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If a man is a head of the household what is a woman? The impact of rural women's engagement in the textile industries of Lesotho on gendered relations in their households: a case study in Mafeteng, Lesotho

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If a man is a head of the household what is a woman? The impact of rural women's engagement in the textile industries of Lesotho on gendered relations in their households: a case study in Mafeteng, Lesotho.

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies.

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Supervisor: Dr. Shireen Ally

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my beloved son Mare Nyabela who restrained his emotions when missing his mother. You have been very strong and I realize the man in you, my boy. Thank you.

Also to the memory of my father I dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God for sustaining me throughout my studies during the period of preparing this dissertation.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Shireen Ally for her guidance, support, suggestions and comments that enlightened me a lot. You have been a pillar of strength. Thank you.

My special thanks go to David Ambrose for his valuable input into this report.

The participants in this study allowed me into their households and sacrificed their time. I wish to thank them and wish them success in their endeavours.

I am also greatly indebted to my husband, for his love and support throughout the time I spent at Wits.

A special salute goes to my mother 'Mamoeketsi Mohono who single-handedly brought us up and saw us through our schooling.

DECLARATION

I, Mosebatho Mohono-Nyabela, declare that this research report is my own unaided work, and that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

…… .....

Mosebatho Mohono-Nyabela Date

ABSTRACT

This study examines the gender aspects of household dynamics in rural households in Mafeteng, Lesotho. It was inspired by the impact of changes resulting from the major retrenchment of Basotho men from South African mines which has coincides with the employment of a large number of women in relatively newly established textile industry. Snowball sampling was used to elicit data from ten women employed in the textile industries. Moreover, in order to establish the significance of employment on gendered household dynamics, purposive sampling was used to elicit data from ten unemployed women. This study reveals how decision-making is done in rural households of employed women. Among things that influence decision-making is economic status. Furthermore, it exposes the gender aspects of household labour within the employed women's households. It also reveals the influence that women's employment has on marital conflict between spouses.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

> "If I come home and find a man in my bed, and the woman says to me, 'That man is the one providing the food', I have to say to her, 'Cover him up better because he is providing the food'" (Narayan et al., 2000: 119).

In the district of Mafeteng in Lesotho in June 1965 a boy named Tumelo was born in a rich family that owned several cattle and many fields. All the family property was due to be inherited by Tumelo upon his father's death. Tumelo was not exposed to any primary education because his father did not reckon a need for it because his son was surely going to get employed in the mines. In due course, Tumelo migrated to the mines in South Africa at the age of twenty in 1985. Two months following his employment, Tumelo got married to Leetoane who went to school only up to Junior Certificate (JC). They had four children. Unfortunately, in 1995, Tumelo came home because he was retrenched from the mines. Because of drought that ravaged the district, most his father's cattle died while others were sold because of poverty. His father's fields became very unproductive due to drought. However, very fortunately, in 1998, Leetoane got employed in a newly established textile factory in Mafetng.

Currently there are several men in Mafeteng, who like Tumelo, have been retrenched from the mines and thus depend on the salary earned by their wives from the textile industry. However, others invested their money on income generating activities while they were still employed. But, at least fifty two thousand men were still employed in the mines by the end of 2006 and some men in Mafeteng are still part of those (Thahane, 2007). A combination of circumstances such as famine, HIV/AIDS and drought has driven several women like Leetoane to work in textile industries.

My interest in the study came in as a result of my concern as to whether women get empowered in gendered household relations as a result of being in paid employment. This study therefore evaluates the changes in gendered household relations as a result of women's salaried employment given their husbands diminished economic statuses.

1.2 AIMS OF STUDY

The aim of my study was to investigate the impact of rural women's participation in paid employment on their household relations in Lesotho.

I intended to concentrate, firstly, on how household decision-making was affected by women's engagement in salaried employment; especially those decisions that surround the planning of household finances and the overall day-to-day running of the affairs of household members. Secondly, I wanted to find out whether rural women's employment has any significant influence on the distribution of housework and whether such influence had any impact on the way they relate to other household members.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

How does rural women's engagement in the textile industries of Lesotho affect the gendered relations in their households?

The study explores the gendered division of labour in the household as well as household decision-making relating to finances, child care, and control over other household resources.

