

**TITLE**

**A report on a study project presented to understanding of paternal  
involvement of African working class in their children's lives**

**The Department of Social Work  
School of Human and Community Development  
Faculty of Humanities  
University of the Witwatersrand**

**In partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree Bachelor of Social Work**

**by**

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**December, 2016**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Social Work in the Department of Social Work School of Human and Community Development, at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at this or any other institution.

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Morongwa Kayla Langa

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Date

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I would like to express my appreciation to my family for support and my supervisor at my field agency for all of their support.

Importantly I would like to acknowledge Motion Church for allowing me to conduct my research project.

And for the fathers that participated, it is all highly appreciated.

## **DEDICATION**

**To my father Lesetja Matthews Langa, thank you for making the sacrifice and being part of me and my brother's life.**

## ABSTRACT

Research and literature on fatherhood in Southern Africa tends to focus more on the absence of fathers than the significant role and the involvement of fathers in the families and children's lives. There is also a view in public discourse that African fathers are less likely to be involved in the lives of their children; usually this view does not take into account the historical factors that contributed to the removal of fathers from their families. There is evidence that there are fathers that are involved in their children's lives despite the public discourse and historical factors. This study aims to understand the paternal involvement of African working class fathers in the lives of the children. This will be done by conducting one on one interview with the use of a semi-structured interview schedule as a research tool. The study will adopt a qualitative approach. The research design that will be used in the study will be the exploratory design; this is explore, understand and describe the topic of research. The participants to be interviewed are African fathers from working class background in Randfontein, Gauteng from the ages of 25-55. Furthermore content analysis will be used to analyse the data; this is finding patterns, themes and at the end understanding the involvement of the men (African working class men) in their children's lives. The finding of the study is hoped to serve as an encouragement for men that are not in the lives of their children. As it may assist in the policy of child support grants for fathers that are not involved and serves as welfare relieve.

Keyword: Working Class, paternal involvement, fathers

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### Introduction

In South Africa there is a problem with absent fathers, not just in South Africa but in other parts of the world. There are various reason for fathers to be absent in their children's lives. That being said there are men that make an effort to be part of their children's lives.

The study conducted is about understanding paternal involvement of working class African fathers. It will look into the contributing factors that resulted in absent fathers like the effects of migrant labour and apartheid. In the same breathe the research seeks on focusing on the reason working class fathers, despite of challenges (money, migrant labour, long hours, being away from family etc.) that they face, they are involved in their children's lives. The study will refer back to absent fathers, how it come about that fathers became absent from their children's lives i.e. it being due to colonialism, apartheid as well as migrant labour and the challenges that that the African working class men face.

The research will look into the historical and traditional roles of fathers in terms on the literature. It will also expand on the role that money plays in fatherhood, the relationship with the mother of the child and incorporate it with theoretical approaches appropriate to the topic.

This will be achieved through the interviewing of various participants, and with the data received from the participants. The data will be analysed by its content to discover and themes to ultimately understand and answer the research question. Which would lead to problem statement, in addition to that is understanding how absent fathers can assist in understanding paternal involvement of African working class men.

### Statement of the problem

Paternal involvement is a major problem in Southern Africa and globally particularly in working class fathers. Globally, the role of fathers in children's lives was never a hand's on approach particularly in industrialised societies where working class men had to be out of the home for extended periods. This places a very detached approach to parenting, especially when professionals states that it is important for developing children to have a stable attachment with



their primary caregiver which includes the father (Holmes, 2014). The reason for less hands on approach to parenting could be targeted at the patriarchal society in which many are socialised in. Whereby men are taught not to show emotions, caregiving, child rearing is a woman's job and the father is meant to provide for his household (Lesejane, 2006). Other things that influence the involvement on fathers is demanding working hours and the fact that the majority of these fathers have long working hours that takes them away from their families; unreliable transports adding to the long hours being away from home, inequality in society being gunned down by police officers, unequal pay at work from other races; thus hindering their involvement in parenting. More specifically in South Africa, is the inequality that the African men on a daily basis in the work place that causes stress thus hindering their involvement, also is the working hours, commuting hours, where majority are unable to buy a car rely on trains which are unreliable and adding more to the hours that fathers are away.

The course of the study is important because, there is an increase on the numbers of fathers who are absent in the lives of their children. Marcisz (2013) speaks of an international trend towards an alarming increase of fatherless families. There are certain factors that may contribute to fathers not being involved in their children's lives for example divorce, death, migrant labour, abuse etc. In the South African context specifically not paying for damages or ability to support the child financially therefore they distance themselves from the child etc. (CSDA, 2013). However this could be argued that there is more to being a father than being the financial provider, there is the emotional role and being a role model for the child etc. Nonetheless, in South Africa unfortunately the role of the father of being a provider is highly valued. For this study therefore is to now focus on the fathers that are involved, with the hope it will influence and encourage future fathers to be involved in their children's lives regardless of financial constraints or any other constraints that may hinder them from being part of their children's lives.

Absent fathers are more prominent the African working class. According to Ritcher, Chikover & Makash (2010) "fathers in middle and upper middle class are more likely to be part of their children's lives more than the working class due to better working conditions and affordability". Before, South Africa's democracy, pre 1994, African fathers were seen of having a role of being the provider, sending money to their children etc. According to Ratele, Shefer & Claws (2002) African fathers were authoritarian, at times violent, distant and patriarch. However being patriarch has long been a respected figure in South African society (Lesejane, 2006). People recall the statement "children are seen and not heard". Their approach

was not hands on approach to parenting hence it could be understandable when some were unable to financially provide for their children they distant themselves.

Thus the study has looked at fathers that are involved in their children's lives despite the challenges of being in a working class they choose to be part of their children's. The study illustrated the factors contributing to the decision of being part of a child's life. What some studies has shown is that there is a historical instance of resolving the issue regarding absent fathers. These include policies and interventions on how to involve young fathers in their children's lives. However with this study the student showed the factors contributing for the men the reasons as to why there are men that are part of their children's lives and also the experiences, their roles and what challenged they faced. Specifically working African class fathers because of the history of the working migrating to the towns and being far from their children and end up not being part of the child's life.

Therefore; by understanding the contributing factors that influence African working class men in being involved in their children's lives, it may shed light on the men that do not as an encouragement for those that are not involved that there men despite certain situation they are involved. The understanding and the finding of the study from the African working class men hopes to encourage more fathers to be involved and decreasing the issue of absent fathers in South Africa. The study therefore is taking an approach on focusing on fathers that are involved in their children's lives, because there is a sense that there is a lot of focus on absent fathers and it is better to focus on the positive than the negative.

## **Overview of Research Methodology**

The approach that will be used for the study will be the qualitative approach. This says that "the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of the participants" (Cresswell, 2009: 16). The study will use an explorative design. Research can serve the purpose of exploring, explaining, evaluating and describing. The sample procedure that will be used in the study is non-probability. Non-probability sampling is selecting a sample from a population in a way which is not random and not everyone will have the equal opportunity or probability in being selected to participate in the study (Salkind, 2006).

Semi-structured interview schedules will be used for the study. This is a tool that will guide the interview in the study. The data will be collected through one on one in depth interviews,

a common method of data collection for qualitative research. For the study in depth interviews will be used to give insight and give understanding for the findings of the study. Content analysis focus on finding patterns and themes to make a conclusion and with the study finding the patterns, themes, cluster etc. a conclusion can therefore be made from it, this according to Poggenpoel (2011). The student after receiving and gathering all the data, having the interviews the student will manage and analyse the interviews. After that the student will then draw a conclusion and verification of what was found in the interviews.

