

Contents

Title Page.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Declaration.....	xiii
Acknowledgements.....	xiv
Dedication.....	xix
List of Tables.....	xx
List of Figures.....	xxi
Acronyms.....	xxii
Maps of Bophelong.....	xxiii-xxiv

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Aims.....	1
1.2 Research Questions.....	2
1.3 Rationale.....	3
1.3.1 The national and international prevalence of the woman-headed family form.....	3
1.3.2 Social vs. juridical changes in post-apartheid South Africa.....	6
1.3.3 A challenge to government policies on the family.....	6
1.3.4 Changing social norms in post-apartheid South Africa.....	7
1.3.5 Gender and patriarchy in post-apartheid South Africa.....	7
1.3.6 The persistence of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.....	7
1.3.7 Single woman-heads, agency and history.....	8
1.3.8 Why a focus on African woman-headed families?.....	8
1.3.9 Why Bophelong: The Peculiarity of the Research Site.....	9
1.4 Methodology.....	11
1.4.1 Research approach.....	11
1.4.1.1 Overview.....	11
1.4.1.2 Some criticisms of ethnography.....	12

1.4.1.3 Strategies for the observer/researcher.....	13
1.4.1.4 Incorporating criticisms and alternatives into the Research.....	14
1.4.2 Research methods.....	15
1.4.2.1 A variety of methods.....	15
1.4.2.2 Research ethics, confidentiality and consent.....	18
1.4.2.3 Some reflections on the research methods.....	19
1.4.3 The phases of the research.....	21
1.4.3.1 Phase 1.....	21
1.4.3.2 Phase 2.....	23
1.4.3.2.1 A volunteer at ASEDI.....	24
1.4.3.2.2 Preparation and Training for Survey.....	25
1.4.3.2.3 Bophelong Survey Implemented.....	26
1.4.3.3 Phase 3.....	27
1.4.3.3.1 Selection of woman-heads.....	27
1.4.3.3.2 Triangulating interviews with woman-heads.....	28
1.4.3.4 Value of the research phases.....	31
1.5 Limitations of the Research.....	32
1.6 Thesis Overview.....	34
1.7 Chapter Outline.....	36

Chapter 2 Conceptual framework

2.1 Introduction.....	38
2.2 Clarifying Key Concepts.....	38
2.2.1 ‘Woman’ vs. ‘female’.....	39
2.2.2 Sex and gender.....	41
2.2.3 ‘Women’ and ‘gender’.....	44
2.3 Patriarchy.....	47
2.3.1 Patriarchy is an historical category.....	47
2.3.2 Patriarchy and the capitalist social formation.....	47
2.3.3 Patriarchy as a system of reproduction	49
2.3.4 Patriarchy, ideology and subjectivity.....	49
2.3.5 Patriarchy and sexuality.....	50

2.3.6 Towards a theory of patriarchy.....	51
2.3.7 Patriarchy, the family and authority.....	51
2.3.8 Patriarchy, culture and tradition in South Africa.....	53
2.4 Headship.....	55
2.4.1 Male-headship contested.....	59
2.4.2. Woman-headship and its contradictions.....	60
2.4.3 Family vs. household.....	63
2.4.3.1 The relationship between families and households.....	65
2.4.3.2 Differentiating family and households in South Africa.....	67
2.5 Social Reproduction: theoretical and conceptual issues.....	69
2.5.1 The Concept of social reproduction.....	69
2.5.2 Reproduction of life and of the means of subsistence.....	71
2.5.3 Social reproduction as reproduction of social relations.....	74
2.5.4 Social reproduction and social struggles.....	76
2.5.5 A critical reflection on the literature on social reproduction.....	77
2.5.5.1 On the concept of social reproduction.....	78
2.5.5.2 Social Reproduction, Capitalism and Neoliberalism.....	81
2.5.5.2.1 Neoliberalism and social reproduction.....	82
2.5.5.3 Neoliberalism, social reproduction and the family.....	84
2.5.5.4 Women, Gender and Patriarchy.....	87
2.5.5.5 Gendered subjectivity and woman-headed families.....	90
2.5.5.6 A ‘crisis’ of social reproduction.....	93
2.6 Social Reproduction in Single-woman-headed families in South Africa.....	94
2.6.1 A View of the Totality.....	97

Chapter 3 Woman-headed families in South Africa

3.1 Introduction.....	98
3.2 Family forms and the rise of capitalism in South Africa	98
3.2.1 Pre-capitalist society, family forms and social mores.....	98
3.2.2. Violent disruption of indigenous societies.....	100

