

Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family

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“My genade is vir jou genoeg. My krag kom juis tot volle werking wanneer jy swak is”
2 Kor. 12:9

I would also like to thank:

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OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie is 'n substudie van die sambreelprojek getiteld "*A multi-disciplinary programme to enhance family well-being in different South-African contexts: Phase one*".

Die hoofdoel van die sambreelprojek is om 'n omvattende, multifasetbenadering te ontwikkel om die welstand van gesinne in verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse kontekste te verbeter. Die doelwitte van hierdie sambreelprojek is, onder andere, 1) om gesinswelstand in verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse kontekste te ondersoek, verken en te beskryf; en 2) om verskillende terapie en metodes (byvoorbeeld perdry) wat moontlik kan bydra tot die bevordering van gesinswelstand in verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse kontekste te ondersoek, verken en te beskryf. Die doel van hierdie studie is om volwasse perderuiters se persepsies met betrekking tot hulle kommunikasie met perde en hoe dit vertolk word na hulle kommunikasie met gesinslede, te ondersoek en te beskryf.

Hierdie doel word regverdig deur navorsing en literatuur wat duidelik die behoefte vir navorsing met betrekking tot gesinswelstand en die mens-dierverhouding binne die sisteem van die gesin en die aard en belang van kommunikasie in menslike verhoudinge, spesifiek in die gesinskonteks - en met perde - aandui. Daar is egter min navorsing oor hierdie verskynsel en as ons die aard van kommunikasie tussen mense en perde en tussen gesinslede kan verstaan, kan ons intervensies om gesinswelstand in hierdie verband te bevorder, beplan en implementeer.

Ten einde die doel van die studie te bereik, is 'n kwalitatiewe ondersoekende, beskrywende navorsingsontwerp geïmplementeer. Doelgerigte vrywillige en sneeubal steekproefnemingstegnieke is geïmplementeer en die steekproef bestaan uit ses vroulike deelnemers tussen die ouderdom van 19 en 53 jaar en drie manlike deelnemers tussen die ouderdom van 20 en 53 jaar. Data is ingesamel deur middel van individuele semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, waarna dit tematies geanaliseer is. Die resultate beskryf die

deelnemers se kommunikasie met perde, hulle kommunikasie met familieledede en die voordele wat interaksie en kommunikasie met perde inhou. Die bevindinge kan gebruik word om intervensies te ontwerp en implementeer wat kan bydra tot meer effektiewe interaksies in die familie konteks.

Sleutelwoorde: Kommunikasie, gesin, gesinswelstand, perde, perderuiters, nie-verbale kommunikasie, verbale kommunikasie, welstand.

SUMMARY

This study is a sub-study of the umbrella project entitled “A multi-disciplinary programme to enhance family well-being in different South African contexts: Phase one”. The main aim of the umbrella project is to develop a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to enhance the well-being of families in different South African contexts. The objectives of the umbrella project are, amongst others, to 1) explore and describe family well-being in different South African contexts; and to 2) explore and describe various therapies and methods (e.g. horse riding) that could potentially contribute to and/or enhance family well-being in different South African contexts. The aim of this study is to explore and describe adult horse riders’ perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family.

This aim is justified by research and literature that clearly indicates the need for research regarding family well-being and the human-animal relationship within the family system and the nature and importance of communication in human relationships, specifically in the family context, and with horses. There is, however, little research on this phenomenon and if we can understand the nature of the communication between people and horses and communication between family members, we can plan and implement appropriate interventions to promote family well-being in this regard.

In order to reach the aim of the study as identified above, a qualitative explorative, descriptive research design was implemented. Purposive voluntary sampling and snowball sampling techniques were used and the sample included six female participants between the ages of 19 and 53 years of age and three male participants between the ages of 20 and 53 years of age. Data was collected by means of individual semi-structured interviews and analysed with the use of thematic analysis. The results describe the participants’ communication with horses, their communication with family members and the benefits of

interaction and communication with horses. The findings can be used to design and implement interventions to contribute to more effective interactions in the family context.

Key words: Communication, family, family well-being, horses, horse riders, non-verbal communication, verbal communication, well-being.

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPT FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES

Permission is hereby granted that the manuscript entitled “Exploring adult horse riders’ perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family” may be submitted by the candidate, AM Scholtz, for examination purposes in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree MA Positive Psychology.



Supervisor:


V. Koen

4/11/2016

Date

DECLARATION BY STUDENT/RESEARCHER

Hereby I, Annemarie Scholtz, declare that this research study: *Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family*, is a product of my own work, and that all sources have been fully referenced and acknowledged. Furthermore, I declare that this dissertation was edited by a qualified and experienced language editor.



Annemarie Scholtz

DECLARATION BY LANGUAGE EDITOR

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DECLARATION OF EDITING

I hereby declare that I was responsible for the language editing of the manuscript *Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family* by A. Scholtz.

A handwritten signature in black ink. The first part of the signature consists of the letters 'E' and 'D' intertwined within a large, hand-drawn oval. To the right of this oval, the name 'iedericks' is written in a cursive script.

DR ELSABÉ DIEDERICKS

04 November 2016

PREFACE

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree MA in Positive Psychology. The Positive Psychology Curriculum (curriculum code G801P) consists of a total of 180 credits. Of these credits, the research dissertation in Positive Psychology, although currently registered as a dissertation, accounts for only a third of these credits (60 credits).

This dissertation is presented in an article format in line with the General Academic Rules of the North-West University (NWU, 2015). The first section of the dissertation provides a short literature review and problem statement. The second section provides the guidelines of the journal that the manuscript will be submitted to and the manuscript itself. The third and final section includes the conclusions of the study.

The manuscript will be submitted to *Society & Animals: Journal of Human-Animal Studies* for possible publication. This journal publishes studies that describe and analyse our experiences of non-human animals from the perspective of various disciplines within both the social sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science) and humanities (e.g., history, literary criticism). The research topic therefore accords with the journal's aim and scope.

SECTION 1

Literature Review

In ancient times, in various cultures throughout the world, people valued the relationships between people and animals and considered them profound. Animals were considered important partners for the survival and health of people (Walsh, 2009). Grier (2006) indicates that over the last few decades, companion animals and/or pets have come to fulfil an increasingly important role in American households. In an American Pets Products Association (APPA) national pet owners' survey conducted in 2007 and 2008, more than 63% of American households had at least one pet. Of these, a strong majority (95%) regarded their pet to be a friend or even a family member (87%) (Walsh, 2009). Other literature and research also indicate that pet owners consider pets to be part of the family system (Cain, 1983; Hickrod & Schmitt, 1982; Sanders, 2003). According to the South African Companion Animal Council (SACAC), pet ownership in South Africa is also on the increase and statistics in 2011 indicated an annual growth of approximately 1.3% in pet ownership (SACAC, 2011).

A large number of studies conducted over the past three decades support the importance of interaction with companion animals and provide evidence that these interactions can enhance people's health and psychosocial well-being (Barker, Rogers, Turner, Karpf, & Suthers-McCabe, 2003; Friedmann & Tsai, 2006; Walsh, 2009; Wells, 2009). Research supports a correlation between pet ownership and positive physiological measures (e.g. lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels), an increase in neurochemicals that are associated with relaxation, and improved immune system functioning in people (Allen, Blascovich, & Mendes, 2002; Charnetsky, Riggers, & Brennan, 2004). Friedmann and Tsai (2006) find that research with regard to human-animal interactions reports lower levels of anxiety, depression

and loneliness in people and also reports enhancement in people's social support and well-being in general when they interact with animals.

Human-animal interactions have long been studied for therapeutic purposes, thereby leading to the development of the fields of animal-assisted therapy (AAT) and animal-assisted activities (Burgon, 2011; Walsh, 2009). Fine (2010) describes AAT as a form of therapy wherein animals are used as a fundamental part of the treatment. This form of therapy is now widely recognised by researchers and practitioners who work in different fields and can be used to address various problems, including psychological and emotional problems (Fine, 2010). Macauley and Gutierrez (2004) refer to equine-assisted therapy as a form of AAT where horses are used to facilitate goal-directed counselling. Equine-assisted therapy is seen as a combination of traditional therapeutic interventions with an innovative component involving relationships and activities with horses (Pendry & Roeter, 2013; Suarez, 2005). Research in this area suggests that this form of therapy can lead to improvements in self-confidence, communication, trust, assertiveness, responsibility, self-esteem, and nurturing (Marx & Cumella, 2003; Vidrine, Owen-Smith, & Faulkner, 2002).

Interaction with horses shows similarities to the benefits of AAT and also added benefits, such as horses' ability to feel human emotions and mirror human body language by reflecting people's behaviour back to them through their responses (Burgon, 2011; Cameron & Robey, 2013; Suarez, 2005). In order to facilitate change in a horse's behaviour, it is required that a person becomes more self-aware of his or her own behaviour, thoughts, and intentions; consequently contributing to changes in their behaviour (Elliot, Funderburk, & Holland, 2008; Pendry & Roeter, 2013; Suarez, 2005). Another unique quality of horse riding is the interacting relationship that is formed while riding a horse (Lentini & Knox, 2009).

Parents of children that have participated in equine-assisted activities reported benefits such as social opportunities, improved interaction with each other and the volunteers, and an

opportunity to care for, trust and nurture another living being (Bachi, 2013; Elliot et al., 2008; Smith-Osborne & Selby, 2010). In their natural environment, horses live in herds and their behaviour is characterised by extreme sensitivity towards their surroundings, which make them masters in teaching social- and relational skills as they have a calming effect, great attention to detail, and are distinctly social (Lentini & Knox, 2009; Pendry & Roeter, 2013; Smith-Osborne & Selby, 2010).

The human-horse relationship is considered unique due to the fact that horses are large in size (bringing an element of danger into the interaction) and there is a high level of body-to-body contact when one rides a horse (Brandt, 2004). This body-to-body contact wherein the body is used as a vehicle for expression remains largely unexplored and is of particular interest. Because the communication between humans and horses is not based on existing communication channels, humans and horses have to develop a system of communication that applies a medium they can both understand. The non-verbal therefore becomes the means by which humans and horses communicate (Brandt, 2004).

Although animals, and consequently horses, were previously excluded and disregarded by research from the symbolic interactionists and sociological perspective, researchers are increasingly pointing out the limitations of this exclusion (Alger & Alger, 1997, 1999; Brandt, 2004; Irvine, 2004; Sanders, 2003). Brandt (2004) points out that Mead's (1934) symbolic interactionism traditionally privileged verbal communication and did not take into consideration that the non-verbal could also act as a basis for language. In fact, research indicates that almost 90% of messages are communicated non-verbally (Vorster, 2011).

According to Alger and Alger (1997, 1999), many of the elements of Mead's symbolic interactionist perspective are compatible with upcoming animal research, particularly if the focus is not only on verbal or spoken language. They further argue that humans and animals can engage in symbolic interaction. Irvine (2004) supports this statement in her literature by

pointing out that by de-privileging verbal and/or spoken language as the only meaningful form of communication, animals' subjective presence also becomes visible through interaction. Alger and Alger (1997, 1999) and Irvine's (2004) research indicates that animals are able to interact with people. By moving beyond verbal language and recognising non-verbal forms of communication, a deeper understanding of human-animal interaction is possible (Brandt, 2004). The context, in which people and horses therefore communicate and interact, requires adjustments of people in their non-verbal communication with horses.

As people cannot use words to communicate with horses, they become more sensitive about the non-verbal messages they convey (Brandt, 2004). For the communication to be effective between people and horses, people need to take feedback from the non-verbal communication and through different processes adjust their communication and/or interactions with horses. Since this process of communication and/or interaction is not clear, this study will focus on how adult horse riders perceive their communication with horses.

Research indicates that horse riders have been noticing increased sensitivity and changes with regard to their communication and non-verbal communication since they start horse riding (Brandt, 2004), which leads one to wonder if this can lead to changes in their communication with people and, consequently, family members. The family context as a close interpersonal context is therefore included in this research and since interpersonal contexts are explained from the systems perspective, a short overview of appropriate theory will be discussed.

Following the interactional approach, which is based on the systems theory, people develop interactional styles and/or relationships that can be either effective or ineffective (Vorster, Roos, & Beukes, 2013). Whereas ineffective interpersonal relationship styles can lead to emotional discomfort and feelings of disconnectedness and discontentment (Roos & Malan, 2012), effective interpersonal relationships and/or styles contribute to mental health

and well-being (Gergen, 2009; Hargie, 2011; Roos & Du Toit, 2014; Smith-Acuña, 2011; Van den Bergh, 2008). In relation to horses, people are forced to consider their interactional style and, if required, make adjustments in themselves as well as in their interaction with horses. According to the systems theory (Becvar & Becvar, 1999, 2009), people are open systems that allow the flow of newly accepted behaviour into other interpersonal contexts, such as the system (family) through positive feedback. Change in interpersonal styles that takes place in an interpersonal context can ultimately introduce change within other systems, such as the family system (Becvar & Becvar, 2009; Dalos & Draper, 2000). Family is a system that consists of interacting individuals, and change in one family member can facilitate change in the larger family context (Becvar & Becvar, 2009; Dalos & Draper, 2000). The basic assumption that all systemic approaches (regarding families) share, is that an individual's behaviour is better understood within the social system of the family (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004).

The South African Law Commission (2002) does not specify a single definition for the term 'family' and the traditional nuclear family (a married man and woman and their children) is not an accurate reflection of the current South African society (Greeff, 2013). In the South African context, families comprise biological families, blended families and single-parent families. Greeff (2013) indicates that a family can consist of a group of people who are related by blood, connected emotionally, who care for extended family and/or are united by material possessions. For the purpose of this study, the term "family" will refer to a group of two or more people who are either related by blood, are emotionally connected, care for extended family and/or are united by material possessions.

