

Reconciling the needs and wants of respondents in two rural Ethiopian communities

Tom Lavers

Received: 23 January 2007 / Accepted: 13 March 2007 / Published online: 3 April 2007
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2007

Abstract This paper uses the Quality of Life research carried out by the Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) Research Group to examine the importance respondents have attributed to a variety of goals in two rural communities in Ethiopia. The results are analysed at the community, household and individual levels to expose the contestation involved in expressions of goal preference at different levels, and the power relations that underlie and contribute to the formation of these goal preferences. In this way, taking communities or households as homogenous units is shown to be inaccurate and potentially misleading. Analysis of individual case studies also provides insight into the complex decision-making process where people with access to limited resources are forced to give certain goals priority depending on current exigencies. The fact that the ordering of priorities can change with time highlights the dangers of any one-off measure being considered as a time-independent picture of individuals' goals. By relating the results of the research to Doyal and Gough's Theory of Human Need, the paper considers to what extent 'universal' human needs correspond to the most important goals as expressed by respondents in the Ethiopian research. Whilst considerable support is found for needs such as health, food and shelter, several respondents in the two research sites consider needs such as education to be unnecessary. This incongruence between the priority of people's goals and theories of need leads us to question what the aim of development should be: to assist beneficiaries in the pursuit of what they want, or provide the things that they are thought to need.

Keywords Quality of life · Needs · Universal · Local · Ethiopia

T. Lavers (✉)
WeD Research Group, University of Bath, Bath, BA2 7AY, UK
e-mail: t.p.lavers@bath.ac.uk

1 Introduction

A remote community in the Peruvian Andes received financial compensation from the regional government for the negative effects of mining activities that had begun nearby. At a meeting to decide how the community should use the money, the mayor, who had travelled to other areas of the country and recognised the benefits of ‘modernisation’, suggested that the money would be best spent providing clean drinking water or building a school or paving the road from the nearest town. In contrast, the community members clearly expressed their preference for the purchase of musical instruments for a band to play at community *fiestas*. The mayor, incredulous, told the people that they were ignorant *campesinos*, unaware of the possibilities that improved infrastructure could bring and that they should follow his recommendations, as he knew more about the world than they. The mayor has since been thrown out of the area, and the community now has a band to play at their fiestas. (Story recounted whilst carrying out research in Peru 2004).

This example, whilst taken from a very different cultural setting to that of rural Ethiopia, demonstrates two points that this paper attempts to illustrate. Firstly, people’s preferences differ, underlining that there is no one vision of modernity or advancement. What, in the view of outsiders, is unquestionably of high priority, may not figure in the goals of residents of a particular community, and indeed may be subservient to what may seem trivial or irrelevant to an outsider. Secondly, that in circumstances in which people make decisions contrary to their best interests—in the above example, if the year after the decision was taken to purchase musical instruments rather than providing clean drinking water for the community, one of the children died as a result of an infection contracted from impure drinking water, it could reasonably be argued that, despite the importance of *fiesta* in Andean cultural life, the community had made the wrong decision—to what extent outsiders have the right to intervene in their ‘best interests’. Thus, the argument of this paper is not whether the community in this example was right or wrong in the decision that it made, but that the preferences of individuals affected by development interventions are nonetheless essential considerations.

This paper uses data from research carried out by the Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD),¹ in particular a survey which asked respondents about the goals that they require to be happy (the ‘goals survey’).² The results of this survey are also supported by other data gathered as part of the WeD research, including: the QoL phase 1; the Resources And Needs Questionnaire (RANQ); and qualitative research on lives, and household and individual diaries. This analysis is then compared with ‘universal’ human needs to examine the extent of overlap between individuals’ goals and their needs.

The paper begins with a methodology detailing the reference framework of the study, including an overview of Doyal and Gough’s *A Theory of Human Need* (THN 1991), its selection as a universal theory and the suitability of use of the goals survey data and potential errors of the study. Section three then considers the community level, using average responses in research sites to approximate community ‘norms’ and considering outliers that differ from these ‘norms’. The fourth section takes one household from each of the two research sites that are the focus of this paper as case studies, contrasting the importance of goals expressed by individuals in these households with the ‘norms’

¹ The conceptual and methodological findings of this research appear in Gough & McGregor (2007).

² This was administered alongside other tools which are described in the WeD Quality of Life toolbox: <http://www.welldev.org.uk/research/methods-toobox/qol-toolbox.htm>

expressed by the community as a whole. The fifth section then compares the views expressed by the communities, households and individuals with the needs identified by THN. In the final section, the paper draws together some of the main themes revealed by this analysis.

2 Methodology

2.1 The goals survey

This paper primarily draws on data from the goals survey. This was tested across the four WeD research countries.³ In Ethiopia, approximately sixty respondents in each of the six DEEP⁴ research sites completed the goals survey. However, for the purposes of this paper, the two sites with which the author was most familiar were selected for detailed analysis. These sites are the two most remote sites covered by the WeD research and offer a contrast in terms of the religion and ethnicity of the populations. The two sites are:

- Dessu, three small villages in North Shewa, Amhara. The population is comprised of approximately sixty percent Argoba Muslims and forty percent Amhara Christians. The local economy is heavily reliant on agriculture with the expansion of irrigated cash-crop farming in recent years supplementing precarious rain-fed agriculture in a drought prone area. Many people also weave in order to supplement their household's income;
- Kedada, several small villages in Arssi, Oromia. The population is approximately 99% Oromo Muslim, with a few Amhara Christian migrant workers. The economy is very dependent on agriculture with irrigated cash-crop farming of increasing importance. There is some employment of daily farm labourers on irrigated land, and many supplement household incomes with firewood collection. (Bevan et al. 2006)

Given the enormous diversity in Ethiopia, with more than 85 ethnic groups present, clearly neither the results drawn from the two sites studied here, nor the six sites covered by the WeD-Ethiopia research can be considered to be representative at the national level. However, analysis conducted on the WeD data from the other four research sites gives no indication that the two sites selected here are particularly exceptional.

