviews of their right to discontinue or not answer any particular question without repercussions. Additionally, all participants were given information on how to access mental health services in their area.

For example, a major ethical concern to be aware of was the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the history of colonization in the area, and cultural differences. Although information regarding individuals' HIV/AIDS statuses were not asked, this information did come up in an interview. Therefore, sensitivity about the topic was employed to ensure that there was no potential for stigma within the questions or how they were asked. Lastly, there are cultural differences and thus questions were asked in a culturally sensitive manner.

Another way potential harm was reduced was through confidentiality. Each participant was given an identification number so there are no documents that include both their names and responses. Any physical forms, such as the informed consent, were kept in a locked room when not being used. Moreover, all electronic files such as audio recordings and transcriptions were encrypted and the hard drive was also kept in a locked room. All audio recordings will be deleted at the conclusion of the project.

## CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### **Needs Met, Not Happy**

Of the eight participants, seven of them had most if not all of their Maslow Needs met yet they were not happy. There were three main manifestations to explain why this occurred. Firstly, there were people who had their needs met in one way but not another. Secondly, there were instances where participants were in between having them met and not met. Lastly, there were areas affecting happiness that were not covered by the Maslow Needs.

### **Met but Not Met**

As can be seen with most of the needs, there were examples of participants who had their needs met in one way but not in another. This means that they had areas of their life that fulfilled that need, but at the same time, there were factors in their life that took away in that same area. For example, one participant had a boyfriend and family from whom she receive a lot of love, but she didn't fit in with any groups or other students at school. So although she felt loved by her family, she didn't feel like she belonged to the community she was living in. There was another participant who was very active in the community and participated in many groups, but there are some people who criticized her and put her down thus causing conflicting feelings for her in participation in these activities. Additionally, at work she felt really good about how some co-workers asked about her life and kids, but at the same time, others really bothered her and give her bad advice:

Even at work, at work, but there are two people (that) make me not to be happy. Those who give me wrong advice. Those two participants, but the rest when I get there, you see, I'll just be happy, you see. They will ask me, "how is your kids", I'll say, "they are good, what-what", you see they will start talking, they will yes, I'll be happy. (7:29)

The only need that was either completely met or completely not met by participants was the cognitive need or the need for knowing and understanding. Furthermore, no participant

commented on needing anything to be happy that would fall into the cognitive need category, including the participants who didn't have this need met. This could indicate that this need is not as indicative of happiness as some of the other needs.

Almost all love and belonging and esteem comments were contradicting, in that there were a lot of positive influences in one aspect of their life but a lot of negative influences in another. This created difficulties not only in measuring if needs are met completely but calls into question whether or not these needs can be fulfilled in a complete and exact way. Additionally, since the Needs Not Met, Happy participant also had contradicting needs, the importance of need fulfillment and the role it has on happiness is challenged. In this way, there is also the conundrum of how the extent to which a need is met or not met effects its influence on happiness. For instance, there were two participants that struggled with access to food. One of these participants struggled with access to food some of the time whereas the other participant experienced it as a daily struggle. As a result, the participant with daily food insecurity had a lot more negative impacts upon their happiness from this unmet area than the other participant. Therefore, not only the contradicting nature but also the inconsistencies of severity of need acquisition creates problems with using Needs Theory to explain happiness.

### **In Between**

Another way in which needs were met but also not met were in instances of participants making progress toward getting to where they wanted to be but weren't there yet. In many cases, they could see the progress they were making towards reaching their goals and needs and believed that they would get there. But they just weren't there yet and that was sometimes unsettling. One participant stated, "I want to get there. Maybe in two years, I'll be, I'll be in four [referring to Agree (4) on the questionnaire]. Because I know, I hope my, my house will be



finished. I hope by then I could be, I'll be facing a life of four kids" (5:12) and later also commented, "I feel good about myself because I'm fighting. I'm starting to get what is right for me." (5:7). While another said,

I'm getting there slowly, slowly. For example now, for example, akere (you know) I'm a participant, they're giving me that 700 pula, sometimes I'm getting that piece job. You taught me nutrition, *Name* taught me feasibility study. Now I'm in the process, I'm registering a company, so I want to achieve som-, gore (because) I feel like I'm going there, slowly, slowly, slowly (7:14)

For this reason, some participants marked 3 (unsure) or 4 (agree) for the need because they were making progress towards it but weren't exactly where they wanted to be. The need wasn't not met but it wasn't met completely either. Along these lines, another stated, "Yeah. But, so right now I gave three because I'm getting to where I want to get. But I have to work." (5:11).

Being in between where you want to be and where you were is a difficult place to be because it can cause conflicting and confusing feelings. Participants may feel good about where they are at in comparison to where they were; they feel happy about making progress towards their goals or that they are fighting for what they want. But on the other hand, they may be disappointed that they aren't where they want to be or they aren't making progress the way they wanted to. Therefore, they were comparatively both bad and good, putting them in this confusing middle place where they're not lacking needs but they're not totally fulfilled either. One summarized it as, "I'm not living the life I wanted to live, but I'm going towards it" (3:6).

Being in this position can both positively and negatively impact happiness depending on the outlook of the participant at that moment. Often, if there are other negative things happening in a person's life, they may be more likely to look at the negative side whereas a person who is already happy isn't swayed to a negative perspective as easily. For example, the participant who

was happy talked about how going traveling with their church made them happy, but not going would not have made them not happy.

I: trips at church, okay. And those things have made you happier, before you weren't as happy?

P: Not really

I: Ok, so your happiness kind of stays pretty even, sometimes when you're traveling it goes up and, but generally it stays about the same?

P: yes

I: Are there any times in your life where you were unhappy?

P: ah, naw I'm just constant (6:20)

### **Additional Factors**

It should be reiterated that there is a difference between short-term elatedness or joys and long-term sustainable, overarching happiness or contentment. The individuals who have their needs met but aren't happy still had many positive and enjoyable aspects of their lives that bring them joy, many of which are the needs that they have met. However, there are prominent negative factors that seem to outweigh or overshadow the positive factors. These additional factors included traumatic life events, periods of transition, negative thought cycles, repeated failures, unmet expectations, comparisons, practical barriers and empathy.

### **Past Trauma.**

Past traumas were things that were very prominent in the lives of these individuals despite having happened in the past. Many of these individuals have gotten out of tough situations they were in previously but continue to hold some burdens from these experiences. Of the seven Needs Met, Not Happy participants, all but one noted a significant incident or incidents that have greatly impacted their lives in a negative way and they continue to deal with the emotional repercussions of these events. Three participants noted growing up in poverty and some of the struggles associated with that. One extreme effect of this experienced by two participants was being abandoned by their parents as children. One participant explained:

Since my, since 2005 my mother left us. She was going, she went to Gaborone. Yes. The reason why, akere (you know), she was taking care of us alone, single parent. So she left us alone. I was staying with my younger brother and my younger sister. It happened that my mother left us and my grandmother took my younger sister to *Another Village*. Now I was left with my younger brother, we were two. And at that time I was doing standard, some Form, Form 2 or 1. I thought, “Ah, what is going now”. My mother was there, I was with my younger brother, gore, “ah!” I said, “Ah! Now my life is over. We do not have money to take care of us. My mother she’s there struggling at Gaborone to send money for us. (7:5)

Another participant had a similar experience and shared,

I grew up not with my mom, just cause she could not afford anything. I was staying with relatives and just imagine, for seven years not seeing your mom with your eyes. For seven years, asking yourself whether your mom is dead or alive. It was just like that. I believe gore, if my mom has, could have managed to raise me, I could not be living this life I am living here right now. Because I was distant. I wasn’t knowing what was happening. You see that pains? Yeah. (5:19)

These were obviously very impactful moments for these participants, and although they did not understand why their parents left and did not comment on any hard feelings they had towards their parents, they do still remember the trials they went through and hold some of those strong feelings.

Two of the participants experienced significant abuse. One experienced emotional abuse from her parents and caretakers while the other was in a physically, emotionally, and financially abusive relationship. The first shared multiple stories of the experiences she had,

For example, one thing that has happened to me, the worst thing is my mom making me a death certificate while I am still alive. So, I can’t even face and ask her, what made you do this? I even have a copy that sometimes I can just sit down and say, “Lord, I do not believe that your own child said that I was dead while I’m still alive.’ And with me praying to God so much, I used to believe that God can hear my prayers and he just has a way of answering them. But I’m still gathering confidence to talk to her about what she has done, through the whole life... (1:6)

I remember what my aunt used to say to me. She used to tell me, “you’re, like mother like daughter, you’re just like your mom” She would say all those things to me. Waobona (you see), it used to hurt me a lot. I used to go to school hurt and cry a lot. And the people wouldn’t understand because I couldn’t tell them what my aunt told me in the morning. (1:6)

And I'll be doing nothing and my, my aunt would be like I wish I could give you to those teachers just for a day and they will see how-how-how ugly you are, how-how lazy you are. I always felt like I was working hard and she would tell me I'm just lazy... (1:13)

The other who experienced abuse from a romantic partner told her story saying, "No. Sometimes they will threaten me that, "I will kill you" sometimes he will beat me up, he will lock me inside the toilet say, "you sleep over there" you see, that was, eish. (7:7)" and,

When I went to Gaborone, now I say, "ah, maybe I will find a guy who will take care of me", now my life will be right track. Unfortunately, there I met this guy. He was very violent, abusing me. I said no, maybe when times go, he will change. So I ended up having two kids with him. I said, no, maybe he will do, I said, maybe when I go back to Palapye, now I will suffer because he's buying food, he's paying rent but eish! (common exclamation of exasperation) I thought my life was on the right track but he was abusing me, I left him. I say, "Ah, this guy is abusing me." (7:6)

Like those who were abandoned, these participants also continued to experience pain from the experiences they had. The first talked at length about the progress that she has made to work through some of the difficulties these abuses have caused her to a point where she continues to have a relationship with her mother and aunt and says that she loves them both despite what has happened. The other participant felt very grateful for being out of the abusive situation she was in even though her current situation is not ideal.

Another participant had been in jail which had a prominent impact on their life, making them search for change in other areas of their life. They explained the experience as, "At the past, it was the life that, gore, I didn't know, I didn't have that hope that one day I would have a new life. So it was a bad life. I ended up in jail, something like living at the dumping site" (3:6).

Others had loved ones die and experienced the loss even years later. One participant noted the loss of her dad and the sorrow she felt. Another remembered the good times they shared before the death of her loved ones sharing, "And my grandmother's, a sister to my mom,

and the mother to mama. We used to have good times before they died. Around on Christmas day. All these jokes that they had. I used to be happy” (5:19-20).

One more participant was dealing with a fairly recent traumatic experience in which her best friend slept with her boyfriend. It was a very painful event in her life so much so that when talking about it, she broke down crying and the direction of the interview was changed to spare further grief. She said,

It really made me like lose trust in people cause I, um, we were friends for, I do not know, like five years or something and I really like trusted her and like, I treated her as my sister and stuff and then like last year, like when we were doing first year, she... I'm sorry \*getting choked up\*. She started like having other friends and they were like mean to me and stuff. And then she slept with my boyfriend... (2:19)

The participant who didn't note a past trauma did deal with depression and suicidal thoughts. There is a possibility that they did experience a past trauma and didn't talk about it. However, even without discussing a trauma, they were dealing with some very difficult emotions.

There were additional betrayals that participants also encountered. Many participants talked about how they do not trust people because of a time when they shared something personal with someone and then that person shared it with others. Some stated it outright, “I tell you, I go and sometimes, they will just share it with others” (3:8) whereas others explained the impact of the lack of discretion such as this participant,

I saw it, with my friend. I told her that, you know I'm HIV-positive and *Daughter's Name* is HIV-positive, so akere, I trusted her, what she did to me, she told others, say, “this one she's taking ARV (anti-retroviral medication), even the, the, the daughter, you see”. People they will say, “hmm what you did to your daughter?!” I will say, “Oof what happened to my daughter?” you see? My friend told them that others were.... Maybe sometimes I will go there say, “eish, can you please, maybe give me a salt? I want to go and cook, you see, when I am here the following day on Facebook, “Hey! People they like to beg too much, what-what”, you see? That's why I say, “Ah, people look at me”. Maybe when you tell them your problem, they, gore (because) now they will disclose

your, your, everything about you. Nowadays, eish, to trust someone... is very difficult for me because I've seen it. I've experienced it. (7:16-17)

This is impactful not just from being hurt from the incident but also with a lack of trust.