1.4 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Lesotho is a small country that is completely surrounded by South Africa. Because of South Africa's strong economy, many of Lesotho's citizens migrate into South Africa to seek employment. Initially, the source of employment in South Africa for male migrant workers from Lesotho was entirely the mining industry. Magrath (2005) statistically shows that the proportion of South African mine workers from Lesotho rose from less than half in the 1930s to three quarters during the 1980s after which it declined rapidly from the 1990s to date. She suggests this number accounted for 80% of Lesotho's male labour force and accounted for 70% of the rural income. This shows that men brought much of the family income in while women did mostly the unpaid household work and the subsistence agriculture. Nonetheless, the percentages shown above might be an overestimation as other sources of information reveal a little lower proportions of migrant mine workers.

There is a gradual shift in the patriarchal situation in Lesotho and elsewhere due to the increasing demand for women to participate in the labour market. High rates of retrenchment of mine workers since the 1990s has meant increasing unemployment for Lesotho's male labour force. Lesotho's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) (2006) shows that, in the late 1980s, over 120 000 males were migrant labourers mostly in South African gold mines but that number had decreased by half by 2006. With the opening up of low-skilled jobs in the industrial sector in Lesotho, women increasingly participate in the labour market as salaried employees. Specifically, intensifying globalization with policies of Foreign Direct Investment has resulted in the building of textile industries in Lesotho that employ mainly female labourers. The African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA), a free trade agreement between Lesotho and the United States supports growth of these industries in Lesotho (Magrath, 2005; Gibbs, 2005). Gibbs (2005) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006) indicate that the manufacturing sector in Lesotho

employs over 60 000 workers most of whom are women who work in the textile industries. This number however, has declined

significantly recently following the stiff competition from Asia in the textile industry that has put Lesotho at a disadvantaged position since 2005. The textile industries now employ 46 424 employees (Thahane, 2007).

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 GENDERED HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS

2.1.1 Impact of employment on household decision-making

The question that I intend to answer through this study is how decisions concerning use of income are made in a household, especially between wife and husband. The concern is whether there is any influence that women's employment has on financial decision-making in households. Other household decisions were related to control over childcare, and control over other resources such as family property. That is, whether employment poses any challenge to the so-called 'traditional' status of the male as primary decision-maker. Blumberg (1991) contends that increased income determines who in the household has more decision-making power and control in the relationship. Women with greater income, in particular, have more decision-making power and stronger voice in their households. Also, Kilbourne (1990) as quoted by Agarwal (1997), based on studies of American households, argues that women who earn cash have more bargaining power than those who are solely housewives. But Stichter quoted by Shaw (1990) contends that changes in resources do not automatically lead to changes in power although the latter can happen after some time. America is a developed country, and it is likely that its practices differ from experiences in developing countries like Lesotho. This research tried to assess whether women who have a better economic standing than their husbands have more bargaining power over those who are economically weak. Moreover, the study focuses on employment in the textile industry that is generally

low wage and therefore may produce different effects within households than Agarwal's study suggested.

A study conducted by Narayan, Chambers, Shah and Petesch (2000) showed that among the things that pressurize women to engage in paid employment are male unemployment and economic difficulties. They found that the changing economic

role of women becoming breadwinners, to a certain extent, gives them greater decision-making power in their households. For instance, in Narayan et al. (2000: 117) the researchers note that, "in Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia a positive link is found between women's earning capacity and their role in household decisions". Furthermore, the same authors state that researchers in Bower Bank in Jamaica heard of the worsening status of men from one of their respondents who said, "If I come home and find a man in my bed, and the woman says to me, 'That man is the one providing the food,' I have to say to her, 'Cover him up better because he is providing the food'" (Narayan et al., 2000: 119).

Furthermore, Verschoor (2005) learned from the study carried out in Mbale in Uganda, that in the majority of households, men have more control over decisions on how the income earned from household production units such as plots and livestock should be spent, though this is not uniform in all households. This is particularly evident where women are not engaged in any paid work. This results in situations where women resort to finding paid employment in low-paid farm jobs so that they are able to fulfill other spending responsibilities which men pay less attention to, yet are necessary for development of their families (Verschoor, 2005). For instance, women would seek paid employment in order to pay for their personal necessities as well as their children's school fees. In this case, men's control over family resources is enhanced by their access to money and this is the reverse where women have more access to money from household production units (Verschoor, 2005). Equally important, Garcia (2005) discovered that in the Dominican Republic, women who have access to money in the form of remittances, do not only gain control over resources but use it to improve their education and that of their children. The findings also indicate that women save more of their income for

investment and for business purposes than men. I therefore found it important to find out whether women who work in the textile industry in Lesotho have full control of the money they work for or do men overrule decisions on how to spend it. It was especially interesting to uncover realities about women's decision making in Lesotho in the twenty-first century since Epprecht (2000) discusses the shifting position of women in families and communities due to various social changes in the twentieth century.