Families form an integral part of society and can be considered to be the most important relationship for an individual (Chao, 2011), therefore it is necessary to strive for well-being enhancement, not only for the individual, but also for the family. The current situation in

which a large number of South African families find themselves in, is concerning. In South Africa's multicultural society, biological parents do not always form part of the family and family structures are becoming increasingly diverse. Absent fathers, single-parent households, child-headed households and broken families are on the increase (Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Nduna & Sikweyiya, 2013; Richter & Desmond, 2008). These changing family structures, as well as the other challenges families are facing (such as high levels of crime, poverty, unemployment, loss of family authority, welfare dependency and lack of transportation), put a strain on family life and affect the well-being of family members (Moss, 2010). Some families are so affected by the dysfunction within the family and the disintegration of family life that they cannot cope effectively or they engage in unhealthy behaviours, which lead to weakening of family ties (Moss, 2010).

Since World War II, Psychology as a science had the primary aim to repair damage within human functioning, but with the emerging field of Positive Psychology, the focus shifted from repairing what is wrong, to building positive qualities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). During the past decade psychologists and researchers have become concerned with prevention and now suggest that there are buffers for mental health problems, referring to human strengths (hope, faith, courage, future mindedness, optimism, interpersonal skill, honesty, perseverance, etc.) (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In the field of Positive Psychology, the aim is to enhance the quality of human life and to promote optimal functioning rather than focusing on illness and pain (Wissing, 2014).

Within the ambit of Positive Psychology, well-being can be divided into two categories, namely 1) a hedonic perspective with the focus on happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction and comfort; and 2) a eudaimonic perspective focusing on meaning, purpose, expression of potential, and being involved with something larger than the self (Wissing, 2014). Dodge, Daly, Huyton, and Sanders (2012) define well-being as having the

psychological, social and physical resources needed to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge. When individuals experience more challenges than the resources they have available to them, their level of well-being will decline. The well-being of the family can be seen in terms of the well-being of a system of relationships due to the interdependence of family members and the influence they have on one another's well-being (McKeown, Pratschke, & Haase, 2003).

Ryff (1989) refers to positive relations with other as being an aspect of well-being, and positive relationships are said to contribute to people's well-being (Bloch, 1996; Roos & Du Toit, 2014; Ryff, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 1998; Van den Bergh, 2008). Positive and/or effective relationships are described as being caring, warm, satisfying and trusting by nature and give people a sense of comfort and security (Brownie & Hortsmanshof, 2012; Ryff & Singer, 1998). Furthermore, research indicates a relationship between positive relational interactions and people's quality of life (Brownie & Hortsmanshof, 2012; Van Biljon & Roos, 2012). Considering the importance of effective and/or positive relationships with regard to well-being, the importance of family well-being comes to light.

Family well-being is defined as a multi-faceted construct that, as a whole, consists of the combination of individual well-being, positive environmental conditions and of a well-functioning family structure (Newland, 2015). Research indicates that the well-being of families, and also specifically South African families, can, amongst others, be enhanced by effective communication (Ackerman, Kashy, Donnellan, & Conger, 2011; Koen, 2012; Peterson & Green, 2009). Tubbs and Moss (2003) broadly define communication as a process of creating meaning or sharing experience. All behaviour is communication and people cannot not communicate (Watzlavick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), and since people spend approximately 75% of their lives communicating (Tubbs & Moss, 2003), this research is significant. Furthermore, four types of communication are distinguished, namely verbal/vocal

communication (communication through the spoken word), verbal/non-vocal communication (words are used but not spoken, e.g. writing), non-verbal/vocal communication (vocalizations without the use of words, e.g. groaning), and non-verbal/non-vocal communication (involves gestures and appearances) (Tubbs & Moss, 2003). Non-verbal communication is therefore defined as communication that conveys non-linguistic messages (Tubbs & Moss, 2003). This type of communication is said to continue all the time and to convey a large percentage of all social meaning (Tubbs & Moss, 2003). Tubbs and Moss (2003) refer to three broad categories of non-verbal cues, including space and time, visual cues (facial expressions, eye contact, body movements, touching, physical appearance, and use of objects), and vocal cues (volume, rate, fluency, pitch, and quality). Effective communication and a willingness to communicate is a characteristic that is common in healthy families (Carr, 2011; Choo, 2000; Peterson & Green, 2009) and is reported to have a positive correlation with well-being as it provides a way for family members to express themselves.

Problem Statement

Many scholars that undertake qualitative research find that their own biography and history serve as a meaningful starting point with regard to their research (Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Riemer, 1977). This is true for me as well – it is my own history and relationship with horses that first got me interested in the human-horse bond. In my own interactions with horses, I experienced a relationship like no other and became aware of positive changes in my own family relations as a result of this relationship. This led me to wonder about the possible benefits of human-animal relationships, but in particular, the human-horse relationship and communication between humans and horses. In search of answers, I instead found that research and literature were limited, especially in a South African context and with regard to the family system, which contributed to the undertaking of this study.

In spite of the value of the human-animal relationships, Kruger and Serpell (2006) and Walsh (2009) indicate that the mental health field has been slow to realise the importance of human-animal bonds and relationships in theory, research and practice; and has undervalued the relationships that people have with animals. Walsh (2009) states that greater attention to human-animal bonds in mental health research, particularly with regard to the family system, is needed. Seemingly from literature, communication - specifically non-verbal communication - is important in both relationships with horses and relationships with family members. There is, however, little research on this phenomenon and if we can understand the nature of the communication between people and horses, and communication between family members, we can plan and implement appropriate interventions to promote family well-being in this regard. The aim of this study is therefore to explore adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this section presented a literature review in order to establish the background and basis of this study. The study is presented in an article format and the following section presents the journal guidelines of the journal earmarked for submission of the manuscript, and the manuscript.

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SECTION 2

Intended Journal, Journal's Guidelines for Authors & Manuscript

The manuscript will be submitted to the “Society and Animals: Journal of Human-Animal Studies”, which specifically focuses on interactions between humans and animals in various settings. The author instructions of the journal are as follows (Society & Animals: Journal of Human-Animal Studies, 2015):



Instructions for Authors

Scope

Society & Animals (SOAN) publishes studies that describe and analyze our experience of nonhuman animals. The goal of the journal is to stimulate and support an emerging content area within the social sciences and the humanities. The field of human-animal studies examines the ways in which nonhuman animals figure in our lives. Authors are encouraged to include data-based discussion bearing on ethical and policy considerations in the current debate over the place of nonhuman animals in an increasingly human-centered world. *Society & Animals* spans four broad areas:

1. applied uses of animals (research, education, medicine, agriculture)
2. animals in popular culture (entertainment, companion animals, animal symbolism)
3. wildlife and the environment
4. sociopolitical movements, public policy, and the law

Society & Animals gives priority to manuscripts that contain significant new results of empirical investigations. However, other types of papers such as theoretical analyses, literature reviews, and methodological contributions are also considered, as are comments on previously published papers and on topics pertinent to the journal. As occasioned, *Society & Animals* solicits comments on selected articles. Any current method within the scholarly traditions of the several social sciences may be applied. Qualitative, ethnographic, and phenomenological methods are welcome, in addition to quantitative and experimental styles of research. Studies employing methods in the tradition of investigations in the humanities, particularly historical and literary analyses, are also welcome.

Ethical and Legal Conditions

Please note that submission of an article for publication in any of Brill's journals implies that you have read and agreed to Brill's Ethical and Legal Conditions. The Ethical and Legal Conditions can be found here: brill.com/downloads/conditions.pdf.

Online Submission

Society & Animals now uses online submission only. Authors should submit their manuscript online via the Editorial Manager (EM) online submission system at: editorialmanager.com/soan First-time users of EM need to register first. Go to the website and click on the "Register Now" link in the login menu. Enter the information requested.

When you register, select e-mail as your preferred method of contact. Upon successful registration, you will receive an e-mail message containing your Username and Password. If you should forget your Username and Password, click on the "Send Username/Password" link in the login section, and enter



Instructions for Authors

your first name, last name and email address exactly as you had entered it when you registered. Your access codes will then be e-mailed to you.

Prior to submission, authors are encouraged to read the 'Instructions for Authors'. When submitting via the website, you will be guided stepwise through the creation and uploading of the various files. A revised document is uploaded the same way as the initial submission. The system automatically generates an electronic (PDF) proof, which is then used for reviewing purposes. All correspondence, including the editor's request for revision and final decision, is sent by e-mail.

Double-blinded Peer Review

SOAN uses a double-blind peer review system, which means that manuscript author(s) do not know who the reviewers are, and that reviewers do not know the names of the author(s). When you submit your article via Editorial Manager, you will be asked to submit a separate title page which includes the full title of the manuscript plus the names and complete contact details of all authors. This page will not be accessible to the referees. All other files (manuscript, figures, tables, etc.) should not contain any information concerning author names, institutions, etc. The names of these files and the document properties should also be anonymized.

Contact Address

For additional information or if you need help in uploading your manuscript please visit the author tutorial or online help links given at the right side of the log-in window. For remaining questions please contact the editor, Dr. Kenneth Shapiro, at: ken.shapiro@animalsandsociety.org. For eventual questions about Editorial Manager, authors can also contact the Brill EM Support Department at: em@brill.com.

File Format

Please upload source files such as .doc, and not .pdf files.

All manuscripts are refereed by the Board of Editors and outside reviewers.

Submission Requirements

Language

Manuscripts should be submitted using American English spelling; the dictionary to use is the Merriam-Webster Collegiate (10th Edition).

Contributors should use language that is respectful of our relation to animals of other species, e.g. gender-based pronouns such as *his*, *her*, *who*, and *whose*; *companion animal*, *animal in the laboratory*, *non human animal*, *keeper* or *caretaker* (not *owner*).



Instructions for Authors

Manuscript Length

Articles should be no longer than 7,000 words (including references).

Manuscript Structure

All manuscripts should be typed double-spaced, with generous margins, and left justified.

The elements of the manuscript should be in the following order:

- Title
- Author, author's affiliation—including faculty, department or institute, university, full mailing address, and author's e-mail address:
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Body of text
- Endnotes
- References
- Tables
- Figures

The journal makes use of *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed., 2010) and, for additional style guidance, *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.) (chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html).

Abstract and Keywords

Manuscripts should include a short abstract of 120–150 words maximum, as well as up to five or six keywords. In the abstract, the active voice should be used, with no use of the first person (“I” or “we”).

Headings

All headings are flush left.

The First Level Heading

The Second Level Heading

Text Citation

In the text, use the author's last name followed by comma, year of publication, and page number if any material is a quotation.

Jones (2005) writes the following:

The animals in the circus gave their trainers an ultimatum (Jones, 2005).



Instructions for Authors

The animals in the circus told their trainers they wanted to “go back to the jungle” (Jones, 2005, p. 34).

Personal communications—text only; do not enter in reference list:

(J. J. Jones, personal communication, November 15, 2005)

J. J. Jones (personal communication, November 15, 2005)

For references with multiple authors—cite up to five authors the first time, then use surname and “et al.”

For six or more authors, cite the first author and follow with “et al.” both initially and thereafter.

Endnotes

Use endnotes to provide information that supplements text. Do not use them as a reference list.

References

The Journal uses author/date text cites and corresponding entries in the reference list. Add a DOI where possible. All citations in the manuscript must appear in the reference list, and all references must be cited in text. The references should be placed in an alphabetical list at the end of the article.

Author, A., & Author, B. (2014). Title of article. *Periodical*, p. 1. DOI:10.1163/15685306-12341360.

Author, A. A. (2014). The title of the article. *Journal*, 1(2), 1–20. DOI:10.1163/15685306-12341361.

Author, A., & Author, B. (2014). Chapter title. In A. Editor & B. Editor (Eds.), *Book title* (pp. 1–20). City: Publisher.

Author, A., & Author, B. (2014). *Book title*. City: Publisher.

Author, A. (2014). *Title of the Dissertation*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University: City.

Author, A. (2014). Article title. In A. Editor & B. Editor (Eds.) *Symposium Title, Vol. 1, The Title* (pp. 1–20). City: Publisher. DOI:10.1163/15685306-12341362.

Author, A., Title of article. Retrieved September 5, 2014, from <http://www.someinternetsite.html>.

Figures and Tables

All figures and tables should be cited in the text. Figures should be submitted as separate source files in .eps, .tif, or .jpg format, in a size suitable for the typesetting area of the journal. The resolution of these files should be at least 300 dpi for half-tone figures and 600 dpi for line drawings. Number the files, and indicate in the manuscript where they are to appear (“Fig. 1 here”).

The text in a figure must be legible and should not be smaller than corps 7. The size of this lettering for any text in a figure should be the same for all figures in the manuscript.

Italics

Italicize titles of books, periodicals, and microfilm publications, foreign phrases, and words that could be misread. Do not use italics for emphasis, abbreviations, or for foreign phrases common in English.



Instructions for Authors

Lists

For items in a sentence, use lowercase letters enclosed in parentheses: (a) (b) (c).

For a vertical list, use Arabic numerals followed by a period and one space. Make sure the lists maintain parallelism.

Numbers

Spell out numbers under 10; but express numbers from 10 and above, both cardinals and ordinals, in figures. Spell out any number that begins a sentence, title, or heading. Avoid beginning a sentence with a number.

Quotations

Use double quotation marks (“...”) to enclose material up to 39 words. Single quotation marks (‘...’) should be used to enclose material quoted within the quotation.

Indent quotations of 40 words or longer. Use double quotation marks for direct quotations within the block quotation.

Publication

Proofs

Upon acceptance, a PDF of the article proofs will be sent to authors by e-mail to check carefully for factual and typographic errors. Authors are responsible for checking these proofs and are strongly urged to make use of the Comment & Markup toolbar to note their corrections directly on the proofs. At this stage in the production process only minor corrections are allowed.

Alterations to the original manuscript at this stage will result in considerable delay in publication and, therefore, are not accepted unless charged to the author. Proof corrections should be returned within four working days to the editor, Dr. Kenneth J. Shapiro, e-mail: ken.shapiro@animalsandsociety.org.