### **Significance of the study**

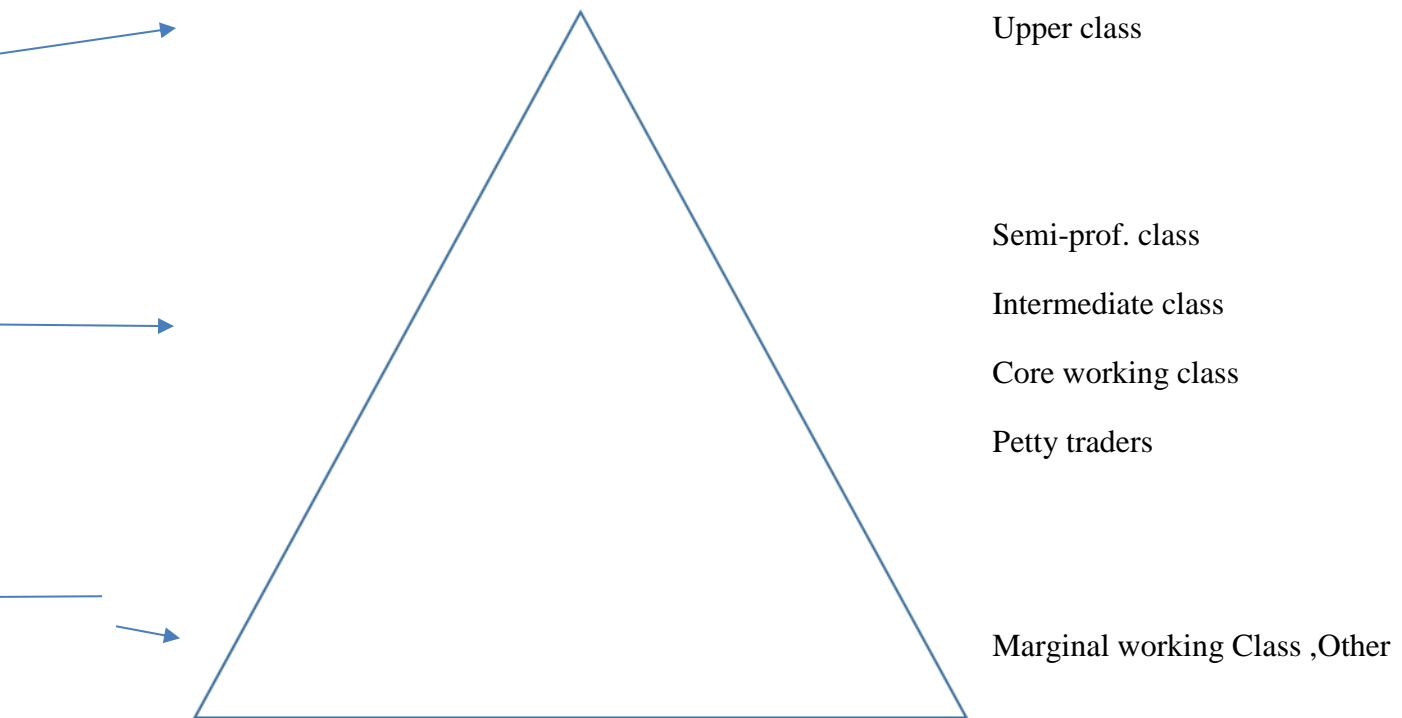
In social work we deal with families. In many cases young men being bullies at school, who “out of control;” etc. can be traced back to parenting and secure attachment theory. There is evidence that when a father is involved in his children’s lives the children will benefit from it. Also in showing and understanding the fathers that are there for their children despite what they may face in terms of challenges, it will be an encouragement for future and current absent fathers to be involved in their children’s lives. This can help social workers with case load in terms of tracing fathers or trying to understand who the father is to understand the client’s situation. The study in significance would seek to revert the notorious connotation that fathers are not present, that SASSA is many children’s father and father’s day being a celebration for single mothers (which is valid considering the circumstances single mothers face which the fathers not being around). It seeks to make society acknowledge the fathers that are there and that are trying.

### **Definition of terms**

Fatherhood- according to Mkhize, (2004) fatherhood goes beyond conception and extends to a network of other close social relationships between adult males and children who may or may not be biologically their own (as cited in Makusha, 2013).

Paternal Involvement-According to (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006) involvement is determined by not only the social and economic resources but caring for the children and supporting them (as cited in Makusha, 2013).

Working Class, Seekings (2003) illustrates the working class group in a diagram in which it differentiate from upper, middle and lower class and according to the diagram working class in South Africa is the middle class.



- upper class (UC): managers and professionals;
- semi-professional class (SPC): teachers and nurses;
- intermediate class (IC): routine white-collar, skilled and supervisory;
- core working class (CWC): semi-skilled and unskilled workers (except farm- and domestic workers);
- marginal working class (MWC): farm- and domestic workers

### Limitations

The limitations of the study are that it would be able to generalise for the whole population but for a certain context. However may argue that the purpose of qualitative research is not generalise but to focus on a specific context and therefore should not be seen as a limitation but in many case it is seen as a limitation. Another limitation is the reliability that the results may not be as consistent when put through the same test, we are working with human being and there is always a possibility for vague and socially desirable answers which will affect the reliability of the study.

**Organization of the study**

Chapter 1 has presented the introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, definition of terms, and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 contains the review of related literature and research related to the problem being investigated, this looking at absent father, the current trends, challenges that face fathers as well as the theoretical approach the study is taking. The methodology and procedures used to gather data for the study are presented in Chapter 3. The results of analyses and findings to emerge from the study will be contained in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will contain a summary of the study and findings, conclusions drawn from the findings, a discussion, and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review

As briefly illustrated in the previous chapter in order to understand paternal involvement of working class African fathers in their children's lives, you need look into the background of the issue. This chapter will expand on the background of the phenomena which is absent fathers. Expand on the effects of migrant and look at the historical roles of fatherhood and its impact. This chapter will expand on the different contributing factors involved with fatherhood. Importantly this will look at Freudian approach and Attachment Theory as a theoretical approach used for the study in order to understand the better.

#### Background

In pre-colonial times (1880-1893) fathers; African fathers were involved in their children's lives, as the patriarch, a symbol and custodian of ultimate power (Lesejane, 2006). According Lesejane (2006: 176) a good father was define as a "provider for the family, maintain the family's unity, assert his moral authority on his family, a protector of the family and a role model to young men in particular". Role model to young men is what the society is in need of from their fathers. Fathers were seen here as more of an influential person rather than just a provider. According to Hosegood & Madhavan (2012) fathers played tradition roles physical or monetary, education, engagement and monitoring. Traditionally this was what was expected from fathers in pre-colonial times. But then the Europeans came and wanting labourers to work in mines and in the urban areas and this is how migrant labour came about (Lesejane, 2006). This then resulted to men's roles as fathers solely about being a provider but being a good father, and a role model.

The issue of working class father historically is due to the result of apartheid where African men were forced to move and work in the towns or the mining areas etc. (Ratele, Shefer, & Clawes, 2012). This was the oppressive system whereby mostly men were forced into paid work by levying taxes that required local people to money (Ritcher, Chikovere, & Makash, 2010). This then resulted in men leaving their homes to work to earn money. This resulted in the main cause of absent fathers mainly in South Africa as reiterated, migrant labour which is believed to have a rippled effect, becoming a trend decades later where men today are not part

of their children's lives (Ritcher, Desmond, Hosegood, Madhaven, Makiwane, Makusha, Morell & Swartz, 2012).

The effect of migrant labour on African families, resulted in men not being able to see their families for long periods of time, sometimes, they would see their families once a year (Ritcher et al., 2012). According to Khewu & Adu (2015) the men that would migrate for work would usually see their children on Christmas and Easter. One could imagine, not being able to be with their families. How does one support his/her family when far away? The most practical way to support a family in such a situation is via monetary support, bearing in mind there was no technology of instant messaging to message the children or video calling, therefore the emotional bond and involvement was difficult as well.

Similarly as one can imagine before Labour Unions and other worker organisations to fight for worker's right to have decent wages and working condition; men were exploited sometimes not having decent wage resulting in the only form of support for family taken away (South African History Online, 2011). This resulted in some men being unable to pay *inhlawulo* (damages for impregnating a girl) and/or *lobola* (bride wealth) (Khewu & Adu, 2015; Makusha, 2013). Traditionally men that were unable to pay this was not seen to be the father of the child and was not encouraged to be part of the child's life (Ritcher, et al., 2010, Makusha, 2013). This would make the men feel castrated, since fatherhood was equated to being a provider and this essentially was the African tradition (Ritcher, et al., 2010; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Makusha, 2013). It would seem easier not to be involved at all, when being far away from the family, not being able to see them, not being able to provide and not being able to adhere to cultural practices (paying of *inhlawulo* and/or *lobola*).