Thompson and Walker (1989) have found from the literature that men are not impressed when their wives are working unless their households are desperate for means of survival which men themselves cannot provide. They are happier when their wives remain home as homemakers who prepare meals and iron their clothes when they (the men) do a salaried job to provide for their households. With this arrangement, it is more likely that men will control women's labour. To some extent, this determines women's contribution in household decision-making and this is likely to influence their decision-making power even when they are breadwinners of their families. This can also be aggravated by the tendency to view women as secondary or supplemental providers while men are considered as primary providers (Thompson and Walker, 1989; Ferree, 1990).

In Lesotho, unemployed married women kept the use of land though they did not own land and all the production derived from it. Land and other major family property belonged and were under the control of men who were working as migrant workers in the mines of South Africa (Murray, 1981; Eldredge, 1993). Married women in rural areas of Lesotho have been dependant for day-to-day expenses on remittances from their husbands. As such, women had a very limited control over the finances and other household property such as land and agricultural production (Eldredge, 1993). For this reason, women's decision-making in the family was limited and was determined by the husbands who sometimes consulted them, though most of the time they were totally excluded from the decision-making process (Letuka, et al, 1998).

It might be concluded that women's subordination in the decision making of the household was partly due to limited job opportunities available for them both in Lesotho and in South Africa. This situation forced women to remain home to continue with their reproductive role while also taking care of family property as men migrated to South Africa to work mainly in the mines (Murray, 1981; Eldredge, 1993). The position of women in the household has been transient over time since it is shaped by the culture that changes from time to time to reflect the changing structure of the society (Epprecht, 2000). Therefore, with the current economic situation whereby there are a number of job opportunities open to rural women in Lesotho, it became relevant to study whether there are changes in the gendered household relations today.

2.1.2 Impact of women's employment on housework

There are several factors that influence the gendered division of labour. Usually men are considered capable of doing economic activities to provide for consumption for the rest of the household while women are expected to remain at home doing housework for the benefit of the household (Pahl, 1984 in Wheelock, 1990). What remains a challenge is whether occupational changes have any significant influence on this practice as it also applies to Lesotho. Chafetz (1991) indicates that the fact that women remain responsible for domestic/child care activities regardless of other roles they perform, gives men more opportunity to control household finances and hence develop more power in economic decision-making. It is ideal that every member of the household should do what they are good at to supplement one another's efforts for sustaining the household. It is ideal that every member of the household should do what they are good at to supplement one another's efforts for sustaining the household. Hence Pahl, (1984:84) in Wheelock, (1990:102) asserts, "If it has become conventional to refer to married man as the chief earner, it should be equally correct to refer to his wife as the chief worker". This is because women seem to do more of the housework than men. For instance, while men usually do less time consuming housework such as bill paying,

repairs, animal care and gardening; women would be doing core tasks such as cooking meals, house cleaning, meal cleanups and laundry (Bianchi, et al, 2000; Strong, DeVault, Cohen, 2005; Berk 1985 quoted by Thompson and Walker, 1989). As it can be seen from the lists of types of jobs for men and women above, women's jobs are daily chores while most of men's jobs are those that need to be done once in a while, like bill paying and repairs allowing them some more time for leisure.

One of the major factors of change in changing-roles perspectives is that of women taking up employment or men becoming unemployed (Wheelock, 1990). However, the absolute size of husbands' contribution to housework is small and it does not vary significantly with their employment or that of their spouses (Wheelock 1990, Blumberg 1990; Byrne 2002; Strong, Devault, Cohen, 2005). Employed men have time for leisure while the employed women double their time on housework during the days while they are off their paid jobs (Wheelock 1990, Folbre 1994). Similarly, studies on time-use show the universal finding that women work longer hours than men world wide, regardless of their employment status (Folbre, 1994).

Wheelock (1990) says evidence from the USA indicates that since 1977, at least the husbands of employed women spend more time in housework and childcare than the husbands of unemployed wives. This is also confirmed by Bianchi et al (2000) with their study based on the gendered division of labour in America where they found out that during the 1990's women did almost half the hours of housework than women in the 1960's. While the propensity for women to do housework is reduced by their increased participation in paid work, the men's propensity to do housework is increased by that same reason. This however might differ from one society to the next. My study intended to find out the relevance to Lesotho, of the assertion that, when women earn greater income comparative to that of their husbands, the gap in housework done by husbands and wives becomes less unequal (Coleman and Blumberg, 1991). This is because unemployed women had more time for their housework while employed men had little time for housework, as they would be occupied in their full time job. But because of changing perspectives,

where women also gain fulltime jobs, like men, they both, do not have enough time for the housework.