The participants were less willing to open themselves up to new people and new possible support systems which made it more difficult to deal with the challenges they were facing. For example, the participant who experienced emotional abuse from their parents talked about not being able to trust anyone again stating,

You do not understand, I've went through a lot such that, ya know trusting and relying on a person is something that I hate, that I can never do. For me to trust a person it would take, I do not know, maybe my whole lifetime. Cause I feel like it's not that easy. Trusting a person means taking your hand in them partly... you're making them partly responsible for you, in a way. Yes. So I won't really trust a person. (1:10)

The traumas not only contributed to a lack of trust and willingness to be open to new relationships but also lingering fear and pain. In this way, they not only continued to have negative feelings from remembering the experience but also causal affects from the reduced potential for new support systems. In an attempt to protect themselves from further pain, they are also limiting possible supports.

### **Transitions.**

Transitional periods had a significant impact on happiness. During these times, individuals did not have the same structures and support systems that they normally would. Usually this effect was temporary during the time of transition but significant enough to have an impact on happiness and well-being for a lengthy enough period of time that it should be mentioned. Transitional periods had a tendency to change one's life in such a way that it made everything seem more difficult.

Some of the transitions that participants were experiencing were moving to a new environment and family changes. Many of those who moved to a new location struggled to adapt

to the new environment. One participant said that after she was transferred to a new village it was not easy to socialize. It took a lot longer because she didn't trust this community as much as the last one. She said, "I came here last year and I'm not well settled with the community members" (3:2) while another participant said,

There is, there are no people who will try to go around and ask if there's anyone into sports or into the singing as another thing. That's the reason why she can't do anything because she doesn't know where to go to, who to talk to, and tell that, 'I can run', 'I need help' (4:8)

A couple of participants, had gone to school and were adjusting to life on their own and trying to find structure and balance. Moving out of your home for the first time is a major transition because it is a change in environment, lifestyles, and independence which can be difficult to maneuver.

One problem is, I was doing my first semester, so it was really hard, me coping. Ya know? I'm used to my parents being there and telling me go and cook and then I'll cook each and every day, I'll wash the plates, I'll clean the house, then go and read. But here it's a bit different. They are so away from me. Sometimes I feel neglected, like they do not really care about me. (1:4)

Another participant talked about their parents' divorce and the resulting impact on their family.

Change in a family structure is difficult as it is such a prominent part of one's life.

At first I was ok with it but like I didn't realize how much it would affect my life, like the change. Cause now my mom sets new rules that she didn't before. We're not free like to talk about some things or even about my dad like my biological dad. She like can't even talk about him when the-the, her new, my step-dad is around and stuff (2:18)

Transitional periods are very impactful due to the extremity of change in one's life. This creates uncertainty, lack of security, and often reduced supports, all of which can negatively affect happiness.

### **Negative Thought Cycles.**

In addition to outward factors, there was also a common experience of “too much thinking” or thinking about the issues that were troubling them and getting caught in continuous cycles of negative thinking. Many commented on how thinking negative thoughts consumed time and energy and often contributed to further negative thoughts and feelings. These thoughts contributed to mood fluctuations, outbursts, depression and suicidal thoughts.

### ***Mood Fluctuations.***

Participants talked of being depressed, stuck in a cycle of negative thoughts whenever they are alone or even when they are with people, they are constantly thinking negative things which has an impact on their happiness. Due to these things, they often found that they had noticeable mood fluctuations. Some explained how their moods were extremely variable and could change from one moment to the next. This participant explained it this way,

Yes those moment where by you will be laughing the whole day and people just do not understand what is wrong with you. And there’s just those moments where you just feel like crying. Sometimes, I just feel like crying with no reason. Ya know, I can just close myself up in the room or just waiting for my roommate to sleep, put on my headsets, just listen to worship songs and just cry for no reason ya know? (1:14-15)

Some found that in certain situations when they were with others they were fine, but once they were alone, the negative thoughts and emotions returned. One explained this in why she needed friends stating:

Yeah cause I do not think I’m a... cause I keep like a... the reason why I need like friends and stuff is cause when I’m alone, like I spend too much time alone, then I start overthinking about like negative things, ya know when you overthink, sometimes you think, overthink negative things too. So and then that really like affects me (2:10)

Another talked about putting on a happy face.

When I’m not happy, I can be positive. Yes, I try. Yes, I will be yes, positive. I will pretend in front of people but when I’m alone, hey! Gore, I will pretend but when I’m alone, I will start weeping, crying. (7:25)



And one more talked about how during the holidays things are fine, but after they're over things are really difficult. She said, "When she was around family in Dec 2017, that's when she felt like, 'OK I'm really happy this time' because friends, family, relatives, cousins, everyone was there. But I guess when those people leave, that's when things gets out of hand." (4:13). She then further explains how it happens when friends come too, "Like they can come right now, she will be so happy to see them right? and then maybe after chatting an hour, two hours, and after that, then it just changes, it's just back to her normal self" (4:14).

There were also mentions of some mood fluctuations regardless of whether or not there was company. Even if they were around friends, they couldn't sustain their happiness. As one participant explained, "Usually it happens, maybe she stays with us and her cousin's friends come and she gets too happy and then just still with them sshhhh \*noise like going down\* and it just goes down." (4:14). Sometimes being in certain places makes them feel bad and starts the cycle of negative thoughts. One participant said,

It depends like here, akere, like now I'm home. When I'm home in my community like this one, I'll feel low self-esteem. Because kana sometimes gore I will feel low self-esteem, but at work, I will have more high, high self-esteem because I like to participate, you know, yes. I like to be there (7:10)

While she talked about how the place that she was in changed her mood, in other places, she didn't feel as down but she didn't like where she was currently staying stating,

No. Being in this place, like here we are, here in home, I do not feel happy, sometimes I will look at my mother, say, 'eish, this woman she did a lot for us, she went to Gaborone, she took care of us. She didn't use her money to maybe build a betteranyana (baby/little) house, what-what-what. Uh, yes, I'll feel like eish. But when I get money, I will try to do my things. Yes, it's determined by the place. (7:27-28)

I don't like this house, it looks like an elephant, even this toilet, I mean the color. But you see because there is no paint or we didn't plaster it, yes. (7:12)

### ***Outbursts.***

There were also instances where thinking about stresses or having stresses build upon each other led to outbursts where participants let out their negative emotions onto others. For some it was in the form of getting angry at others like this participant explains, “It can happen that when, just like this maybe me and you and her are just talking and laughing, then later while we’re still chatting around, she can just get angry at one of us.” (4:13). For another it built up to corporal punishment as she details, “And sometimes I will, I will feel more stress, more stress, more stress and I’ll become angry to my kids, end up to beat them, what they will say, “checheche we are hungry what-what-what”. They will make noise to me so I will end up beating them. Ohh... you know?” (7:18). Either way, these outbursts leave the participants feeling sad, guilty, and disappointed afterwards.

### ***Depression.***

Some participants talked about being depressed. One talked of how she didn’t feel good about anything. A couple talked about how things might be better if they weren’t around anymore. At least three referenced feeling depressed explicitly though others talked of depressive thoughts like imagining their death. One participant said, “Yeah like I... I’m kind of... how can I put it? depressed when I’m in school.” (2:1) and later stated “I always try to like motivate myself but then I always like go back to the same place, yeah.” (2:11). Another said, “Yeah, like she only gets happy for just a little bit of time.” (4:12). A third participant explained their thoughts as well:

I’m nothing, even when I’m going to *Name of clinic*, I walk in the morning and when I knock off, I walk. You see, when I get there, when I, sometimes when I look at myself, akere, I walk too much, just I’ll say, “Hey, look at me.” I get in the office, I will start to work with myself, I’ll say, “hey, what can I do now?” and I’ll come back walking in this condition, now kana (because) it’s too hot! I will say, “this is life, there is nothing that I can do.” Sometimes I will, I will say, “eish, but it’s better if I die”. Sometimes when I’m

walking because akere, I have a heart problem, sometimes I'll faint, I'll say, "what if I faint and die?" You see, to end all my problems. But after that I will regret, I'll say, "what about my kids, they are three and they're young." (7:21)

### ***Suicidal Thoughts.***

Two of the participants who talked about feeling depressed also talked about having suicidal thoughts. Both participants referenced suicide multiple times during each interview. The first had thoughts that were explained by the translator saying, "She doesn't feel useful to Botswana because one, she's not working. I think she doesn't feel like she's adding to Botswana, cuz she's not working and this kind of thing makes her feel suicidal." (4:3). The other explained her thoughts too saying,

Yes, but I have two, these two, they are troubling me too much. Two, two thoughts, they are troubling too much, to commit suicide and to give away my kids. Just to, I'm trying all my best to kill that thing but hey, it keep on coming to me time and again, every day I will say, "eish, if I give away my kids to someone... If I commit suicide" I said, but eish, if I commit suicide, who will look after them? Sometimes I will feel like I'm nothing. (7:21)

The impact of overthinking or thinking negative thoughts is a way in which unhappiness is compounded. Repetitive negative thoughts and the resulting outbursts, among other outcomes, cause negative impacts to relationships but more so, they are distressing from being a behavior or thought that the participant is experiencing that they do not want to be experiencing. They do not feel it is in their control and they feel remorse or guilt afterward.

### **Repeated Failures.**

One participant who experienced negative and suicidal thoughts after being repeatedly unable to get a job despite multiple attempts. Even after getting a job, after a short time it was lost. This ongoing cycle of finally finding a solution to her problem only to be without it again was devastating. The translator explained,

Like mostly when she's with family, she's just there, taking her space, thinking too much. Like this job thing, usually when, if she finds a job, she only works for like a week and then the job is somehow gone, destroyed. She says she's found another one and a week also, done. Like she thinks a lot, "why is it happening to me?", "why is like this to me?".... So I think those are the things that make her feel like she is not part of this country, like she's not useful to her country. She doesn't feel very well. That's why she wants to....that's why she's feeling suicidal. (4:4)

Another participant also talked about feeling disheartened after having many job interviews with no success in getting a new job. They felt they were so close just to have someone else jump ahead and take the job. They said,

Sometimes I go for some interviews. I get some interviews with people from some universities. From different communities. Now I've been to *Place* but I'm strong, I get there are you know what, I have to be one of the top five. And it happens. Every time when I get to the interview, someone got a job. I know, you know what, she's cutting that line that is before me. (5:7)

Not only was there stress from not having the job but also a blow to their confidence in their abilities to achieve success or even be able to get a job. The loss in hope makes it difficult to find success in the future. Similar to how those who experienced trauma and betrayal didn't trust people as much after their ordeals, the loss of hope after several failures makes individuals less likely to try again in the future.

### **Unmet Expectations.**

There are a variety of expectations faced by participants, from the culture, the community, neighbors and co-workers, friends and family and from themselves. There are also expectations the participants had of others that were not always met. For both expectations of oneself as well as of others, when met, these expectations can be comforting and reassuring, but when they are not met, they can be isolating, discouraging, and disappointing.

### ***Cultural Expectations.***

Expectations could be limiting or comforting depending on how they related to the individual and their values, beliefs, identity and way of life. Societal or cultural expectations provide regularity and predictability with what to expect in certain situations. This could be beneficial or harmful depending on how you meet those expectations. One participant who appreciated modesty was comforted by the lack of nude beaches in Botswana and thus not being exposed to that. However, if you like to wear shorts, but then are stared at, harassed or critiqued for doing so, this could be challenging as one participant described, “maybe it’s cause in Botswana we don’t have like a beach so like people like nudity is just, they stare at you even for wearing shorts” (2:17).

Another conflict with expectations and reality was in the cultural expectation of children. It was widely accepted that people of a certain age should have children or generally that having children was a necessity. This was exemplified when a participant was denied a birth control operation because of her age: “I thought maybe I say, ‘oh, what if now, I go to the hospital to remove my womb so that I cannot give birth?’ you know? Gore, I was like, ‘eh no, I’m nothing. I will remove my womb’. So they refuse to take out, my, my, my, that thing. They refuse, they say, ‘no, you are still young’.” (7:6). Even though participants generally agreed with the desire for children, it put major strains on their lives as they often did not have the means with which to take care of their children.

