

Ubuntu as a mediator in coping with multimorbidity treatment burden in a disadvantaged rural and urban setting in South Africa

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BACKGROUND

- Multi-morbidity is the occurrence of two or more chronic conditions
- People living with multi-morbidities in economically precarious circumstances in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) experience a high workload trying to meet self-management demands
- However, in countries such as South Africa, the availability of social networks and support structures may improve patient capacity
- These social networks are governed by cultural patterns linked to the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which promotes solidarity through humanness and human dignity

OBJECTIVES

- To explore the mediating role that Ubuntu plays in people's ability to self-manage HIV/NCD's multi-morbidities in underprivileged settings in urban and rural South Africa

METHODOLOGY

21 Female and 9 Male

Interviews

HIV/NCD

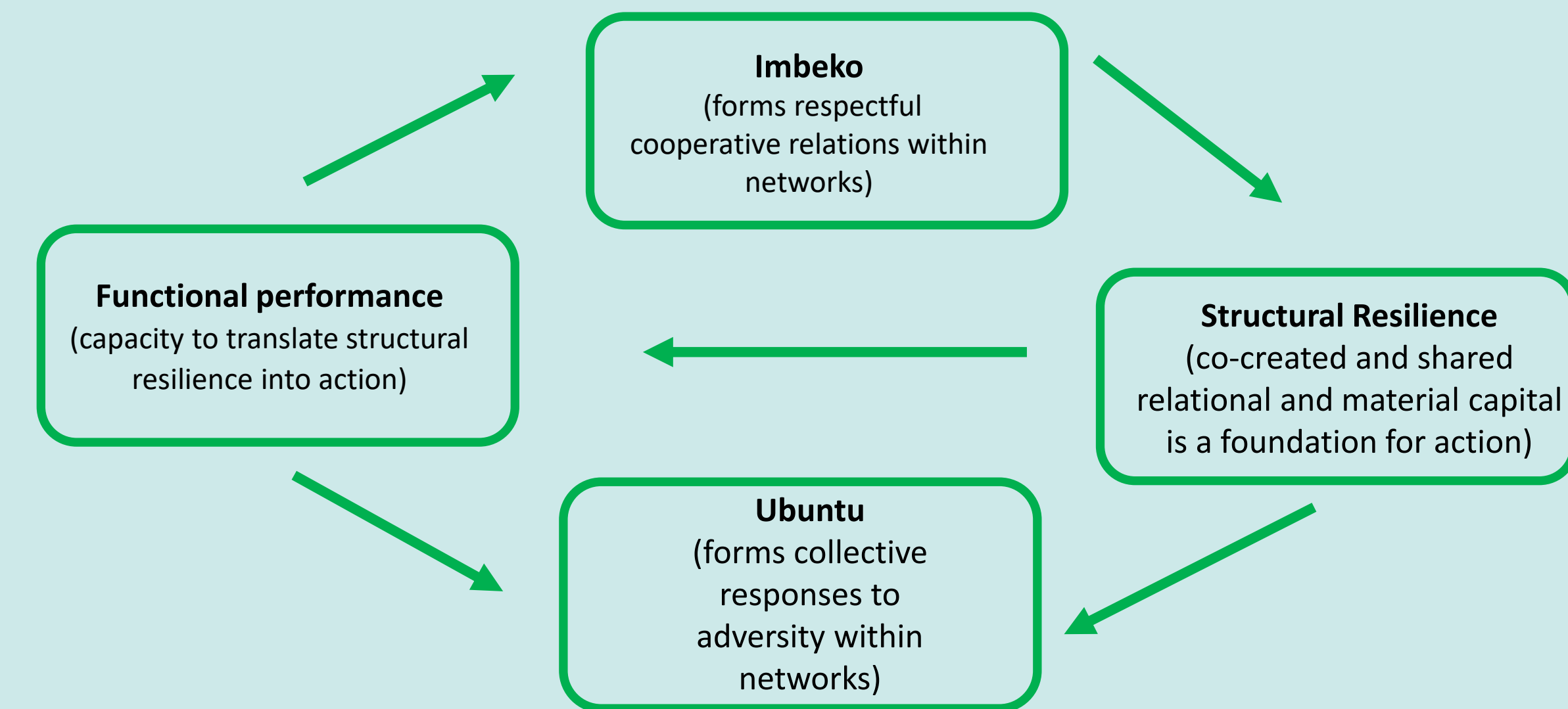
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Bulungula, EC, SA
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RESULTS

- Despite facing economic hardship, people with multi-morbidities in South Africa were able to cope with their workload
- They actively used and mobilized family relations and external networks that supported them financially, practically, and emotionally
- Overall, urban participants had smaller support networks and experienced more loneliness compared rural participants
- Using their social networks allowed participants to better self-manage their chronic conditions
- Embracing Ubuntu and its core values, including togetherness, solidarity, and receiving Imbeko (respect) from health workers, enabled participants to share their treatment workload and increase self-management capacity



CONCLUSIONS

- Ubuntu is an important mediator for people living with multi-morbidities in South Africa
- Ubuntu allows them to navigate their treatment workload through increasing their social capital and structural resilience, which is key to self-management capacity
- Incorporating Ubuntu and linked African support theories in current treatment burden models will enable better understandings of patients' collective support structures
- It can inform the development of context-specific social health interventions that fit the needs of people living with chronic conditions in African settings.

ADVOCACY MESSAGE

- We advocate for policy makers to actively include African support networks in redesigning integrated health services in South Africa and offer solutions to improve the lives of people living in with multimorbidity in low-income settings**

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