The questionnaires were translated into Amharic and Oromiffa and respondents completed the questionnaire in the relevant language; Amharic in Dessu and Oromiffa in Kedada. This paper uses analysis of the results of the goals survey, in which respondents were asked to say to what extent they felt that approximately 45 goals were needed for them to be happy (Bethlehem 2005).⁵

2.2 A theory of human need

This paper draws on the idea of a set of universal basic needs, and for this purpose it considers Doyal and Gough's *A Theory of Human Need*. THN is developed using a hierarchical approach, 'moving from universal goals, through basic needs to intermediate needs' (Gough 2003: 8). *Needs* are defined as a particular category of universal goals

³ Bangladesh, Peru and Thailand in addition to Ethiopia.

⁴ in-Depth Exploration of Ethiopian Poverty.

⁵ Respondents were asked: 'What things do you need to be happy?' and their responses were scored on the following scale: 0: Not necessary, 1: Necessary, 2: Very necessary'

relevant to all human beings in order to avoid harm,⁶ distinct from *wants* which are derived ‘from an individual’s particular preferences and cultural environment’ (*ibid*: 8). As such they argue for two basic needs, those of health and personal autonomy. Doyal and Gough define autonomy as ‘*cognitive and emotional capacity*’, ‘the level of *cultural understanding* a person has about herself, her culture and what is expected of her as an individual within it’, and ‘*critical autonomy*... the capacity to compare cultural rules, to reflect upon the rules of one’s own culture, to work with others to change them and, *in extremis*, to move to another culture’ (*ibid*: 10, emphasis in original). THN goes on to state that there are need satisfiers, which, although culturally variable in the way in which they may be satisfied, have ‘universal satisfier characteristics’ (*ibid*: 10). For example, although there are many different types of cuisine in different cultures that can satisfy the requirement for nutritional daily food, there is a universal satisfier characteristic of a minimum number of calories a day for a specified group of people required to avoid detrimental effects to an individual’s health. These universal satisfier characteristics can be used to define a list of intermediate needs, which must be fulfilled in order that the two basic needs, health and autonomy, may be satisfied. THN groups these intermediate needs into eleven categories: nutritional food and clean water; protective housing; a non-hazardous work environment; a non-hazardous physical environment; safe birth control and child-bearing; appropriate health care; a secure childhood; significant primary relationships; physical security; economic security; and appropriate education.

2.3 THN as a universal theory

THN is just one of the many universal theories put forward in the social sciences,⁷ and several of these theories were also considered for inclusion in this paper. For example, from the field of psychology, Ryan and Deci’s *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT; see Ryan and Sapp 2007) argues that there are three basic psychological needs, of which the restriction of any one will result in psychological harm. The three needs are: competence, ‘being able to effectively act on, and have an impact within, one’s environment’; relatedness, ‘feelings of belonging and connection’; and autonomy, ‘the experience of volition, ownership and initiative in one’s own behaviour’ (Brown and Ryan 2003). Whilst these arguments are convincingly made, it was found that SDT did not provide sufficient comparability with the goals survey to permit inclusion in this paper. SDT focuses on purely psychological needs, whereas the goals survey focuses on many physical resources, as well as social and communal ones, some of which are more closely related to the psychological needs identified in SDT.

Other notable examples include the *capability approach* pioneered by Sen and Nussbaum (see for example, Sen 1999, 2002; Nussbaum 2000), based on what *capabilities* and *functionings* people have—to do and be the things that they have reason to value. Sen has repeatedly declined to put forward a list or hierarchy of human capabilities or functionings, and, as such, his ‘thin’ version of human capabilities provides little guidance on the components of wellbeing with which to conduct analysis for the purposes of this paper. Nussbaum’s ‘thick’ notion of capabilities does just this by identifying a list of ten central human functional capabilities, which she claims to be relevant for all human beings

⁶ Gough defines harm as ‘fundamental disablement in the pursuit of one’s vision of the good’ or ‘an impediment to successful social *participation*’ (2003: 8, emphasis in original).

⁷ For example Alkire (2002) compares several lists of universal needs and goals.

(Nussbaum 2003). However, there is little evidence of a cross-cultural consensus regarding this list (Gough 2003, 2004), and, indeed, potential for achieving it (Clark 2002).

Thus, it has been argued that THN can mediate between the ‘thin’ and ‘thick’ approaches to capabilities of Sen and Nussbaum, respectively, combining the merits of a wide range of human capabilities and a broad vision of human flourishing, evident in Nussbaum’s work, and the greater potential for underpinning international and inter-cultural consensus of Sen’s (Gough 2003).

2.4 Comparing THN with local expressions of goals

This paper aims to compare the needs identified in THN with the importance attached to goals by respondents. In this context, it is therefore necessary to assess the suitability of the data produced for this purpose.

The goals survey explicitly asks respondents about the things they require to be happy. However, without a process of cognitive debriefing following the goals survey, we cannot be sure how the questions were interpreted by respondents: whether a goal is important just for happiness, as is the literal meaning; or more generally interpreted as the things that the respondent feels are necessary to their lives, not just for their happiness. Assuming the first of these interpretations, the goals survey would focus on the attainment of *hedonic* wellbeing—the view that wellbeing is derived from pleasure maximization—rather than *eudaimonic* wellbeing—which involves the fulfilment of one’s *daimon* or true nature; ‘doing what is worth doing’ not just what is pleasure inducing (Ryan and Deci 2001).⁸

This is an interesting point that warrants further investigation. However, the distinction between happiness and a broader interpretation of eudaimonic wellbeing is a subtle one that is not necessarily immediately evident outside debates in the social sciences. Indeed, it would seem unlikely that the respondents would have made such distinctions during the brief period allowed for administration of the goals survey. As such, for the purposes of this paper, the author has made the assumption that the questions were interpreted more generally; that respondents answered the questions according to the goals that they felt were important to their lives, not just to the achievement of narrowly defined happiness.

In this paper, THN is used to mediate between Sen’s thin and Nussbaum’s thick versions of capability theory. It is proposed therefore that, taking into account Sen’s focus on capabilities as doing and being the things that people have reason to value, the goals survey data, reflecting the goals that respondents feel are important to their lives, can reasonably be used as the basis of comparison with THN in the context of capabilities.