However, findings revealed by Carroll Wright on the study based on female employment indicate that housework doubles the burden on the working married woman. Wright states that working mothers have to wake up before and sleep later than the rest of household members to do housework (Folbre, 1994). Similarly, Byrne found from the study undertaken in New Zealand that working women performed household chores before going to work and after work even when men were not employed. The chores included preparation of breakfast and dinner for other household members (Byrne, 2002). Folbre (1994) argues that, as much as women's participation in wage work adds to the economy of their households, there are several constraints that inhibit their full participation in the labour market that includes norms and preferences that customarily connect them to housework and childcare. Studies have also revealed that irrespective of their occupation in the job market, housework remains an extra occupation for women, thus making them work extra hours daily (Hochschild, 1989). However, while some women can perform household chores before they go to work, it is not possible for others to do so, yet the expectation is for them to remain at home as homemakers. The empirical data for my research provides the insightful presentation on how women who work in textile industries are able to cope with housework and how that influences their relations with other members of their households.

It is important to note that in most societies, gender plays a major role in shaping people's activities, both at home and at work. According to Ferree (1990) gendered roles make it difficult for equality to be realised. That is why "for some households, it seems more acceptable to do away with certain amounts of unpaid labour than to have it done by the 'wrong' gender" (Ferree, 1990: 876). This suggests that some housework is rather left undone if women do not have enough time to do it instead of men helping out. Thompson and Walker (1990) found from their research that there is little connection between wages and housework. Hence wives earnings were found to have no relation to husbands' contribution to housework (Huber and Spitze, 1983; Kamo, 1988 in Thompson and Walker 1989).

Since these studies were carried out in other countries, these findings might not be generalised beyond those countries hence it was crucial to study whether the situation in Lesotho was similar to or different from this.

2.1.3 A brief historical overview of gendered relations in Lesotho

Eldredge (1991) analyses gender relations in rural households in Lesotho during the nineteenth century through early twentieth century and emphasises that women's subordination cannot be attributed only to their economic position in their households as it has been shown that women's economic contribution to their households predates capitalism and colonialism and their subordination is also an old phenomenon within Basotho society (Eldredge, 1991). Their economic roles varied from agricultural production to crafts making which added to household production (Magrath, 2005). According to Epprecht (1996), despite their major contribution to household wealth, women had little control over production. This was due to Basotho custom that dictated payment of 'lobola', the price for the bride by the groom's family; as well as the weakness associated with women's femininity. Equally important, women's decision-making power in Lesotho had always been inhibited by laws that restricted them from the ownership of land and cattle (Magrath, 2005). Do such factors continue to keep rural women in subordinate positions even to date?

Moreover, the way the household tasks were shared within rural households was skewed to the side of women. Apart from several tasks they performed in agricultural production, they also had to do household tasks such as childcare, food preparation, drawing water, collecting wood and wild vegetables. Men made their own tasks even easier through initiating work parties which increased women's workload since women had to cook for the parties. Men also adopted technology that reduced their own workload because they had decision-making leverage to do so (Epprecht, 1996; Magrath, 2005). The study gives an overview of whether women still find themselves carrying the housework burden currently when they participate in salaried employment in a more controlled work place. Allison and Epprecht (1995) observed that waged work doubles women's burden of housework

that affects their performance in their waged work that manifested in absenteeism and lateness to work. Unmarried women find themselves in better positions than married women in this aspect because they have the sole power to allocate tasks independently between children and domestic workers.

According to Magrath (2005), when men began to migrate to the mines in South Africa, women reduced their workload by allocating tasks among children so as to reduce the gap created by loss of labour through migration. Women gained the power to manage agricultural production and rural livelihoods but men still remained in control of the major household decisions such as control of family resources including land and equipment used in agriculture, and spending of remittances (Magrath, 2005; Matlosa and Pule, 2000). Women were economically dependent on their husbands as there was limited income generating opportunities for them due to the laws that restricted their migration to South Africa. Also, the husbands were reluctant to allow them to seek employment in urban areas so as to limit their freedom as well as the need for women to maintain the rural household (Magrath, 2005; Eldredge, 1991). Men were against an idea of women earning income outside the household because the prevailing gender orthodoxy was that a husband should provide for his wife and that men should control household cash (Francis, 2002).