Additional cultural expectations that were talked about included taking care of the family, having a job and contributing to society, making money and not living in poverty, getting married and helping others. When these weren’t met, they often caused a lot of anxiety, turmoil and even discrimination. One participant talked in anguish about how she felt she’ll never get

married, “I have three kids, yes, no one will marry me. Ahh, it’s not good Boitumelo, I regret what I did, it’s not good and I’m the only one taking care of my kids. You see, my first born, she is going to do standard one.” (7:17).

Others talked about feeling the need to help others despite not having nothing to spare. It was such a strongly held belief that people would go out of their way to do things for others even if it made achieving their goals increasingly more difficult. This participant described,

Some of them are happy. Some of them. Some of them they're not happy. But how can you be happy? How can you sleep while one, someone says, “I didn’t eat today”, but wena (you) you are eating? But I had palache (stiff porridge) only, that person maybe there’s no palache, at all. I have to be happy after I see these things happen. But I’m happy. I’m happy. It’s not that I’m happy, but to be happy I have to share my happiness in others. (5:16)

Sometimes the result of unmet expectations was internal, but other times it manifested in very apparent ways. For example, one participant who was living in poverty felt that they couldn’t talk at the community meeting due to discrimination for being poor. She explained,

They will gossip, they will say, “look at her. Just see.” They will laugh because they do not respect me. Because, just because, sometimes I feel like, they do not respect because we do not have much because we are poor. Cause of the way we are living here. Yes, you see, sometimes they will laugh at us. Maybe when, like maybe like when there is a meeting at the kgotla we are asked, maybe say, we can comment. Sometimes it’s difficult for us to comment because maybe they will say, “look at her, what she’s saying, look at their place” they say that. (7:9)

Depending on the expectation, one of the results of not meeting said expectation can be stigmatization. For instance, there is an expectation to be healthy and not spread diseases. In Botswana, HIV is very prevalent and thus there is a lot of stigma around being HIV-positive and spreading HIV. Despite the events resulting in the infection or the inability to change the situation, a participant was stigmatized not only for having HIV, but also for her daughter having HIV. She additionally feels like she might not be able to get a scholarship due to her status stating, “Yes and sometimes I think that, what if I try some scholarship, apply for some

scholarship? But this for scholarship, I'm a little bit scared because maybe I'm HIV-positive and you go for medical test... I do not know that's why I'm saying a job, any job" (7:16).

### ***Outlook on Challenges.***

There was a common attitude among participants that they were fine with the challenges they faced, though they seemingly were not. There is an expectation in this society where you do not talk about your problems or whatever you may be facing because it could bring someone else down or possibly they'll share it with others. One participant said,

That's why, eish my life, Boitumelo, it's not good. Yes, there is no order. So now I'm trying all my best. Yes I'm trying, trying all my best. What I'm looking for now, I want to have that a permanent job and take care of my kids. Yes, that is what I'm looking for. Because this, if I go after men and ah-eh (uh-nuh/not good). I'm ok with it now. I want to focus. (7:6)

One participant even depicted the occurrence in other Batswana. She explains what the possible reach of her studies could be one day saying,

I might be doing IT but with this IT, Information Systems, I can in some way reach out to, even to people who are far from me ya know. Not through Facebook or WhatsApp. I just have a feeling there's this website that will just connect me to them. And reach out to the people in the villages that do not understand the need for a social worker for example. They do not understand the need to be, to be counseled. They just feel it's fine to just cry all the time. They feel like its fine when they're abused. They feel like it's fine when they have HIV/AIDS and everybody's mocking at them. They feel like it's fine when they have TB and they're taken out and kept on the other side because they just cough. They feel like its fine when they, she is that thin cause there are people that are this thin and everyday people making a 'ayy' \*high pitch noise indicating disbelief\* when they are way too thin. 'Not even a broom is your size.' You see, they just feel it's fine, even though it hurts them. (1:10)

This process of saying, "I can cope with it" or "I'm fine with it" may be beneficial in that they aren't thinking negative thoughts about the problem as much. On the other hand, one problem with this is that they may not be accessing help. They may be denying the fact that this problem or stress is impacting them and ignore it. They may not even be aware or able to

identify there is a problem since it's not talked about. Or they realize that it is a problem but do not feel like they can share or express it which may ultimately make it harder to deal with.

### *Expectations from Others.*

There are different expectations for all areas of life. At work, it is usually expected that employees show up on time and do their work. Some neighbors expect quiet surroundings and for their neighbors to maintain a certain aesthetic of the outside of their house. Family and friends often have the expectation that you spend time with them or do things for them. Just like the other expectations, when they are met, can have positive results but when they aren't, they can be detrimental. For example, one participant tried very hard to make sure her children were quiet and behaved but didn't feel it was enough explaining,

But janong (now), the people around here, ya know you see, we are not free, eish. Yes, we are in trouble. They'll say, "Eish at this compound, they're kids making too much noise, they disturb us. Eeeyy, look at these kids, eish." Maybe sometimes they will tell you, "take your kids, they will vomit, I do not want to see who's sick". Say, "hey your kids, they are dirty, I will vomit, take out your kids, out of my sight. They are making too much what-what-what." But I do not like my kids to be dirty. I do not like my kids to cry to disturb others, you see, it's because I do not, I do not spend the day here because when I'm at work, I'm at work. I will come back, I will try to make them clean, I will try to give them something to eat and my mother she, she will try. And sometimes on weekends I will go in the morning, akere, they will be clean now because of, we do not have the comfortable place where they can play, where they can maybe watch some cartoons. (7:20)

She found it very distressing to be disturbing to her neighbors and tried not to despite many hurdles. Another participant was criticized by their family when they weren't at work, they explained, "Now they just saying, 'wena (you) you're always sitting down, you do not do nothing'. By my own family" (3:7). Most of the participants referenced being criticized by people in their lives which is a common way for people to let you know that you are not meeting the expectations that they have for you. Criticism was very upsetting for participants, especially when delivered by someone close to them. In most cases, participants tried very hard and wanted



to meet the expectations set out for them which ultimately added to the negative impact. There were instances where participants were trying very hard to do the right things but didn't quite do them and were criticized. This left them feeling doubly bad about the situation.

In addition to having a job being a strong expectation to meet, taking care of their children was a large burden for individuals. Not only was this a personal goal for them, but people in the community also had ideas of how they should properly raise their children which left many of the participants in constant worry about supporting their children and making sure they had a good life. Often this came with challenges. One participant was in a difficult situation in which she had to decide whether to give her daughter her medication on an empty stomach or not to give it to her at all. To avoid making her child sick, she didn't give her the medication only to be scolded later. She told,

*Daughter's Name* she's sick, sometimes I, every, when for blood collection I, we go there to the hospital but sometimes if I do not have money, I will stay and when we get there they will say, "you, you are not serious, we will take you to a jail because you are not taking care of the kids", you see, but that thing is painning me a lot. Gore I'm trying, I'm trying. It's because now I'm taking care of them alone. With that 700 pula and some money of the piece job, you see, and at the hospital they will tell me that I'm not taking care of *Daughter's Name*. They will send me to a jail, they will take me to a prison because I'm not taking care of her. Eish this life is not good at all. Sometimes I'll say, "Ah! Eish, maybe if I was alone without kids maybe it will be better. Right now with kids, hmm! (7:17)

### ***Personal Expectations.***

There are also many expectations that people have of themselves which are derived from societal expectations and personal goals based on outcomes they want to receive. The participants talked about wanting to get good jobs, be successful, be examples for their children, perform well in school, get married, among many other hopes. Some of these were future goals that caused concerns about whether or not they were going to be met, but some were ongoing. One student talked about not doing as well as she'd like at school, "Cause like I said, I wanted to

pass, I had a standard which I wanted to pass but then I didn't like pass as much as I wanted to. But I was able to pass through to the next semester though" (2:9).

Personal expectations can be the most devastating when they aren't met because of the value they hold for the individual. In most cases, the goals that a person has are something that they want more and care more about getting than something someone else assigns to them. This makes it especially devastating when they aren't met.

### *Unmet Expectations of Others.*

In addition to not meeting the expectations set out for you, there can also be negative implications from other people not meeting your expectations. In general, there seem to be strongly held beliefs of the role of a friend by these participants, and many of them addressed being let down or disappointed by others. One had the expectation that if you help a person, then in the future they will help you, but in their experience, this expectation was not met. They explained, "Gore you can trust the person because right now I have helped this person so which means next time when I have a problem they will help me. Next time you have a problem, they will disappoint you." (6:14).

Similarly felt ideas were if you trust a person with personal information or just in general, that they will end up disappointing you. One participant said blatantly, "If you trust a person, you're sure to be disappointed some way, somehow." (1:11). Another talked not about being trustworthy but in being dependable and consistent. They said,

Because this, this, this land is full of judgment. You find that the people who are going to respect you are those whom you respect. And some of us, you will respect them but they will, they will not respect you because wena, they go to the bar and they do not meet you there, they can't value (you) that way... (5:6)

When the expectations set by the participant were not met by others, it was discouraging. They didn't feel like they could rely on others, and ultimately there were a few who started to

question if there was anyone who could support them in the way they needed. It also led some to feel taken advantage of. Many told of cases in which they would do things for others, but when they needed help they didn't get any, which made them feel used.

### **Comparisons.**

There is an indefinite amount of comparisons a person can make, but generally what was found were personal and external comparisons. Personal comparisons were comparisons made to the individual's past, present or future. Past comparisons could be made to where they lived in the past, what they used to do or have, or past difficulties they faced. These could be positive or negative depending upon whether their current situation is better or worse than their previous situation. If they were in a bad situation and got out of it, this could provide joy whereas if they moved from a better to a worse situation, there was something left to be desired. Most often the comparisons made to past living situations were negative. Many participants had moved villages and found their new locale to be less desirable. One talked about the differences in access to amenities, "She's saying in Francistown she could go to the parks or the mall. It's nice to be in the mall, ya know, like yeah, even the parks where you have, where you can play, maybe you can just relaxing, ya know? So, here in *Village Name*, naw..." (4:7).

Present comparisons could be between where you wanted to be at this time and where you are. If you made progress to your goals this could be a positive thing, whereas if you aren't where you want to be or where you think you should be, then this could be a negative thing. Even if you made progress, if your focus is the parts that you are missing, then the result can be in feeling unfulfilled like with this participant, "Yeah, like having my own home and build it for myself. I see myself married too. As compares to now cause if I have challenge, there's no one to talk to. I end up going to my colleagues" (3:7-8).

Future comparisons are in thinking about what you want in the future. This could be positive in that you are making progress to your goals or provide hope in that someday you will get what you want. However, this can also create worries in what if this negative thing happens in the future. This could provide stress for things that haven't occurred yet such as worrying about their child resenting them for something that happened. "Even *Daughter's Name*, my daughter, when I see her, eish, I'll feel like crying. Say kana (because), when she grows up, she will hate me. She'll say, "Why? Why I'm taking ARVs? What happened?" you see. Sometimes I will say, I'm not taking care of her, watch if maybe she died because sometimes I do not give her medicine. When I look at her, I'll cry." (7:29).

External comparisons are those made to other people or societal expectations. Comparing their situation to people who were happier had a negative impact on their happiness. On the other hand, comparing themselves to others who were in worse situations could make participants feel comparatively better. However, participants often when making comparisons to other people said things along the lines of, and "my experience wasn't as bad as theirs so I shouldn't feel bad". Therefore, they belittled their own problems and thus felt worse about feeling bad about the struggles they were facing. For example, a participant who experienced emotional abuse tried to reduce the pain she was dealing with by comparing her experiences to others who had experienced trauma. She said,

Like right now I can take in other people's problems and even compare them with mine and tell them ya know what, mine was better, they are going through worse. And I usually tell them that, 'just look at where you are right now and compare yourself to the other children who are not eating, not schooling and just wondering what they can do with their lives. Because they've just been prevented' but with these things I think I have learned a lot. Me being neglected, me being criticized. I tend to tell people I love it. It used to make me cry but right now I can say, ya know what, I love being done that to me. (1:5)

Although she was using comparisons to try and mitigate the pain she felt, it was very apparent that she was still highly affected by her past trauma. So, it may not have had the outcome of relief that she intended.