As stated, absent fathers can be traced back to the effects of apartheid. (Ritcher et al., 2012). The increase of urbanisation, African families coming to towns, living in townships cannot go unnoticed yet there is an imbalance of fathers that are involved and fathers that are not. Nonetheless there is a significant number of children growing without fathers (Ritcher, et al., 2012). This could be seen as a cycle, men are not involved in their children's lives because they did not have fathers in their own lives (could be seen as a reason for their paternal involvement in their children's). A study conducted, in South Africa by (CSDA, 2013) where they interviewed 34 men who are not involved in their children's lives. What was said is that they did not know how to be a father because they never had fathers, also some have actually tried to be involved in their children's lives but because of financial issue (not paying damages)

they distanced themselves from their children's lives (CSDA, 2013). The question is why is that so, what are factors despite of financial constraints and not having fathers in their lives still tried to be emotionally involved in their child's life.

According to CSDA (2013) men that are absent from their children's lives because they did not have a father to "teach" them how to be a father hence they claimed that it could be a cycle. With that being said, there are known cases of men being involved in their children's lives, despite all the issues and obstacles that they may face whether financial, not having a father. They choose to be part of their children's lives, they make an effort. For boys absent fathers is a problem not only because it may result on the boy not knowing how to be a father and therefore not fathering his own children; but it means they do not have a male model to show them how to treat and respect a woman and self-control (Patrick, 2006). It is argued that although children are impacted by absent fathers because of work (migrant worker), no money to support children and therefore they have a feeling of not being good enough, there are social fathers that are there for these children to be the male role model that they need (Ratele et al., 2012). In society it is expected for biological fathers to take care of their own instead of relying on social fathers (which could be male relatives, men in the community etc.).

Aside from migrant labour being the historical cause of present absent fathers; according to (Wilson, 2006), it is important to keep cognisance of men that had children with their wives in the rural area versus the children they have in the townships with the women they lived with whilst working away from home. In other words when some of the men were away from their wives and children in the townships, they would find comfort in other women resulting in them having children outside of their marriages (Wilson, 2006). The dynamic is that the children from the wife in the rural area are likely to receive all the monetary support as compared to the children that are in the townships, it is said that they did not receive much of the financial resources (Wilson, 2006). For the reason that, it is already difficult for these men to support their families by sending money, now they have another family that is in a closer radius therefore priority would be made to the family in the rural area because the man is committed to that family through marriage (Wilson, 2006). This shows that the relationship with the mother also plays a role, whether the father is married to the mother, living with the mother, etc.



### **Contributing factors**

According to Makusha (2013) fathering or father involvement also tends to be influenced by the father-mother relationship (the relationship between the father and the mother) because the quality of father-mother relationship than the father-mother legal or residential status is more important to father-child involvement. In other words the father and mother may not reside together in the same place but have a good relationship with each other (not necessarily a romantic relationship) has a positive influence on the father's relationship with the child (Makusha, 2013). Alternatively the father and mother may be married or co-habiting with each other but do not have a good relationship with each other in the home which can in turn negatively impact on the relationship between the father and child (Makusha, 2013). This reiterates the point that a father being there is not subject to his physical presence at home, he can be far but the relationship with the child is there.

In other writings it states that money and class as well as the relationship with the mother of the child is a contribution of fathers being involved in their children's lives. In American studies it shows that a father that is married to the mother of the child and live together, if the father earns more than the mother or the mother does not work; he is less likely to be involved with the child (Meteyer, 2005). This goes back to the point that a father can be present but it does not necessarily mean that he is involved in his child's life in the broader sense, that money and being a provider is not the only criteria for being a father. The study also states that when the father of the child is earning less and is living together with the mother of the child, the father is more likely to be involved in the child's life (Meteyer, 2005). Similarly according to Meteyer, even when the father does not live with the child or the mother; the involvement is indicated by visitation, financial support and one on one activity. In South Africa, families are structured differently it is ideal for most families to have a mother and father living together but that is not the reality due to the effects of migrant labour. The reality is that a number of families do not have a mother and father living under one roof which also impacts of fathers being involved. As briefly mentioned the relationship with the mother of the child plays a part in the involvement of the father in the child's life.

Marcisz (2013) states the older generational fathers were more punitive and authoritarian, and providers due to the effects of apartheid. However the new generational fathers (which the student is seeking to understand) are less punitive; seek to have equal relationship with their children. To the point whereby these new generational African fathers are sometimes part of the child birth process when previous they were not part of it (Marcisz, 2013). This shows a

significant shift of father roles from the traditional generation and the current generation. The new generation of fathers are not accepting of fathers that are not part of their children's lives, they disagree with it; according to a interviewee from Marcisz (2013: 36) study, the individual states that "slowly but surely not everyone of but a minimum of us is getting there slowly but surely". In other words yes the men are involved is the minority so far however in time more fathers will be involved.

Working class African men are facing a different reality from different race and class that influences their presence and involvement. This is the reality that faces the African working class fathers. Internationally there has been recent headlines of African-American, fathers, men said to be in the working class being gunned down by police officers Alton Sterling a father who was trying to make a living gunned down (Lopez, 2016). These are not isolated incidents, many African-American men are being gunned and this is a reality that African-American working men face every day when they walk out in the streets. Similarly this can be taken back home in South Africa whereby miners, whom many were fathers strike to earn a better living were gunned down in Marikana in 2012. This is another reality that is face by our working class African fathers. They leave their homes to work resulting in them being away from their families.

This comes to another reality, inequality which is related to the Marikana Massacre. It was exposed that a black man working in computer programming earns plus minus R8000 whilst a white man in the same industry earns over R20000 (Peuper, 2016). For a father that needs to look after his look after his children that is not a lot, to support their family when they expect to provide from their families and hence feel they are not good enough fathers. Although computer programming is a favourable and father does not have to leave home; however the father in most cases commutes in trains are not reliable as they get stuck and when they are late they get reprimanded. These are the examples of realities that African working class fathers have to face. Yes they try by all means to work to support their children however their greater structures that bring challenges, even though these challenges the fathers stay strong and continue to support their families and be involved in their children's lives.

Economic status or class has also a great deal in the involvement of men in their children lives. As stated, men that were not able to pay for *inhlawulo* and/or *lobola* felt castrated because in the African culture it is traditionally believed that being a provider equated to being a father (Ritcher, et al., 2010; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Makusha, 2013). Sadly in South Africa currently,

poverty and the lack of employment opportunities in a community joined with the socio-cultural tendency that define fatherhood primary in terms of ability to provide economically for one's family have a negative impact on fatherhood as this robs a number of men of the opportunity to be more involved in their children's lives (Makuksha, 2013). This is a reality facing a significant portion of man in the country. On the other hand there is another portion of the men now in the country that have the opportunity to employment. According to Rabe (2007) in situations where employment and work patterns are favourable, there is evidence of working class men embracing fatherhood through reading to children, showing interest in their school work bringing about the "new father" that being the provider and caregivers (as cited in Khewu & Adu, 2015). In essence money plays a significant role in father involvement even though it should not be the sole condition.

The question goes back to; yes there are fathers that are involved in their children's lives despite possible cycle from apartheid (migrant labour, the father being away therefore "he" is not a father), despite monetary constraints (seeing money as only form of support and involvement in a child's life), despite any other possible constraint. With this study, it will aim or try to understand today's working class men's (African) approach to fatherhood, being there for your children, talking to them, spending time with them and not only monetary involvement . Understanding how despite all the challenges they are confronted with as working class fathers are still part of their children's lives. They are from the "same" disadvantaged history of apartheid yet they are involved in their children's lives and with this understanding gained it could be used to encourage the current generation of fathers and future generation of fathers to be involved in their children's lives.

## **Theoretical framework for the study**

### **Frued's psychoanalytical theory**

The theoretical approach for the study would rely mostly on Frued's psychoanalytical theory. It may be seen as a theory strictly used for psychology; however it will assist in understanding the men's early childhood experiences. Understanding the early childhood experience may shed light on the contributing factors that influence African working class men to be involved

in their children's lives. In other researches about father involvement, the studies tend to lean on the roles of fathers, traditional roles and modern roles.