Most rural married women who were tied to their homes by family responsibilities were generally dependant on the remittances from their husbands who worked at the mines in South Africa (Murray, 1981). Hence Murray was able to speculate the devastating effects of reduced employment in South African mines long before the massive retrenchment of the 1990s. But this is not supposed to suggest that all women were tied to their homes due to circumstances imposed on them by different power structures. It has been proven that historically, Basotho women still found ways to work as wage earners outside the borders of their country. Despite the strong opposition and harassment by the state and individuals in power, women's fight for their autonomy persevered throughout Lesotho's history. They forged their

way into different positions of power and also made prominent contributions as wage earners Epprecht (2000).

Francis (2002) indicates that though women remained responsible for agricultural production for subsistence during the absence of male relatives, shortages of labour and other resources needed for agriculture have turned Lesotho from an agrarian economy to a labour reserve for South Africa. Falling gold prices during 1999 and restructuring of the industry have resulted in the loss of jobs from South African mines (Francis, 2002; Cobbe, 1986). This has had, and continues to have devastating effect on rural livelihoods since women and their households became dependent on the remittances. Poor performance in agriculture leaves limited, if any, economic opportunities to migrant returnees from the South African mining industry (Cobbe, 1986).

Retrenchment coincided with increased women's employment in the garment industries of Lesotho's urban areas (Magrath, 2005). Baylies and Wright (1993) assert that women make up a larger proportion of the workforce in the textile industry. This is because women are perceived to be docile by the entrepreneurs and because of their better standard of education compared with men. However, women's perseverance in working under poor working conditions and for low wages in the textile industries is more based on a need to earn a living for the household not necessarily because they were docile. The need was aggravated by men's retrenchment from the mines (Baylies and Wright, 1993).

Retrenchment led to the reconfiguration of gender relations in the rural households because men's presence meant that women had to hand over some managerial responsibilities to men. However, Magrath (2005) suggests that men found it difficult to be in control of the household as the household heads because of their diminished financial status and because women have become accustomed to managing the household independently. This sometimes results in domestic violence as men beat women to demonstrate their power in the household (Magrath, 2005). On the other side Sweetman in Magrath (2005) postulates that women remain dependent on their husbands for access to land and cattle therefore men

remain in control and may even control women's income because they are now present in the households. Matlosa and Pule (2000) also contend that retrenchment of men combined with patriarchy in Lesotho exacerbates subordination of women in decision-making. This is because women's wages are devalued, being equated to subsistence just like agricultural production they used to contribute to the household especially in families where the husband is still working in the mines (Magrath, 2005). Allison and Epprecht (1995) found from the study they conducted with women working in the weaving industry that working women enjoy greater freedom and independence if they are living without husbands.

Therefore the situation that prevails in Lesotho is to a large extent the legacy of practices of the past. However, many initiatives are being taken to improve the status of women in the country through employment creation. The economy of Lesotho has collapsed and women are currently the most responsible actors in boosting the economy of their families in rural areas. Therefore, the study examines whether women's increasing participation in salaried employment, coinciding with increased male retrenchment, has any influence in household gendered relations.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 STUDY AREA

The study was conducted in Lesotho in the district of Mafeteng. Mafeteng, just like any district of Lesotho, includes rural and urban areas. In the urban areas of Mafeteng, there are textile factories and a consequence is that, there are several rural-urban migrants who come to seek employment in the textile factories. As mentioned earlier, most of the textile industry employees are women. Mafeteng was an ideal case for my study for a number of reasons. Firstly, there are textile industries located in this district. Secondly, there are several men who worked as mineworkers most of whom are currently unemployed. Lastly, soil erosion has hit hard on this district making agricultural performance very poor hence leaving unemployed men with limited options for activities to provide for their households. Furthermore, Mafeteng is a district very familiar and accessible to me. Amongst several rural villages in Mafeteng, three villages were sampled on the principle of convenience in terms of easy accessibility.

3.2 SAMPLE

The sample for my study consisted of twenty participants. It comprised twenty households of rural women. Of that total number of twenty, ten were households of women who worked in the textile industry. The remaining ten households were of women who never worked. Ethnographic research was done in two of those households. Considering the fact that there is no complex social stratification in Lesotho, these numbers were reasonably big to make the findings representative while also small enough to be researchable.