E-Offprints

A PDF file of the article will be supplied free of charge by the publisher to authors for personal use. Brill is a RoMEO green publisher. Authors are allowed to post the pdf post-print version of their articles on their own personal websites free of charge. This means they can show the article exactly as it appears in print. The institute employing the author is allowed to post the post-refereed, but pre-print version of articles free of charge on its repository. The post-refereed, pre-print version means the final accepted version of the manuscript before typesetting.



Instructions for Authors

Consent to Publish

Transfer of Copyright

By submitting a manuscript, the author agrees that the copyright for the article is transferred to the publisher if and when the article is accepted for publication. For that purpose the author needs to sign the **Consent to Publish** which will be sent with the first proofs of the manuscript.

Open Access

Should the author wish to publish the article in Open Access he/she can choose the Brill Open option. This allows for non-exclusive Open Access publication under a Creative Commons license in exchange for an Article Publication Charge (APC), upon signing a special Brill Open Consent to Publish Form. More information on Brill Open, Brill's Open Access Model and the Brill Open Consent to Publish Form can be found on brill.com/brillopen.



Appendix: Three-part Style Guide (2007 Revision):

- Part 1, The Guide
- Part 2, Sample Reference List
- Part 3, Cheat Sheet

This Style Guide supplements *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fourth Edition). Dictionary of record is *Merriam-Webster Collegiate* (10th Edition). *Society & Animals* uses U.S. English constructions and spelling. *Note:* If your field's disciplines differ substantially from *Journal* style requirements, please advise. We will work with you to achieve a mutually satisfactory accommodation.

Part 1, The Guide

Order of 9 Elements

Title

Author, author's affiliation—including faculty, department or institute, university, full mailing address, and author's e-mail address:

Abstract—all papers must include an abstract

Keywords—all papers must include key words.

Body of text,

Endnotes

References

Tables

Figures

Presentation: Justify left

Abstract

- 120-180 words maximum
- Active voice only
- No use of first person (I or we)

Keywords

List in lower case important words used in abstract and text.



Instructions for Authors

Body of Text

Use author-date format for cites—author's last name and date of publication. Do not provide author's first name or name of publication.

- Bold heads
- Italicize subheads.
- Indicate Table and Figure placement first mention at end of paragraph.
- -----

Table 1 about here

Figure 1 about here

Endnotes

Use endnotes to provide information that supplements text. Do not use as a reference list. The Journal uses author/date text cites and corresponding entries in Reference List.

Speaking of Nonhuman Animals

Use “nonhuman” animal first mention in title, abstract, heads, and text. Use “companion animal” or “animal companion” first mention in title, abstract, heads, and text. Use proper name, when appropriate, for a nonhuman animal. Use “animal in the laboratory” (“zoo, wild,” or “on the farm”) first mention in both abstract and text. Use personal pronouns to refer to all nonhuman animals (even “no-see-ums”).

Editorial Guidelines

Heads and Sub-heads

Please supply heads and subheads both to break up long blocks of text and to lead the reader through the paper.

Italics

- Italicize titles of books, periodicals, and microfilm publications, foreign phrases, and words that could be misread.
- Do **not** italicize for emphasis, abbreviations, or foreign phrases common in English.

Lists

- For items in a sentence, use lower case letters enclosed in parentheses: (a) (b) (c).
- For a vertical list, use Arabic numerals followed by a period and one space. Make sure the lists maintain parallelism.



Instructions for Authors

Numbers

Express numbers under 10 in words. Express numbers 10 and above, both cardinals and ordinals, in figures. Spell out any number that begins a sentence, title, or heading. Avoid beginning a sentence with a number.

Parallelism

When a series begins with a particular part of speech, use that part of speech throughout the series.
Example: The participants were told **to make** themselves comfortable, **to read** the instructions, and **to ask** about anything they did not understand.

Running Headers

A short running headline may not be longer than 60 characters.

Quotation Marks

Double quotation marks enclose material up to 39 words. Single quotation marks enclose material quoted inside the quotation. Indent quotations of 40 or more words. Use double quotation marks for direct quotations inside the block.

Citations and References

All citations must be in the Reference List, and references must have a matching text citation.

Text Cites

Last name only of author, followed by comma, year of publication, and page number if any material is a quotation.

- Jones (2005) writes the following:
- The animals in the circus gave their trainers an ultimatum (Jones, 2005).
- The animals in the circus told their trainers they wanted to “go back to the jungle” (Jones, 2005, p. 34).

Personal communications—text only; do not enter in reference list.

- (J. J. Jones, personal communication, November 15, 2005)
- J. J. Jones (personal communication, November 15, 2005)

Multiple authors—cite up to five authors first use, then only first author followed by, & et al. For six or more authors, cite first author and follow with & et al. both initially and thereafter.



Instructions for Authors

References

- All references must have matching text cites.
- Use Part 2, Sample Reference List, to construct your Reference List.

APA SAYS...

Active Voice

“Verbs are vigorous, direct communicators. Use the active rather than the passive voice, and select tense and mood carefully” (APA, p. 32)

Long Sentences and Long Paragraphs

Although writing only in short, simple sentences produces choppy and boring prose, writing exclusively in long, involved sentences creates difficult, sometimes incomprehensible material. Varied sentence length helps readers maintain interest and comprehension. When involved concepts require long sentences, the components should march along like people in a parade, not dodge about like broken field runners. Direct, declarative sentences with simple, common words are usually best” (APA, p. 28) (Please note: The Journal edits overlong sentences and breaks long paragraphs at an appropriate breaking point.)

Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

Misplaced modifiers, because of their placement in a sentence, ambiguously or illogically modify a word. You can eliminate these by placing an adjective or an adverb as close as possible to the word it modifies.

Unclear

The investigator tested the subjects using this procedure. [The sentence is unclear about whether the investigator or the subjects used this procedure.]

Clear

Using this procedure, the investigator tested the subjects (APA, p. 38)

While and Since

Use *while* to link events occurring simultaneously; use *although*, *whereas*, *and*, or *but* in place of *while*.... *Since* is more precise when used to refer only to time (to mean “after that”); otherwise, replace with *because*. (APA, pp. 42-43).



Instructions for Authors

Part 2: Society & Animals Reference List

(Fictitious references below)

Books

- Granger, H. (2005). *Animals I have known* (Rev. ed.). New York: Scholastic Inc.
- Jones, A. B., & Smith, C. D. (2005). *How to write a style guide: From start to finish*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute.
- Jones, A. B., & Smith, C. D. (2005). Who needs all this style guiding anyway? In E. B. Brown & J. C. Green (Eds.). *Style for the ages* (pp. 125-135). Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute.
- Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.
- Karr, S. (Ed.). (2000). *Dictionary of obsolete print terminology* (2nd ed., Vols. 1-3). Arlington, VA: The Printing Press.
- Manet, A. (1999). *Nonhuman animals and you* (K. Shapiro & M. Randour, Trans.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum (Original work published 1937).
- Roget, G. (1999). *Votre grenouille a mangé mon déjeuner* (Your frog has eaten my lunch). Paris: Presses de France.
- Shapiro, K. J. (2005). *Rats I have known* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute.
- Weasley, R. (in press). What next? In B. Buckbeak & C. Crookshanks (Eds.), *Empirical study of magical theories: Vol. 5. Magic tomorrow*. Washington, DC: Magic Press.

Journals

- Lauffer, M. A. (Ed.). 500 workshops are not enough (Special Issue). *Workshops, 100* (3). *Journal (Entire Issue)*
- Smith, A. B., & Brown, G. (2003a). The search begins. *Everyday Events, 48*, 525-550.
- Smith, A. B., & Brown, G. (2003b). The search continues. *New Every Day, 45* (2), 10-25. *Journal Paginated by Issue*
- Smith, A. B., & Brown, G. (in press). The search has a happy ending. *Everyday Events*.

Magazine, Newspaper, Newsletter, Brochure

Magazine

- Hagrid, P. (2005, January 5). Following the spiders. *Forests, 247*, 656-670.

Daily Newspaper Article, No Author

- Three cheers for the elephants. (2005, May 21). *The London Times*, p. A12.
- Traveler, R. (2005, June 23). High mountain valleys in West Virginia. *The Charleston Gazette*, pp. A1, A4.

Daily Newspaper Article

- Weasley, B. (2004, Spring). Dragons in Romania. *Dragon Studies, 41*, 52-59.



Instructions for Authors

Newsletter

Smith, R. W. (2005, Winter). Keeping companion animals warm when it's cold. *Care for Companion Animals*, 34, 8-10.

- Give date as it appears on issue.
- Give volume number

Brochure

Research and Training Center for Saving Animals in the Wild. (2002). *Guidelines for writing press releases about individual species* (2nd ed.). [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Author.

- Format references to brochures in same way as those to entire books. In brackets, identify the publication as a brochure.

Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses

Gordon, G. F. (2001). Ancestry of the Hopi Indians: Descendants of various groups from north, south, and east over three centuries. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 52 (01), 428A. (University Microfilms No. AAF87-14245)

- Doctoral Dissertation Abstracts (DA) published and obtained on university microfilm. Beginning with volume 27, DA paginates in two series--A for humanities; B for sciences. Beginning in 1930, DA title is Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI). For Master's Thesis abstracted in Masters Abstracts International and obtained on university microfilm, use format shown; give as publication information the title, volume numbers, page numbers, and the University Microfilms number.

Hensley, E. R. (2003). Mesa homes of the Hopi Indians: Social and religious use of the kivas over 100 years [Pueblo State University, 1990]. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 59, 47562.

- Doctoral Dissertation abstracted in DAI and obtained from the university]. Use same treatment for Master's Thesis.

Jackson, R. W. (2004) *Multinial clans of the Hopi Indians: Customs and traditions of the Bear and other prominent clans*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Pueblo University: Chinle, AZ.

- Doctoral Dissertation unpublished. Use same treatment for unpublished Master's Thesis. Do not give name of state if included in name of university.

Symposia Proceedings

Published Proceedings

Anderson, P. R. (2004). Educational approaches to working with nonhuman animals in the wild. In R. Simpson (Ed.), *Alaska Symposium on Education: Vol. 22, New perspectives* (pp. 286-403). Juneau: University of Alaska Press.

- Capitalize the name of the symposium, a proper name.



Instructions for Authors

Unpublished Contributions to Symposium

Martin, L., Johnson, P., & Oliver, N. (2004, May). Enrichment items introduced at the Tivoli Zoo. In R. E. Winters (Chair). *Reducing traumatic experiences for nonhuman animals housed in urban zoos*. Symposium conducted at the Second International Congress of Zoos, Aalborg, Denmark.

- If month is known, give both it and year.

Internet

Parker, C. T. (2005). Websites and referencing them. In *Web guides*. Retrieved September 5, 2005, from <http://www.webgsnet/citation.htm>

- Internet Guidelines. Author, date published if available; otherwise, n. d. (no date). Title of article; title of web site; retrieved date; from URL. Separate items of citations with periods.



Part 3: Society & Animals Reference List

This Style Guide supplements *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th ed.)/ For additional style guidance, the journal uses *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The dictionary of record is *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed.). The journal uses U. S. English spelling.

Abstract—required

- active voice
- third person
- 150 words maximum

Keywords—required

- important words used in abstract and text

Nonhuman Animals

- nonhuman animal initially in title, abstract, heads, and article
- companion animal or animal companion initially (see above)
- nonhuman animal in the laboratory...in the wild...on the farm—first use
- personal pronouns for all animals from no-see-ums to humans (*the dog who...*)
- gender specification only if content requires (*cow=she; bull=he*; however, no use of “it”)

Text Cites

- author/date (Jones, 1999) or Jones (1999)
(*no citing of names of books, articles, or first names of authors*)
- all names used up to five authors first use; then, first author et al.
- first author et al. for six or more authors;
- author/date first use in a paragraph, then author only
- author in personal communication (inits., last name); date (May 5, 2005)
- text cites matched to Reference List entries and vice-versa

Reference List

- author/date, alphabetized by author’s surname
- references matched to text cites and vice-versa
- style (*Society & Animals* Reference List samples in Part 2)

References

Society & Animals. (2015). Instructions for authors. Retrieved from http://www.brill.com/sites/default/files/ftp/authors_instructions/SOAN.pdf

MANUSCRIPT

**EXPLORING ADULT HORSE RIDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR
COMMUNICATION WITH HORSES AND HOW IT TRANSLATES TO THEIR
COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILY**

For publication in

Society & Animals: Journal of Human-Animal Studies

MANUSCRIPT

Please note that for examination purposes, the tables are included in the manuscript text where appropriate, but will be moved to appear after the references before the manuscript is sent to be considered for publication. Certain sections, for example the ethical considerations, are also discussed in detail and these sections and the manuscript length will be shortened before the manuscript is sent to be considered for publication. The manuscript structure is as follows: Title page; abstract, including key words; introduction/problem statement and aim; method (research design; participants and sampling; data collection; data analysis; trustworthiness; ethical considerations); results; discussion; conclusion and references.

TITLE PAGE

Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family

A. M. Scholtz, V. Koen*, C. M. Oosthuizen and V. Roos

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore and describe adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family. A qualitative explorative, descriptive research design was implemented. The sample group, which was sampled through either a purposive or snowball sampling technique, included six female participants between the ages of 19 and 53 and three male participants between the ages of 20 and 53. Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and analysed with the use of thematic analysis. The results identify three main themes, including communication with horses, communication with family members and benefits of interaction and communication with horses. The findings reveal similarities between the communication that takes place between the participants and horses, and between the participants and their family members. These similarities make it possible for the communication in one context (with horses) to be translated to the other context (with family members), and the findings suggest that such a translation is possible and is supported by the systems theory. Apart from the seemingly positive influence that interaction and communication with horses can have on communication with family members, through the development of an increased awareness and sensitivity regarding body language and what horse riders communicate non-verbally, other benefits are also identified by the participants. These include the relief of stress and nervousness, increased awareness of personal boundaries, development of positive traits such as determination, patience and calmness, an enhanced bond with family members through time spent with horses, and relief of family conflict through time spent with horses.