Taking the first six intermediate needs to broadly relate to physical health and the other five to relate to autonomy (Gough 2003), we can then map the goals covered in the goals survey to the needs identified in THN. This shows that health is included in the goals survey and is also identified as a basic need. In addition, daily food in the goals survey relates closely to the intermediate need of nutritional food, though the goals survey does not consider the requirement of clean water. A place to live also closely fits the concept of protective housing in THN. The other intermediate needs relating to health do not however relate sufficiently to any of the goals covered by the goals survey to merit further

⁸ Whilst these approaches to studying wellbeing undoubtedly overlap, they also differ. As such, happiness is a suitable focus of investigation from a hedonic perspective, however, from a eudaimonic point of view, to consider what a person needs to be happy, will reveal an incomplete set of goals required to achieve wellbeing.

comparison: access to wage and family labour partially relate to a non-hazardous work environment, yet in economies dominated by subsistence agriculture, they are only a small part of the picture; equally government and NGO services partially relate to appropriate healthcare, yet these services will also include agricultural interventions and education, and as such the results tell us little about how respondents value healthcare itself; none of the goals sufficiently relate to the intermediate needs of a non-hazardous physical environment or safe birth control and child-bearing.

The goals survey does not directly consider the concept of autonomy, as defined by THN, however some goals do closely relate to several of the intermediate needs that underpin autonomy. Several of the goals such as good family relationships, good relationships with people, friends and marriage match the intermediate need of significant primary relationships. The need of economic security is also covered by economic independence, and to some extent wealth. Finally education, and to a lesser extent education for children and knowledge, relate to appropriate education in THN. As with health, there are several intermediate needs supporting autonomy that do not adequately match goals in the survey. In particular, the survey tells us little about the importance respondents give to a secure childhood or physical security.

Therefore, although the nature of the goals survey does not allow validation or contradiction of THN, it does provide some evidence with which to examine to what extent the goals of respondents and their 'needs' overlap.

2.5 Potential errors of the study

The sample size of sixty respondents in each site was small, and as such the quantitative analysis that is possible and the conclusions that can be drawn from it are limited. However, this paper uses the results of the survey predominantly in an illustrative way. Indeed, one of the main purposes of this paper is to point out the heterogeneity of opinions and the limitations of generalising about 'community' values without considering those that deviate from these norms. This argument would be equally relevant if a larger sample had been used.

In addition, it is important to note that the two case studies chosen for qualitative analysis should not be taken to be representative of their communities. Indeed, both households are among the wealthiest in the respective research sites. Nevertheless, the cases studies serve to illustrate some important themes, as well as the different factors which have been taken into account when respondents made assessments of the importance of different goals.

Whilst care has been taken in piloting the goals survey to ensure that the questions are clear and understandable, it is possible that the questions may be interpreted in a variety of ways. One particular example of this is the goal of education. In Ethiopia education can take a number of forms in addition to formal academic education. Religious education, both for Muslims and Christians is common in many parts of the country, and additionally, it is possible that respondents could interpret education as including informal means such as learning by accompanying parents on daily duties on the farm or in the household.

The format of the questionnaire itself requires respondents to consider their goals and the importance of these aspirations. For many respondents this may be the first time that they have been explicitly asked such questions and perhaps the first time that they have fully considered them, and responses should be viewed in this light.

Despite these qualifications, which require that the results of the goals survey be considered cautiously, the data, when examined alongside other parts of the WeD research,

both qualitative and quantitative, does provide valuable insights into the importance that respondents in the two communities attach to a range of material, cultural, social, human, collective and spiritual goals.

3 Goals: community 'norms' and 'deviators'

This section discusses the results of the goal survey using average responses to approximate community 'norms', and examining the variations from these norms.

3.1 Basic needs goals

Even a cursory glance at the results of the goals survey reveals that although basic needs items such as daily food and shelter are very important to residents of both sites, these are not the exclusive focus of the communities' goals. In Kedada such things as being of good character (1.9, community average on a scale of 0: not necessary to 2: very necessary), peace of mind (1.8), and clean and beautiful surroundings (1.8) are rated as marginally more important than daily food (1.7) and as important as a place to live (1.8), and in Dessu, communication with God (1.7) and being of good character (1.7) are rated only slightly less important than daily food (1.8) and more important than a place to live (1.5). Whilst these differences are not large enough to confirm that, for example, peace of mind is considered to be more important than daily food, the results do show that daily food is not the sole priority of the community members. Indeed, in Kedada, daily food is only the twenty-fourth most important goal and a place to live is twenty-first, and in Dessu daily food is the sixth most important goal and a place to live twelfth. As such it is hard to justify any claims that asking people in Ethiopia what goals they have reason to value does not relate to the local reality as their sole focus is on day-to-day survival. Clearly there are significant problems with food insecurity in many areas of the country, and Kedada and Dessu are two examples of food insecure areas (Bevan et al. 2006), yet food insecurity is not equally experienced by all members of a community, as some are better equipped to cope with such shocks, and is seasonality and annuality dependent. At the very least, periods of relative food availability do afford people opportunities to formulate goals beyond the requirement of day-to-day survival.

Clearly this is not to deny that such basic needs are very important, as in both sites the scores received are extremely high. In addition, there is only one person in Dessu and none in Kedada that thinks that daily food is 'not necessary'. The survey also shows that health is the most prized goal, with men and women in Kedada and men in Dessu all rating it as the most important. Only women in Dessu do not consider it to be the most important, although they still rate it very highly. Indeed, there is very little contestation regarding health, with only one person in Dessu believing it to be 'not necessary', and 58 of 62 respondents in Dessu and 60 of 61 respondents in Kedada stating that it is 'very necessary'.

3.2 Education

People in Kedada view education both for themselves (1.5) and their children (1.9) to be far more important than residents of Dessu do (1.1 and 1.1 respectively). Although a score of 1 or more represents 'necessary' on the scale used in this survey, there is considerable

contestation regarding the importance of education in both Dessu, where 14 respondents believe that it is ‘not necessary’, and in Kedada where eight do. In Kedada only one person replied that education for children was ‘not necessary’, however there is considerable contestation in Dessu with ten people stating that it is ‘not necessary’. The greater importance of education in Kedada is perhaps a sign that the community is more outward looking in their goals, with education, especially for the younger generation, prized for the opportunities that it opens up beyond subsistence agriculture. Further evidence of the prioritisation of goals related to links outside the community in Kedada is given by the fact that a bridge (1.9), road (1.7) and public transport (1.7) are given very high priority. This is unsurprising given the inaccessibility of the site despite its relative proximity to nearby towns such as Dera and Nazret, due to the lack of a bridge over the Awash River. In contrast, residents of Dessu rate the importance of all these goals much lower—bridge (0.9), road (0.9) and public transport (1.0). This is despite the equally, if not more, remote location of the community, poor quality of roads to the nearest town, lack of any public transportation and the potential usefulness of a bridge especially during the wet season. For example, many children are prevented from regularly attending school at this time of year, as they are unable to cross the river (Bevan et al. 2006).