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

I identified three villages with a large number of female textile employees. The three villages were selected from Qalabane region in Mafeteng. This area has got a large number of women who work in the textile industries. The snowball sampling procedure was used to select women for participation. Snowball sampling is sometimes called network because cases are identified within a network of cases linked to one another (Neuman, 1997). That is, few participants that are identified introduce new cases with similar characteristics required by the researcher. This procedure proved to be very convenient because it helped me to find appropriate participants within an HIV/AIDS ravaged society. Typical family structures in several households were distorted by HIV/AIDS related deaths. In that regard, I identified one woman working in the textile industry and asked her to introduce me to other fellow workers in the village who were still with their husbands. The process rolled on until I reached the targeted number of respondents. Due to limits imposed by the nature of their work that involves long labour-intensive hours, I had to conduct in-depth interviews with them at their respective homes during leave periods.

Furthermore, I used purposive sampling to interview a second category of women who had never been employed. This method helped me to find people who were better suited to my study because I wanted to identify particular group of unemployed women, but not every unemployed woman, for in-depth investigation. The procedure was to find out about the statuses of their husbands, and that was then used as a deciding factor for their selection. By virtue of being unemployed, most of them were available at their homes at any time for interviews. Furthermore, I did ethnographic observations in two rural households where:

- The wife worked in the textile industry and the husband was retrenched from the South African mines,
- The wife was unemployed while the husband worked at the mines.

There were thus two categories of women who participated in this study: unemployed women and textile factory employed women. However, the husbands of these two sets of women had diverse occupations. Some of them were retrenched migrant workers; migrant mine workers; and some never got employment. There were also men casually employed in South Africa.

I collected data during the Christmas period when it was easier to find participants home and to arrange appointments. Some of them were still working extra shifts during those holidays so had to arrange for interviews on Sundays when they were home. The study revealed that, unemployed men, either those who were previously retrenched from the mines or those who never worked, migrated to Bloemfontein (in South Africa) to seek employment. The majority of men in the last category were young men whose wives were targeted for this study.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

I conducted the case study in Mafeteng, Lesotho in order to get an in-depth analysis of the influence of women's engagement in the textile industry on their gendered household relations. The empirical study was meant to find out the dynamics of the gendered household relations and, as such, qualitative methods of gathering data were employed. Strauss and Corbin (1990: 19) confirm that, "qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known. It can also be used to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known." Since I knew little about what was going on in the households in terms of prevailing gender relations, the qualitative method was appropriate for this research.

3.4.1 In-depth interviews and ethnography:

The study intended to find out the effect of women's full time employment in Lesotho's textile industries on the gendered relations in their households. In-depth interviews and ethnographic observations were employed in order to gain insight information as to how gendered relations are influenced by situations where women are breadwinners in the household. This was interesting because most of the men in my study area have been retrenched from the mining industry in South Africa making them dependant on working women. For this reason, most women have become breadwinners though there are those whose salaried employment supplements the income of their husbands who are still working.

3.4.2 Why interviews?

An in-depth interview is a conversation with an individual conducted by an interviewer that usually collects specific information about one person. Therefore I specifically used in-depth-interviews because:

- Interviews involve questions that guide the flow of discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee. This study required highly sensitive information from the respondents hence questionnaires could not be used to collect data. This is due to the fact that in-depth interviews are a conversation, thus additional questions may be leveled during the interview so as to probe for clarification about certain aspects of the information that is being provided by the interviewee (Boyce and Neale, 2006).
- My study dealt with sensitive issues of family relations which people may have been reluctant to disclose especially to a stranger. That is, it was about private lives of couples and families (Weiss, 1994). However, since I knew the language and cultural background of the participants, it was easier for me to employ appropriate skills to elicit even sensitive information.

- Face-to-face interviews made it possible for interviewees to disclose what would otherwise not have been disclosed using other data collection methods (Barriball and While, 1994).

3.4.3 Why ethnography?

Ethnographic research is the combination of participant and non-participant observation studies, which helps the researcher to study a particular society, group, institution, setting or situation holistically (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). According to Adler & Adler (2003: 42), ethnography includes "observing social activities as an outsider, observing while participating in the activities, and conducting intensive interviews". That helped me to get the insightful information from the natural setting: households of the household members who are being investigated. This research method proved to be ideal in answering my question because I became part of the households that I studied yet I did not interfere with their day-to-day activities while I learned from close proximity. During ethnographic observation I still asked questions on issues that were not clear to me for better understanding (ethnographic interviews).

The two methods were complementary since, while using interviews, I was possibly missing some interesting details on what was going on in the households since interviewees have a tendency of hiding some of the information that they found embarrassing or highly confidential. That is probably because it might have affected relations within their households. The conclusions that I made were informed by observations that were translated into field notes during data collection time. Moreover "ethnographic methodology enables the researcher to even reveal nuances and subtleties that other methodologies miss" (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 394) hence it was ideal for my study. Furthermore, this methodology does not suppose any preconceptions among those that are investigated (Herbert, 2000).