Key words: Communication, family, family well-being, horses, horse riders, non-verbal communication, verbal communication, well-being.

Introduction and Problem Statement

Evidence suggests that the mental health field has been slow to realise the value of human-animal relationships in theory, research and practice and has undervalued the significance of the bonds that people can have with animals and their pets (Kruger & Serpell, 2006; Walsh, 2009). Within the social sciences, there is very little available research on the relationships that humans have with horses in particular (Brandt, 2004). Walsh (2009) argues that greater attention to human-animal bonds in mental health research, particularly with regard to the family system, is needed and points to the potentially valuable role animals and pets can play in healthy family functioning and family well-being. Another aspect that is considered to play an integral role in healthy family functioning and family well-being is communication. Literature indicates that communication, specifically non-verbal communication, is important in relationships with horses and relationships with family members. Research on this phenomenon is, however, limited. If we can understand the nature of the communication between people and horses, and communication between family members, we can plan and implement appropriate interventions to promote family well-being in this regard. In light of this, the aim of this study was to explore and describe adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family.

Family Well-Being

The family is considered to play one of the most crucial roles in society and is often regarded as one of the most important relationships an individual engages in (Chao, 2011). In spite of this, there is evidence to suggest that family life seems to have become endangered in our modern times and that our increasingly fast-paced lives and the various and numerous pressures we face, greatly impact our family relationships (Christensen, 2002). Walsh (1996) explains that there is widespread concern about the demise of the family as institution. In

South Africa, family structures are becoming increasingly diverse - absent fathers, single-parent households, child-headed households and broken families are on the increase (Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Nduna & Sikweyiya, 2013; Richter & Desmond, 2008). These changing family structures, as well as the other challenges families face, including high levels of crime, poverty, unemployment, loss of family authority, welfare dependency and lack of transportation, put a strain on family life and affect the well-being of family members (Moss, 2010). It is therefore necessary to strive for and research well-being enhancement, not only for the individual, but also for the family. One perspective to do this from is from the perspective of Positive Psychology.

In the emerging field of Positive Psychology, the aim is to enhance the quality of human life and to promote optimal functioning instead of focusing on illness and pain (Wissing, 2014). Within the ambit of Positive Psychology, well-being can be viewed from two perspectives. The hedonic perspective focuses on happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction and comfort, while the eudaimonic perspective focuses on meaning, purpose, expression of potential, and being involved with something larger than the self (Wissing, 2014). The well-being of the family can be seen in terms of the well-being of a system of relationships due to the interdependence of family members and the influence they have on one another's well-being (McKeown, Pratschke, & Haase, 2003).

Family well-being is defined as a multi-faceted construct that, as a whole, consists of the combination of individual well-being, positive environmental conditions and of a well-functioning family structure (Newland, 2015). Research indicates that the well-being of families (in general) and South African families, can, amongst others, be enhanced by effective family communication (Ackerman, Kashy, Donnellan, & Conger, 2011; Koen, 2012; Peterson & Green, 2009).

Communication

Research indicates the integral role that communication (defined as a process of creating meaning or sharing experience) plays in human relationships (Tubbs & Moss, 2003; Watzlavick, Beavin, & Jackson, 2011). Available evidence suggests that people spend approximately 75% of their lives communicating. Tubbs and Moss (2003) distinguish between four types of communication: verbal/vocal communication (communication through spoken word), verbal/non-vocal communication (words are used, but not spoken, e.g. writing), non-verbal/vocal communication (vocalizations without the use of words, e.g. groaning), and non-verbal/non-vocal communication (involves gestures and appearances). Non-verbal communication is therefore defined as communication that conveys non-linguistic messages. This type of communication is said to continue all the time and to convey a large percentage of all social meaning (Tubbs & Moss, 2003). Feelings, emotions and attitudes are expressed through non-verbal communication and people therefore rely mostly on what they see (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2012). The three broad categories of non-verbal cues include space and time; visual cues such as facial expression, eye contact, body movements, touching, physical appearance, and use of objects; and vocal cues such as volume, rate, fluency, pitch, and quality (Tubbs & Moss, 2003).

Family communication refers to all verbal and non-verbal behaviours by which family members affect one another, establishing their interpersonal relationships (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2005). Research provides evidence that healthy functioning families tend to have effective communication and a willingness to communicate; with communication contributing to the well-being of families by providing a way for family members to express themselves (Carr, 2011; Choo, 2000). Other studies, including South African studies, support this statement and provide evidence that family well-being, can, amongst others, be enhanced

by effective communication (Ackerman, Kashy, Donnellan, & Conger, 2011; Koen, 2012; Peterson & Green, 2009).

Human-Animal Relationship

Studies that have been conducted on the relationship between humans and animals point to the positive impact that relationships with animals can have on people's health and well-being (Barker, Rogers, Turner, Karpf, & Suthers-McCabe, 2003; Friedmann & Tsai, 2006; Serpell, 1991; Walsh, 2009; Wells, 2009). Evidence suggests a relationship between pet ownership and positive physiological measures such as a decrease in blood pressure (Allen, Blascovich, & Mendes, 2002; Anderson, Reid, & Jennings, 1992; Charnetsky, Riggers, & Brennan, 2004). Friedmann and Tsai (2006) report lower levels of anxiety, depression and loneliness, and enhancement in social support and general well-being of people that have frequent interactions with animals. Beck and Meyers (1996) state that interaction with companion animals may be one of the more successful survival strategies of humans. A number of studies point to the positive socializing effects of companion animals (Edney & Robinson, 1998). An example of this includes a study conducted with children, which had found that children who grow up with companion animals in their presence, showed enhanced social competence and improved non-verbal communication (Guttman, Predovic, & Zemanek, 1985).

Interactions between humans and animals have been studied for many years with regard to possible therapeutic purposes, thereby leading to the development of fields such as animal-assisted therapy (AAT) and animal-assisted activities (AAA) (Burgon, 2011; Walsh, 2009). AAT can be defined as a form of therapy wherein animals are used as a fundamental part of the treatment (Fine, 2010). Equine-assisted therapy, specifically, refers to a form of AAT where horses are utilized to facilitate goal-directed counselling (Macauley & Gutierrez, 2004). The unique qualities of a horse are found to be useful in therapy sessions as horses are

sensitive to changes in their environment and respond to these changes in an immediate and direct nature in the form of non-verbal communication such as body language (Green, 2013). Research in the area of equine-assisted therapy suggests that it can facilitate improvements in self-confidence, communication, trust, assertiveness, responsibility, self-esteem, and nurturing (Marx & Cumella, 2003; Vidrine, Owen-Smith, & Faulkner, 2002). Equine-assisted therapy is also used in family therapy – in such a session, a licensed mental health provider or therapist works with an equine specialist and uses one or more horses. The therapist asks the client/s to take part in an experimental activity with the horse/s. These activities are developed by the therapist to allow the client/s to, in a metaphorical manner, experience something that they are struggling with in their lives or family context (Green, 2013). Green (2013) reports that equine-assisted family therapy practices can help clients and families make noteworthy changes in their lives related to finding effective ways to work together, improve family interaction and enhance persistence, determination, resilience and creativity.

A unique quality of equine-assisted therapy and horse riding is the interacting relationship that is formed while riding a horse (Lentini & Knox, 2009). In order for people to be able to facilitate change in a horse's behaviour, they need to become more aware of their own behaviour, thoughts, and intentions, which can consequently lead to changes in their own behaviour (Elliot, Funderburk, & Holland, 2008; Pendry & Roeter, 2013; Suarez, 2005). Roberts, Bradberry, and Williams (2004) explain that horses have the ability to read peoples' feelings and energies and anticipate their intentions by studying and being sensitive to people's body movements and body language. As a result of this, horses also have an innate ability to mirror body language and energy back to a person (Roberts et al., 2004).

When considering the size of pets such as dogs and cats, the relationship between humans and horses is also considered to be unique because of the largeness of horses, which adds an element of danger to the interaction and emphasises the importance of effective

communication with horses (Brandt, 2004). The human-horse relationship is also considered to be unique as a result of being able to ride a horse and the high level of body-to-body contact that takes place during horse riding. In this body-to-body contact, the body becomes the means for expression. Non-verbal communication therefore becomes the primary manner in which humans and horses communicate (Brandt, 2004). This research can contribute towards a better understanding of non-verbal communication between people and horses and how it can be translated to people in a family context.

Researchers such as Alger and Alger (1997, 1999), Brandt (2004), Irvine (2004) and Sanders (2003), expose the limitations of excluding animals from the perspective of symbolic interactionism and sociology. Brandt (2004) explains that Mead's (1934) symbolic interactionism originally favoured verbal communication, ignoring non-verbal communication as a basis for language. Yet research suggests that an approximate 65% of messages are communicated non-verbally (Birdwhistell, 1970; Tubbs & Moss, 2003). Irvine (2004) explains that animals' subjective presence can also become visible through interaction by de-privileging verbal language as the only meaningful form of communication. Alger and Alger (1997, 1999) and Irvine's (2004) research further indicates that animals are able to interact with people. By moving beyond verbal language and recognising non-verbal forms of communication, a deeper understanding of human-animal interaction is possible (Brandt, 2004). As the discussion earlier indicated, the manner in which people and horses communicate and interact requires people to adjust their non-verbal communication with horses.

According to Brandt (2004), people who work with and ride horses can become more sensitive to and aware about the non-verbal communication they transmit, as it becomes the primary manner in which they communicate with horses. For effective communication between people and horses, people should be receptive to feedback from the non-verbal

communication from horses (such as not responding how the rider expects the horse to) and, through different processes, adapt the manner in which they communicate with horses by being aware of what and how they are communicating to the horse. Horse riders report increased sensitivity and changes in their communication and, specifically, their non-verbal communication since taking up horse riding (Brandt, 2004). Brandt (2004) explains that a horse uses its body to communicate.

Although humans can verbally communicate with horses through tone of voice and vocal instructions, they cannot convey all of their intentions to a horse through verbal communication. As a result, horse riders too must utilise their bodies as a means of communication that the horse can understand and respond to. As a result, people who work with and ride horses can develop a heightened awareness with regard to their non-verbal communication, such as being sensitized to their body language and what they convey non-verbally (Brandt, 2004). This leads one to wonder if horse riding can result in changes in horse riders' communication with other people and, consequently, family members when considering Walsh's (2009) statement that the bond between humans and animals merit greater attention in mental health research, especially in family systems. The family context (as a close interpersonal context) is therefore included in this research and since interpersonal contexts are explained from the systems perspective, a concise discussion of appropriate theory follows.

The Interactional Approach

The interactional approach is based on the systems theory and holds forth that human beings develop interactional styles and/or relationships that can be either effective or ineffective in nature (Vorster, Roos, & Beukes, 2013). While evidence suggests that ineffective interpersonal styles can lead to emotional discomfort and feelings of disconnectedness and discontentment (Roos & Malan, 2012), effective interpersonal styles

are said to contribute to the mental health and well-being of people (Gergen, 2009; Hargie, 2011; Roos & Du Toit, 2014; Smith-Acuña, 2011; Van den Bergh, 2008). The systems theory (Becvar & Becvar, 1999, 2009) describes people as open systems that allow the flow of newly accepted behaviour into other interpersonal contexts, such as the system (family) through positive feedback. Change in interpersonal styles that takes place in an interpersonal context can ultimately introduce change within other systems, such as the family system (Becvar & Becvar, 2009; Dalos & Draper, 2000). Family is therefore regarded as a system that consists of interacting individuals and wherein change in one family member can result in change within the larger family context (Becvar & Becvar, 2009; Dalos & Draper, 2000). The basic assumption with regard to families that all systemic approaches share is that an individual's behaviour can be better understood within the family social system (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004).

In conclusion, the discussion and problem statement above inform the research question and aim by illuminating: 1) the need for research regarding family well-being and the human-animal relationship within the family system; 2) the nature and importance of communication in human relationships, specifically in the family context, and with horses; and 3) the applicability of the interactional approach in this research. The aim of the study, which is stated below, is justified by research and literature that clearly indicate the need for research regarding family well-being and the human-animal relationship within the family system; also the nature and importance of communication in human relationships, specifically in the family context, and with horses. There is, however, little research on this phenomenon and if we can understand the nature of the communication between people and horses, and, communication between family members, we can plan and implement appropriate interventions to promote family well-being in this regard.

Research Question and Aim

Based on the above, the following research question is posed: What are the perceptions of adult horse riders regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family? This study's aim was therefore to explore and describe adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family.

Method

The research method includes a discussion of the research design, participants and sampling, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Research Design

A qualitative explorative, descriptive research design was implemented for the purpose of this study. Qualitative research is used to study selected issues in depth, openness and detail in order to identify and understand the themes that emerge from collected data as it unfolds in real-life situations (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). Botma, Greeff, Maluadzi, and Wright (2010) explain that an exploratory study is used to collect new data if limited previous research has been conducted regarding the topic or phenomena in question. The descriptive approach is used to accurately describe phenomena (Terre Blanche et al., 2006) and refers to knowing the kind of varieties that a phenomenon appears in; also the aspects thereof (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). The design is therefore fitting for the study and the study's aim.