Comparisons can go either way in affecting happiness. However, often when experiencing negative thought cycles, these comparisons tend to be more negative. Since there are an unlimited number of comparisons a person can make, the impact on happiness depends greatly on how the person is focusing their attention. The additional concern comes about when comparisons made create the expectation that one shouldn't be upset thus deprecating the significance of their own difficulty.

### **Practical Factors.**

There were many limitations affecting participants and their ability to be happy based on practical factors. There is frustration in knowing exactly what you need or want to help improve your life or happiness but for one reason or another not being able to obtain it. Some limitations informed decisions that were made despite being aware of the negative impact that it had on happiness. A prime example was in the participant who derived great joy from counseling people, spent her free time counseling others, and wanted to study psychology but didn't because IT was a more practical and financially beneficial field to go into. Another wanted to transfer schools to get out of a negative situation but wasn't able to because the school wouldn't allow it.

I was thinking about like school-wise like I do not like the school and I want to move to another school and things keep happening that like me and my boyfriend like we can't meet. Like just live like with long distance that I always try to go to him but then like, Even now it's been like three weeks without me seeing him so those terms. And in terms of like my family also, my... they... my parents divorced and there's yeah... and that's why I said it. (2:10)

Other limitations were uncontrollable but effected happiness considerably. Not living in their own home or home village, not having certain opportunities, limitations of time, money and

jobs were all factors that had an impact on the participants' ability to be happy. Unfortunately these things were often very difficult to obtain.

She's saying like she can't get access to other things here in Radisele. So maybe that's the things that makes her feel like she's not part of this because she doesn't get some of those things. But she says that, if she were at her home village, she could have got those things. (4:2)

Furthermore, from lack of certain resources like time and money, participants were forced into potentially harmful situations. One participant had health conditions that made it unsafe to walk in the sun but needed to work and thus was forced to put her life at risk which was even more distressing.

My life is not good because I struggle. I struggle because right now I, I, I'm a low blood, I'm HIV-positive and I have a problem with my, my heart. So I'm not allowed to walk direct to the sunlight. I'm not supposed to walk or stand long, long time. But because I do not have nothing, I'm forced to go and do maybe a piece job during the day when there's too much heat, because I have no option. So I'm saying my life is not good. (7:17)

Not having money for electricity also made storing medications in a refrigerator impossible. As one participant described, "Water is there. But sometimes I've given up because some medication they say, put in the refrigera-, put in a fridge. Naw, I do not put in a fridge, akere, because we do not have electricity." (7:24).

Possibly the most prominent concern for some participants were job possibilities. Almost every participant commented about jobs or money at some point in the interview. They often talked about it as the solution to their problems. One saying, "A job is the key to everything" (6:11) and having a job will help you get the things you want. Jobs are tremendously important because they both fulfill needs as well as reducing burdens and stresses. Jobs were so powerful because they not only provided money to help ease other strains, but they provided countless other benefits. Some additional benefits that came up in the interviews were jobs providing purpose, feeling a part of the community, contributing to society, freedom, feelings of success,

prestige, potential for learning new things, social interactions, sense of security, having a path, predictability, identity and more. One participant said, “you can’t lead a meaningful and purposeful life without money and job” (6:10). All of these areas could be fulfilled without having a job, however having a job makes it significantly easier to do so. Also, it is a huge advantage to gain all of these benefits from one entity.

I think what she’s trying to say is that, not being financially stable is what makes her not happy. That’s what makes her life not to be good. So, if she could be financially stable, if she could have maybe, I’ll say money, if she could have a business that can keep her going financially, she could have a better life and she won’t feel lonely, suicidal, and all of those things, if she could have a job. Like the job could take away all her worries. (4:11)

Not having a job was possibly one of the biggest stressors that participants faced.

Unfortunately, there is little that they can do about this as unemployment in Botswana is so high.

At the time of this writing in 2019, the unemployment rate in Botswana is 18.1% (Trading Economics, 2019). There is also a disparity between age and gender. Youth unemployment in 2018 was 36.16%, youth being persons aged 15-24 (The Global Economy, 2019). From 2000 to 2016, there has been a difference between employment of men and women ranging from a 2.5% difference to a 7.2% difference. In 2016, the unemployment rate for men was 15.6% while for females it was 21.4%, a 5.8% difference (Matandare, 2018).

Practical barriers are frustrating in that the individuals know exactly what they would need to be happy, but they can’t have it for various reasons. Even if they understand the reason and it makes sense to them, it can still be challenging because they know there is something that would fix their problem, but they are left without it. When it’s a limitation that doesn’t make sense to the person like bureaucratic red tape, then it can be even more exasperating.

## **Empathy.**

Empathy or the impact that participants faced from the emotions or well-being of others was an interesting factor. If another person was unhappy or not doing well, the participant felt unhappy. Conversely, if the person was getting better or in a positive mood, this positively affected the participant. For the purposes of this study, this is how empathy will be defined. The participants were very aware of the ability to affect others' moods with your own and talked about it repeatedly when asked about the importance of happiness. Participants could be affected both by strangers or people close to them, though it seemed as though they were affected more by those they were closer to.

Sometimes it can be a very strong reaction like when this participant heard about an incident someone else went through,

When a person comes and tells me their problem, I'll take it in that much ya know. I wouldn't sleep. I'll be like, 'I do not believe this girl got raped and I can't do anything.' You see? I do not believe men. I can't even restore her vision to back. If I had the power ya know. I would cry the whole night if a person tells me that they lost their mother yesterday. I feel like it's me who have lost my mom ya know? (1:9)

While another participant was affected by the state that her mother was in. She had so much care and concern for her that every time she saw her, it was distressing. She explained,

Yes the people, yes they affect my happiness. Because, like, for example, when I'm with my, the one I call her my friend, I'm not happy, gore I will remember the past things she's doing, maybe sometimes like now, you know, I will remember those things. See, and sometimes when I'm with my mother I will be not happy, looking at her condition, I say, 'eish, she is sick. She is not doing well. She's not working. Gore I will think, not happy. (7:28)

There were cases where participants were affected due to the perceived negative impact they were having on others, but more to the point, even when participants were doing fine themselves they were still affected by how others were doing. The closer the relationship and the severity of the other person's condition, the more impact the participants felt. When loved ones



were in tough situations, there were shared feelings of hurt or stress such as when the participant's mother was not in good health and it was sad for the participant.

Interestingly, participants also felt this with strangers or people they didn't know as well. Something as little as seeing someone else smile was enough to boost their mood even if just slightly. Watching others be happy and have joy was a contagious feeling that could be felt by those witnessing it as well as experiencing it. One participant said, "Like in the... for example, if you go to Kasane, you'll find people who are always smiling, like, "hey! So I'm not like the only person who is always smiling in this world". Almost all people are always enjoying this. And it's nice." (1:20). It does seem that the amount of impact is related to the closeness of the relationship as well as the severity of the condition. For example, seeing someone in a car accident would create a larger negative feeling than seeing someone trip on the sidewalk. Also, there is a stronger reaction if you know the person tripping or in the accident than if they were a stranger.

### ***Importance of Happiness.***

Not only did participants feel the effects of the happiness and well-being of others but they were also aware of how their mood and happiness could affect others. When asked the question, *is it important to be happy?* Not only did they all agree but most of them supported their agreement with statements about how their happiness would affect others around them. One participant stated, "it is because when you are happy the people around will also be happy." (9:4) while another said, "Yeah it's important to be happy. It's important because I believe if you are happy other peoples are happy, you can live a long life." (5:18). They know that their own happiness affects the well-being of the people around them. They do not want to upset or bring down anyone else making it even more important for them to be happy. This added extra weight

to the importance of being happy and also added anguish if they were negatively impacting the happiness of others.

### **Needs Not Met, Happy**

There was one individual interviewed who was happy and did not have their needs met. This participant will be referred to as Participant 6 for ease as she was the sixth participant to be interviewed. She was in a situation where both her social and higher-level needs were not met, but she was happy. Like the other participants, there were things related to the Maslow Needs that contributed both positively and negatively to her happiness, but there were also things that affected her that didn't fit into the Maslow Needs.

### **Non-Maslow Factors Affecting Happiness**

On the whole, there were some overarching similarities and differences between Participant 6 and the Needs Met participants. Like the others, Participant 6 had some needs met in one way but not in others. She had supports from friends and family, and overall there were sources of positive and negative influences on happiness. However, there were also some noticeable differences such as a lack of some of the major stressors that other participants faced like past trauma, periods of transitions, and supporting dependents.

From not having her Maslow Needs met, she faced certain challenges. However, some of these challenges carried less weight because of having fewer responsibilities and thus fewer expectations. Additionally, this participant had a more optimistic perspective and incorporated strategies to improve happiness and limit her exposure to negative factors. What is more, without the added obstacles, there is an added level of resilience to face situations.

### **Fewer Expectations.**

Similar to the other participants, not having a job was a major concern for Participant 6. However, it seemed less urgent of a need than for other participants. One of the strongest desires of Participant 6 was getting a job. She felt having a job would afford her the freedom to live on her own and not be a burden to others, provide enough money to have more variety in their life, help her to discover a purpose and allow her to travel more. She also said, “You can’t lead a meaningful and purposeful life without money and job” (6:10) which demonstrates the value associated with having a job. But Participant 6 didn’t have any dependents she needed to support and wasn’t herself starving or not meeting her physiological needs. All in all, it seemed as though a job would help increase joys and contribute to positive influences on happiness but that there weren’t as many negative influences that needed to be reduced unlike the other participants greatly impacted by not having a job.

In terms of practicality, she didn’t mention anything about not having a house but did comment on money and jobs. In reference to money, she stated that, “You have to maintain your body health in order to look, your appearance to look nicely” (6:1). Additionally, she later talked about wanting access to more variety and how having money would allow her more options in life, specifically in regards to food choices.

### **Optimistic Perspective.**

Additionally, the character and perspective that Participant 6 had allowed for reduced impact of some stressors which ultimately led to a more constant level of happiness. When asked why she was happy despite not having her needs met, Participant 6 said, “right now, it’s my own, my character” (6:17). She continued to say, “I told you I like laughing, maybe the character that got me is the one that keeps me like motivated” (6:17). This could mean a variety of things like

not taking things so seriously or finding the joy in little things or even doing things to de-stress. In referring to other things, Participant 6 said there was a pattern in not focusing on negative things and finding joy even though things aren't exactly how she wanted them.

The perspective that Participant 6 has when taking on some issues is a huge part of this. Participant 6 does not focus on the negative things in her life. She briefly mentioned not having a great relationship with her parents, but didn't elaborate unlike other participants who were often consumed by thoughts of the negative aspects of their life. Additionally, Participant 6 did not internalize external problems such as the unemployment problems in Botswana. This was something that easily caused stress in others, but Participant 6 had the perspective of it not being her problem and thus not something to stress over.

#### ***Realistic Expectations.***

Perspective was a key factor in how participants perceived happiness and the factors that influenced it. Many participants tried to change their expectations of certain things to try and not be as disappointed in them such as in comparing their situations to people who had more difficult life circumstances. This was not something that Participant 6 mentioned doing. Similar to other participants, there were times when her expectations led to disappointment. However, she also had an attitude where she felt less like the expectation needed to change, but rather the people involved needed to meet the expectation, even if that meant she was the one who needed to rise to meet the expectation.

This perspective of not challenging the expectation at hand could be from setting more realistic expectations of herself such as not taking responsibility for things outside of her control. She was the only participant to specifically say that something was not her responsibility so she wasn't going to worry about it. One of the most prominent cases of this was in talking about

things in Botswana, specifically unemployment. Most of the other participants felt very concerned about the high levels of unemployment in Botswana and the effect it had on their lives. On this matter, Participant 6 said, “The situation we can’t change. That’s the way we found it so it’s just going to be like that so I do not want to interrupt my happiness with things that I do not have control of” (6:23). In that way, she was actively relieving herself of stress over a situation she couldn’t control merely through not taking responsibility for it.

There was also a common attitude among participants when talking about different issues they faced, that although there were challenges, they were fine with it. This was not something that Participant 6 did. She was either ok with something or not ok with it. There weren’t any times where it seemed they were conflicted on an issue.