Interestingly in both sites, men (Dessu 1.2, Kedada 1.9) believe education for their children to be slightly more important than women do (Dessu 1.0, Kedada 1.8). Additionally, women in Kedada (1.2) place substantially less emphasis on their own education than men (1.8). These two results suggest internalisation of the society’s perception of women as housewives and mothers (Nussbaum 2000), for whom formal education is of little or no use. With women traditionally given far less access to education than men (Tassew et al. 2005), in many cases women may also fail to recognise the potential opportunities that education opens up, as they themselves have never had access to them.

In Dessu, whilst 14 people believe that education is not important, only one person denied the importance of knowledge.⁹ This suggests that other forms of acquiring knowledge are perceived to be very important and in some cases more important than knowledge gained through formal education. A particular example of this would be religious education, with Quranic and to a lesser extent church education considered by some to be far more important than attending formal education. This also underlines the importance of ensuring that education provided in schools is appropriate, and meets the needs of the community the school serves and the opportunities open to students completing education. As such, with parents unconvinced of the relevance and importance of education compared to other methods of acquiring knowledge, such as learning skills from the parents themselves, enrolment in education is unlikely to increase.

3.3 Material versus non-material goals

In both sites, material goals are prioritised in comparison with social, collective and cultural goals. In Dessu, seven of the top 10 are material, the only non-material goals being health, communication with God and being of good character. In Kedada, the top goals are not so dominated by the material; health, being of good character and communication with God are also very important here, and collective goals, such as improvement of the community and peace in the community feature highly as well. In both sites, social

⁹ The research officers working in Kedada, did not suggest knowledge as an important goal in the site and, as such, it was not included in the Kedada questionnaire (Bethlehem 2005).

relations are regarded to be of secondary importance to agricultural inputs such as land, irrigation and livestock. This is especially so in Dessu.

There are many possible explanations for this result. Notably, many of the respondents are seriously deficient in many of the material resources covered by the goals survey, which results in significant deprivation for respondents and their families. In comparison, for many respondents social relations with family and neighbours are relatively strong. This may therefore be an example of social relationships being taken for granted whereas material goals, which have not been achieved, are prioritised. Another partial explanation could lie in the nature of social relations themselves. For example, it is perhaps not surprising that marriages which can involve a combination of abduction, rape, forced migration or little or no choice of partner (Bevan et al. 2006; Wolde 2002; and WeD Adult Lives research) are considered 'not necessary' by many respondents. Nonetheless, it is clear that while the results suggest that social relations are relatively unimportant compared with material goals, this must be interpreted cautiously. As there are a number of possible explanations, simplistic generalisations have the potential to mask contestation within the community and further investigation is required to understand the underlying causes.

Additionally, it is notable that male respondents consistently place greater emphasis on social relationships than women do. This is true for non-familial relationships in both sites: friends (Dessu: men 1.4, women 1.2; and Kedada: men 1.2, women 1.0) and good relationships with people (Dessu: men 1.4, women 0.9; and Kedada: men 1.8, women 1.7); and good family relationships in Dessu (men 1.7, women 1.3). One partial explanation for this could be the large proportion of women migrating for marriage, with 31% of women in Dessu and just 12% in Kedada having been born in the community in which they now live (source: RANQ 2004). Gebre-Egzbiabher and White (2004) propose that this causes women to be disconnected from their social networks and that cultural barriers make them less likely to integrate into their new community. However, one might expect familial ties to be far more affected than friendships and relations with other members of the community, which, with time, can be rebuilt in a new location. As such, another possible explanation may be the nature of social relationships which men and women have, with women tending to be involved in relatively small domestic circles, whereas men go out more and have a greater involvement in community activities.

In both sites, men place more emphasis than women on marriage (Dessu: men 1.4, women 1.1; Kedada: men 1.4, women 1.3) and having children (Dessu: men 1.4, women 1.0; Kedada: men 1.5, women 0.7). Indeed, ten people in Dessu (two male and eight female) and eight in Kedada (five male and three female) stated that marriage was 'not necessary'. This is in contrast to the social unacceptability of women remaining unmarried, and despite the key part that having children plays in the identity of women in rural communities and the fact that infertility is always perceived to be the fault of the woman, leading to stigmatisation. Surprisingly, given the large family sizes in Kedada, having children is given relatively low importance, rated as the second least important goal overall. These results would suggest that despite strong cultural norms, which encourage marriage and having children, there is considerable contestation with respect to whether these goals are important for personal life satisfaction.

3.4 The importance of religion

It has been claimed elsewhere that religion is a significant factor influencing norms and behaviour in Ethiopia (e.g., Ellis and Tassew 2005). The two sites considered here offer a

contrast between one religiously homogenous site, Kedada,¹⁰ and a mixed site, Dessu.¹¹ As such, the goals survey data presents an opportunity to investigate the effect religion has on the construction of individuals' goal preferences. The influence of religion may be evident in many ways. For example, some goals may have reduced significance for followers of a religion, or a subgroup of followers, for example based on gender, because these do not fit with the principles of the religion. In some societies, reduced importance of education for women might be an example of this. In contrast, some goals, for example marriage, may be assigned added importance as a result of the emphasis the religion places on them.

Analysis of the average responses of respondents from the religious groupings does not show many differences in terms of goal preferences. The few exceptions are that in Dessu, Orthodox Christian respondents (1.3) placed a slightly greater emphasis on education than Muslims respondents did (1.0). Also, Christian respondents reported the greater importance of good family relationships (Christians 1.6; Muslims 1.3). However, this difference is not consistent for other social goals such as friends or good relationships with people. Calculation of the standard deviation of responses in Dessu does not show any greater consensus within religious groups as to the importance of goals. Equally, comparing the standard deviation of responses in Kedada and Dessu does not show any greater consensus of opinion in Kedada, where respondents are from one religion, than Dessu, where both Christians and Muslims are represented.¹²

Whilst the results must be viewed cautiously due to the small sizes of the samples and the particularities of the communities, the goals survey indicates that factors such as gender and geographical location are more important in the construction of goals than religion. Whilst religion may be highly significant in terms of how goals are satisfied, for example marriage customs and social relations (Bevan et al. 2006; Ellis and Tassew 2005), it does not appear to be an overriding factor that affects the importance of goals to which individuals aspire.