Participants and Sampling

A purposive, voluntary sampling technique (Creswell, 2012) was used to sample participants who met the inclusion criteria. The criteria for participants included that: They have to actively partake in horse riding; live in Potchefstroom in the North West Province (considering that the student resides close to this area, it would have become time-consuming and costly if other provinces and towns were also included); be at least 18 years of age; be

literate in Afrikaans or English; and be part of a family (a family member). Apart from the inclusion criteria indicated above, there were no other exclusion criteria. Participants were recruited by a mediator, who is the owner of a horse riding facility located in Potchefstroom in the North West Province. Thereafter, snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961) was used to recruit individuals who were not from the recruiter’s horse riding facility. Participants who were recruited by the mediator were asked to locate individuals who met the inclusion criteria and who were willing to participate in the study. Snowball sampling continued to the point of data saturation (the point at which data becomes repetitive and redundant) (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The sample comprised six female participants between the ages of 19 and 53 years of age and three male participants between the ages of 20 and 53 years. The demographic profile of the participants is provided in Table 1 (see Addendum A for a copy of the demographic information form).

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Participants

Item	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	33.3%
	Female	66.7%
Age	19 – 29	44.4%
	30 – 39	11.1%
	40 – 49	11.1%
	50 – 59	33.3%
Culture	White	100%
Number of years horse riding	< 10 years	11.1%
	10 – 15 years	33.3%
	15 – 20 years	22.2%
	20 – 25 years	11.1%
	> 25 years	22.2%

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and an interview schedule, with the following questions, was used (Terre Blanche et al., 2006):

- Please tell me about the communication between you and horses?
- What did you learn in your communication (verbal and non-verbal) with horses? Can you give me an example?
- Please tell me about the communication between you and your family members?
- What have you learned from your communication (verbal and non-verbal) with family members? Can you give me an example?
- What is your perception of how your communication with a horse or horses translates to your communication with family members?

The researcher developed the interview schedule with guidance from her supervisors and it was evaluated by a panel of experts in qualitative research during the approval process. The first interview served as a pilot study to determine the effectiveness of the questions. Since the interview schedule was found to be effective during the first interview, the interview had been included for analysis.

All interviews were recorded with a digital voice recording device and were transcribed, verbatim, by a professional transcriber for analysis.

Field notes. Field notes are described as notes of observation or conversation taken by a researcher during the research process (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Taking of field notes is an essential part of the research process as observations and interviews are only useful to the extent that they can be remembered. Wolfinger (2002) indicates two strategies of field note keeping that were used for the purpose of the proposed study. The first strategy entails descriptions of observations that the researcher notices and finds interesting and telling about the participants. The second strategy involves describing

everything that happened during a specific period of time in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The field notes were written immediately after each interview by the student and used to confirm and strengthen the findings as well as for audit trail purposes (examples of field notes are provided in Addendum B).

Setting for data collection. Data collection was conducted at the respective facilities where the participants partake in horse riding. The researcher requested a quiet location with minimum distraction and privacy. The researcher arranged a time with the participants when they were at the facility as part of their normal routine and the researcher travelled to the participants.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed through the use of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and the analyses were done concurrently with the data collection to determine the point at which data saturation had been reached. Clarke and Braun (2013) state that thematic analysis can be defined as a flexible method to identify and describe themes that emerge from qualitative data. It is a movement away from facts towards interpretation of people and activities (Creswell, 2012). The six steps of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed to analyse the data, namely familiarisation with the data; coding; exploration of themes; theme reviewing; naming of themes; and writing up the findings.

The researcher, in co-operation with an independent, experienced co-coder, analysed the collected data to organise it into themes. A work protocol was designed and provided by the researcher to the co-coder, also providing information on how the data were to be analysed (please see Addendum C for a copy of the work protocol). After independent coding, the researcher and co-coder discussed the emerging themes to determine whether they agreed on the categories.

Trustworthiness

Findings and interpretations of data need to be accurate to ensure trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2012). Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify four strategies for the evaluation of trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Table 2 provides an overview of the strategies that were utilized in this study to ensure trustworthiness.

Table 2

Strategies to Ensure Trustworthiness

Criteria	Description	Strategies
Credibility	Truth value that has been reached through the findings and the context in which the research was done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexivity (the researcher was honest and critical throughout the research process in discussing her role in the study and to respect the data collection site and participants); • Peer review through evaluation of the proposal and findings by supervisor, co-supervisor, and assistant supervisor; • Structural coherence through the use of literature control and/or integration.
Transferability	Possibility to transfer the findings to other groups or different contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dense and detailed description of participants, data collection, data analysis and research process.
Dependability	Consistency of the findings if the same study was carried out again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dense and detailed description;

	in a similar setting and with the same participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code-recoder procedure; • Keeping field notes.
Confirmability	Absence of bias during the research process and the description of findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping field notes; • Reflexivity.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional ethical permission was received for the research (NWU-00076-13-A1). Since the study involved human beings, the researcher considered various international ethical principles and/or guidelines such as the Helsinki Declaration (Burns & Grove, 2005) to conduct the research in an ethical manner and to protect the welfare of the participants (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

The following ethical considerations were considered to ensure that the rights of participants had been observed (Botma et al., 2010; Terre Blanche et al., 2006): Participation was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time without any consequences. Participants were treated with fairness, equity and respect during all stages of the research (Terre Blanche et al., 2006) and participants were not discriminated against regarding their beliefs, gender, age, class, race, culture or sexual orientation (Botma et al., 2010). An independent person supplied the participants with the informed consent letter and participants were given at least a week to study the informed consent form (please see Addendum D for a copy of this form). Each interview was recorded with a digital voice recorder. To ensure anonymity of participants, the recorded interviews were downloaded onto a password-protected computer, with no names attached after each interview and deleted from the recorder.

All data were transcribed verbatim (by a transcriber) for analysis (example of transcribed data is provided in Addendum E). The transcriber signed a confidentiality agreement (please

see Addendum F for a copy of this agreement). The interview transcripts were labelled with a unique number to protect participants' identities. After the recordings had been transcribed, they were saved on a password- and virus-protected computer in a locked office at the NWU, along with other digital data for a period of seven years for audit purposes. After the seven years, the recordings will be deleted from the computer by a member of the research team. Field notes were kept by the researcher to ensure that the interpretation of what had been said in the interview was correctly understood (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

The participants might benefit indirectly from the study by gaining awareness of their family communication, which in turn can potentially contribute to their family well-being; also gaining knowledge about horse riding or communication with horses as a potential contributor to family communication. A further indirect benefit is that the knowledge gained through this research may benefit society with regard to communication with horses and with family. The results of the study will also be made available to the participants once the study is complete. The study is considered to be low-risk, however, the possibility of dignity harm or emotional and psychological discomfort could not be predicted in advance; therefore, participants were informed about support services available to them if they experienced adverse effects as a direct result of their participation. The only costs involved for the participants were their travel costs. The perceived benefits of the study outweighed the perceived risks. The researcher is honest in reporting the data without changing or altering the findings to satisfy certain predictions or interest groups and the research refrains from plagiarism (Creswell, 2012).

Results

This section presents the themes and-subthemes as identified through data analyses and includes direct quotes from participants in support of these themes. An overview of the

themes and sub-themes is presented in Table 3. The themes and sub-themes are discussed in more detail below.

Table 3
Overview of Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Communication with horses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication • Non-verbal communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Body language ○ Body movements ○ Eye contact ○ Tone of voice • Foundations of healthy communication with horses
Communication with family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of family communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Verbal communication ○ Non-verbal communication • Foundations of healthy communication with family members
Benefits of interaction and communication with horses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relief of stress and nervousness • Increased awareness of personal boundaries • Translation of communication with horses to communication with family members • Development of positive traits • Enhanced bond with family members through time spent with horses • Relief of family conflict through time spent with horses

Communication with Horses

Participants stated that they use both verbal- and non-verbal communication to communicate with their horses and also identified foundations of healthy communication with horses. This is discussed in more detail below.

Verbal communication. Verbal communication is used when calling a horse: “...verbaal reageer hy soos wanneer ek net sy naam noem of vir hom fluit, dan kom hy na my toe...” (...verbally he responds as when I just call his name or whistle to him, then he comes to me...) (Participant 4, female); when riders want to get their horse’s attention: “...verbaal maak ek klanke waarop my perde reageer...” (...verbally I make sounds upon which my horses respond...) (Participant 8, male), “...so my perde reageer op my stem” (...so my horses respond to my voice) (Participant 3, male); and is used to give commands: “Sy reageer baie mooi op bevele soos ‘trot’ of ‘canter’” (She responds very well to instructions such as ‘trot’ or ‘canter’) (Participant 5, female), “...die opleiding deur my stem” (...the training through my voice) (Participant 3, male). Verbal communication is also used to calm and reward the horse: “In the saddle, if they are uptight or tense, I will speak to them soothingly and reassure them that all is okay” (Participant 9, female), “Also reward is a ‘well-done’” (Participant 9, female).

Non-verbal communication. The findings indicate a strong emphasis on non-verbal communication between rider and horse. As stated by the participants, these interactions mainly consist of body language, including body movements, but also include eye contact and tone of voice.

Body language. Participants perceive that horses can read energy expressed through body language; therefore the energy that you use to approach a horse is crucial: “...die energie waarmee jy na die perd toe stap bepaal vir hom moet hy vlug, en as hy nie kan vlug nie, moet hy veg” (...the energy with which you approach a horse determines whether he must flee, and if he cannot flee, he must fight) (Participant 6, male), “...perde is baie in gevoel met ‘n mens se energievlakke” (...horses are very much in tune with a person’s energy levels) (Participant 7, female). Participants shared that horses can immediately pick up on energy through non-verbal communication such as body language and sense if you are relaxed or tense despite

whether you are physically close to them or not: “...as jy opgestres is dan gaan sy nie vir jou luister nie, maar as jy ontspanne is, gaan sy ontspanne wees” (...if you’re stressed out then she will not listen to you, but if you are relaxed, she will be relaxed) (Participant 5, female), “...al staan jy tien meter van hulle af en jy stres bietjie, gaan hy ook outomaties gespanne voel” (...even if you are standing ten metres from them and you stress a little, then he will also automatically feel anxious) (Participant 8, male).

Body movements. Participants further shared that horses notice the most subtle movements, for example through the principles of pressure and release: “...sodra die perd doen wat hy nie moet nie, sit jy druk op hom maar jy release ook” (...immediately when the horse does what he should not do, you put pressure on him, yet you also release) (Participant 8, male), “...most of the ground communication is via pressure and release” (Participant 9, female). Participants also use their touch to reward or calm their horses: “...reward is a stroke” (Participant 9, female), “...en ek vryf hom so, is die perd net rustig” (...and I stroke him like this, the horse is just at peace) (Participant 1, female).

Eye contact. Another form of non-verbal communication used to communicate with horses, is that of eye contact. The participants indicate that direct eye contact can sometimes be perceived as intimidating: “...hoe nader ek aan my perde stap, ek stap normaal, maar maak nie oogkontak nie” (...the closer I walk to my horse, I walk normally, but without making any eye-contact) (Participant 6, male), “...ek’t ook geleer jy kyk nie ‘n perd in die oë nie, want dit is intimiderend” (...I have also learnt not to make any eye-contact with my horse, because it is intimidating) (Participant 2, female). On the other hand, some participants mentioned that appropriate eye contact with a horse gives them a feeling of being understood by a horse: “...of net hom in die oë kyk, dan is dit net asof hy jou kan verstaan, soos hy weet presies hoe jy voel” (...when I look into his eyes, it is as if he understands you and knows exactly how you feel) (Participant 1, female), “...my perd in die oë kyk wanneer ek met haar

praat en dis asof sy verstaan” (...when I talk to my horse I establish eye contact and it is as if she understands) (Participant 2, female).

Tone of voice. The tone of your voice, which is vocal but non-verbal, is also perceived to affect the effectiveness of communication with horses. Participants shared: “...*ek’t ook agtergekomp, met albei (perde), as jy streng praat of kwaai praat sal hul jou net so kyk*” (...I have noticed, with both horses, if you speak in a strict or angry voice, they will just stare at you) (Participant 2, female), “...*maar as jy op hom gaan skree die hele tyd - dit werk nie*” (...but if you are going to scream at him the whole time - it will not work) (Participant 1, female).

Foundations of healthy communication with horses. Participants identified foundations of healthy communication with horses, which include trust, respect, consistency, correct timing, sensibility, consideration of personal space and consideration of or appreciation for uniqueness, which are reflected in the following quotes: “...*daar moet ‘n vertrouensverhouding wees tussen my en my perde...*” (...there needs to be a trusting relationship between my horses and I...) (Participant 3, male), “...*beginsels van vertroue, respek, konsekwentheid, tydsberekening, aanvoeling*” (...principles of trust, respect, consistency, timing, sensibility) (Participant 6, male), “...*ek doen dit altyd en elke keer dieselfde sodat die perd nie moet dink dit is vandag so en more weer so nie en my dan wantrou nie*” (...I always and regularly do it the same for the horse not to think that it is done differently today compared to tomorrow and therefore distrust me) (Participant 6, male), “...*en vir hom wys hy kan jou vertrou*” (...and show him that he can trust you) (Participant 1, female).

Communication with Family Members

This theme includes the nature of family communication and foundations of healthy communication with family members.

Nature of family communication. Participants stated that their communication with family members varies and also depends on the family member in question: “*I have some good communication with my family and some bad*” (Participant 9, female), “*...sal nie met my pa praat oor emosionele goed nie, maar eerder met my ma*” (...I will rather talk to my mother about emotional things than to my father) (Participant 4, female).

The nature of communication with family members is indicated to have an impact on relationships with family members: “*Ons het ‘n baie moeilike verhouding gehad... ek en my dogters het ‘n baie lekker verhouding*” (We had a very difficult relationship... my daughters and I have a very pleasant relationship) (Participant 7, female), “*...my en my ma se verhouding is nie altyd so goed nie... ek en my pa kom nou weer baie goed oor die weg*” (...the relationship between my mother and I is not always good... my father and I get along very well) (Participant 5, female), “*...my dogter hou alles hier binne...kan sien daar is iets fout, maar kan nie praat daaroor nie... my seun nou weer, ons kom goed oor die weg en ons praat met mekaar*” (...my daughter keeps everything bottled up...you can see something is wrong, but can’t talk about it...my son, on the other hand, we get along very well and we talk to each other) (Participant 2, female). Participants further shared that they use both verbal- and non-verbal communication to communicate with their family members.