3.2.3 Capitalist hegemony	101
3.3 The rise of woman-headed families in South Africa.....	104
3.3.1 Black women migrate	104
3.3.2 Black women, families and the cities.....	105
3.3.3 Cohabitation vs. Fragmentation.....	107
3.4 Emergence of woman-headed families.....	112
3.4.1 Women's Attitudes.....	114
3.5 Democracy, political freedom and woman-headed families in contemporary South Africa.....	116
3.5.1 Democratisation and juridical equality in post-apartheid South Africa.....	116
3.5.2 Access to housing, inheritance and the right to ownership of assets.....	118
3.5.3 Impact of Neoliberalism.....	120
3.5.4 Women's access to waged work and the right to work.....	121
3.5.4.1 Domestic work restructured.....	124
3.5.5 Care work.....	125
3.5.6 Contradictions of the state's gender policy.....	126
3.5.7 Low wages, state social grants, poverty and the rise of woman-headed families	128
3.5.7.1 State Grants and the rise of woman-headed families.....	128
3.5.7.2 Poverty and inequality.....	132
3.5.7.2.1 Inequality between households.....	132
3.5.7.2.2 Inequality and woman-headed family-households.....	134
3.5.7.3 Childcare, work and woman-headed families.....	136
3.5.7.4 Fathers and Child Maintenance.....	137
3.5.7.5 Gender-based violence and woman-headed families.....	139
3.6 Size and Structure of the woman-headed family form in South Africa.....	141
3.7 Summing up.....	143

Chapter 4 The Research Site in Context: Bophelong in South Africa

4.1	Introduction.....	145
4.2	Bophelong in South Africa.....	145
4.2.1	Geographic Location.....	145
4.2.2	Brief overview.....	146
4.3	A Brief History of Bophelong	149
4.3.1	History and economy of the Vaal region before apartheid.....	149
4.3.1.1	Coal.....	149
4.3.1.2	Steel.....	149
4.3.1.3	Energy – ESKOM and SASOL formed.....	150
4.3.1.4	Water.....	151
4.3.2	A Working Class Divided	152
4.3.3	Bophelong Township under apartheid.....	153
4.3.3.1	Rise of manufacturing.....	153
4.3.3.2	Housing in Bophelong.....	154
4.3.3.3	The State’s struggle to control black townships.....	156
4.3.3.4	Vaal Uprising 1984.....	157
4.3.4	Bophelong in the new democracy in South Africa	158
4.4	Socio-Economic Profile of Bophelong.....	159
4.4.1	Population and Migration.....	159
4.4.1.1	Population Size.....	159
4.4.1.2	Migration.....	160
4.4.1.3	A Youthful Population.....	161
4.4.1.4	Gender.....	161
4.4.1.5	Languages Spoken.....	162
4.4.1.6	Household Size.....	162
4.4.2	Economic profile.....	163
4.4.2.1	Financial Crisis in Emfuleni municipality.....	163
4.4.2.2	Employment, Self-employment and Unemployment.....	165
4.4.2.3	The Skills Base	167
4.4.2.4	Black Women and skills.....	168

4.4.2.5	Income – wages and informal sector incomes.....	169
4.4.2.5.1	Wages.....	169
4.4.2.5.2	Informal Sector.....	170
4.4.2.6	Survival strategies.....	171
4.4.2.7	Debts and Mashonisas.....	171
4.4.3	Social Profile	172
4.4.3.1	Education and Literacy.....	172
4.4.3.2	Housing.....	172
4.4.3.3	Health and Reproductive Rights.....	174
4.4.3.4	HIV/AIDS.....	174
4.4.3.5	Contraception and Termination of pregnancy.....	175
4.4.3.6	Social Amenities.....	175
4.4.3.7	Cultural /Associational.....	176
4.5	Family Forms in Bophelong.....	176
4.5.1	Family	176
4.5.2	Family Forms.....	177
4.5.3	Woman and headship.....	179
4.5.4	Woman-headship, age and marital status.....	179
4.5.4.1	Woman and marital status.....	181
4.5.5	Family forms and woman-heads.....	182
4.5.6	Family forms and income.....	183
4.5.7	Family form and housing type.....	184
4.5.8	Housing type and sex of head of household.....	185
4.5.9	Family Conflict.....	186
4.5.10	Children in Bophelong.....	187
4.5.11	Maintenance of children.....	187
4.5.12	Domestic Violence.....	188
4.6	Black women and the social grants	188
4.6.1	Brief overview.....	188

4.6.2 Social Grants: The National Picture.....	190
4.6.3 Profile of Black Women Recipients	191
4.6.3.1 What do they use the Grant for?.....	193
4.6.3.2 What food is eaten every day?.....	193
4.7 Summing up: Bophelong in contemporary South African society.....	195