The basic and core assumption of Freud's psychoanalytical theory is that "every action has a cause" (Muckenhoupt, 1997: 83). Freud did not believe that people did things, their behaviour was for no reason, he believed there was an underlying cause either through the unconscious or by something that happened in one's childhood. This will assist in the understanding of the involvement of African working class fathers in the lives of their children. Understanding their childhood, what they experience, did they have father figures, what was the role of the father, where was the father etc. Those types of experiences will help understand the person they are today, even in healthy functioning families childhood experience is an explanation of their healthy functioning. Freud's theory does not suggest that childhood experiences is there to point out dysfunctional behaviours or bad things but it is a point of reference to understand who is the person at the current moment.

### **Attachment Theory**

The other theoretical framework that would be relevant for the study is the attachment theory. Attachment in simple terms is the tendency to look for a bond to another person (not necessarily a mother) and feel secure when that person is present (Bowlby, 1982). It is a theory developed by John Bowlby (1988) empathising that a child needs to develop a relationship with a care giver for social and emotional development to occur normally. In some of the writing it states that the primary caregivers are not necessarily the mother of the child (due to a large number of mothers having to work and leaving the child with a babysitter). However it is important for a child to develop a bond or a healthy attachment with the mother and it also beneficial for the child to develop a bond or attachment the father, in order for the child to be emotionally stable adult who is able to build and keep relationships (Lee Senior, 2009). It is written that healthy attachment is classified by having love, security and joy whilst; unhealthy attachment on the other hand bring anxiety, grief and depression (Lee Senior, 2009). Thus the emotional needs those are required for healthy attachment as according to the theory is attention, affection, respect, support, comfort, approval and security (Lee Senior, 2009.).

It is evident that the need for children to development does not only cost money but cost an emotional investment as well. Children require the emotional needs that were stated to develop

to develop healthy relationships in future, and it is more beneficial for a child when the father is the other attachment figure whose responses lead to the development of patterns of attachment. Children with their fathers involved in their lives according to (Pleck, 1994) is recorded to be linked to social and cognitive competence, increase empathy and more locus of control (as cited in Meteyer, 2005). Likewise it has been found that according to Grange (2013) children without fathers are significantly disadvantage in terms of behaviour, school and relationships; which are grounds for attachment not being there. Alternatively a study in South Africa shows that children whose fathers are involved achieve better in school, have higher self-esteem and especially for girls are more secure in their relationships with partners of the opposite sex (Khewa & Adu, 2015). It illustrated the benefits of fathers being the other attachment figure. This is what is meant by involvement, and in the study the emotional investment of fathers that are attachment figures would be understood; since it is important for a father to develop a bond with his child no matter the economic circumstance although it does indeed a big role.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Research Methodology**

As stated in chapter 1, the research aims in understanding paternal involvement in Southern Africa of working class fathers. This chapter will look into the research methodology of the research. The chapter will go into detail about the research methodology that was used in the research. It will explain the research design that was used in conjunction with the type of methodology. And further the chapter will describe and explain the data collection methods, the tools and instruments, as well as speak on the data analysis that is going to be used, the population and sample of the participants. It will briefly look at the research site i.e. where the research is taking place. The chapter will conclude with the limitation of the study.

#### **3.1. Research Site**

The research was conducted at a place called Motions Church; it is a local church in Randfontein West of Johannesburg. Randfontein is a Gold Mine city which is characterised by high employment like the rest of the country (Integrated Development Plan, 2012). Those who are working, earn a salary of R801-R1600 per month and they make up the majority of the population (Integrated Development Plan, 2012). Due to this low earnings, many of the people are living in informal settlements. The city has a majority of its people speaking Setswana as the first language, as the city is close to the North West province (Census, 2012).

Motions Church is situated in one of the suburbs in Randfontein that places value on family, sense of community and commitment to the youth and children from the outer community.

#### **3.2. Research approach**

The approach that will be used for the study will be the qualitative approach. This says that “the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of the participants” (Cresswell, 2009: 16). In other words, unlike quantitative, qualitative study wants to understand the individual’s view of their reality, their understanding and perception of reality and of their world according to their daily life experience and the meaning that they attach to it (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). According to Marshall & Rossman (2011) such interest involves researcher being inside the natural environment of those that they are studying and is

based on a specific context. Another way to explain qualitative approach understands that it studies a phenomena using general description to explain or to describe it (Mark, 1996).

Therefore, qualitative research will be more appropriate approach for the study. The reason is that this study is research a topic with the aim of general description that is using the description of black fathers and the specific age group of 25-55 to explain the phenomena for the rest of the population. Qualitative research is the appropriate approach because this study will need the experience of the fathers to be illuminated. In other words their world view and the meaning that they attach to it is of utmost value towards writing the report because they are best to describe their involvement in their children's lives.

### **3.3. Research Design**

The design that was used in the study was exploratory design. In qualitative research it is known that there are different purposes of research; either the purpose of exploring, explaining, evaluating and describing. The purpose of exploring according to Rubin & Babbie (2005) is exploring and examining a new topic. In other terms exploratory research design, is the "exploration of a relatively unknown research is, to gain insight, develop an existing hypothesis about an existing phenomenon" (Rubin & Babbie, 2005: 124). It is providing a beginning familiarity with a topic with the purpose of examining an interest (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). The limitation to explorative approach according Rubbin & Babbie (2005) is that it seldom gives satisfactory explanation or answers to the phenomenon of interest. Therefore it should be kept in cognisance that the study may not give satisfactory to the readers, regarding the topic being studied. It is hoped that a better understanding will be discovered.

Because absent fathers is a phenomenon that has been studied and is a big issue, paternal involvement is a relatively new phenomenon that the student is interested in exploring. The study is bringing insight, by exploring and understanding the paternal involvement of African working class fathers. This was done through the exploratory approach to research.

### **3.4. Population and sample**

Population according to Mark (1996) is the collection of all individuals. Sample is the portion of the population selected for the study (Mark, 1996). The sample procedure that will be used in the study is non-probability. Non-probability sampling is selecting a sample from a

population in a way which is not random and not everyone will have the equal opportunity or probability in being selected to participate in the study (Salkind, 2006). The sampling that has been used was convenience sample is a type of non-probability sample in which it relies on the availability of participants. According to Rubin & Babbie (2005) it is usually used by social workers because it is not expensive as compared to other methods, in other words getting who is available and willing to participate are selected criteria for a sample (Salkind, 2006). This is due to the fact that time plays a role in the availability of sampling. The student may not have enough time to sample participation through random sampling for example; also that the category of the sample plays a role as well. Males are notoriously known for not being as expressive as their female counter parts. This means that there will not be many males participants available to be randomly sampled therefore convenience sampling is the most best fitted sampling type to be used for the study.

Participant population in this study was African fathers from the working class who are involved in their children's lives. This was a sample of men who are available and willing to participate in the study. They will not be coerced to participate and will be given the option and opportunity to withdraw from the study whenever they wish to. The research setting is a church based organisation from Motion Church that is based in Randfontein where the student already received formal permission from the senior of the Church to conduct the research at the premises. The participant population will be between the ages of 25-55. Participant will be recruited in one of the weekend sessions from men at church. A letter (the participant form) has been prepared with a brief outline of the study and the researchers contact details, the participation form also includes details of a social work that will be available for participation who feel that they may need counselling after participating in the study. Interested participants will be encouraged to contact researcher to arrange a time for interview session one session for each participant.

### **3.5. Data Collection**

An interview is a face to face situation in which an interviewer asks questions to one or more interviewee (Mark, 1996). According to Sewell (2001: 1) qualitative interviews is the "attempt to understand the world from the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations" (as cited in Greef, 2005: 287). Interviews is the most predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research. It is where the interviewee and researcher interact together, a conversation between the two where the researcher establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific



topics raised by the interviewee i.e. the interviewee does most of the talking (Rubbin & Babbie, 2001). The data collected in the study was through one on one in depth interviews, a common method of data collection for qualitative research, it was in depth in that it was flexible, iterative and continuous.