4 Individuals' goals and intra-household comparisons

4.1 Case study 1—Dessu

This Amhara, Orthodox Christian household comprises eight people; a married couple and their six children. Their eldest child, a daughter, has married out but lives in the village. The goals survey was completed by four household members; the household head, GM, his wife, BM, and the two eldest children still living at home; AG, male, 14 years old and YG, male, 12 years old.

Education is a key theme for each of the four respondents. GM is literate as a result of a literacy programme, and this ability was vital in gaining employment in the seedling station in Dessu. Through this employment, in addition to his wages, he was able to learn about irrigated farming techniques and with access to irrigated land has greatly prospered

¹⁰ In Kedada 53 of the respondents stated that they were Muslim and eight did not state any religion or did not answer.

¹¹ In Dessu there were 28 Orthodox Christian respondents and 29 Muslim ones. Five respondents did not state any religion or did not answer.

¹² The only exception to this is for the goal of a bridge (1.9 in Kedada with a standard deviation of 0.3 compared with 0.9 in Dessu with a standard deviation of 0.6). However, this level of consensus is hardly surprising given the overwhelming need for a bridge in Kedada, as previously discussed.

in recent years, making his one of the richest households in the community. Education of parents has been shown to be a strong predictor of children's education in Ethiopia (Cockburn 2001; Tietjen 1998) and given his experience, GM unsurprisingly rates education and education for children as 'necessary', and stated in the QoL phase 1 that, 'I aspire... to educate all my children'. Yet this wish for his children has come into conflict with farm labour requirements. Several years ago, with young children to support, the household faced a severe labour shortage and as a result neither the eldest son, AG, nor the eldest daughter (now married and no longer in the household) received any education but were required to work to help support the household. GM, indeed, has expressed concerns regarding his son and the opportunities open to him as a result of his illiteracy. GM's choice is interesting in that it differs from the findings of other research in Ethiopia which concludes that there is bias towards the first-born child in a household, with subsequent children less likely to go to school (Cockburn 2001; Tassew et al. 2005).

YG and his younger brother and sister (neither of whom are included in the goals survey) are however receiving education as the labour shortage has eased, with AG farming full time and YG and his siblings able to assist in farming and household activities as secondary activities to education (*Source*: RANQ 2004). This, however, is likely to be a particular source of dissatisfaction for AG, as he places great importance on education, rating it as 'very necessary', yet can see his siblings attending education when he was unable to do so.

In contrast to the rest of her household, BM feels that 'education' is 'not necessary' perhaps reflecting the perception of the changing importance of education between generations, as she does feel that education is 'necessary' for her children, and indeed the household is sending both sons and daughters to school and the parents intend to send the youngest children to school once old enough. BM's main occupations are housework, and fetching firewood and water (*Source*: RANQ 2004), activities that require no formal education. In contrast, it appears that there are now increasing opportunities in and outside Dessu for the younger generations if they are educated and this may be an explanation for the relative importance given to her own education and that of her children.

BM views having children as 'necessary' and her husband views it to be 'very necessary', yet she expressed concern in the QoL phase 1 regarding the number of children that they have and the effect that this has on their standard of living and on her health, with the demands of looking after them all. 'The large number of my children is worrying me how I could send all of them to school and how I could bring up them well, not to starve them... I am now taking contraceptive not to give birth.' (*Source*: QoL Phase 1).

4.2 Case study 2—Kedada

This Muslim family comprises three households living within one compound. The head of the family, GH, has three wives, living in the three houses and he splits his time between them. GH has had a total of eighteen children, though eight of those have since died, the first wife bore fourteen children, the second five and the third one. Several children have married and have now set up their own households nearby. The unmarried children continue to live with their mothers. The goals survey was completed by GH, his second wife, ZK, their son YG and GH's third wife, AD.

GH is notable in considering that both marriage and having children are 'not necessary', despite the great cultural importance that is placed on the family and children in Kedada, and despite the fact the he himself has three wives and has had a total of 18 children. In this

regard, GH represents the ideal for a man in his sixties in Kedada—he rotates his time with his three wives, living with his children and grandchildren—yet he does not believe that these goals are important. Equally, he also states that friends are ‘not necessary’, which, as discussed, represents the views of a substantial number of respondents in Kedada.

Interestingly, neither ZK, who has five children, nor AD, who has one, believe that having children is ‘necessary’. Viewed in the context of the community norms examined in the previous section, this is not entirely surprising as the average response for women in Kedada is only 0.7. However, as previously discussed, this is unexpected given the great importance of children in the community expectations of women, and the great stigmatisation attached to infertile women.¹³ Given that both of these women do themselves have children, their responses, and those of other women in the community, may indicate a situation in which there is only a problem if the person is unable to have children and that women who do have several children do not always recognise their necessity.

There are a range of different opinions in the household regarding education: GH believes that for both himself and his children, education is ‘very necessary’ despite having no formal education himself and being unable to write; ZK, as with BM in the previous case study, believes that education for herself is unimportant, yet recognises that education for her children is ‘very necessary’; in contrast AD, GH’s third wife believes education for herself to be ‘necessary’ and that of her children ‘very necessary’; equally, YG also views education as ‘very necessary’. The explanation for BM’s professed lack of need for education in the previous case study could equally apply to ZK, whose main roles involve housework. However, it is interesting that GH, who has never attended formal education but has been to Quranic school, does feel that education is very important. This may be a reflection of his religious beliefs—he also stated that communication with God is ‘very necessary’—in that his religious education has been very important in his religious life, or perhaps an indication that he regrets not having had formal education himself and that the kind of opportunities that GM in Dessu has taken advantage of were not open to GH due to his illiteracy.

5 Contrasting the universal with the local

This section compares the basic and intermediate needs identified by THN with the preceding analysis of the goals survey.