### **Strategies to Improve Happiness.**

In addition to the expectations and perspective that Participant 6 had, she also employed strategies that allowed her to maintain her happiness and reduce factors causing unhappiness. She instituted various coping mechanisms including limiting factors she knew would cause negative effects on her happiness.

### ***Coping Mechanisms.***

Similar to the other participants, Participant 6 utilized various coping mechanisms. Talking with others and being listened to, listening to music and laughing were all tactics she mentioned. She talked about the types of music she liked to listen to and connecting with others over music, also saying, “Listening to music. Yes, it gives me strength” (6:10). Laughing was another source of relief that she noted more than once saying, “I’ll say, ah, there are sometimes they, I’m a person who likes laughing” (6:5). Then later she said, “I told you I like laughing, maybe the character that got me, is the one that keeps me, keeps me like motivated” (6:17). Like

other participants, she found relief and expression through laughing that was both physical and emotional.

### ***Limit Negative Influences.***

Although coping mechanisms were a tool utilized by all participants to help reduce the impact of negative factors, Participant 6 not only partook in strategies such as taking breaks or participating in joys like the others but additionally talked about limiting exposure to negative factors. For this, Participant 6 talked about liking to be alone and not wanting to spend too much time with people, including the people she enjoyed being around. She stated, “I like distancing myself from people.” (6:4) and “Yeah, that’s why I say I’m not, I’m uncertain about that. I like being alone. Gore, I love people for a very short period of time. Then they get into my nerves so I’m K, bye” (6:4)

She liked and wanted to be around people but only for a short amount of time. It was something she needed and wanted but too much was then counterproductive. She talked highly of alone time and feeling free. She even stated, “When you are on your own, you are just free” (6:4). All in all, she felt positive effects from being with people but was very aware that spending too much time with others, even people she enjoyed, would lead to negative effects on her happiness. To limit these negative impacts or stressful situations, she figured out the amount of time she needed to gain the benefits without dealing with the drawbacks.

She was very aware of the amount of social interaction she needed, even talking specifically about the number of days out of the week, “I need to see them maybe two days, from then I do not need them. I think I just need people for a very short period, maybe, two days it’s enough from seven days, two days is enough. But there’s a need to see myself alone.” (6:4). From this she was then able to limit the amount of time she spent with people so to reduce the

negative impact she might receive. More importantly, this shows a high level of personal awareness and emotional intelligence.

### **Resilience.**

Unlike the other participants, Participant 6 did not reference any previous traumas or transitional periods she was experiencing. These things had pronounced negative impacts on the other participants. Since Participant 6 was not experiencing them, she wasn't experiencing those negative impacts either. Additionally, many of the other participants got into negative thought cycles where they would focus on their stresses and as a result become more stressed, depressed or experienced other negative outcomes. Since Participant 6 didn't seem to have as many stresses, she didn't get stuck in those negative thought cycles. She did experience mood fluctuations but they seemed to not have the same level of impact as the negative thought cycles others experienced. She explained their variable moods like this,

It comes like this, it comes, there's a certain point where I'll feel, "oh this is what I want". And then the next morning, it will be so down, down, down. Like I have to, it's a draw back. So I need something, I guess, that later where I will say, I'll go up, up, up, up, up, up. I do not go down. Yes. (6:12)

However, she also talked about how certain things did not affect her. When asked if there were any times she was unhappy she said, "naw I'm just constant, I thought, I can't tell you whether I'm happy or I'm sad." (6:20). Also when asked if having her needs met would make her more happy she said, "yeah, I wouldn't be more happy but would just be happy." (6:22). There were things that negatively and positively impacted her mood, but overall her happiness remained fairly constant.

The consistency with her mood despite challenges shows a level of resilience. Resilience was also something that was not explained through Maslow's theory. Through the descriptions of why happiness is important, participants noted the effect it would have on their abilities to handle

other situations, effectively increasing their resilience which makes it easier to fend off negative factors in the future. This is an important aspect of happiness in that the result of happiness is a tool with which to sustain further happiness. Three participants answered the question of why happiness is important as follows:

Like when you are happy, you, you'll have stress but not like when you are not happy. You'll be able to say, "oh this place, this situation" but then, it will not drain you like if you are not happy. (6:17)

It's important to be happy because when you're happy, everything is easier to meet. When you're not happy, you'll just be thinking of that what makes you not to be happy. When you are happy, you have time just to do everything. And if not, you just think about just think about that problem that is bothering you (3:9)

It is important, because when I'm happy, you, I can't (beat), like I will, I will go back to my kids. When I'm happy I can't, you, vent at that anger to my kids. I can't do that. And when I'm happy I can't think of committing suicide. I can't think of (abandoning) my kids, like I'm thinking now. When I'm happy I'll, I'll, when I'm happy I'll just cooperate with family, sometimes I, I'll just go straight at sleep, not talking with them. You see, not eating that matogo [stiff porridge meal] every day, when I'm not happy. When I'm happy, it avoids a lot of things. It will bring peace, yeah it brings peace. (7: 24)

Since Participant 6 was by evaluation happy, she already had a built-in support system for her happiness and the resilience that it provided. Being happy allowed her the flexibility, time and emotional energy to deal with any other situation that arose. It seems that the happier you are the more able you are to resolve situations that could potentially reduce happiness whereas if you are already struggling with difficult situations, it makes it increasingly difficult to handle any one situation and that adds to the unhappiness.

### **Culture.**

Culture was another area of relevance for Participant 6. For the country as a whole and the resources provided through government assistance, Participant 6 noted tourism as being a substantial asset of the country. Additionally, having museums where people could go and learn



about the history of Botswana was important. When asked what about Botswana makes her happy, she said, “(It’s a) place of tourism. I think that (there are) good things that you do not know. At the museums, there are things that our late grandparents left, so we see things they used for their kind of lifestyle. Yes.” (6:22). Learning about the past and hearing from elders was a value shared by Participant 6. Where the government focuses its attention affects people not only through any services provided but also through showing what ideas and values they consider important. This can be very comforting to those who share those values.

### **Similarities**

There were some similarities between Participant 6, who didn’t have her needs met but was happy and the other participants who did have their needs met and weren’t happy. Participant 6 had needs that were met and not met such as for love and belonging. She had some friends but wished those friends would accept her for who she was. She had a group she belonged to but didn’t like to spend all her time with them. She had a family that helped to support her, but she didn’t have a great relationship with them. She liked the people she lived with and got joy from talking with others but also felt criticized and like a burden. This was very similar to other participants.

### **Differences**

Moreover, there were many differences between Participant 6 and the other participants. Some of these included differences in transitional periods, past traumas and comparisons. These differences played a noteworthy role in the experienced happiness or lack thereof for the participants.

### **Transitions.**

Participant 6 did not mention any transitional periods she was going through. She noted moving between the capital and her home village because of the people that were assisting her, but she didn't mention that this was a new phenomenon or note the same kinds of extreme impact that the other participants were going through in their transitions.

### **Past Trauma.**

In contrast to the other participants, Participant 6 did not mention or allude to any past traumatic experiences she faced. It is possible that she faced some extreme challenges and didn't talk about them but she also did not seem to have any very strong emotional reactions to any question or referencing any people or events in her life.

### **Comparisons.**

Participant 6 made some comparisons but not many. She referenced the possibility that some recent church trips contributed to an increase in happiness. In addition to that, she commented on how moving to a new location in the future would make her happy. She hadn't traveled to this place before but had ideas about the new experiences she could have there which were desirable compared to her current location. She said, "I need to find a new place. But I need to stay far away. I need to stay there in Maun. Where I can meet new people." (6:8). Maun is a village with a lot of tourists passing through. Tourism was also something she mentioned in regards to what she liked about the country. She enjoyed the access to new people and new experiences and wanted to be in a place that could constantly supply them.

Other than those two points, there weren't many other points of comparison made. She didn't mention any future worries she had although she did talk about a specific job that she

hoped to get. She didn't make any comparisons to other people or how their lives compared. She also rarely talked about the past in general.

All in all, she experienced fewer extremes both positive and negative to her happiness. She noted that when you are happy, you do not have the same stress as when you're not happy, meaning that you are better able to handle and adapt to stress when you are already happy. Additionally, Participant 6 talked about how having certain things increased her happiness but without them she would still be happy. For example, she went on a trip with church which made her happy and listening to music makes her happy, but if she didn't have those things, she would still be happy. Having those things did not make her happier than they were before. They acted as extra joys or boosts but didn't significantly add or take away from the underlining happiness. Furthermore, when asked if having her needs met would make her more happy she said, "yeah, I wouldn't be more happy but would just be happy." (6:22). Therefore, more positives and negatives didn't significantly change the equilibrium of happiness she experienced.

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### **Overview**

The basis of this study was that there are some people who do not fit within what would be predicted through Needs Theory, mainly that there are individuals that have their needs met and aren't happy and those who do not have their needs met and are happy. This was found in this study as well as in a study conducted by Tay and Diener (2011), who found that there are people who had their needs met but weren't happy and stated that additional factors are relevant when looking at happiness. For this reason, this study was designed to address these contradictions in the theory.

What this study found was both inconsistencies with need acquisition as well as additional factors that influenced happiness for both individuals who did and did not have their needs met. In terms of need acquisition, the findings of this study showed participants who had a need met in one way but not another and having needs partially met. Both of these situations, having needs met but simultaneously not met and having needs partially met, create conflict for the individual in whether they feel truly fulfilled in those areas. Furthermore, there were factors such as past traumas, periods of transition, repeated failures, unmet expectations, and negative thought cycles among others that played a role in why participants who had their needs met were still not happy.

### **Interpretations of Findings**

All of these inconsistencies can be explained not through the acquisition of a certain set of needs but rather in looking at the balance between positive and negative factors. In most cases participants who had their needs met had a large number of positive factors and thus were happy as is predicted through Needs Theory. This is why there is significant supporting evidence for

this theory and its use in large-scale predications of happiness. However, there are people who have those needs met and are not happy as was the case in this study. These individuals had many positive factors in their lives, but the positive factors were outweighed by the overarching negative factors that they were also experiencing. Likewise, the participant who didn't have her needs met but was happy had relatively few negative factors despite not having her needs met. Additionally, through her perspective and coping strategies, she was able to limit the effects of negative factors on her life. Furthermore, it was a widespread idea from all participants that being happy contributes to resilience which ultimately helps sustain happiness. Lastly, when referencing things they would need to be happy, all of the participants mentioned things that would relieve negative factors or increase positive ones.

Therefore, the absence of happiness when basic and higher-level needs are met can be explained through the presence and amount of negative influences an individual is facing in comparison to positive factors. Negative factors can include things causing stress, depression, sadness, fear etc. while positive factors cause joy, relief, comfort, etc. The type, severity, amount, breadth, and repetitiveness of the stressors within someone's life all play a role in how impactful the stress will be on happiness. Conversely, the presence of happiness when neither basic nor higher-level needs are completely met can be explained by a relative lack of negative factors as compared to positive factors as well as the ability to manage these negative factors like utilizing coping mechanisms and reducing the impact of negative factors through perspective and resilience.

### **Connection to Other Theories**

As it can be seen from the findings of this study, the three additional theories mentioned in Chapter II hold more merit than previously expected. Comparisons, goals and culture were all

factors affecting the happiness of participants in this study. Comparisons can both positively or negatively affect happiness depending on the comparison being made. However, this theory does not clearly describe the role that resilience and negative thought cycles play on happiness. In addition, it does not clarify how limiting negative influences and the use of other coping mechanisms affect happiness.

Goals were also a factor affecting happiness. As described in the findings, repeated failures was an area negatively affecting a person's happiness. Additionally, meeting or not meeting expectations of self which can also be described as meeting or not meeting one's goals, was another area affecting happiness. However, this theory fails to explain the role that past traumas, periods of transition, negative thought cycles, empathy, resilience and culture play on happiness.

Despite having significant criticisms, Culture Theory always seemed to be separate from Needs Theory and as such, questions pertaining specifically to culture were asked in the interviews of this study. Through these questions, it was affirmed that culture was an area that did play a role in happiness, in that there are factors like government influence, mutual ideas and values, and cultural expectations that influence happiness. However, Culture Theory does have its limitations and does not explain some of the other factors affecting happiness found in this study including practical limitations, transitions, empathy, past trauma, comparisons, resilience, and coping mechanisms.