In the study the respondents are ones guiding the interview. Initially the student started the conversation with the question and from the questions the participants would respond and from the response the student would probe from response before asking the next question. It is a conversation that is structure beforehand by the student but through the participants' stories and their view points of their world themes and patterns derived. It is also important to build a rapport with participants in order that they feel comfortable sharing their stories especially when the population is males. As stated males are notoriously known for not being as open as their female counterparts; therefore before starting the in depth interview the student "breaks the ice" with general questions in order for participants to feel comfortable to share their stories in depth. The student started off with the general greetings, however most of the participants were always in a hurry wanted to keep things short. Some participants would give one words and rushed the interview to head home. Other participants would be elaborative to a point they answered the entire question without the student asking. Iterative questions has been used as well as opened end questions and probing questions to empathise that the in depth knowledge of the respondents, what they have to share is of value and therefore many measure will be used in order to them to express themselves. For the study in depth interviews has been used to give insight and give understanding for the findings of the study.

### **3.6. Research instrumentation**

Interviews in qualitative research may be structured where the researcher is trained to use an interview schedule which consists of a list of question (Mark, 1996). In Unstructured interview are conducted without using any of the researcher's prior information, experience in a particular area (Greeff, 2005). Semi structured interviews are therefore is defined as "those organised around areas of a particular interest while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth" (Greeff, 2005: 292). Just as structured and unstructured interviews, there are interview schedule used. This is the questionnaire written to guide the interview is called an interview schedule (Greeff, 2005). This provides the researcher with a set of predetermined questions that might be used as an appropriate instrument to engage the participant, it is also

said that producing the schedule beforehand forces the researcher to think explicitly about what they hope the interview will cover (Greeff, 2005: 292).

Semi-structured interview schedules will be used for the study. This is a tool that will guide the interview in the study. That is, it is controlled by the researcher (the type of questions that will be asked) however it gives opportunity for interviewee to expand on their answers and give complex account of their experience (Hugh-Jones, 2013). In other words according to Hugh-Jones (2013) that questions are prepared beforehand but it has the freedom to interviewer or interviewee to raise other questions, freedom to probe into aspects that was anticipated by the interviewee. In the study semi structured interview was used. This was to give the student the flexibility for the student to ensure that participants are able to elaborate themselves. By having semi-structured interview it guided the student however the participants would take the lead in where the conversation goes. Also with questioning skills like probing it will assist in having the participants expand more on what they have to say. The interview schedule will have set questions but there will be probing involved, exploring points that are brought up by interviewees and the interview may not take the exact structure of the schedule. Also by including iterative questioning, going back on a point that the participant made in order that the student has the finer details needed to analysis the data.

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

The process of data analysis includes the search of general statements about the relationship among categories of data and it builds a grounded theory (de Vos, 2005). In simple terms according to Mark (1996) it is reducing large information into something smaller and can be able to be put into a report. In analysing the data the student looks for the patterns of interaction and events that are fairly common to what is being studying and from discovering the norms or the patterns the question of why is asked why do these patterns appear (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). content analysis focus on finding patterns and themes to make a conclusion and with the study finding the patterns, themes, cluster etc. a conclusion can therefore be made from it, this according to Poggenpoel (2011).

The student after receiving and gathering all the data, having the interviews the student will managed and analysed the interviews. After that the student then drew a conclusion and verification of what has been found in the interviews. This this conclusion drawing and verification data analysis, where the range of tactics includes comparison, contrast, noting

patterns and themes, clustering, using metaphors, use of triangulation, looking for negative cases, following up surprise and checking results with respondents (Poggenpoel, 2011: 340).

### **3.8. Limitations**

The limitations of the study are that it would be able to generalise for the whole population but for a certain context. However may argue that the purpose of qualitative research is not generalise but to focus on a specific context and therefore should not be seen as a limitation but in many case it is seen as a limitation.

In terms of reliability of a research (qualitative research) means there is trustworthiness in the research, there is consistency in the research (Golafshani, 2003). In other word the extent to which a measuring instrument is stable and consist and the relative absence of errors of measurement in a measuring instrument (Mark, 1996). The way to ensure reliability according to Mark (1996) is through pre-testing as well as random sampling. Because the nature of the study incorporating men (difficult population to get to participate) it will not make sense to incorporate pretesting as it will discourage them to post test. As well as for random sampling it will not suffice since there is not a large group willing to participate, purposeful sampling is more logical in that it serves to use participants who are available. However reliability will be improved through the standardised condition of the study, having the similar condition, environment etc. and importantly the standardised interview schedule. Also the research will maintain reliability by keeping record tapes of interviews with participants.

For validity, which according to Golafshani (2003) is whether the research answered the question that it intended to answer and for this research the formal report will state whether it answered the question. In simpler terms, it is the extent to which an instrument or a study measures what it intended to (Mark, 1996). A way to ensure validity is by conducting the similar stud in a different to ensure that the results will be the same, because of time constraints this not possible (Shenton, 2004). Nevertheless insuring validity can be done in other numerous ways through the types of questions asked, insuring that they are iterative, the use of triangulation meaning the incorporation of the data and literature and the scrutiny of the study.

From what has been discussed in the chapter, it is known how the logistics of the research went. From the data collection methods and tools to how it was analyse. With the map of where the participants were recruited and interviewed to give the reader of where the research took place. Next chapter will continue on from this foundation. The next chapter will look at was found

from the interviews that were conducted and will discuss the various finding according it their appropriate themes.

## CHAPTER 4:

### Findings and discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand paternal involvement of African working class fathers. By understanding the contributing factors that influence African working class men in being involved in their children's lives, it may shed light on the men that do not as an encouragement for those that are not involved that there men despite certain situation they are involved. The rest of the chapter will look into the findings of the data, by reporting on the descriptive analysis of demographics and then present the findings from the interviews conducted.

#### Descriptive analysis of demographics

The sample size of the participants that were interviewed was 10 men. The ages of the men ranged from 25-55 according to the proposal however the 10 that participated ranged from 25-40. Judging from the research question it is clear to see what the characteristics of the sample were, they were mostly in the working were in the working class (core working class, semi-skilled, intermediate and semi-professional) which according to Seekings (2003) fall under working class due to the amount of money they earn do not differ much. The sample is unique because of the organisation, the Church where the participants were recruited tries to instil values of family by having occasional men meeting they try to instil values to men to be involved in the raising of their children. However the challenge of the participants is that a number of them are married (the influence of the values instilled by the organisation) there the responds from the sample (the married ones) are ideally what is expected, to an extent socially desirable in that they may want to portray themselves as the 'ideal' father however the student is unable to judge and gave participants unconditional positive regard.

**Table 1: Profile of fathers (N=10)**

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS	NO.
<b>AGES</b>	
<b>25-30</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>31-35</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>36-40</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

**MARITAL STATUS**

<b>MARRIED</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SINGLE<sup>1</sup>*</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

**FATHERS IN THEIR LIVES**

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>NOT PRESENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

**Presentation of findings**

To restate the methodology of the research for the chapter, the study is based on a qualitative methodology which means there is value in the participant's world view. It was exploratory in that it was describing what and exploring a phenomenon which is according to the participant's world view. The way in which these world views were explored was through the in depth interview with the participants.

A semi-structured interview scheduled was used as the guide but the participants lead the interview. They were encouraged to be elaborative as much as possible in order for patterns and themes to offer and in certain instances probes were used to understand what the participants were saying. The interviews were analysed by compressing the information what was found and then through the different themes that occurred and patterns they were stated in different themes. In other words they were grouped by what was stated more frequent to what was stated the least frequent. In essence the interviews were not structured as participants would not be elaborative or have their conversation flow.

Therefore in order to answer the research question, the rest of the chapter will look into the different themes that occurred. Starting with the primary themes, the secondary and the "extra" things that stood out, that participant mentioned. Ending the chapter, a summary of the findings will be attempted to understand better what was found in the study.

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<sup>1</sup> Single- meaning not married, it does include relations with a partner

#### **4.1. Providing**

In answering the critical question of how are working class African fathers are involved in their children's lives and in understanding his involved, there was one thing that was prominent and common throughout the interviews was "providing". Most of the participants saw that providing for their children is important when being involved. Provision for the participants meant that they were being a father, that it is their responsibility, and what they are primarily supposed to do for their children. Provision for the participants came in different forms, whether it was sending money to the child or the mother of the child, buying things for the child clothes, uniforms, sweets, food etc., just providing for the well-being of the child ensuing that they are "covered".