5.1 Health

The results of the goals survey, at both the community level and individual case studies, show that health is viewed as extremely important. Both men and women in Dessu and Kedada feel that it is ‘very necessary’, with all but women in Dessu rating health as the most important goal, and they still rate it very highly. Indeed, there are very few deviators from this norm, with no one in Kedada and just one person in Dessu rating health as ‘not necessary’.

Regarding the intermediate needs that relate to health, the goal of daily food, equivalent to the intermediate need of nutritional food, is largely undisputed in its importance in both communities. Equally the importance attributed to a place to live in both Dessu and Kedada overlaps with the intermediate need of protective housing.

¹³ As previously discussed, infertility is considered to be an exclusively female problem.

As such, analysis of the goals survey shows that, of the needs identified in THN that match goals covered in the survey, there is relatively little contestation in the two communities. Health, daily food and protective housing are all considered to be ‘very necessary’ by the majority of respondents.

5.2 Autonomy

As discussed in the methodology, the concept of autonomy is not considered explicitly by the goals survey. As such, comparison must be based on those goals that relate sufficiently to autonomy-related intermediate needs in THN. Significant primary relationships relate to a number of goals such as marriage, friends, good relationships with people and good family relationships. As previously discussed, the results show that these tend to be given lower priority than many material goals and are considered to be relatively unimportant overall. The necessity of these relationships is contested, with a significant number of respondents believing that marriage, friends, and to a lesser extent good relationships with people and good family relationships are ‘not necessary’. As such, whilst significant primary relationships are included as an intermediate need in THN, based on the results of the goals survey, they cannot be claimed to be a universal goal.

The goals of wealth and economic independence broadly relate to economic security, and their necessity in both communities overlaps with THN’s classification of economic security as an intermediate need. Only one person in Kedada disputes the necessity of economic independence and no one states that wealth is unimportant, whilst the majority of respondents believe both to be ‘very necessary’.

As we have seen, education is by no means a universal goal, with many people, especially in Dessu, disputing its importance both for themselves and for their children. Interestingly, knowledge is considered to be far more important in Dessu, perhaps underlining the distinction made in THN of *appropriate* education. However, the results of the goals survey demonstrate that education, at least *formal* education as the residents of Dessu and Kedada perceive it to be, is not a universal goal. There is clearly a large proportion of respondents that believes education to be ‘necessary’ or ‘very necessary’, and an even greater proportion which believe education for children to be so, reflecting a growing relevance for formal education within the communities. However, there are undoubtedly a substantial number of exceptions, in particular in Dessu, who do not currently see the benefits of formal education.

As such, although we have no means of examining the importance of autonomy, as defined by THN, to respondents, we can see that a number of the intermediate needs that Doyal and Gough identify do not match the aspirations of the two communities examined in this paper, whilst others such as appropriate education and significant primary relationships are contested.

5.3 The goals that are not ‘needs’

There are several goals that people in Dessu and Kedada value highly which are not included in THN’s list of intermediate needs. Examples arising from the goals survey include: to be of good character (Dessu 1.7, tenth most important, Kedada 1.9, fourth most important); communication with God (Dessu 1.7, eighth most important, Kedada 1.8, tenth most important); and peace of mind (Dessu 1.7, eleventh most important, Kedada 1.8,

eleventh most important). Clearly the goals survey does not provide sufficient evidence to be able to draw conclusions that any of these goals are universal needs, as Gough asserts, '[i]f something is not universally necessary for enhanced basic need satisfaction, then it is not so classified, however widespread the commodity/activity/relationship may be' (2003: 11). Indeed, there is not even a consensus in Dessu and Kedada regarding the necessity of the three examples given here, with one person in Kedada believing that peace of mind is 'not necessary'. However, it is important to recognise that not all needs, as defined by social science theory, are universally desired. Similarly, there are also goals, widely viewed as being very important, which are not needs according to universal theories. As will be discussed in section six, if a goal to which a community aspires is shown not to be a universal need, the question remains as to whether it should necessarily be subservient to those things that are considered to be.

6 Themes arising

This section draws together the important themes that the analysis in the preceding sections has raised and discusses the implications of these results.

6.1 Contested goals—within all levels of analysis¹⁴

Just as needs at the theoretical level are contested, the results of the goals survey discussed in this paper clearly demonstrate that goals at the community and household levels are contested. Neither unit can be taken as homogenous; although there are community 'norms', there are equally people that deviate from these 'norms' in virtually every goal that the survey covered. Within households there are also significant differences between the goals of different household members. Parents often have different priorities from their children, dependent on the stage of their life and resulting requirements. Men will also often have different priorities to women, as a result of the different roles that each is expected to have according to community norms, and the different opportunities and restrictions that men and women encounter. As such, taking communities or households to be homogenous units with a single view of the good is likely to over-represent powerful groups and lead to policies that build on and reinforce existing power relations. At the household level, the views of the (usually male) household head are likely to dominate, and at the community level, the opinions of elite, male respondents of particular age groups and majority ethnic groups will be given greater emphasis to the detriment of the minorities and less powerful.

This paper has also demonstrated certain instances of internal contestation within individuals. Goals compete with one another for priority and, in certain cases and at certain times, goals which an individual regards as very necessary come into direct conflict, as has been demonstrated by this paper in case study 1, in which the father of the family values education for his children very highly, yet when faced with an extreme labour shortage within the family, he was not able to send his eldest two children to school, instead requiring them to work on the farm and in the home. Now that the labour shortage has eased, as his children have been able to spread the work between them, he has sent his younger children to school. It is, therefore, also problematic to view an individual's goals

¹⁴ I am grateful to Pip Bevan regarding this point.

as unchanging over time, and to take instances of choices made as evidence of the lack of importance attributed to goals that have not been selected. In the example of case study 1, such an assumption may have led to the erroneous conclusion that GM is at best indifferent to the benefits of education. As such, this suggests significant weaknesses in any one-off measure that does not allow for people's changing views.

6.2 Cultural norms driving choices and actions

It has been shown in this paper that respondents' answers relating to the importance of goals do not completely explain the motivating factors driving people's decision-making. Given the results discussed, it seems probable that cultural values also have a major role in the actions taken by respondents. Whilst the fulfilment of cultural norms and expectations may in many cases be a source of happiness in themselves, the analysis presented suggests that cultural norms are also a driving factor in decision-making, promoting goals which are not necessarily required for satisfaction. In particular, this paper has shown that marriage and having children was not considered necessary by many parents. Whilst to some extent this could be attributed to a lack of sexual education or availability of contraception, the case of GH in case study 2, who has 18 children and three wives, cannot be so easily explained. Indeed with the great cultural significance attributed to marriage, family and large numbers of children in Kedada, it is probable that this cultural conformity and the status with which it is associated has a major motivating factor in his choices.