Verbal communication. Participants use verbal communication to share information with their families: “*...wat ook vir my en my vrou goed gewerk het, is om na werk saam te gaan stap om die dag se gebeure te bespreek*” (...what worked well for my wife and I, is to go for a walk after work to discuss the day’s happenings) (Participant 6, male), “*...verbale kommunikasie is ‘n moet om te kan sê ek voel so of so of kom ons doen dit of dat*” (...verbal communication is a must to be able to say how you feel or lets do this or that) (Participant 8, male). The nature of verbal communication and how it is used, is also perceived to be important: “*...dit is nie wat jy sê nie, maar hoe jy dit sê*” (...it is not what you say, but rather

how you say it) (Participant 5, female). Verbal communication also occurs in written form between family members, which is seen to be non-vocal, but verbal none the less: “...as jy nie kan praat daaroor nie, dan skryf ‘n briefie” (...if you cannot talk about it, then write a letter) (Participant 2, female).

Non-verbal communication. For the participants non-verbal communication, specifically through body language and facial expression, is perceived to be important in communication between family members: “...weereens sal ek sê liggaamshouding.” (... once again I will say body language) (Participant 5, female), “...just the way I hold my body or my facial expression gives away my true feelings” (Participant 9, female). An awareness of and ability to understand what family members communicate non-verbally is also perceived to be important: “...jy kan partykeer in die huis instap en dadelik weet hier is ‘n vibe” (...sometimes when you enter the house, you will immediately know here is a vibe) (Participant 6, male), “...jy sien sommer die dag as jy haar moet uitlos...” (...you will notice when to leave her alone) (Participant 4, female), “...hulle weet onmiddellik, hulle leer body language, hulle weet as ek hartseer is” (...they immediately know, they learn body language, they know when I am sad) (Participant 2, female), “...jy kan dadelik sien as jy in ‘n vertrek kom dat die ander persoon ontsteld is en dan sal jy ook weet hoeveel spasie jy daardie persoon moet gee” (...upon entering the room, you will immediately see that the other person is upset and then you will know how much space to give that person) (Participant 8, male).

Foundations of healthy communication with family members. Participants shared that their healthy family communication is built on the foundations of respect, trust, consistency, correct timing, sensibility or intuitiveness, and personal boundaries: “...dieselfde beginsels van vertroue, respek, konsekwentheid, tydsberekening, aanvoeling...toepas op jou gesinslede...” (...the same principles of trust, respect, consistency, timing, sensibility...apply to your family members...) (Participant 6, male), “...hoe jy optree moet konsekwent wees, dan

weet almal waar hulle met mekaar staan...” (...your actions must be consistent, then everyone will know where they stand with each other) (Participant 3, male). Participants shared that to have healthy communication, you need to respect and consider personal boundaries and be able to communicate clearly regarding your boundaries. Participants mentioned that both verbal- and non-verbal communication are used within their families to set boundaries: “...jy moet jou kinders aanspreek en sê: luister, dis waar dit nou ophou en respekteer wat ek nou vir jou sê” (...you must address your children and say: listen, this is where it stops and respect what I am telling you now) (Participant 2, female), “...my dogter wil ook nie hê mense moet in haar persoonlike spasie inbeweeg nie, sy sal nou nie skop soos die ponie, maar haar liggaamstaal sal duidelik vir jou wys jy betree my spasie” (...my daughter doesn't want other people to enter her personal space, she will not kick like the pony, but her body language will clearly reveal that you are entering her space) (Participant 7, female), “...dan gee mens maar net tyd tot die ander een gereed is om daaroor te praat” (...then you just give enough time until the other person is ready to talk about it) (Participant 6, male).

Benefits of Interaction and Communication with Horses

The participants shared that interaction and communication with horses have several benefits, including the relief of stress and nervousness, increased awareness of personal boundaries and the translation of their communication with horses to their communication with their family members.

Relief of stress and nervousness. Participants shared that being around horses seems to naturally relieve stress: “...as ek van die skool af gekom het en daar was stres, dan is daar vir my geen lekkerder plesier as om op die perd te klim nie” (...when I returned from a stressful day at school, then there is no greater pleasure than to saddle up my horse) (Participant 1,

female), “...maak dit my meer rustiger en om nie heeltyd so senuweeagtig te wees nie” (...it calms me and not to be so stressed all the time) (Participant 8, male).

Increased awareness of personal boundaries. Participants indicated that horses make it clear when someone has crossed their boundaries: “...so wanneer jy te naby aan hom kom en hy voel bedreig, sal hy ook na jou probeer skop” (...when you come too close and he feels threatened, he will try to kick at you) (Participant 7, female), which provides riders with an opportunity to learn about boundary setting and to discover and be aware of their own as well as others’ personal boundaries: “...daar is van hulle (perde) wat in mens se spasie sal inbeweeg en jou net onderstebo loop” (...some of them (horses) will just enter your space and walk over you) (Participant 7, female), “...dieselfde as met perde, moet mens jou mense ook leer om weg te beweeg wanneer iemand in ‘n slegte bui is” (...the same with horses, you have to teach your family to walk away when someone is in a bad mood) (Participant 7, female).

Translation of Communication with Horses to Communication with Family Members. Participants shared that their communication with horses has impacted on and been translated to their communication with their family members. They shared the following: “...hulle moet luister - jy sê nee dan is dit nee...ek hanteer my diere en al my kinders dieselfde” (...they must listen – if you say no, it means no...I treat my animals and children alike) (Participant 2, female), “...dieselfde beginsels van vertrouwe, respek, konsekwentheid, aanvoeling en tydsberekening wat in perdetaal geld, kom vir my net so neer op wat in ‘n gesin moet gebeur” (...the same principles of trust, respect, consistency, sensibility and timing that apply in horse language, should apply to your family as well) (Participant 6, male), “...die kommunikasie en gevoelens wat jy met jou perd deel, moet jy terugvat na jou gesin toe...” (...you must take the communication and feelings you share with your horse back to your family) (Participant 7, female). One participant states that her awareness of how

she communicates with horses has strengthened healthy communication between herself and her family: “...ek kan sê dit het my baie versterk (in my kommunikasie met familie), want ek kan byvoorbeeld nie die stal deur toeklap in sy (die perd) se gesig en sê ek is nou klaar met jou nie...dit het dadelik my gemoed verander teenoor my ouers...” (...I can say it strengthened me (in my communication with my family), because I cannot, for example, shut the stable door in his (the horse’s) face and say I am done with you...it immediately changed my mind towards my parents) (Participant 1, female).

Participants further indicated that horses mirror the behaviour and emotions of those around them by reflecting back what they observe from someone who enters their space, thereby sensitizing the horse riders to what they are communicating (especially non-verbally), not only in their communication with horses, but also in their communication with family members. This is reflected in the following statements: “...dan kalmeer ek myself en dadelik raak sy dan ook rustig” (...I calm myself and then she also becomes calm) (Participant 2, female), “...die dag as ek kwaad en gefrustreerd is, werk ek eerder nie met hom nie, want outomaties het hy dan ook nie ‘n goeie dag nie en werk ek hom ook op” (...the day I am angry and frustrated, I don’t work with him, because automatically he also has a bad day and I instigate him as well) (Participant 4, female), “...as ek met my ouers ongeduldig is, is hulle met my ook ongeduldig en presies dieselfde met my perd” (...when I am impatient with my parents, they are also impatient with me and the same with my horse) (Participant 5, female), “...jy moet jouself regkry voordat jy vir iemand of vir die perd iets anders kan leer” (...you have to change yourself before you will be able to teach someone else or your horse something) (Participant 1, female), “Ek het al geleer dat as jy kalm is, dra dit ook oor na hulle (kinders) toe. As jy opgetense is, dan is hulle ook” (I have learnt that when you are calm, it rubs off on your children. When you are tense, they will be tense as well) (Participant 2, female).

The participants note the importance of non-verbal communication and specifically body language in the human-horse relationship as well as between family members. They indicate that what is just as important as reading and understanding your family members' and horse's body language is your appropriate response to the message: “...*dis dieselfde met jou gesinslede, jy moet die situasie lees, en dan ooreenkomstig die regte ding doen en reg optree*” (...it is the same with your family members, you have to read the situation and then act accordingly and do the right thing) (Participant 3, male).

Development of positive traits. Interaction with horses, either through handling, riding, or caring, is perceived to develop positive traits such as determination: “...*die perde het my geleer om dan net asem te haal, een stappie terug te neem en dan weer te probeer*” (...the horses taught me to just breathe, take one step backwards and try again) (Participant 7, female); patience: “...*ek sal sê die dat ek meer met lyftaal met my perde praat, leer dit my meer geduld*” (...I would say that the more I use body language to communicate with my horses, the more patient I have become) (Participant 8, male), “...*ek kan egter ook sien dat die perde haar geduld leer...*” (...I also notice that the horses teach her patience...) (Participant 7, female); and calmness: “...*dan gaan ek na my perd toe en dit maak my net soveel rustiger*” (...then I just go to my horse and it makes me calmer) (Participant 4, female), “...*my persoonlike twee perde, hulle kalm me*” (...my personal two horses, they calm me) (Participant 2, female).

Enhanced bond with family members through time spent with horses. When the whole family or more than one member of the family gets involved, the time spent together with horses can enhance the bond among family members: “...*ek is mal oor die diere, en juis omdat dit my familie nader aan mekaar gebring het*” (...I am crazy about these animals, especially because they brought my family closer) (Participant 1, female), “...*dit beteken vir my baie meer en dis iets wat ons saam as 'n gesin doen*” (...it means so much more to me and

it is something that we as a family can do together) (Participant 1, female). “...*dogter is op daardie ouderdom wat verhouding vreemd voel, perdry gee tyd om ongemaklikheid te oorkom, al word daar nie altyd gepraat nie*” (...my daughter is at that stage where a relationship feels strange, and although we don't always talk to each other, horse riding affords the time to overcome this awkwardness) (Participant 3, male).

Relief of family conflict through time spent with horses. Conflict is inevitable in any family and for some of the participants, their interaction with horses offers an escape from the immediate situation as well as time to reflect and work through their emotions before coming into contact with family members again: “...*as daar iets is by die huis wat nie lekker is nie, sal ek eerder na my perd toe gaan...om by my perd te wees sluit alles net heeltemal uit en jy dink dan aan niks anders nie*” (...if there is something that bothers at home, I will rather go to my horse...when I am around my horse, everything else is excluded and nothing else matters) (Participant 4, female), “...*ek het agtergekom my familie werk my partykeer op en dan is my perd die een wat my weer terugbring en my relaxed laat voel*” (...I have discovered that when there is tension between my family and I, then my horse is the one that relaxes me.) (Participant 5, female), “...*ek kan nie net by hom (perd) opdaag en is nou kwaad nie, jy moet jou hele houding verander. So wanneer ek huistoe gaan, is ek dan so gekalmeer en sien jy dalk iets uit 'n hele ander oogpunt en beseef ek moes dalk nie dit gesê het nie*” (...I cannot just show up angry at my horse, I have to change my attitude. So when I go home, then I am calmer and sometimes you see something from a different perspective and you realise you perhaps shouldn't have said it) (Participant 4, female).

Discussion

This section provides a discussion of the results and integrates appropriate literature in this regard.

The results indicate a stronger focus on non-verbal communication in communication with horses and identify various types of non-verbal communication that take place in communication between horse riders and horses, including body language, body movements, eye contact and tone of voice. Brandt (2004) states that horses use their bodies to communicate and that, in the relationship between humans and horses, the body acts as the basis from which a communication system can be established. The communication between humans and horses is therefore an embodied experience and points to the importance of non-verbal communication in human-horse relationships and communication. Goodwin (2007) explains that horses can adapt their communication to include humans and it is shown in their interpretation of human body language. Other sources also point to the ability of horses to detect and use the non-verbal communication that a person displays (Cameron & Robey, 2013; Hausberger, Roche, Henry, & Visser, 2007). Trotter (2012) confirms that softened voice tones, indirect eye contact and smooth body movements can facilitate a positive response from horses.

Verbal communication is, however, also identified as a form of communication used between horse riders and horses, especially in the form of vocal instructions such as calling a horse when riders want to get their horse's attention, to give commands to a horse or to calm and reward a horse. According to hearing and learning theory (McGreevy & McLean, 2007), horses are able to learn the meaning of some words (Heleski et al., 2014).

Within the context of the family, the results reveal that the participants use both verbal- and non-verbal communication to communicate with their family members. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2005) explain that communication is the main way to enact interpersonal relationships between family members. The interactional approach, which is based on the systems theory, holds forth that the communication/interactional style that human beings develop, is their relationships (Roos & Malan, 2012; Vorster, Roos, & Beukes, 2013).

Healthy functioning families are often found to communicate effectively, and effective communication is reported to have a positive correlation with family members' well-being as it provides a way for family members to express themselves to one another (Carr, 2011; Choo, 2000; Peterson & Green, 2009). While verbal communication enables family members to exchange information with one another through speaking or writing, the integral role of non-verbal communication in human relationships and, consequently, between family members, is supported by numerous studies (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990; Kahlbaugh & Haviland, 1994; Phutela, 2015; Tubbs & Moss, 2003).

The results show similarities in the communication that take place between the participants and horses, and between the participants and their family members. As indicated above, both verbal- and non-verbal communication is reported to be used and play an important role in both contexts. There are also similarities in the foundations that are reported to underlie healthy and effective communication in both contexts, including trust, respect, consistency, correct timing, sensibility or intuitiveness and consideration of personal space or -boundaries.

Literature supports the importance of trust in family relationships and in effective family communication (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990; Peterson & Green, 2009). There is also evidence to suggest that trust plays an important role in the human-horse relationship and -communication (Carlsson, Ranta Nilsson, & Traeen, 2014; Frewin & Gardiner, 2005; Ghiringhelli, 2016).