Traditionally, employed fathers according to Lesejane (2006) who could provide financially were held in high regard because men were judged by their ability to provide. In South Africa men that left home in the rural areas to look for work in the urban areas are able to bring that money back home to provide for their children were seen as men and the bread winners (Ritcher et al., 2012). In past researches in South Africa as well, by Ritcher et al. (2010) employed men all noted that economic support as being core to being a good father. It goes back to the defining of the man's masculinity in South Africa. That is men being the breadwinner, providing, according to (Ratele, 2012) is the key maker of masculinity. These man or father's their roles are seen to be a protector, protector in the sense of the ability to provide for the family (children) financially (Quinn, 2012). The construct of fathers, or the core of being a good father is a social construct that men have been socialised to know, even the media plays it part in building this social construct in this modern day. The media moulds this construct by presenting particular gendered parental roles (Morell, 2006). This put emphasis on the material aspects of fatherhood, and less on the emotional engagement; even when taking a look into the policies and laws in the country it is evident emphasis on economic support is stressed as the laws that seek to make fathers pay maintenance (Morell, 2006). Provision or providing for your children Holborn & Eddy, (2011) expectation by the society places pressure on fathers, and puts limitation to their involvement (as cited in Ratele, 2012)

Times has passed from pre-colonial times, apartheid era and post-apartheid times, although the times has passed and hopefully changed, one thing that will remain is the importance for fathers to provide. It may be seen as a traditional requirement, or socialisation however from

the findings by the participants, fathers still see providing as important as being a father. As mentioned, even the South African law is in corporation with this idea, where they will make fathers that are not paying money for their children well-being, pay through a court order. But this these participants they provided for their children through their own will. Even the participant who is unemployed, although he is not earning an income his mother assists him in financially supporting his daughter. He also tries to buy some himself when he gets money from his mother to buy his daughter something. This could be seen as the participant trying to validate his masculinity, confirm, that he is a father to his daughter and not always have his mother provide for his daughter.

For other participants, they can be seen as migrant labours. They live away from their children (not necessarily from their rural areas) coming to another city and for some another province to work. With money that they receive, they sent it home. They send it to their families and to their children in order to provide for their well-being. As Morell (2006) states that with the economic conditions men or fathers find it difficult to find work and when they do find work it is usually in great distance from their children. It is true for participants whose children are in the North West and Pretoria and the men are working in Randfontein. This places pressure on the participants; however the participants persisted without having a court to order them to provide for their children. This elucidates a certain value for money when it comes to being involved in the lives of the children.

#### **4.1.1. Money and its value**

As indicated in the findings money and providing is important to the participants. The participants mostly the single ones i.e. not married saw money as their main challenge and compared to the participants who are married. Participants wish to provide more for their children not only for their children but for their families at home. As participant 5 stated that ever since he got his child it has been difficult to provide for his family at home because his main priority is ensuring that his child has all the essentials needed to survive especially since the mother of the child is not working. This puts enormous pressure for him as he feels he is letting his family down by not supporting them but consoles himself by remembering that his siblings are working and can provide for his family and he can focus on supporting his child.

Earlier it was said that media and society plays its part in the construct of men seeing providing for the children as the core (Morell, 2006). Even in money and its value, media and the society construct how men and fathers and people in general value money. As participant 4 puts it



*‘My problem is work, it pays too little... I can’t, okay... you know in life we like competition; not that I like competing but competition is there for everyone and it pushes you to be ahead. For example you I see you driving your own car as a woman. I too as a man would wish to see myself driving my own car but it is not my only aim in life... I wish to provide more for my child, there are many things I wish to get for her but it is so hard...’*

He experience challenges in financially supporting his child which contributes to his idea of money being a factor. With the socio-cultural tendency that define fatherhood primary in terms of ability to provide economically for one’s family according to Makuksha (2013) it have a negative impact on fatherhood as this robs a number of men of the opportunity to be more involved in their children’s lives. The feeling of not providing and not providing the way you would wish can make the man feel emasculated, especially when a woman is able to on her own. The participant used the student as an example instead of another man who is driving a car but because he pictures a woman driving her own car makes him wish to have that and more. This goes back to gender roles that we are socialised into, he confirms the idea according to Mavungu (2013) that the popular belief that “if a Black man is not financially supporting he should rather distance himself from his children” (as cited in Khewu & Adu, 2015: 2).

Interestingly, although all participants speak about providing for their children, in terms of buying food, clothes, cell phones, sweets etc. these are all post-natal responsibilities. None on the participants speak about providing for the children pre-natal, buying things before hand or preparing to have a child by getting things ready beforehand. From a study done by Theresa Quinn, (2012), participant spoke about pre-natal preparations, the buying of formula, nappies and clothes. However for the participants in this study this was not the case, even for the married participants did not mention any pre-natal provision for their families. This brings the question of whether a father providing for his child is a man or a man providing for his child is a father.

Provision and providing for children is not all that the participants saw as important for being involved in their children’s lives. The relationship that these men have with their children is also important. This emotional involvement is what some writers refer to ‘new fathers.’

## **4.2. Relationship**

As much as the participants view providing for their children as critical in being involved however they mentioned a relationship. Meteyer (2014) simply put it that father involvement

is indicated not only by financial support but by visitation, activities and so forth i.e. a relationship. Most participants have a relationship with their children or at least try to have a relationship with their children. They found it to be important to have that relationship with their children. For some of the participants that live away from their children it is especially important to have a relationship. For example participant 5 states that being far from his child is difficult however calling every day is much better than not “socialising” at all, there is a relationship formed at the end of the day.

This brings forth the idea of the ‘new father’ by Marsiglio & Roy (2012) and Roy (2008), which is a man who is both a provider and a caregiver to his children (as cited in Morell, 2006). Caregiver in this sense according to Attachment Theory is the person that the child develops a relationship, provides social and emotional development (Lee Senior, 2009). According to Ritchter & Morell (2006) for Black fathers to equate fatherhood and providing is dangerous especially when Grange (2013) argues that fatherhood and a father’s role is not limited to providing but it includes being a caregiver, nurture the children as well as being a protector (Khewu & Adu, 2015). As a famous quote by Sigmund Freud (1930: 72) “I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as need for a father’s protection” (as cited in Thurschwell, 2000: 104); this points out a need for fathers, ‘new fathers’ to be more than economical providers but to be co-primary givers to their children. As Participant 1 points out via the differentiation of terminologies

*‘Anybody can father a child but to become a dad means that you are involved. So anyone can be a father it’s simple. Your involvement in your child’s life is where the dad part comes in. for me it’s not about just being a male figure biological father as such; it is about being a real role model to your kids and take charge, and lead by example. You grooming them, in other words you are breeding them to be what you want them to be. Somehow growing up under a father and you have notice some mistake that you do not want to repeat. So you are breaking that cycle. So you become that ‘dad’ that you hoped your father was to you.’*

What has been identified by the participant is that what Morell (2006: 13) also disputes of the saying that ‘a man becomes a father when he impregnates a woman’. What the participants shows by the differentiation of terminologies is that he agrees that a man becomes a father by impregnating but that father only becomes a ‘dad’ when he is involved in that child’s; involvement in the sense of building a relationship and a caregiver for the child. Just as Mkhize (2004) states “fatherhood goes beyond conception and extends to a network of other close

social relationships between adult males and children who may or may not be biologically their own” (as cited in Makusha, 2013: 2). According to Quinn (2012) a father’s involvement varies from non-primary caregiver to primary caregiver and it is usually determined by the time spent with the child. That being said geographical proximity plays a vital part in time being spent as well as the relationship with the mother of the child which brings forth the next thing that will be discussed about.

#### **4.2.1. Relationship with mother of the child**

As stated geographical proximity parts a role when it comes to time spent being with the child and how much a father is involved. It was noted that a significant small number of men are married to the mother of their children, which gives them easier access to see their children when they want to, every day. Meaning they have the privilege of spending time with the children on daily basis, they do not have to make an appointment to see their children. However for the fathers who stay away from the children and are not married to the mother of the child, it is not that simple. For the participants that stay in another province and even city from their children, they have to see their children very months. For participant 2 that works in another town he makes an effort to see the child 3 times a week after work although he comes at 6.