6.3 The problems of asking people what they want

There have been a number of other studies that have attempted to highlight the goals and views of poor people. In terms of size, the World Bank's *Voices of the Poor* study (Narayan et al. 2000) stands out. Though this work found general support for many of the items included in universal lists of needs, including THN, education and learning were not generally considered to be goods in themselves, though the importance of human capital was recognised (see also Gough 2004). This fits closely with the findings of this paper, for example the greater importance of knowledge compared with education according to respondents in Dessu.

In another example, Clark (2002) used the foundations of Nussbaum's approach to investigate perceptions of wellbeing amongst the poor in one rural and one urban site in South Africa. He found considerable support amongst his respondents for the value of good health, avoiding hunger, shelter, happiness, knowledge and friendship. Nonetheless his respondents did dispute the importance of the capability to live a long life, opportunities for sexual satisfaction, and literary and scientific pursuits, goals which have been advanced by Nussbaum.

The formulation of universal models has often attracted criticism as, whilst they are presented as objective, the views they contain are not without perspective; 'a view is only possible from a viewpoint' (Myrdal 1962). Indeed, writers such as Escobar (1995) have argued that universal models tend to be European or North America constructs serving those interests at the expense of those of developing countries (see also McGregor 2004). However, whether or not THN represents a true and complete list of universal human needs, it may be agreed that the creation of such a list, long or short, is possible. The incongruence between 'community' and individual goals and universal social science

theories of human needs, highlights the contrast between needs and wants. Analysis in this paper and the example from Peru contained in the introduction highlight cases in which, many may feel, people make choices which are contrary to their own best interests—where their *wants* do not meet the requirements of their *needs*. This may be as a result of the internalisation of community values (Nussbaum 2000), which represent the power relations in the community relating to such factors as gender, age and wealth, or cases in which people consistently misjudge the benefits that certain goals will bring.¹⁵ With respect to developmental organisations, whether they are government departments, intergovernmental organisations or non-governmental organisations, this leads us to the question: What is (or should be) the role of these organisations? To assist people in attaining what they *want*, or to assist them in the attainment of (or to give them) what they *need*?

It can be argued that if people are consistently making decisions that are contrary to their best interests and that they are suffering as a result, then outsiders have a right and perhaps even a duty to intervene on their behalf if this leads to an improvement in the 'beneficiary's' quality of life. However as Lukes (2005) points out, this argument of false consciousness, that people do not know what is the best thing for them and that their desires are the social construction of existing power relations, is equally a licence for tyrannical paternalistic intervention. As such, many, including the likes of Mill (1859) and Hayek (1949) have argued for the primacy of the individual's interests and against intervention in the 'liberty of action' (Mill 1859: 13), as long as others are not harmed in their pursuit.

As such, pursuing a universal needs agenda, especially given the contestation that exists within the social sciences and at all levels of analysis, that has been alluded to in the previous section, in the face of individual and community *wants* represents an imposition of alien priorities. However, as a development worker in charge of a budget and accountable to superiors and funders, it is unrealistic to expect investment purely in a community's *wants* in the absence of theoretical support or empirical evidence that such policies will lead to the organisation's goals, whether they be economic growth, pro-poor growth or poverty reduction /alleviation/eradication.

There is a potentially attractive third option of concentrating on the overlap of *needs* and *wants*; assisting communities to attain their goals when these overlap with universal needs, but not forcing external perceptions of universal needs on a community when these do not overlap with a community's own goals. However, one can also make the case that this is an example of what Bachrach and Baratz (1970; see also Lukes 2005) call the second face of power, as many of the true goals that the community value are never allowed onto the agenda—the only options that a community really has are those based on a foreign conception of universal needs, and as such this is little different than the first option of pursuing a universal needs agenda regardless of a community's goals.

Returning to the capabilities approach to find a way out of this quandary, it is freedoms that are important. Whilst paternalistic intervention on behalf of falsely conscious 'beneficiaries' does have the potential to improve the quality of their lives, this is at the same time a clear restriction of their freedom to think and to choose for themselves, and if that means making choices which are not in their own best interests, then they also have the freedom to make mistakes (NEF 2003). Although, as discussed, an individual's goals are to some extent socially and culturally constructed and therefore a reflection of existing power

¹⁵ See for example, NEF (2003), which demonstrates that people pursue the goal of increasing their income, to the detriment of other goals, despite the fact that this has been shown not to increase happiness or life satisfaction.

relationships within the community in which the individual lives, using this as a justification for intervention in clear conflict with an individual's 'views' nonetheless can be a restriction of their freedom. Therefore, the ideal role of development must be to create spaces in which people are supported and have access to knowledge. In this way, they may be able to become critically autonomous, as THN proposes, and sufficiently empowered to challenge existing norms and power structures, so that they are free to make informed decisions, and to decide on the goals that they have reason to value, even to critique or reject 'development' itself.

7 Conclusions

In contrasting Doyal and Gough's *Theory of Human Need* with the goals of respondents to the goals survey in Dessu and Kedada, this paper has found that whilst THN professes to be a universal theory of need applicable to all human beings, there is considerable divergence with the goals to which people in the communities of Dessu and Kedada aspire. The results of the goals survey do show considerable, though not unanimous, belief in the importance of health, defined by THN as a basic need, and daily food and a place to live, corresponding to two of THN's intermediate needs. However, the intermediate needs which, THN proposes, underpin autonomy, namely appropriate education and significant primary relationships, do not receive such consistent support in the two communities. Clearly the goals survey does not provide sufficient evidence to prove or disprove THN, however, and equally importantly, it does reveal that what some consider to be universal human needs are not universally desired.