### **Connection to Set-Point Theory**

Additionally, the findings of this study provide insight for Set-Point Theory as well. Although other research shows the possibility of an individual's happiness to significantly move beyond the Set-Point, this study found reasons for why individuals who are happy continue to be

happy and why those who are not continue to be unhappy. This study found that both in perception and experience that individuals who are happy tend to be more resilient. This resilience then allows the individual to better handle any additional challenges that may arise thus reducing the negative impact on happiness. In this way, a person who is happy is more able to remain happy.

On the other hand, this study also found reasons why an individual who is unhappy is more likely to remain unhappy, primarily through negative thought cycles. The individuals who were unhappy tended to have a more negative perspective on factors affecting their life and thus experienced more negative outcomes from difficulties in their lives. Also, in reflecting on the negative factors affecting their lives, they experienced additional negative impacts on their happiness. In this way, unhappiness amplified unhappiness through repeated negative thoughts and relived negative feelings like hurt. Therefore, although it may be possible to significantly change one's level of happiness, there are additional challenges making it harder to do so. This may be why there was support for Set-Point Theory. However, the additional information gathered from this study can be used to inform strategies for maintaining happiness or assisting individuals in getting out of the cycle of unhappiness.

### **Limitations of Theories**

All five of these theories – Set-Point, Comparison, Goals, Culture and Needs Theory – have relevant perspectives and contributions to happiness research but remain incomplete. This is consistent with the findings of Diener and Lucas (2000) who stated, “The theories are to a degree compatible, rather than completely contradictory. There is empirical support for each of the theories, but also there are data contradicting a simple formulation of each model, and no approach can by itself explain all of the extant findings.” (p. 41). Comparison, Goals, and

Culture Theories do complement Needs Theory in addressing aspects that affect happiness that are not covered through the needs. However, none of them on their own provide a holistic look on happiness either. Additionally, even when combined together, the theories still fail to specifically explain the role of some factors like past traumas, empathy, negative thought cycles and resilience. There were obvious impacts from these factors that are not addressed through the theories at hand. However, all of these theories seem sensible when looking at a balance between positive and negative factors influencing happiness.

### **Connection to Other Empirical Literature**

This study found three factors that call into question the effectiveness of Needs Theory in predicting happiness. The first of these is in cases where an individual has a need met in one way, but at the same time it's not met in another way, such as having people whom you love but not being able to spend time with them. Similar to this, a study conducted by Suh, Diener and Fujita (1996) found that good and bad life events co-occur. They stated this as an “exciting avenue for the exploration of the structure of life events” (p.1091).

The second discrepancy found was in participants feeling that they were on their way to achieving their need but weren't there yet. In this way, the need was not unmet but at the same time it wasn't completely met. There wasn't much literature on people who were on their way to having a need met but not fully there yet, nor on the implications of that. However, as noted in the gaps of the literature, there isn't as much qualitative research done in this area which ultimately makes identifying nuanced differences like this very difficult to achieve.

Thirdly, there were factors affecting happiness that were not explained by the Maslow Needs. Influencing factors found in this study included past traumas, transitions, negative thought cycles, repeated failures, unmet expectations, comparisons, practical barriers, empathy



as well as perspective, coping, and resilience. Although Needs Theory does not explain how these areas affect happiness, there are many other studies that have been done with each individual factor. These findings are outlined in the following paragraphs for each of the factors.

### **Literature on Individual Factors**

In relation to past trauma, one study demonstrated a connection between past traumas with lower well-being and more PTSS (posttraumatic stress symptoms) symptoms (Cheung Chung and Hunt 2014). Another noted that people who have experienced a trauma often continue to deal with the effects long after the trauma occurred (Holman and Cohen Silver 1998).

Regarding transitional periods, a study looking at the effect of gender, transition and adulthood on happiness found that, “times of transition predicted lower positive affect and lower satisfaction; during periods of transition less intense positive affect and decreased satisfaction would be expected in comparison to other periods” (Bojanowska, 2016), thus indicating that people experience less happiness in times of transition. Additionally, the study conducted by Suh, Diener and Fujita (1996) referenced earlier, also found that, “changes in life events can, at least temporarily, alter the level of one’s SWB” (p. 1100).

A study analyzing the outcomes of six studies found that in all of the six studies, failure to attain important standards or expectations led to thoughts of suicide (Chatard and Selimbegovic, 2011). They said this was, “in line with the idea that such effects reflect motivations to escape from negative self-awareness” (p. 578). This supports the findings of unmet expectations of this study and is related to repeated failures. Additionally, a study on women after failed IVF attempts showed that repeated failed IVF attempts had increasingly more effects on the women including being more depressed, having a lower self-esteem and less self-confidence (Hynes, Callan, Terry and Gallois 1992).

A different study talked about how Maslow's Theory fails to consider conditions outside the individual (Hagerty nd). They state environmental health and poverty as factors contributing to the wellbeing of an individual. I would also extend this to practical barriers and empathy; empathy or more accurately emotional contagion being "the phenomenon of having one person's emotions and related behaviors directly trigger similar emotions and behaviors in other people" (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson 1993). There is an entire area of research on emotional contagion in which people are affected by someone else's mood or situation. In one study conducted by Gump and Kulik (1997), participants displayed behavioral mimicry, where they copied the behaviors of the afflicted person, and had anxiety as a result of the situation another was going through.

There are also the factors that tend to keep a person happy or unhappy. People tend to remember or compare negatively when they are unhappy just as one study found that people had more negative memories on the days they were depressed and recalled happy memories on the days they were less depressed (Clark and Teasdale 1982). Contrasting to that, resiliency helps sustain happiness. A study done on resilience in adolescence found that resilient students had higher scores on problem-solving coping strategies (Dumont and Provost 1999).

There is a plethora of research on optimism and pessimism which relates to the perspective, specifically optimistic perspective, presented in this study. A study done by Augusto-Landa, Pulido-Martos and Lopez-Zafra (2010), found positive relationships between optimism and well-being as well as negative relationships with pessimism and well-being. Similarly, another found both optimism and pessimism were associated with happiness (Dember and Brooks, 1989). There are many other studies that link an optimistic perspective with happiness and alternatively lowering happiness with a more pessimistic perspective.

According to Pearlin and Schooler (1978), “coping refers to behavior that protects people from being psychologically harmed by problematic social experience” (p.2). They talked about the types of coping strategies people use including, “keeping the emotional consequences of problems within manageable bounds” (p.2) like how Participant 6 limited exposure to negative factors and managed her expectations. Another study also found a link between coping mechanisms and well-being. They also found that those who had poorer mental health used fewer adaptive coping strategies (Aldwin and Revenson 1987), similar to how only the unhappy participants of this study mentioned unhealthy coping mechanisms.

### **Literature on Balance of Positive and Negative Factors**

Furthermore, there has been some research to support the idea that a balance between positive and negative factors affects happiness. According to Busseri and Sadava (2011), happiness is a higher-order construct consisting of a cognitive and two affective components. The cognitive component consists of evaluations of life circumstances, similar to how perspective and expectations played a role in this study. Olsson, Garling, Ettema, Friman and Fujii (2013) stated that, “the affective components of happiness include the positive and negative moods and emotional episodes that people experience.” There is even a scale called the Positive Negative Affect Scale or PANAS developed by Watson et. al. (1988) which is frequently used to measure current mood or retrospectively to assess the frequency and intensity of affects for a specified timeframe. Olsson et. al. (2013) found,

On this measure happiness increases with the frequency and intensity of positive affect (PA), including emotions such as joy and delight, and decreases with the frequency and intensity of negative affect (NA), including emotions such as anger and fear. (p. 257)

Additionally, Olsson et. al. (2013) stated, “A measure of emotional well-being (also referred to as the affect balance) is constructed by computing the difference between retrospective

assessment of the frequency and/or intensity of positive and negative affect” (p. 258). All of these findings are consistent with what was found in this research study. However, I do believe that not only the frequency and intensity of positive and negative affect should be looked at but also the type, severity, amount, breadth, and repetitiveness of the factors affecting happiness.

Overall, although Needs Theory fails to explain the additional factors affecting happiness found in this study, there is an abundance of research that has found links in the aforementioned areas. This demonstrates that Needs Theory does not provide a complete picture of experienced happiness for all individuals.

### **Summary**

In summation, measuring acquisition of needs does not thoroughly explain the presence or lack of happiness. Although need acquisition does play a role in happiness through increasing or decreasing negative or positive factors, there are factors influencing happiness that are not explained through Needs Theory or the acquisition of needs. Firstly, there are instances in which needs can be met in one way but not in another way creating conflicting pressures. Secondly, needs can be partially met. This also causes conflict in experiencing both positive and negative influences on happiness. Lastly, there are factors that influence happiness that are not explained through the Maslow Needs. Their influences on happiness can however be explained by the balance between negative and positive influences as well as the ability of the individual to handle negative factors through perspective, resilience, and coping mechanisms. All in all, it seems as though looking at all positive and negative factors a person is facing instead of a certain, specific set of needs will give better insight into experienced happiness.

## **Sociological Connection**

Happiness and the factors influencing happiness are highly social. Some of the factors found in this study were innately social while others were more indirect, but all of them had some form of sociological connection. Factors like past traumas and empathy are highly social in that an individual's happiness is directly affected by an interaction with another person.

Practical factors and transitions were affected more by a larger social context. The resources a person has access to are affected by communal resources provided by government entities or other people within the community. The factors facilitating transitional periods are largely affected by societal expectations like going away for college or by the societal structure such as in moving for a job. One transition mentioned was due to a participant's parents divorcing and thus causing a change in their family structure and in her family relationships.

Perspectives and expectations, although seemingly individual, are also affected by society. There are individual perspectives, attitudes and reactions to different situations, but everything is happening within the context of society and is thus affected by it. For instance, personal expectations can be derived from cultural, familial or additional expectations set by other people. However, personal expectations can also be set by goals and perceived outcomes: these predicted outcomes are a result of structure of the society in which a job may lead to benefits. Even definitions and awareness of happiness come from learned experiences within the society. Thus being able to identify happiness and define it within oneself is a learned trait.

Even negative thought cycles and resilience are social in the way that they affect social interactions. The biggest concern participants had with their negative thoughts were the outbursts or mood fluctuations they had and how those might affect the people around them. Similarly, one

of the most prominent reasons why participants wanted to be happy was that they believed they then wouldn't negatively affect those around them.

All in all, this research supports the idea that happiness and the factors influencing happiness are highly affected by society and social interactions. This shows that a sociological perspective is valid and necessary in researching human needs and happiness and that the implications contribute to social understandings and applied community work.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

There are strengths and limitations with any study, this study included. The strengths and limitations are outlined in the following sections and includes factors like the rich examples and anecdotes provided through in-person interviews as well as cultural differences and language barriers.

#### **Strengths**

The purpose of this project is to explore a conundrum within the current research on Needs Theory within happiness research. In providing a qualitative look through interviews, there was increased insight into the presence of exceptions to the theory. Furthermore, Botswana created a unique setting in which this enigma was explored as well as providing support for the universality or lack thereof, of this theory.

#### **Limitations**

Limitations surrounding this research were cultural and language differences. Some participants spoke in Setswana and required translation. Although the translators did an excellent job, there are some things that are difficult to translate. There are differences in language that are hard to maneuver. For example, 'to like' and 'to love' have the same verb 'go rata' and depending upon the context will mean one or the other. Additionally, even English words were

used differently such as when a person talks about ‘beating’ a child, they mean ‘hitting’ or enforcing corporal punishment. Fortunately, I spent more than two years living in the area and thus was able to interpret and translate the cultural differences. Furthermore, literacy was a factor for at least one participant. There was one participant who couldn’t read and had a friend fill out her questionnaire while she told her the answers and it happened that the friend filled out the questionnaire incorrectly.

A second limitation of this study is that it is not generalizable due to a small sample size. Time was a limiting factor, especially in finding more participants falling into the category of needs not met, happy. Additionally, it was significantly easier to find women participants than male participants. Nevertheless, this study provided insight on factors that influence happiness.

Finally, a third limitation was in data collection and transcription. For the comfort of the participants, they were allowed to pick the location of the interviews. On a few occasions interviews were conducted outside which later led to difficulties in transcribing due to wind and noisy children. This did result in some pieces of interviews being inaudible. However, the vast majority was captured at a reasonable quality to the point where the inaudible portions were relatively insignificant.