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I took it upon myself to ensure that the rights of the respondents were not infringed for the purpose of this research whatsoever. Before the interview, respondents were assured that the information that they provided for the research work would be treated with confidentiality, as it will only be used for the purpose of my academic research. In order to avoid distraction from other members who might influence the information that the interviewees provided, the interviews were conducted in a private space away from other members of their household. This was meant to avoid the situation whereby interviewees may have failed to give information that they felt uncomfortable sharing in the presence of other household members. That was with particular attention to information that was considered detrimental to family relationships of the interviewees. I have used pseudonyms in place of my respondents' real names to maintain their anonymity and safeguard their dignity.

I introduced myself fully and explained the purpose of my research to my respondents before I interviewed or observed them. The success of my research depended upon the respondents' free will to be interviewed or observed since it was done on the basis of their consent not obligation. For instance, while doing ethnography, I had to make hosting respondents aware of my purpose of visit into their households prior to my visit. Though to some extent knowledge of the motive of my visit influenced their behaviour, I still had to tell them and observe them only if they allowed me to. All I had to do was to adopt a convincing technique to persuade them without jeopardising their trust and confidence.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 WOMEN'S WAGED EMPLOYMENT AND GENDERED HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS IN QALABANE

4.1.1 Decision-making in rural households in Lesotho

Decision-making constitutes an integral part in gendered relations within households. When men and women interact in a household, they often focus their quality time on the making and implementation of decisions. However, it is not all the time or in every household that decision-making becomes a collective process between the spouses. At times some participate as decision makers while others are bound to receive and implement decisions that are imposed on them by those with more decision-making power. Equally important, it is difficult to predict who should or should not make household decisions since power relations between men and women within households is very complex and subject to many tangible and intangible factors. Presumably, economics can be one such factor.

One of the aims of the study was to find out the impact that women's waged employment has on household decision-making. Thus this section comprises the discussion on that subject based on the evidence found through the research. The empirical data was gathered from female textile employees who resided in villages within the region of Qalabane in Mafeteng Lesotho. In addition, unemployed women from the same area were also interviewed to verify whether textile industry employment really made a difference in household decision-making.

The study focused on households with a typical family structure that consisted of a husband and a wife as well as other household members. However, finding the appropriate target for my study became a very serious challenge because of the impact that HIV/AIDS has on rural families. Most of the households were headed either by children or a single parent because people are dying as a result of

HIV/AIDS pandemic that continually alters the family structures. As such, decision making in several households had also taken a new turn.

4.1.1.1 Women's control over household income

Ferguson (1990) observes that there are too many official development assistance agencies in Lesotho, which indirectly make the state less active through driving several development activities. These 'development drivers' play an instrumental role in reinforcing and expanding the exercise of bureaucratic power. It is this state of affairs that make Lesotho a unique case in that; state does not play a very significant role in the provision and management of household resources. While development agencies implement projects to alleviate poverty, the state politicise their activities in order to gain more power. In the meantime, family men and women have to worry about management of livelihoods within their households, which sometimes translates into household conflict.

Almost every working woman independently planned their salary spending though there were still identifiable exceptions. All but one woman, whose husband was unemployed, reported that they solely decided on how their income was to be spent. One of them stated that she only involved her husband through informing him what she had decided to do with the money so that he could help her to make better choices on which needs should be prioritised from the list that she had already outlined. Some of the respondents explained that the money that they earned from textile industries was so little that planning it with their husbands had proved to be pointless. They affirmed they just identified the immediate needs of the households such as food, groceries and other affordable commodities and bought those they could afford.

One woman had a different experience. She claimed that she rarely decided alone on how her salary was to be spent though she admitted she sometimes spent some of it without her husband's knowledge. However, her inspiration was fuelled by the fact that her husband owned a tractor that he used to plough for other people and

got payment in return. While he was in control of the tractor because of being its operator, according to the interview with his wife, all payments were made to her. This means, while the husband still had some means to bring some income home, there was collective decision making in the household. It confirmed that, though women's work granted them some form of independence on income spending, their husbands' economic status determined the extent of their independence.

It was also found that involving a spouse in income planning was not only a show of loyalty by the working spouse but it was also done to set an example for the other spouse to follow suit. People with similar abilities have equal potential of being employed unless otherwise incapacitated. As such, some of the working women still believed that, one day their husbands would find better employment that would turn them into the main breadwinners in future. Therefore, some of the working women remained loyal to their unemployed husbands by planning their salaries with them as a way of persuading them to do the same later on when they got employed. A textile worker whose husband did piece jobs for survival explained that she tried by all means to involve her husband in every income spending plans she made.