That being said there is also a connection with the relationship with the mother of the child even if the father is working away in another province, city or town. For example participant 5 his child is in Pretoria but he is together with the mother of the child and he therefore goes to Pretoria every month. It is different for participant 4 who is not together with the mother of the child, according to him the family of the mother of the child tried to stop him from seeing the child so he is unable to see the child on a monthly basis, he has to see the child whenever they (the family of the mother of the child) permit to. For participant 10, who is not together with the mother of the child he states that he went to see the child once but his mother fetched the child to visit him. For participant 8 things are more complex in the sense that three of his children are in the North West however they are not by the same mother. The last child, he is still together with the mother so he is able to see the child every moth. However with the other two children, the participant expresses that it was difficult because him and the mother of the child broke up and he was not able to see the children, they stopped him and then the mother passed away, however at the end he is now able to see the children and speak to them on a daily basis.

*‘..... Like my relationship with the older two are changing and it is affecting me. You know when you raise a child together with the mother and you break up the families do not want you to be part of the child’s life , they do not want you to visit and things like that. But at times they leave them for me to visit them....’*

According to Makusha (2013) fathering or father involvement also tends to be influenced by the father-mother relationship (the relationship between the father and the mother) because the quality of father-mother relationship than the father-mother legal or residential status is more important to father-child involvement. In other words the father and mother may not reside together in the same place but have a good relationship with each other (not necessarily a romantic relationship) has a positive influence on the father’s relationship with the child (Makusha, 2013). This demonstrates the relationship with the mother of the child plays a vital role. By strictly looking at the participants who are not married to the mother of the child, one can see that those that have a good relationship with the mother are able to see the child on a regular basis than those who do not have a good relationship with the mother of the child.

#### **4.2.2. Attachment Theory**

To reiterate Attachment theory states that a young child needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally, and that healthy attachment brings security and joy, unhealthy attachment brings anxiety, grief and depression (Lee Senior, 2009). According to State of African Fathers (2015: 47) father’s lives matter in children, for the emotional, social, intellectual development because “world needs men involved as caregiver not because fathers do uniquely ‘male’ things but because children are more likely to thrive with multiple nurturing caregivers, regardless of their sex”. In saying that children thrive they need as many caregivers but if the father is around it is more beneficial to have a father as another caregiver. Similar in a study by Rohner & Veneziane (2001) which may be outdated nonetheless, the study demonstrated the strong positive effects of fatherly affection had on children’s psychological well-being and emotional develop throughout the child’s life (as cited, Quinn, 2012). It is also said that fathers who have warm close and nurturing relationship with their children can have an enormously positive influence on their development (Morell, 2006). Participant 9 states what he thinks what his daughter needs from him

*'Money is the least of what they need. My daughter just needs hugs, needs me to walk with her. She enjoys the walk to the shop more than what we are going to buy from the shop. They want you to be there money is the last thing, communication affection, listening hearing speaking to them is what is needed money is a bonus.'*

This shows that indeed money is needed for the upbringing of children but children also need love and affection. Other participants also stressed how they see communication, especially since they are far away they see talking to them developing a relationship over the phone, calling every day better than not making any efforts at all. This in the long run will be beneficial to the children developing secure attachment.

#### **4.3. Role of participants' fathers**

What was noted in the study, although it did not come out a lot for it to be a theme however it was interesting; it is the relationship between some of the participant and with their own fathers. A number of participants from whom the fathers were present were raised by "strict" fathers and did not have a relationship with those fathers although they were present in their lives. According to Morrell, (2006) & Richter et al. (2011) traditionally, fatherhood in Africa was defined by the powerful role accorded to men and fathers as acknowledged heads of households, based on a patriarchal system (as cited in Makusha, 2013). Adomako Ampofo & Boateng (2007) states the biological father was seen as an authoritative figure that was consulted on important household decisions even in his absence (as cited in Makusha, 2013). This is evident in the finds that a number of participants that had their fathers present in their lives were very authoritative and punitive. From descriptions such as instructive, traditional, "fear me", "one bull", the "head" this shows that indeed traditionally fathers more punitive and authoritative, powerful in their manner that they needed to be "feared" in a way.

Interestingly it was discovered in the interviews were participants who were raised by strict, 'old school' fathers have a certain way of describing their role to their children. Participants 1 talk about 'taking charge', 'breeding'. Participant 3 describes it as 'controlling' his child, 'building' him up. Participant 9 talks of 'steering', 'guiding'. What is thought provoking is these participant described their fathers as "fear me" and 'old school' or 'traditional'. These men are all married to the mother of their children; therefore they are involved in their children's life full time. This can be explained through what they experienced in their childhood. This according to Freud (1927) that is identifying with the father and for the father

to play a protective role is important for the resolution of the Oedipus Stage (as cited in Quinn, 2012).

Freud speaks to children, more specifically sons that identify to an extent with their fathers and try to be like them, conversely he states that before identifying with the father the son unconsciously is jealous of the father and wants them “dead” (Watts & Hook, 2009). This brings the question whether authoritative parenting style of previous generation fathers influence them to do things “the right way”, that is getting married and having a family. Yet again with the identification and identifying with the father instead of competing with the father, as stated in the Oedipus Complex the men therefore got married to be like the dad and have a wife assumingly similar to his mother (Watts, & Hook, 2009). Correspondingly participant 10, when talking about his late father, he believed that if his father was alive he doubt he would a child, he would be afraid because the father was strict.

#### **4.5. Limitations**

Limitation for the study is that more could be found in that it would have been interesting to get more information from men that are older in comparison to the younger ‘new dads’ and compare the results. Nonetheless that being said research with men is notoriously always difficult in that they are known for not liking to talk to ‘strangers’ about their personal lives. Patel, Doku & Tennakoon (2003) developed a criteria of population group that are challenging in terms of response; this group are mainly people who are older, male gendered, non-whites, from urban areas, unemployed or low occupation, low family income or low economic status. The student participants are from more than one of these criteria, nonetheless like every research more can be done for the next research to better it no research is perfect.

#### **Conclusion**

The chapter highlighted the main finding from the study into its basic form and incorporated a discussion together with the finding according to the relevant literature. Table 2 (Appendix G) is a summary of what was found in the interview from the participant description to the theme founded in the study. So far the study showed in what way fathers are involved in their children’s lives which is namely through financial provision and through developing a relationship. What the study shows is the challenges that are faced which are namely the geographical distance from them and their children, the relationship with the mothers of the children and also finance, the longing to provide more. These were the objectives that were

aimed for through the research. The next chapter will conclude by giving recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusions and Recommendation

This research was aimed at understanding the involvement of working class fathers in the lives of their children. Through the interviews that were conducted with the participants the research was able to ascertain where possible a pattern in terms of the factors contributing in fathers being involved in their children's lives. To explore ways in which fathers are involved in their children's lives, having a relationship with children, supporting them (not only in monetary terms) speaking to them and seeing on a regular basis. To identify some of the work related challenges that affect their involvements in parenting of working class fathers which were mainly money and the working hours and demands from work. To identify the values they hold about parenting and to understand their own experiences of being a father. The research was based on two theoretical frameworks of Freud and of the Attachment Theory.

With the Freudian theory the research was looking at the effects of early childhood experience and its impact on the men being fathers. Attachment theory was based on the assumption that as much as a child's primary attachment should be with a mother but an attachment with a father is just as important. The research was also based on the literature of the different contribution factors to fathers being involved in their children lives. Factors like money, effects of apartheid and migrant labour in South Africa, the relationship with the mother of the child all are seen to be things influencing the involvement of fathers.

In essence the research found that providing for their children and having a relationship with them (visiting, calling, leading, and being a role model); is important for "modern" working fathers. Modern in the sense that none of the participant's interviews were over the age of 40. Table 2 (Appendix G) shows an in-depth summary of the findings from the interviews conducted. As stated the study showed in what way s fathers are involved in their children's lives which is namely through financial provision and through developing a relationship. For participants this is important to them even though this is a traditional aspect of what it is of being a father but participants still stick to those traditional values. What the study shows is the challenges that are faced which are namely the geographical distance from them and their children, the relationship with the mothers of the children and also finance, the longing to provide more. What this shows is that in our country there will still be men having to leave their families in order to provide for them therefore geographical factors will always play a part



however with these 'new fathers' they now try to change the dynamics by calling their children every day. Also that although previous fathers shows characteristics of authority however these 'strict' fathers instilled values of family to the point that the participants that are married are from fathers who are described as 'strict'. These were the objectives that were aimed for through the research understanding the involvement, looking at what challenges they face, understanding their childhood experience (for those who had fathers involved in their lives) and see its impact on them today as well as point how these men by all means try to stay involved in their children's lives dispute the challenges they face.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendations for future research**

Where does this leave the future of this research? Firstly the issue with the research many of the Participants were forever in a hurry to go home or to make a next appointment therefore the proper in depth interviews to probe certain statements could not be done. The student felt hesitant and was not comfortable to conduct the interviews. Many of the participants and identified participants mainly asked if they were unable to do the research over the phone or on social media. Also with the little number of participants more patterns could have emerged.