Various sources point to the importance of respect in family relationships and -communication; also with regard to the importance of respect regarding personal space in interpersonal relationships (Badejo, 2010; Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990; Guilamo-Ramos & Bouris, 2008; Horner & Sugai, 2005). Literature also indicates the importance of respect in human-horse communication (Carlsson et al., 2014; Frewin & Gardiner, 2005).

Evidence indicates the importance of being consistent in interactions with family members to establish family routines (Ryan, Claessens, & Markowitz, 2013; Spagnola & Fiese, 2007) and also suggests the importance of consistency in communication with horses (Brandt, 2004; Goodnight, 2007; Hausberger et al., 2007).

Effective family communication requires sending and interpretation of messages. The importance of interpretation relies on factors such as correct timing (Fingerman, Nussbaum, & Birditt, 2004). The human-horse relationship is characterized by mutual trust and respect, as stated earlier, which are formed through both consistent communication and correct timing when handling a horse (Goodnight, 2007).

Literature also points to the importance of sensible and responsive interactions between family members to overcome communication difficulties (Laursen & Collins, 2004) as well as the importance of having a “good feel”, empathic basis and intuitiveness or sensibility in communicating with horses (Brandt, 2004, 2006). To survive in the wild, horses are - by nature – sensitive to changes in posture, movement and expression (Burgon, 2011; Kohanov, 2001; Lentini & Knox, 2009).

Evidence reveals the importance of respecting personal boundaries in interpersonal relationships such as family relationships (Badejo, 2010; Ferguson, 2010; Horner & Sugai, 2005). As social animals, horses live in a hierarchy where each individual horse has its own place in the herd; therefore boundaries are an essential part of equine communication and herd dynamics (Birke, 2007; Burgon, 2011; Kohanov, 2013).

One should consider that the similarities, as pointed out in the discussion above, make it possible for the communication in one context to be translated to the other context. The findings suggest that such a translation is possible. Horses are distinctly social and are therefore able to teach social- and relational skills (Smith-Osborne & Selby 2010; Lentini & Knox, 2009), which can lead to enhanced interaction with family members (Maujean,

Kendall, Roquet, Sharp, & Pringle, 2013). Brandt (2004) explains that individuals who work with and ride horses can, as a result of the nature of their communication with horses, develop an increased awareness and sensitivity regarding their body language and what they communicate non-verbally.

Apart from the seemingly positive influence that interaction and communication with horses can have on communication with family members, other benefits have also been identified by the participants. These include the relief of stress and nervousness, increased awareness of personal boundaries, development of positive traits such as determination, patience and calmness, an enhanced bond with family members through time spent with horses, and relief of family conflict through time spent with horses. Trotter, Chandler, Goodwin-Bond, and Casey (2008); and Holmes, Goodwin, Redhead, and Goymour (2012) reveal that interaction with horses can reduce anxiety and stress. Literature also supports the finding that interaction and communication with horses can lead to an increased awareness of personal boundaries. Horses are said to have a unique ability to make humans aware of their personal space, thereby providing humans with an opportunity to learn how to set their own personal boundaries more effectively (Smith-Osborne & Selby, 2010). Smith-Osborne and Selby (2010) and Lee and Makela (2015) further confirm that interaction with horses has the potential to lead to the development of positive traits such as determination, patience and calmness. Literature further indicates that pets can provide emotional support (Stammbach & Turner, 1999) and can alleviate negative moods (Turner, Rieger, & Lorenz, 2003). Research suggests the valuable contribution that leisure time, such as time spent with horses, can have with regard to family bonding and strengths (Hawks, 1991; Jenkins & Lyons, 2006).

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family. The

findings reveal the importance of effective verbal- and non-verbal communication in human-horse communication and in communication with family members; also identifying foundations of healthy communication in both contexts. The results further point to similarities in communication with horses and with family members, indicating the possibility that communication in one context can be translated to communication in the other context. The possibility of this translation is supported by the findings, which suggest that communication with horses can be translated to communication with family members. The results further indicate that this translation can be beneficial to family communication. Apart from the apparent benefit of interaction and communication with horses to family communication, the results also identify other possible benefits of interaction and communication with horses, which include the relief of stress and nervousness, an increased awareness of personal boundaries, development of positive traits, an enhanced bond with family members, and relief of family conflict through time spent with horses. The significance of this study's findings is in the fact that insight and understanding into the subjective feedback people receive on their interactions in one particular interpersonal context and how it translates to the family context, are gained.

Recommendations and Limitations

The sample for the study included only white participants, even though attempts were made to include participants from other races. Future research in this area may therefore benefit from the sampling of participants from a variety of races by providing a broader perspective with regard to the phenomenon. The study explored individual perceptions with regard to horse riders' communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family. Exploration within the larger context of the family through utilising explorative family interviews may therefore be useful in providing the perspective, perception or experience from the family point of view. Longitudinal research on

communication with horses and how it translates to communication with family members in South Africa is recommended; and the use of larger samples and a variety of qualitative data collection and data analyses techniques may provide a broader perspective. The current findings can be used to design and implement interventions to contribute to more effective interactions in the family context. The findings may be useful in programmes or workshops on family communication and family well-being, also in family therapy/guidance and should be made available through professional and/or popular publications and presentations.

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SECTION 3

Conclusions

In this section a discussion will follow on the literature- and empirical conclusions as well as a personal reflection.

Literature Conclusions

Although there is an abundance of literature available on human-animal relationships, South African studies and literature specific to a South African context proved to be very limited. This was also the case regarding studies and literature on the human-horse relationship and -interaction. The current available literature on human-animal relationships and/or interactions has a strong focus on the benefits of these relationships in therapy and for the physiological and psychological health of human beings. The literature also focuses more on the relationships between humans and household pets, especially dogs and cats. Very few sources could be found that specifically focus on human-animal- and human-horse communication, especially in relation to the family system, family communication and family well-being. The literature used for this study ranged from older to the most recent literature, with no significant differences between reports and findings in older and newer sources. The themes and sub-themes identified in the results of section two of this dissertation were confirmed and supported by literature.

Empirical Conclusions

The research method and qualitative explorative, descriptive research design implemented in this study proved to be useful and appropriate. The combination of a purposive and snowball sampling technique proved effective in that adult males and females from different age groups were sampled and could provide their perceptions on the topic. It is unfortunate that the sample included only white participants, although attempts were made to include other races. The data collection technique (semi-structured individual interviews) and data

analysis technique (thematic analysis) proved to be valuable since the study's findings are meaningful and provide insight into and an improved understanding of adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to communication with their family. The use of an independent co-coder for analysis also contributes to the trustworthiness of the analysis and results.

Personal Reflection

In undertaking this study, I have discovered and learned a great deal with regard to the research process, conducting research in an ethical manner, the importance of research being practically feasible, the potential challenges that one might face in such a study and how to deal with and overcome such challenges. At the same time, it has given me an insider perspective into the value that research can have and the valuable role it can play in an individual, family and community context, while also giving me insight into the true nature of qualitative research and the role that the researcher fulfils in such research. By acting as an interviewer and conducting semi-structured individual interviews with the participants, I have honed my interview skills and was given the privilege to interact with people with whom I share the same interest and to see the happiness and satisfaction in their eyes when they talk about their families and horses – it was a truly rewarding experience.

I hope that through this study, more people, especially in a South African context, will become aware of the merit of and need for research regarding human-animal relationships and specifically human-horse relationships in social sciences and mental health research. I also hope that this study highlights the potentially valuable role of the human-horse relationship and -communication in the well-being of human beings, specifically regarding the family system and family communication and that it will inspire other researchers to do more research in this regard and to publish their findings.

Addendum A: Demographic Information Form



Demographic Information Form

Dear Participant

The following document includes a short demographic information form for your completion.

Please complete the following:

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: M F
3. Culture: _____
4. Period you have been horse riding: _____

Addendum B: Examples of Field Notes

Onderhoud 3

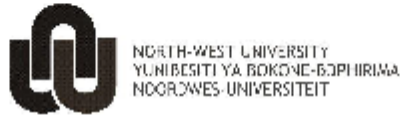
- Bedag op dinge.
- Sien "mood" in oë van perd.
- Sensitief teenoor perde → Vermoeg situasies met mense.
- Perd sentimenteel → soos sy vriende of persoon.
- Ongemaklik verhouding met dogter.
- "Perd" gee tyd om ongemaklikheid te oorkom, al word daar nie altyd gepraat nie.
- Persoonlike moet "ge" - ^{Perd} _{persoon}
- Alleen tyd met dogter → Beter verhouding
- mense ↓
- Perde ↑

Sensitief

Onderhoud 5

- Perd soos eie - Ryskool
- Naby verhouding - ^{Perd} _{familie} ..
- Perd is anker vir baie situasies.
- Goede opvoeding - let op die manier waarop jy met ander praat en hanteer.
- Baie lief vir perd - soos eie.
- Verhouding verskil - ^{Perd} _{familie} tog hantering is dieselfde.
- Sien uit na tye wat huistoe gaan om by perd te wees

Addendum C: Work Protocol and Confidentiality Agreement for Co-Coder



WORK PROTOCOL FOR CO-CODER

Dear Ms G. Schalkwyk

You are hereby invited to act as a co-coder for the study entitled *Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family*.

The research question posed is: What are the perceptions of adult horse riders regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family?

The aim of the study is to explore adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and an interview schedule was used:

- a. Please tell me about the communication between you and horses?
- b. What did you learn in your communication (verbal and non-verbal) with horses? Can you give me an example?
- c. Please tell me about the communication between you and your family members?
- d. What have you learned from your communication (verbal and non-verbal) with family members? Can you give me an example?
- e. What is your perception of how your communication with a horse or horses translates to your communication with family members?

For the purpose of this study, thematic analysis is used to manually analyse the data. The six steps suggested by Clarke and Braun (2013) and Braun and Clarke (2006) should be followed when analysing the collected data. The six steps to be followed when analysing the data are as follows:

1. **Familiarisation with the data:** First, you will have to become familiar with the collected data by means of reading the transcripts of the interviews.
2. **Coding:** Data then has to be coded. This is a process of reading through data so that segments that feature consistently will receive labels indicating the importance of data and that are relevant to answer the research questions as indicated above.
3. **Searching for themes:** Themes are constructed by the researcher by identifying meaningful pattern similarity in the collected data. Before moving onto the next step, you have to end this stage by ordering the coded data that are relevant to a specific theme.
4. **Reviewing themes:** It is also important to review the identified themes so that it will be convincing to readers. The nature of each theme will be discussed separately followed by explaining the relationship between themes. The themes need to accommodate the data.
5. **Naming the themes:** Themes have to be explained in detail now, mentioning the critical aspects of each theme, in order to identify a name for the theme.
6. **Writing up:** Finally, the analysed data will be integrated, interpreted and contextualised with existing literature.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A.M Scholtz

E-mail: annemarie.scholtz10@gmail.com

Tel.: 083 218 5675

NOTE: Please complete the confidentiality agreement on the next page if you are willing to act as co-coder and send it back to me.



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING

entered into between: and AM Scholtz

I, the undersigned

Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms Gizelle Schalkwyk

Identity Number: 9203190166083

Address: Opinift Residence, NWU

hereby undertake in favor of the **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**, a public higher education institution established in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997

Address: Office of the Institutional Registrar, Building C1, 53 Borchard Street, Potchefstroom, 2520 (hereinafter the "NWU")

1 Interpretation and definitions

1.1 In this undertaking, unless inconsistent with, or otherwise indicated by the context:

1.1.1 "Confidential Information" shall include all information that is confidential in its nature or marked as confidential and shall include any existing and new information obtained by me after the Commencement Date, including but not be limited in its interpretation to, research data, information concerning research participants, all secret knowledge, technical information and specifications, manufacturing techniques, designs, diagrams, instruction manuals, blueprints, electronic artwork, samples, devices, demonstrations, formulae, know-how, intellectual property, information concerning materials, marketing and business information generally, financial information that may include remuneration detail, pay slips, information relating to human capital and employment contract, employment conditions, ledgers, income and expenditures and other materials of whatever description in which the NWU has an interest in being kept confidential; and

1.1.2 "Commencement Date" means the date of signature of this undertaking by myself.


1.2 The headings of clauses are intended for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of this undertaking.


2 Preamble

2.1 In performing certain duties requested by the NWU, I will have access to certain Confidential Information provided by the NWU in order to perform the said duties and I agree that it must be kept confidential.

Dated at Potchefstroom this 26 May 2016

Witnesses:

1 

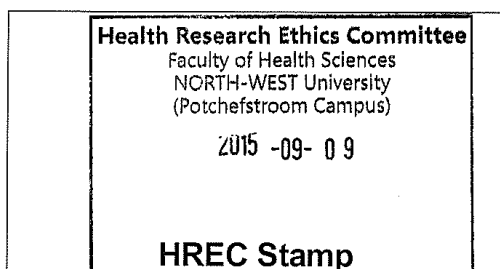
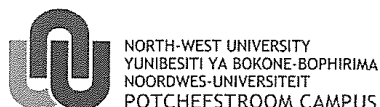
2 

(Signatures of witnesses)



(Signature)

Addendum D: Informed Consent



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR ADULT HORSE RIDERS

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family

REFERENCE NUMBERS: NWU-00076-13-A1

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: A. M. Scholtz

E-MAIL ADDRESS: annemarie.scholtz10@gmail.com

CONTACT NUMBER: 083 218 5675

You are being invited to take part in a research project that forms part of the fulfilment for my Master's degree in Positive Psychology. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part. Please also note that the research may be terminated earlier in particular circumstances.