### **Future Research**

Future research should be done to expand upon the findings of this study. Firstly, this study found many more participants who had their needs met and were not happy than those who did not have their needs met and were happy. Since there has not been research done on these anomalous groups to Needs Theory before, there is no explanation for why there may be more Needs Met, Not Happy participants than Needs Not Met, Happy participants. This is an area that could be investigated in the future.

Secondly, this study found a connection between the balance of positive and negative factors and how they impact happiness; however it was not the focus of the study and thus researching the balance between positive and negative influences and more specifically how they work together to affect happiness should be explored in the future. Specific foci should include the ways in which negative factors like stressors impact happiness such as the type, severity, amount, breadth and repetitiveness of the stressor and to what extent these impact happiness. Additionally, it is important to look at both how the role of perception and realistic expectations prevent negative effects on happiness as well as how the use of coping mechanisms can help mitigate some of the negative effects or create positive influences on happiness. In addition to how coping mechanisms may reduce some negative impacts, a look at how counselling or work to address some of the major negative impacts people face would give insight into the larger picture of happiness.

Furthermore, with Needs Theory and happiness research in general, there is a mix of objective situations and subjective interpretations of those situations. Therefore, it would be insightful for future research to look into the conundrum of what the relationship between objective social situations and subjective interpretations of social situations is, and how they shape individual happiness.

Future research should also consider the distinction between happy and not happy in the sample. In this research, participants were coded as either happy or not happy. A more rigorous measure might not only pull from extremes and also create a category for those in the middle to investigate.

Additional happiness research should continue to be conducted around the world. Since happiness is a universally experienced phenomenon, it is important to continue to gain insight on



happiness from various cultures. This can also continue to provide an explanation of the role of cultural expectations, social programs, and culture in general on happiness.

It would also be beneficial to continue to look into any differences there may be in factors affecting happiness between urban and rural settings, since there are differing social expectations as well as access to goods, services and opportunities, it could play a significant role in happiness. The variances between urban and rural factors in multiple countries would also be an interesting area of investigation.

Qualitative research provides rich detail in the factors affecting people's happiness that is not captured through quantitative research and thus should continue to be utilized as well. Furthermore, due to the significant role government social programs like poverty eradication, universal health care, free education, etc. played in the lives of the participants of this research, it would be a valuable area of research to look into the role social programs play on happiness both in Southern Africa and around the world.

Therefore, future areas of research should include looking into why there may be more individuals who have their needs met and aren't happy compared to those who do not have their needs met and are happy. Also, continuing to explore how the balance between positive and negative factors impacts happiness is a fruitful direction. Additional continuations would be in both global and qualitative research as well as on the difference between urban and rural settings internationally, specifically in countries outside of the US and Europe. Lastly, due to their repeated significance in affecting the happiness of participants in this study, research on the impact of social programs like Botswana's poverty eradication programs, universal health care, and free education on happiness around the world should also be studied.

## **Implications and Practical Solutions**

Since happiness is such a popular subject area, the implications of this research may be interesting to many. There are implications for research as well as for lived happiness in individuals and communities. Additionally, outlined below are practical solutions and recommendations for ways that countries, communities and individuals can promote happiness for themselves and others.

### **Implications**

The primary implication of this research is in the paradigm shift of thinking about happiness as the achievement of certain universal human needs and instead viewing it more as a balance between positive and negative factors as each individual factor may affect two people differently. Additionally, noting the importance of coping mechanisms and guidance on happiness can help to reduce stigma about seeking assistance as well as provide support for programs that work to aid in this area.

As society, culture, and the government play a noteworthy role in affecting happiness, these are also areas that attention should be given to. Since the decisions a government makes can support or change the societal expectations by giving or taking away emphasis, these decisions should be made knowing that they will have an impact on the population. Moreover, the practicality of these decisions and how they affect a citizen's daily life is another area that should be given weight. Government programs provided support for the personal well-being of the participants of this research and thus provides feedback for their worth.

### **Practical Solutions**

This research showed the usefulness of healthy coping mechanisms as a means of temporarily improving happiness. Seeking assistance either professionally or otherwise can be

very useful in addressing concerns a person is facing and can help to provide real solutions to the problems they are facing. This can also help to shape expectations and perspectives the individual has on the situation. Therefore, making widespread use and acceptance of assistance programs and overall acceptance with talking about and addressing mental health issues would be valuable. Providing widespread coverage for mental health addressing depression, suicide, past traumas, periods of transitions and more would also be instrumental in supporting individuals as they manage negative influences on happiness.

Government programs worked to reduce negative factors felt by the participants. Providing temporary work, poverty relief programs, social work programs, free health care, free education and others were all mentioned as positive factors by participants. For this reason, these programs and others like them should be continued to be implemented. Additionally, working to reduce unemployment both through sustaining current programs as well as supporting more job producing initiatives is important. Another area of focus for the government would be in addressing the rising threat of crime and violence through a trained and equipped police force.

Additionally, holidays and cultural events were important as they provided breaks and opportunities to spend time with loved ones. Continuing to endorse and implement these events and time off for these activities every now and then can be useful.

## **Recommendations**

Based on this research, there are recommendations for tactics individuals, communities, and Botswana in particular can use to help support in the happiness of the society. These can be small scale things like taking time for oneself or larger scale as in continuing to endorse government social programs.

For individuals, utilizing coping mechanisms, seeking help from friends or family, doing things to minimize stressors and taking time for joy are all things that can be done to support happiness. Coping mechanisms, in response to stressors, allow for breaks or supports in dealing with any difficult situation a person faces; so implementing them can be useful in guiding happiness. Along these lines, talking about problems with friends, family, or mental health professionals can work to help ease stressors. Likewise, taking time to either reduce stresses or engaging in things that provide joy are ways to help a person be better equipped to deal with negative life events.

At the community level, continuing to provide resources, promote understanding and support of others, and engage in cultural events and holidays would be beneficial in supporting the happiness of the community. Access to resources both physical (stores, food, etc.) and service-oriented (mental health, information, etc.) can assist individuals. Promoting more awareness on topics that relate to stigma is another important area. People can be criticized or mistreated due to stigma and discrimination; therefore, working as a community to be open-minded and understanding about different situations can be useful for those who may not fit into the societal expectation. Cultural events and holidays provide social interactions and breaks from daily troubles and thus are useful in boosting moral of a community.

For the country of Botswana, there are three main ways the government can support the happiness of Botswana. Firstly, the government should continue to maintain and promote the programs that provide support to the people as well as taking care to be open-minded and be aware of the cultural expectations that government actions and statements create. Secondly, Botswana should continue to provide government-assisted social programs such as healthcare,

education, youth business programs and poverty eradication programs. Lastly, working to reduce unemployment and rising crime rates should be a focus for future government assistance.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, Needs Theory, like the other three prominent theories in this area, does not provide a complete representation of experienced happiness for all individuals. Needs Theory does not account for needs that are met but not met (conflicting), partially met, or factors affecting happiness not explained by the needs. Therefore, looking at a balance between positive and negative factors provides a more in depth look into happiness. However, there are an unlimited number of things that can affect a person's happiness both positively and negatively. Although it is difficult to change life situations and alter significantly some of the factors influencing happiness, there are areas of possible change for people. Utilizing coping mechanisms was a useful strategy employed by all of the participants both happy and unhappy. Additionally, although change in expectations and perspective can be difficult to alter, they are also tools that can affect the amount at which different factors can alter happiness. Furthermore, it is apparent that the government programs Botswana provides are a significant safety net for citizens and help to reduce negative stressors on happiness. However, unemployment and rising safety concerns are areas that could be focused on for continuing to support the happiness of the population.

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## APPENDIX A: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

### Questionnaire on Happiness and Need Fulfillment

**Instructions:**

Please read the following statements in full and then indicate if you strongly agree, agree, are uncertain, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement as it applies to your life. These statements should be taken as an overall assessment of your life and not one day specifically.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
<u>I have access to food daily</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I have access to water daily</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel that I have energy to do my daily activities</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>My life is orderly and well-defined</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel safe and secure in my daily activities</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I have the freedom to make decisions about my life</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel loved by family, friends, spouse and/or children</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel that I am a part of my community or a group within my community</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>There are people in my life (family, friends, children, etc.) that I love</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel respected by my peers</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel that I am useful and necessary in the world</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel that I am a person of worth</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I constantly learn new things</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>If I have a question, I have access to a source (person, book or other) that can provide an answer or explanation</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel more at ease when I understand something that I was unsure of or curious about before</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>There are sources of beauty in my life</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>The area where I live is enjoyable to look at</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I see, hear or experience art, music, dance, theatre or other forms of creative expression in my life</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I lead a purposeful and meaningful life</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA
<u>I feel I am living up to my potential</u>	SD	D	U	A	SA

I am engaged and interested in my daily activities	SD	D	U	A	SA
I have had moments of realization in which I reflect on life	SD	D	U	A	SA
I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others	SD	D	U	A	SA
I believe that people are essentially good and can be trusted	SD	D	U	A	SA

## Happiness

Please use the following definition of happiness when answering the following questions

*Happiness: Overall experience of wellbeing in life*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, I think my life is good	SD	D	U	A	SA
I feel contentment with many aspects of my life	SD	D	U	A	SA
In general, I consider myself a happy person	SD	D	U	A	SA

## Demographics

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender

Male \_\_\_\_\_

Female \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Employed Yes No

## Potsolotso ka go Fitlhehelela Letlhoko le Boitumelo

### Ditaelo:

Bala ditselana tse di latelang ka botlalo o bo o tshwaela ka fa o ka dumalanang ka teng. Ditselana tse di tshwanetse di tsewe ele tshoboko ya botshelo jwa gago botlhe eseng jwa letsatsi.

	Ga ke dumelane go thelele	Ga ke dumelane	Ga ke itse	Ke a dumela	Ke a tota
Ke na le tshono ya dijo malatsi otlhe	1	2	3	4	5
Ke na le tshono ya metsi malatsi otlhe	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke le matlhagatlhaga go dira ditiro tsame tsa tsatsi le letsatsi	1	2	3	4	5
Botshelo jwa me bo tsamaya sentle e bile bo tlhalosega sentle	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke babalesegile mo ditirong tsame tsa tsatsi le letsatsi	1	2	3	4	5
Ke gololosegile go dira ditshwetso ka botshelo bame	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke ratiwa ke balelwapa, ditsala, mokapelo kana bana	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke le karolo ya morafeng wame kana setlhopha sa morafeng wame	1	2	3	4	5
Gona le batho mo botshelong bame (balelwapa, ditsala le bana) ba ke ba ratang	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke tlotliwa ke balekane bame	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke le mosola ebile ke le tlhwatlhwa mo lefatsheng	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke le motho tota	1	2	3	4	5
Ke nna ke ithuta dilo tse diša	1	2	3	4	5
Fa kena le potso ke na le tshono ya didiriswa (jaaka motho, buka kana sengwe) tse di ka mphang karabo kana tlhaloso	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke gololesegile fa ke tlhalogantse sengwe se ke neng ke na le ketsa etsego kasone kana go batla go itse ka sone	1	2	3	4	5

	Ga ke dumelane go thelele	Ga ke dumelane	Ga ke itse	Ke a dumela	Ke a dumela tota
<u>Gona le metlhala e mentle mo botshelong bame</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Lefelo le ke nnang mogo lone le kgatlhisa leitlho</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ke a bona, utlwa kana go ikutlwela tsa botaki, kopelo, mmino, tsa bodiragatsi kana ditsela					
<u>dingwe tsa go itshupa mo botshelong jwame</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Ke tshela botshelo jo bonang le boleng</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Ke ikutlwa ke tshela kafa ke kgonang ka teng</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ke tsene ebile ke kgatlhegela ditiro tsame					
<u>tša tsatsi le letsatsi</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Ke nnile le nako ya go sekaseka botshelo bame</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ke na le seabe sa go tsisa boitumelo le go					
<u>tshela sentle ga batho</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ke dumela gore batho ba siame ebile ba					
<u>tshepagala</u>	1	2	3	4	5

### **Boitumelo**

Dirisa tlhaloso tsa boitumelo go araba dipotso tse di latelang

*Boitumelo: tshoboko ka kakaretso ya botshelo*

	Ga ke dumelane go thelele	Ga ke dumelane	Ga ke itse	Ke a dumela	Ke a dumela tota
Ka kakaretso ke akanya gore botshelo					
<u>jwame bo siame</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ke ikutlwa ke amogetse dikarolo tse dintsi					
<u>tša botshelo jwa me</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Ka kakaretso ke ipona ke le motho yo o					
<u>itumetseng</u>	1	2	3	4	5

### **Mokgwa ya Setlhopha**

Dingwaga tsa gago: \_\_\_\_\_

Bong

Monna \_\_\_\_\_

Mosadi \_\_\_\_\_

Ise Dingwe \_\_\_\_\_

A o a bereka

Ee \_\_\_\_\_

Nnya \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDES

### **Interview Guide: Subgroup A (Needs, Not Happy)**

#### **Introduction**

Hi. How are you? My name is Carolyn Moe. I am a Peace Corps volunteer and an American student studying happiness. I was hoping to talk to you about your life and happiness today. The interview will take about 1 hour. There are minimal risks or benefits to participating and your identity will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary, if at any time during our conversation you feel uncomfortable you can stop at any time without penalty and you can skip any questions you do not feel like answering. Would you like to participate? Are you ok with having our conversation recorded?