This paper has also found that goals are contested at all levels of analysis. As has been briefly discussed here, contestation within the social sciences regarding the nature of human needs is clear, yet we have also seen that considering communities or households to have homogenous views of goals would be equally fallacious. Although the example given in the introduction to this paper presents the views of the Peruvian community members as homogenous, this is unlikely to have been the case. The support for establishing a band for the community may well have been substantial, however, it is likely that there was at least token support for the plans outlined by the mayor, and the eventual outcome is likely to have reflected the interests of the more powerful members of the community, possibly at the expense of the weaker ones. Virtually every goal is contested to a lesser or greater extent at the community level, and as such there are no goals which the survey supports as being universally desired. As such, individuals' and communities' goals are deeply rooted in the cultural values of the community and will often reflect existing power relations based on gender, race and age.

Another important consideration is that at different times and in different circumstances, people have different priorities of what goals are important. There is contestation not just between different people in a community or household but also internal contestation within individuals. Goals which are highly valued can come into conflict with one another and which of these is given priority will depend on the opportunities and challenges that the individual faces at a particular time. Importantly, these circumstances can change over time, resulting in very different priorities being ascribed to valued goals. As such, examining only the actions of an individual may result in misleading conclusions being drawn regarding their goals, and assuming these goals to be consistent over time may be very inaccurate.

This paper has highlighted and explored the distinction between *wants* and *needs*. *Needs* constitute those goals that are universally required for all human beings in order to avoid harm. *Wants* in contrast are the goals of individuals which they believe are important, and which are rooted in cultural and social values and norms. In many cases there may be considerable overlap between *wants* and *needs*, but this paper has shown that there is also very clear divergence in many cases: there are *needs* that according to social science theories are universally required by all human beings in order to avoid harm but which a substantial number of individuals do not value, and there are many *wants* that individuals value far more highly than their supposed *needs*.

As a result, occasions will arise in which it is clear, or at least appears to be clear, that people are making choices which are contrary to their own best interests, as shown by universal theories. However, this paper draws on Sen's capability approach to make a clear case for an individual's right to make choices regarding their own lives, even if these choices are bad ones. As such it would be a restriction of their freedom to take a paternalistic attitude towards people who have goals which are considered not to be in their best interests. Instead, part of the work of developmental organisations must be to open dialogue with the communities in which they work, expounding the benefits of what they consider to be universal needs, thereby supplying individuals with the knowledge and opportunities to make informed choices regarding their own lives, rather than imposing alien ideas of what is important. In cases where this is ignored there can be dire and unexpected consequences, as the former mayor of one rural Peruvian community can no doubt testify.

Acknowledgements The support of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged. The work was part of the programme of the ESRC Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Fourth International Conference on the Ethiopian Economy in Addis Ababa. Comments received at the conference were useful in making revisions, and I would like to thank Pip Bevan, Laura Camfield, Ian Gough, J. Allister McGregor, Alula Pankhurst, Alison Woodcock and two anonymous reviewers for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

References

- Alkire, S. (2002). Dimensions of human development. *World Development*, 30(2), 181–205.
- Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. S. (1970). *Power and poverty: Theory and practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bethlehem, T. (2005). *Developing Ethiopia WeD-QoL: 'Working through the process'*. Addis Ababa: WeD-Ethiopia (Unpublished).
- Bevan, P., Pankhurst, A., & Lavers, T. (Eds.) (2006). *Ethiopian village studies II*. Addis Ababa: WeD-Ethiopia. Available online at: www.wed-ethiopia.org/comprof.htm.
- Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological wellbeing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 822–848.
- Camfield, L., McGregor, J. A., & Yamamoto, J. (2005). *Quality of life and its relationship to wellbeing*. Bath: Wed Research Group, University of Bath (Unpublished).
- Clark, D. A. (2002). *Visions of development: A study of human value*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Cockburn, J. (2001). *Child labour versus education: Poverty constraint or income opportunity?* Oxford: Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University.
- Doyal, L., & Gough, I. (1991). *A theory of human need*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.
- Ellis, F., & Tassew, W. (2005). *Ethiopia participatory poverty assessment 2004–05*. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).
- Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Gebre-Egzbiabher K., & White, M. (2004). Migration, community context, and child immunization in Ethiopia. *Social Science and Medicine*, 59, 2603–2616.
- Gough, I. R. (2004). Human wellbeing and social structures: Relating the universal and the local. *Global Social Policy*, 4(3), 289–311.
- Gough, I. R. (2003). Lists and thresholds: Comparing the Doyal-Gough theory of human need with Nussbaum's capabilities approach. WeD Working Paper 1. (Bath: WeD Research Group, University of Bath).
- Gough I. R., McGregor J. A. (Eds.) (2007) *Wellbeing in developing countries: From theory to research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hayek, F. (1949). *Individualism and economic order*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Lukes, S. (2005). *Power: A radical view* (2 ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- McGregor, J. A. (2004). Researching wellbeing. *Global Social Policy*, 4(3), 337–358.
- McGregor, J. A., & Camfield, L. (2005). *Terms of reference for phase 3 of the QoL research (applied and methodological)*. Bath: Wed Research Group, University of Bath (Unpublished).
- Mill, J. S. (1859) [1974]. *On liberty*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Myrdal, G. (1962). *Value in social theory*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Narayan, D., Patel, R., Schafft, K., Rademacher, A., & Koch-Schulte, S. (2000). *Voices of the poor: Can anyone hear us?* Oxford: Oxford University Press for the World Bank.
- New Economics Foundation (2003). *The politics of happiness*. London: NEF.
- Nussbaum, M. (2003). Capabilities as fundamental entitlements: Sen and social Justice. *Feminist Economics*, 9(2–3), 33–59.
- Nussbaum, M. (2000). *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 141–66.
- Ryan, R., & Sapp, A. (2007). Basic psychological needs: A self-determination theory perspective on the promotion of wellness across development and cultures. In I. R. Gough, & J. A. McGregor (Eds.) *Wellbeing in developing countries: From theory to research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sen, A. (2002). *Rationality and freedom*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tassew, W., Alemu, M., Jones, N., Bekele, T., Seager, J., Tekie, A., & Getachew A. (2005). Education choices in Ethiopia: what determines whether poor households send their children to school? Young lives working paper 15. London: Save the Children UK.
- Tietjen, K. (1998). The demand for primary education in rural Ethiopia. Technical paper 87. (USAID).
- Wolde, G. (2002). Democratisation process and gender. In B. Zewde, & S. Pausewang (Eds.), Ethiopia: The challenge of democracy from below. Uppsala/Addis Ababa: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet/Forum for Social Studies.