Chapter 5 The Grandmothers' Generation - the Survivors

5.1 Introduction.....	197
5.2 Grandmothers: Becoming the Head of the Family.....	198
5.2.1 Biographies of three Grandmothers.....	198
5.2.2 Becoming a woman head of the family.....	203
5.2.3 Self-identity as heads of families.....	210
5.3 The Family Form of the Grandmothers' woman-headed family.....	214
5.3.1 Composition of the family.....	214
5.3.2 Sources of income.....	217
5.3.3 Patterns of consumption.....	219
5.4 Grandmothers and the Reproduction of Capitalist Patriarchy.....	222
5.4.1 Division of labour.....	222
5.4.2 Decision-making.....	224
5.4.3 Authority in the woman-headed family.....	225
5.4.4 Associational life.....	228
5.4.5 Culture, tradition and patriarchy.....	230
5.5 Summing up the Families Headed by Grandmothers.....	235

Chapter 6 The Mothers' Generation - the Liberators

6.1 Introduction.....	239
6.2 Mothers: Becoming the Head of the Family.....	240
6.2.1 Biographies of the Mothers.....	240
6.2.2 How the Mothers Became Heads of their Families	242
6.2.2.1 Overview.....	242

6.2.2.2 Abuse, Violence and Poverty.....	245
6.2.2.3 Economic crisis and the crisis of the male-headed families.....	246
6.2.2.4 Demise of Apartheid, the housing question and new gender discourses.....	248
6.2.2.5 Declining social pressures, fathers and the political economy of apartheid.....	249
6.2.3 The Mothers' attitudes to men and their identity as heads of families.....	252
6.3 The Family Form of the Mothers' Generation.....	259
6.3.1 Composition of the Mothers' families.....	259
6.3.2 Working conditions and skills.....	261
6.3.3 Sources of income.....	263
6.3.4 Patterns of consumption.....	267
6.4 The Mothers' Generation and the Reproduction of Capitalist Patriarchy.....	272
6.4.1 Division of labour.....	272
6.4.2 Decision-making.....	276
6.4.3 Authority.....	281
6.4.4 Associational life.....	283
6.4.5 Culture, tradition and patriarchy.....	285
6.5 Summing up the Mothers' Generation.....	293
 Chapter 7 The Daughters - the Pragmatists	
7.1 Introduction.....	302
7.2 Becoming the Head of the Family.....	303
7.2.1 Biographies of the Daughters.....	303
7.2.2 How the Daughters became heads of their families.....	306
7.2.3 The Daughters' Attitudes to men.....	310
7.2.4 Self-image and identity as woman-heads of families.....	317
7.3 The Family Form of the Daughters' Families.....	320
7.3.1 Composition of the families.....	320
7.3.2 Work and sources of income.....	322

7.3.2.1 Work.....	322
7.3.2.2 Other sources of income.....	327
7.3.3 Patterns of consumption.....	329
7.4 The Daughters' generation and the reproduction of capitalist patriarchy.....	334
7.4.1 Division of labour.....	334
7.4.2 Decision-making.....	337
7.4.3 Authority.....	339
7.4.4 Associational life.....	341
7.4.5 Culture, tradition and patriarchy.....	343
7.5 Summing up the Daughters' Generation.....	348
Chapter 8 Conclusion - Social Reproduction in the woman-headed family	
8.1 Introduction.....	352
8.2 The peculiar nature of social reproduction in woman-headed families.....	353
8.3 Towards an understanding of the woman-headed family form.....	355
8.3.1 The objective and subjective potential of the woman-headed family for social change.....	355
8.3.2 Becoming a woman-head.....	358
8.3.3 Self concept and attitude to men.....	363
8.3.4 The Structure and composition of the woman-headed family.....	365
8.3.4.1 Variety in form.....	366
8.3.4.2 Variety in headship.....	367
8.3.4.3 Fluidity in composition.....	367
8.3.5 Work, income and patterns of consumption.....	368
8.3.6 Division of labour, decision-making and authority.....	370
8.3.7 Associational life.....	373
8.3.8 Traditional culture and patriarchy.....	373
8.3.9 Woman-headed families and state patriarchy.....	375
8.4 Struggle, organisation and the emancipatory potential of woman-headed families.....	378
8.5 Concluding Remarks.....	379

8.5.1 Some considerations for social policy.....	380
9. Bibliography.....	382
10. Appendices	
10.1 Appendix 1: Meetings with Key informants and organisations, 2007-08.....	413
10.2 Appendix 2: Interviews with social grant recipients, Bophelong Township, March-May 2007.....	414
10.3 Appendix 3: In-depth interviews with woman-headed families in Bophelong 2007-2009.....	415
10.4 Appendix 4: Interviewers, Bophelong Survey 2007.....	417
10.5 Appendix 5: Social amenities in Bophelong as at 2008.....	418
10.6 Appendix 6: Questionnaire - In-depth interviews with social grant recipients.....	419
10.7 Appendix 7: Questionnaire - Bophelong Survey held in November/December 2007.....	423
10.8 Appendix 8: Guide questions for the In-depth interviews with woman-headed families.....	430
10.9 Appendix 9: Guide questions for the Focus Group discussion with woman-headed families, 18 December 2008.....	434