You were selected on the basis on having the majority of your needs met yet you are not happy.

*\*Go through questionnaire\**

Although you have most of your needs met you are not happy?

What does happiness mean to you?

Is it important to be happy?

What would you need to be happy?

Can you tell me of a time when you were happy?

Has your happiness changed significantly over time?

Does the place you are in determine your happiness?

Do the people you are with affect your happiness?

Many people think that people need to have basic things like food, protection, love, respect, etc. to be happy. Do you agree with this? Is that true for you?



How does living in this community impact your happiness?

- What about this community contributes to your lack of happiness?
  
- What about this community contributes to your happiness?

How does living in Botswana impact your happiness?

- What about Botswana contributes to your lack of happiness?
  
- What about Botswana contributes to your happiness?

## **Interview Guide: Subgroup B (No Needs, Happy)**

Hi. How are you? My name is Carolyn Moe. I am a Peace Corps volunteer and an American student studying happiness. I was hoping to talk to you about your life and happiness today. The interview will take about 1 hour. There are no risks or benefits of participating and your identity will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary, if at any time during our conversation you feel uncomfortable you can stop at any time without penalty and you can skip any questions you do not feel like answering. Would you like to participate? Are you ok with having our conversation recorded?

You were selected on the basis on not having the majority of what we consider universal human needs met but you are happy.

*\*Go through questionnaire\**

How is it that you are happy despite these situations?

What does happiness mean to you?

What is the greatest thing that contributes to your happiness?

If you were missing this, would you be less happy?

Is there anything else that would make you less happy?

Is there anything that could make you happier?

Could you share a story of a time when you were very happy?

Has your happiness changed significantly over time?

Does the place you are in determine your happiness?

Do the people you are with affect your happiness?

Many people think that people need to have basic things like food, protection, love, respect, etc. to be happy. Do you agree with this? Is that true for you?

How does living in this community impact your happiness?

- What about this community contributes to your lack of happiness?
  
- What about this community contributes to your happiness?

How does living in Botswana impact your happiness?

- What about Botswana contributes to your lack of happiness?
  
- What about Botswana contributes to your happiness?

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORMS

**Consent Form for Interview**  
Relationship of Fulfillment of Needs and Happiness

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This study is being done in order to learn more about the relationship of the fulfillment of needs and happiness. This study is being conducted by Dr. Maria Schmeeckle and Carolyn Moe, researchers at the Illinois State University and is not affiliated with Peace Corps or Humana People to People. We will ask questions related to your happiness and the fulfillment of human needs. Interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes. If you agree to participate please sign the form below and we will give you a copy of this form.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There is no payment for taking part but many find it beneficial to talk about their life. There are few risks but it is possible that previous life distresses may come up in conversation.

**Confidentiality:**

We will not share any personal information. Your records will be kept private. If the information becomes published steps will be taken to keep your name a secret.

**Participation:**

Your participation in this research is voluntary (no one is forcing you to do this). Refusal to participate involves no penalty or loss of benefits. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. You can also skip questions you do not feel like answering.

**Contacts and Questions:**

Feel free to ask any questions you have now, and if you have any questions in the future you can contact Dr. Maria Schmeeckle at [mhschme@ilstu.edu](mailto:mhschme@ilstu.edu) or Carolyn at +267 7477 3070.

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I consent to participating in the above study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I consent to being recorded as participation in the above study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics and Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529 or via email at [rec@ilstu.edu](mailto:rec@ilstu.edu).

# Pampiri ya Tumulano

Botsalano Jwa go Fitlhelela Letlhoko le Boitumelo

O kopiwa go tsenelela tshekatsheko/patlisiso thuto. Tshekatsheko e, e direlewa go ithuta thata ka botsalano jwa go fitlhelela letlhoko le boitumelo. Tshekatsheko e e dirwa ke Dr. Maria Schmeckle le Carolyn Moe (Boitumelo), basekasiki ko Illinois State University. Re tla botsa dipotso malebang le boitumelo jwa gago le phitlhelelo ya ditlamelo tsa bothokwa. Potsolotso e tla tsaya metsotso e e kanang ka 45-60. Fa o dumela go tsenelela potsolotso e ke kopa o saene fomo e kwa tlase, gape re tla go neela khopi ya fomo e.

## **Bodiphatsa le Mosola:**

Ga gona tuelo go tsenelela mme ba le bantsi ba bona go le bothokwa go bua ka botshelo jwa bone. Bo-diphatsa bo ko tlase mme go na le kgonafalo ya gore puisanyo e kgone go ama dikgang tse difitileng tsa botshelo jwa gago tse di ka go utlwisang bothoko.

## **Sephiri:**

Ga re na go bua le ope ka se re se buang/tse re dibuang. Dipuisanyo tsa rona ke sephiri. Fa e le gore puisanyo ya rona e ka gatsiwa, dikgato di tla tsewa gore maina a lona a nne sephiri.

## **Go Tsaya Karolo:**

Go tsaya karolo mo tshekatshekong e ke go ithaopa (ga le patelediwe go dira se). Go tlhoka go tsenelela ga go reye go re o na le molato kana o ka senyegelwa ke sengwe. O ka nna wa emisa puisanyo e ka nako nngwe le nngwe mme gagona molato kana ditshenyegelo. O ka tlola dipotso tse o sa batleng go di araba fa di sa go tsee sentle.

## **Kgolagano le Dipotso:**

Phuthologa go botsa dipotso fa o na le tsone gompieno, le fa o na le dipotso dingwe mo nakong e e tlang o ka ikgolaganya le Dr. Maria Schmeckle mo mogaleng wa [mhschme@ilstu.edu](mailto:mhschme@ilstu.edu) kgotsa Carolyn/Boitumelo mo +267 7477 3070.

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O tla fiwa moriti wa kgatiso ya maitlamo e le sesupo sa gago.

Ke dumelana le go tsaya karolo mo tshekatshekong e

Saena \_\_\_\_\_ Letsatsi \_\_\_\_\_

Ke dumelana le gore puisanyo e gatsiwe jaaka ke e tseneletse

Saena \_\_\_\_\_ Letsatsi \_\_\_\_\_

Fa o na le dipotso dipe ka ditshwanelo tsa gago jaaka motsayakarolo mo tshekatshekong e, kgotsa o utlwa o kare re go tsentse mo diphatseng, o ka ikopanya le ba ofisi ya Research Ethics and Compliance kwa Illinois State University mo (309) 438-2529 kana email mo [rec@ilstu.edu](mailto:rec@ilstu.edu).

**Consent Form for Questionnaire**  
Relationship of Fulfillment of Needs and Happiness

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This study is being done in order to learn more about the relationship of the fulfillment of needs and happiness. This study is being conducted by Dr. Maria Schmeeckle and Carolyn Moe, researchers at the Illinois State University and is not affiliated with Peace Corps or Humana People to People. The questionnaire consists of 30 statements that you rank from 1 to 5 depending on how much you agree or disagree with the statement. The questionnaire should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Based on the results of the questionnaire, you may be asked if you would like to participate in an interview.

If you agree to participate please sign the form below and we will give you a copy of this form.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There is no payment for taking part but some may find it beneficial to reflect on their lives and their happiness. There are few risks but there may be some discomfort in answering the questions.

**Confidentiality:**

We will not share any personal information. Your records will be kept private. If the information becomes published steps will be taken to keep your name a secret.

**Participation:**

Your participation in this research is voluntary (no one is forcing you to do this). Refusal to participate involves no penalty or loss of benefits. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. You can also skip questions you do not feel like answering.

**Contacts and Questions:**

Feel free to ask any questions you have now, and if you have any questions in the future you can contact Dr. Maria Schmeeckle at [mhschme@ilstu.edu](mailto:mhschme@ilstu.edu) or Carolyn at +267 7477 3070.

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I consent to participating in the above study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics and Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529 or via email at [rec@ilstu.edu](mailto:rec@ilstu.edu).

## **Pampiri ya Tumulano**

Botsalano Jwa go Fitlhelela Letlhoko le Boitumelo

O kopiwa go tsenelela tshekatsheko/patlisiso thuto. Tshekatsheko e, e direlewa go ithuta thata ka botsalano jwa go fitlhelela letlhoko le boitumelo. Tshekatsheko e e dirwa ke Dr. Maria Schmeekle le Carolyn Moe (Boitumelo), basekasiki ko Illinois State University.

Dipotsopatlisiso di dirilwe ka dikitsiso di le masome a mararo (30) tse o ka di fang matshwao go tswa mo bongweng (1) go ya botlhanong (5) go tswa fela gore wena o dumalana kana ganetsana go le kae le kitsiso. Dipotsopatlisiso di tshwanetse go tsaya metsotso e le lesome (10) go ya go e le lesome le botlhano (15) go di fetsa. Go remeletswe mo maduong a dipotsopatlisiso, o ka bodiwa gore a o ka rata go tsaya karolo mo potsolotsong. Fa o dumela go tsenelela potsolotso e ke kopa o saene fomo e kwa tlase, gape re tla go neela khopi ya fomo e.

### **Bodiphatsa le Mosola:**

Ga go na tuelo go tsaya karolo mme bangwe batla bona go le botlhokwa go lebelela matshelo le boitumelo jwa bone kwa morago. Go na le bodiphatsa bo se kae mme go na le kgonagalo ya go sa arabe ka tshosologo.

### **Sephiri:**

Ga re na go bua le ope ka se re se buang/tse re dibuang. Dipuisanyo tsa rona ke sephiri. Fa e le gore puisanyo ya rona e ka gatisiwa, dikgato di tla tsewa gore maina a lona a nne sephiri.

### **Go Tsaya Karolo:**

Go tsaya karolo mo tshekatshekong e ke go ithaopa (ga o patelediwe go dira se). Go tlhoka go tsenelela ga go reye go re o na le molato kana o ka senyegelwa ke sengwe. O ka nna wa emisa puisanyo e ka nako nngwe le nngwe mme gagona molato kana ditshenyegelo. O ka tlola dipotso tse o sa batleng go di araba fa di sa go tsee sentle.

### **Kgolagano le Dipotso:**

Phuthologa go botsa dipotso fa o na le tsone gompiano, le fa o na le dipotso dingwe mo nakong e e tlang o ka ikgolaganya le Dr. Maria Schmeekle mo mogaleng wa mhschme@ilstu.edu kgotsa Carolyn/Boitumelo mo +267 7477 3070.

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O tla fiwa moriti wa kgatiso ya maitlamo e le sesupo sa gago.

Ke dumelana le go tsaya karolo mo tshekatshekong e

Saena \_\_\_\_\_ Letsatsi \_\_\_\_\_

Fa o na le dipotso dipe ka ditshwanelo tsa gago jaaka motsayakarolo mo tshekatshekong e, kgotsa o utlwa o kare re go tsentse mo diphatseng, o ka ikopanya le ba ofisi ya Research Ethics and Compliance kwa Illinois State University mo (309) 438-2529 kana email mo [rec@ilstu.edu](mailto:rec@ilstu.edu).