This study is a sub-study of the umbrella programme: "A multi-disciplinary programme to enhance family well-being in different South African contexts: Phase one", which has already been approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (ethics number: NWU-00076-13-A1). The primary investigator of the umbrella programme is Dr Vicki Koen, e-mail address: 12976121@nwu.ac.za.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00076-13-A1)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in the North West Province of South Africa and will involve semi-structured interviews with experienced health researchers trained in the methods used (qualitative research, specifically semi-structured interviewing and thematic analysis). The number of participants that will be included in this study will be determined by data saturation (the point at which data becomes repetitive and no new themes emerge).*
- *The aim of this research is to explore adult horse riders' perceptions regarding their communication with horses and with family.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to participate because you have complied with the following inclusion criteria: you actively partake in horse riding; you live in Potchefstroom in the North West Province; you are an adult (at least 18 years of age); and you are part of a family (a member of a family).*

What is the procedure?

- *Participants will be approached by either a mediator (who is the owner of a horse riding facility in Potchefstroom in the North West Province) or by an existing participant.*
- *Once participants have indicated an interest in participating they are contacted by the researcher and are supplied with the informed consent form (in person or by electronic mail) by an objective outside party trained therein and not by the researcher personally. Participants will have at least a week to study the informed consent form and to have an opportunity to ask questions. The contact information of the researcher is supplied in this form and the contact information of the person obtaining informed consent will also be given to you. Please feel free to contact either person if you have any questions after reading this form.*
- *After participants have given informed consent, they will be contacted telephonically by the researcher and a time and date, that is convenient for the participants, will be arranged with the respective participants.*
- *Participants will be contacted telephonically by the researcher the day before the set time and date for data collection to remind them.*
- *The data will be collected by the student (researcher) and fieldworkers who are Master's students in Research Psychology. Fieldworkers will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.*

What will your responsibilities be?

- *You will be requested to provide some of your demographic information (specifically age, gender, culture, and period you have been actively horse riding) and to participate in an individual, semi-structured interview and to answer open-ended questions (questions that are not answered by yes or no*

answers). The duration of the interview will be approximately one hour. In order to record the content of interviews precisely, an audio-recording will be made.

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- *There will unfortunately be no direct benefits for you, but the knowledge gained through this research may benefit society with regard to communication with horses and with family and you yourself may benefit indirectly by learning something about your communication with horses and with family.*

Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research?

- *This research has a low likelihood of trivial harm. Physical harm in the form of fatigue, headaches, boredom, discomfort, and muscle tension related to the data collection method may be experienced. If you experience any of the above, you will be given an opportunity to rest and take a break during the data collection.*
- *Psychological harm or emotional harm may occur due to self-disclosure or answering personal questions during data collection.*
- *Apart from possible travel costs, there will be no costs involved for taking part in this research study.*
- *The benefits outweigh the risks.*

What will happen in the unlikely event of some form of discomfort occurring as a direct result of your taking part in this research study?

- *Should you have the need for further discussions after any mental discomfort or distress during or as a result of your participation, you must inform the researcher who will provide you with the contact information of a helping and qualified professional to provide emotional containment and support if necessary.*

Who will have access to the data?

- *Your identity or name will not be disclosed and will not be documented in the manuscript/publication of the research.*
- *Collected data will be used exclusively for research purposes.*
- *Only the consent forms you sign will identify you and only the research team (student, supervisors, transcriber and co-coder) will have access to the consent forms, audio-recordings, interview transcripts, and field notes. The fieldworkers, co-coder and transcriber will be required to sign confidentiality agreements.*
- *The interview transcripts will be labelled with a unique number. No one (apart from the research team and a possible fieldworker) will be able to identify you.*
- *All hard copies of documentation will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in an office at the North-West University for seven years after publication of the results of this research and will then be destroyed by a member of the research team by shredding it. Electronic data (e.g. transcriptions and voice recordings) will be stored on a virus-free and password-protected computer in an office at the North-West University for seven years after the publication of this research and will then be destroyed by a member of the research team (all files will be deleted from the computer in question).*
- *At the completion of the research, the research results may be used for publications in books, journals, and websites or for conference papers or*

presentations. In any of such instances, your identity will not be revealed. Should we use a quote from your interview, we will ensure that details are changed (e.g. names or other identifying information will be removed) to make it impossible to identify you as the source of information.

- The Health Research Ethics Committee also has the right to inspect research records.
- E-mails sent to communicate the results to participants will only be sent to one participant at a time and after e-mails have been sent, they will be deleted from the researcher's mailbox/sent items to protect your identity.

What will happen with the data?

- The audio-recorded interviews will be transcribed word-for-word by a transcriber who will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- After the interviews have been transcribed, they will be analysed by the researcher and an experienced co-coder who will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- This is a once off collection and data will be analysed in South Africa.

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

- No, you will not be paid to take part in the study. Apart from possible travel costs (to location for data collection, which will be at the facility where you partake in horse riding), there will be no costs involved for you if you do take part.

Are there any conflicts of interest?

- There are no existing conflicts of interests that the researchers are aware of.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact Mrs Annemarie Scholtz at e-mail: annemarie.scholtz10@gmail.com or tel.: 083 218 5675 or her supervisor, Dr Vicki Koen, at e-mail: 12976121@nwu.ac.za if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 2089; carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher.
- Please keep a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

How will you know about the findings?

- A summary of the findings of the research will be shared with you by electronic mail after the completion of the study. Please provide an e-mail address in the future contact page below so that we can send the results to you.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study titled: Exploring adult horse riders' perceptions of their communication with horses and how it translates to their communication with family

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*)
20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

Future contact page

Please provide an e-mail address where you would like us to send a summary of the results:

Please note that e-mails will only be sent to one participant at a time and after e-mails have been sent, they will be deleted from the researcher's mailbox/sent items to protect your identity.

.....

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*)
20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*)
20....

.....
Signature of researcher

.....
Signature of witness

.....

Addendum E: Example of Transcribed Data

Onderhoud 7

Vertel my meer oor die kommunikasie tussen jou en jou perde?

Al my perde het verskillende geaardhede en persoonlikhede so elkeen kommunikeer op 'n verskillende manier. Daar is van hulle wat in mens se spasie sal inbeweeg en jou net onderstebo loop, maar dit is nie dat hulle vir jou wys hulle is kwaad vir jou nie. Perde is baie in gevoel met 'n mens se energievlakke. Hulle is baie verskillend, maar hulle sal wanneer jy vir hulle aandag gee, die aandag ook terug gee. As hulle voel hulle is nie vandag lus vir jou nie dan sal hulle ook uit beweeg, weg van jou af. Perde is liefdevolle diere en "herd animals", hulle wil deel van 'n sosiale netwerk wees.

Wat het jy geleer uit jou kommunikasie (verbaal en nie-verbaal) met jou perde en kan jy 'n voorbeeld gee daarvan?

Met hulle nie-verbale houding soos om ore plat te trek of sterte te swaai is ook maniere hoe hulle kommunikeer. Dit hang ook baie af van hoe my gemoed die dag is. As ek baie gelukkig en geselserig is, dan sal baie van die perde ook baie meer gemaklik met my wees. Ek het een perd gehad en as ek 'n moeilike dag gehad het en is gefrustreerd, dan sou sy dieselfde optree teenoor die ander perde en wanneer ek rustig was dan was sy ook rustig tussen die ander perde. As ek emosioneel of "down" was dan het sy deur haar houding dit ook vir my gewys. Dan het ek ook 'n ander perd en die dag as ek so "down" is sal hy net sy kop op my skouer kom sit of net in my spasie inbeweeg en by my staan. Die ponie wat ek het deel nie sy persoonlike spasie nie, so wanneer jy te naby aan hom kom en hy voel bedreig sal hy ook na jou probeer skop om vir jou te wys staan weg.

Vertel my meer oor die kommunikasie tussen jou en jou familieledede?

Ek wens ek het my perde gehad toe ek my seun nog in die huis gehad het. Ons het 'n baie moeilike verhouding gehad en ek moet sê ek kon duidelik die verskil sien toe ek my twee dogters gehad het, wat jonger as hy is. Met hulle het ek die perde gehad en dit het my 'n groot rustigheid gegee deur dit wat jy by jou perde leer te kan terugvat huistoe en met jou gesinslede op dieselfde manier kommunikeer. Ek dink dit sou 'n verskil gemaak het in my en my seun se verhouding en selfs nou nog. Ek en my dogters het 'n baie lekker verhouding en hulle is ook baie by die perde. Hulle sien ook die kommunikasie wat hulle met die perde het en ons dan saam het, ook hoe die perde met mekaar "interact". Die perde sal ook byterig met mekaar wees, ore plat trek en skop, net soos wat kinders met mekaar kan baklei, maar hulle sal dan ook sien dit is daardie spasie wat ons vir mekaar moet gee.

Wat het jy geleer uit jou kommunikasie (verbaal en nie-verbaal) met jou familieledede en kan jy vir my voorbeelde gee?

My middelste dogter is baie lief vir die perde en sal baie gereeld kom ry. Sy het ook 'n verhouding met die perde. Sy kan egter ook baie kortaf en verstrooid wees. Ek kan egter ook sien dat die perde haar geduld leer soos wanneer hulle iets doen wat sy nie wil hê hulle moet nie en sy dan iets anders moet probeer om die gewenste resultaat te kan kry. Dit het ook vir haar 'n beter verhouding met haar seuntjie en man laat vorm, want sy het deur die perde geleer dat daar tye is wat jy net moet asem skep en mekaar spasie gee. My ander dogter ry egter nie sommer perd nie, sy is allergies vir hulle hare, maar sy sal in hulle kamp rondbeweeg dan sal party na haar toe kom en ander sal weg beweeg van haar af, want hulle weet sy wil nie regtig met hulle "interact" nie. Sy wil ook nie hê mense moet in haar persoonlike spasie inbeweeg nie, sy sal al nou nie skop soos die ponie, maar haar liggaamstaal sal duidelik vir jou wys jy betree my spasie.

Wat is jou persepsie van hoe jou kommunikasie met jou perde vertaal na die kommunikasie met jou familieledede?

Dieselfde as met perde, moet mens met jou mense ook leer om weg te beweeg wanneer iemand in slegte bui is. Ek dink as mens in 'n gesinsverband tussen jou gesin is soos wanneer mens tussen perde is perde in 'n "herd" is, kan mens sien wat in jou gesin ook gebeur. Die kommunikasie en

Addendum F: Confidentiality Agreement for Transcriber



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING

entered into between: L Botha and AM Scholtz

I, the undersigned

Prof / Dr / Mr / Ms L. Botha

Identity Number: 751128 0117 087

Address: Klerksdorp North West

hereby undertake in favor of the **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**, a public higher education institution established in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997

Address: Office of the Institutional Registrar, Building C1, 53 Borchard Street, Potchefstroom, 2520 (hereinafter the "NWU")

1 Interpretation and definitions

1.1 In this undertaking, unless inconsistent with, or otherwise indicated by the context:

1.1.1 "Confidential Information" shall include all information that is confidential in its nature or marked as confidential and shall include any existing and new information obtained by me after the Commencement Date, including but not be limited in its interpretation to, research data, information concerning research participants, all secret knowledge, technical information and specifications, manufacturing techniques, designs, diagrams, instruction manuals, blueprints, electronic artwork, samples, devices, demonstrations, formulae, know-how, intellectual property, information concerning materials, marketing and business information generally, financial information that may include remuneration detail, pay slips, information relating to human capital and employment contract, employment conditions, ledgers, income and expenditures and other materials of whatever description in which the NWU has an interest in being kept confidential, and

1.1.2 "Commencement Date" means the date of signature of this undertaking by myself.

1.2 The headings of clauses are intended for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of this undertaking.

2 Preamble

2.1 In performing certain duties requested by the NWU, I will have access to certain Confidential Information provided by the NWU in order to perform the said duties and I agree that it must be kept confidential.

2.2 The NWU has agreed to disclose certain of this Confidential Information and other information to me subject to me agreeing to the terms of confidentiality set out herein.

3 Title to the Confidential Information

I hereby acknowledge that all right, title and interest in and to the Confidential Information vests in the NWU and that I will have no claim of any nature in and to the Confidential Information.

4 Period of confidentiality

The provisions of this undertaking shall begin on the Commencement Date and remain in force indefinitely.

5 Non-disclosure and undertakings

I undertake:

5.1 to maintain the confidentiality of any Confidential Information to which I shall be allowed access by the NWU, whether before or after the Commencement Date of this undertaking. I will not divulge or permit to be divulged to any person any aspect of such Confidential Information otherwise than may be allowed in terms of this undertaking;

5.2 to take all such steps as may be necessary to prevent the Confidential Information falling into the hands of an unauthorised third party;

5.3 not to make use of any of the Confidential Information in the development, manufacture, marketing and/or sale of any goods;

5.4 not to use any research data for publication purposes;

5.5 not to use or disclose or attempt to use or disclose the Confidential Information for any purpose other than performing research purposes only and includes questionnaires, interviews with participants, data gathering, data analysis and personal information of participants/research subjects;

5.6 not to use or attempt to use the Confidential Information in any manner which will cause or be likely to cause injury or loss to a research participant or the NWU; and

5.7 that all documentation furnished to me by the NWU pursuant to this undertaking will remain the property of the NWU and upon the request of the NWU will be returned to the NWU. I shall not make copies of any such documentation without the prior written consent of the NWU.

6 Exception

The above undertakings by myself shall not apply to Confidential Information which I am compelled to disclose in terms of a court order.

7 Jurisdiction

This undertaking shall be governed by South African law be subject to the jurisdiction of South African courts in respect of any dispute flowing from this undertaking.

8 Whole agreement

8.1 This document constitutes the whole of this undertaking to the exclusion of all else.

8.2 No amendment, alteration, addition, variation or consensual cancellation of this undertaking will be valid unless in writing and signed by me and the NWU.

Dated at Potchefstroom this 20th March 2016

Witnesses:

1 [Signature]

2 [Signature]

(Signatures of witnesses)

[Signature]

(Signature)