Thus the future for this research, it is to look into more convenient ways to conduct interviews for men, perhaps through voice notes on instant messaging sites or stick to quantitative methods of research for the reason that men do not like interacting and sit for too long talking to a stranger. Also the research in future can focus on fathers involved in the lives of children whom they are not together with the mother of the child. This is men that are not together with the mother of the child but is supporting the child. Questionnaires could be used for the participant because of their nature and with today's society everyone is on the go therefore interviews and other forms of data collection should be convenient.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

As social workers, through this research it is important to facilitate programmes that encourages father involved, father child involvement. Like the Kangaroo Mother Care but for fathers, it is a relatively a new campaign however they encourage fathers to also bond with the child being bear chested. A community project promoting this campaign will encourage the bond with father and child. This is important because it will encourage attachment with the father as well, as noted that it is also important for a child to have an attachment with the father.

The world is changing and so is fatherhood, attachment is important for them to develop secure attachment and to build healthy relationships with the opposite sex.

Social workers can promote parenting workshops for parents who are not together for them to learn how to work out things such as visitation, maintenance, how much (according to what the father can afford). Everything to ensure the child is raised 'peacefully' and far away as possible from courts and family conflict. With this the research ascertains ways in which they overcome challenges to ensure that fathers are involved in their children's lives. In the end the fathers face their own different challenges but made an effort to be involved in their children's lives. It hoped that other men too will be influenced and be part of their child's life.

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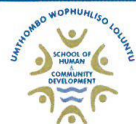
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## Appendix A



**SOCIAL WORK**  
**THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)**



### DEPARTMENTAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SOCIAL WORK) CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**PROTOCOL NUMBER:** SW1/16/08/04

**PROJECT TITLE:** Understanding parental involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives

**RESEARCHER/S:** Morongwa Kayla (685320)

**SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT:** SHCD / Social Work

**DATE CONSIDERED:** 18 August 2016

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:** APPROVED

**EXPIRY DATE:** 09 October 2018

**DATE:** 10 October 2016

  
**CHAIRPERSON:** Dr Francine Masson

**Cc: Supervisor:** Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela

### DECLARATION OF RESEARCHER(S)

To be completed in **DUPLICATE** and **ONE COPY** returned to the Administrative Assistant, Room 8, Department of Social Work, Umthombo Building Basement.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorised to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the committee. **For Masters and PhD an annual progress report is required.**



SIGNATURE

15 / 11 / 2016  
DATE

**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES**

## Appendix B

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives.

Good day,

My name is Morongwa Kayla Langa and I am a fourth (final) year student registered for the degree Bachelor of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research into the *understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives*. The main aim of the research is to understand the involvement of working class fathers in the lives of their children. It is hoped that the findings will help in understanding the reality of working class men involved in their children's lives. I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. If you agree to take part, I shall arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The interview will last approximately one hour. You may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering.

With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. No one other than my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and interview schedules will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. Should you feel, during the interview you need further counselling; a qualified social worker is available for counselling. Ms. Karabo Modise based at Dr. Yusuf Dadoo Hospital Krugersdorp and she can be reached on the following number: (011) 600-6056

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted on telephone no. 0734448587. Alternatively you may contact my supervisor Ms. Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela on 0117174471 her email address. Motlalepule.Nathane@wits.ac.za. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request.



Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix C

18 October 2016

### Understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives

The Senior Pastor

Motion Church

#### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Dear Mr. Edgar. Billy

My name is Morongwa Kayla Langa; I am a registered fourth year student in the degree Bachelor of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research into the understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives. I hope to access at least 10 working class African men who are all South Africans between the ages of 25 to 55 men. These men must be involved in the lives of their children. The objective of the study is to understand the reasons of the involvement in the lives of their children, to identify the factors contributing to men being part of their children's lives.

The research will be conducted under the supervision of my supervisor Ms. Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on my mobile phone number 0734448587 or email. [Kayla.langa.56@gmail.com](mailto:Kayla.langa.56@gmail.com). Alternatively you may contact my supervisor on 011 7174471 of email. [Motlalepule.Nathane@wits.ac.za](mailto:Motlalepule.Nathane@wits.ac.za).

I undertake to provide you with a bound copy of the dissertation upon completion of the study. Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

**Morongwa Kayla Langa**

## Appendix D

### Understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives

#### CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO-TAPING OF THE INTERVIEW

I hereby consent to tape-recording of the interview and being a voluntary participant of the study. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained at all times and that the tapes will be destroyed two years after any publication arising from the study or six years after completion of the study if there are no publications.

**Name of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Researcher** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Understanding of paternal involvement of African working class fathers in their children's lives

#### CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular items or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

**Name of Participant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Researcher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F

### Interview schedule

#### Section A: Demographic Information

Pseudo Name/ Participants No. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Age Categories

25 – 30	31 – 35	36 – 40	41 – 45	46 – 50	51 – 55	56 – above
---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	------------

#### Employment status

Employed	Unemployed
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Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Biological children \_\_\_\_\_

- Tell me more about you and your role as a father.
- Tell me more about your involvement as a father in the lives of your children.
  - How would you describe your relationship with your children?
  - Do you currently live with your children in the same household?
- What is the number of family members in your household?
- Do you send money (if they are not living with you), do you phone? Are you the disciplinarian does really mean?
- Tell me about ways in which you are involved in your children's lives.
- Do your working hours allow you time to be involved in the lives of your children?
- Briefly share with me some of the challenges you face in being working fathers and being fully involved in the lives if the children.
- Please tell me briefly about your own experience of being parent.
- Briefly tell me about your childhood, relationship with your father (if he was there or not)
- If your father was present in your life, what was the relationship you had with him?

## Appendix G

**Table 2: Summary of findings**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	married same house hold	together with mom different house hold	married	not together	together with mom different household	not together	married	together with mom different house hold	married	not together
	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	unskilled	Semi-skilled	unskilled	Semi-professional	Semi-skilled	Intermediate	Unemployed
<b>Father</b>	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present*	deceased	Present	Deceased but raised by grand father	Present	Deceased
<b>Role of their father</b>	Old school “fear me” one bull	“Hero” role model	“wore trousers” “fear him”	- “Life with out a dad is Hell”	“he tried” “had love”	-	“role model” “paved a way”	“strict” made sure he had laws	“traditional, instructive” no affection	- Doesn’t think he would have a child if father was alive

<b>Their roles</b>	Provider, involved emotionally etc. take charge, role model, breeding	Provide, spend time, visits 3 times a week and weekends	Control, spend time, building the child up	Try to provide, try to visit	Sends money, phones, and visits every month	Provides, visits every month and phones everyday	Guide, provider, teacher, means of survival, role model	Provides, buys clothes, food etc., visits and phones them	Steer, guide them, love and affection, provide for them	Sees the child during the holidays. Buys her things when he has money
<b>Challenges</b>	No challenges	Leaves from work (time off). Working hours, working away for weeks	Work hours are too long, and too tired to play with child	Wish had more money to provide for child	Money is a challenge	Money also a challenge	No challenges	Sees that after raising the child away from mother it is difficult to be involved as the family stops him	Working hours, being away from home	Family always on his case when they support the child. Wants him to get back with the mother and does not want to.

## Appendix H



**PO Box 6399 Greenhills Randfontein 1767  
Tel 011 412 2855**

Hi Morongwa Kayla Langa

I Edgar Billy give you permission to conduct your research here at Motion Church.

God Bless  
Ps Edgar Billy

Pastor Edgar Billy - Email: [motionchurch@gmail.com](mailto:motionchurch@gmail.com) - Cell: 074 582 0519

**"Moving people to God and purpose"**

Reaching our world - Influencing lives - Building a godly generation