> "I also keep on giving him money to spend on drinks because he is the kind of person who drinks alcoholic drinks. This I do for him to realise that it is what I want but he still does not want me to touch his own money."

Although that woman had liberty to plan her regular salary income on her own without involving the husband whose income was very irregular, she did not since she worked hard to change her husband's behaviour. She even went to an extent of asking me for advice on what to do in order to win over her husband so that he involved her in the spending of his own income.

> "Now I am only satisfied because he is the one who works therefore the money is his. Truly, I would be happy if we share decisions on how the money should be spent."

That comment from the unemployed woman showed that unemployed women had different experiences from those of their employed counterparts. In many such households, women contributed less to household income spending while their working husbands' decisions on income planning were found to be dominant. Equally important, none of the respondents admitted that their husbands showed them any proof of payment in the form of payslips so that they could see how much they earned in order to determine how much was missing. Most of them received irregular amounts of money from their husbands each month even while their husbands had regular salaries.

Interestingly, all the working women interviewed generally spent their income on household needs as opposed to their own personal needs. In Lesotho, women seemed to be more responsible for the running of the households and thus made better decisions on which of the households' needs should be prioritised. Therefore, most of the time, they used their own money to buy most of the household needs, especially if their husbands could not afford or were not willing to help them. One woman whose husband was a retrenched mine worker complained that though she did not want to involve her husband in the planning of her salary or its use, she still had to buy groceries that he also used. She said she had no other alternative because she had to buy food and toiletries for her household and could not stop her husband from using them since he was part of the household. Her bitterness emanated from being excluded from income planning while her husband was still employed. She angrily said,

> "While he was still working, he wouldn't show me his salary. He would rather give me money with the instructions on what I should do with it. He is the one who taught me this."

4.1.1.2 Does type of employment of the husband really matters?

‘’Mathapelo’ worked with her husband in the textile industry in Mafeteng. When she and her husband received their salaries on payday, they both brought it home and combined it. Because they worked under the same management, they both knew how much each one of them earned. They would then get together to decide collectively on how the money was to be spent. In her capacity as a woman, ‘’Mathapelo’ was more informed about the needs of the household since she was more responsible for household management. Therefore, while planning their income, she suggested more priority areas than her husband. However, her husband still had the opportunity to reject her spending preferences if he found them not worthwhile.

’Mathapelo’s household experiences were similar to other families where both spouses worked together in the same job. They revealed a similar trend of collective decision making on income spending. As shown earlier on, when women’s salaries constituted the main source of household income, women made decisions independent of their husbands. Similarly, when wives and husbands did similar jobs, there was joint decision making on household spending. This means that women’s work puts them on par with their working spouses while at some stage it gave them authority over their unemployed spouses concerning decisions on income spending.

The above situation did not differ much in households of the working women whose husbands worked in semi-skilled employment such as in the mining industry. There was joint decision making between working wives and their husbands who worked as migrant workers in the mines of South Africa. Because of staying apart from their husbands, women sometimes spent their salaries on immediate needs without prior planning of income spending with their spouses. However, they either informed their husbands through the phone or kept the track record of their spending so that they gave them a detailed account of their income and expenditure when they come home. It is worthwhile to note that, when their husbands earned a salary that was more than their own, working women’s salaries were generally

spent on smaller household needs such as food and groceries. Their husbands were responsible for major household expenditure such as furniture, building materials, payment of children's school fees and clothing.

One other remarkable experience of the working women whose husbands worked in the mines was the level of reciprocity in their households. Their husbands brought home their salaries and their payslips to their wives even though extra earnings such as bonuses were not revealed to them. On the contrary, unemployed women did not receive the same treatment from their migrant worker husbands. None of those interviewed reported to have seen their husbands' payslips anytime in the period they had spent together. Thus, women's employment qualified them to a certain treatment from their spouses. As much as the salary they earned was small and their working position was not likely to improve overtime, they gained respect in their households just by of virtue bringing some income in their households.

Nonetheless, the study revealed that both employed and unemployed women's main contribution in income spending plans was to make suggestions while their husbands made final decisions on income use. This trend also existed in other African countries such as Malawi where Semu and Mawaya (1999) have established that both men and women are involved in household decision-making despite the fact that men have more power to decide the type and size of budget, as they are the ones who finance the household budget. Working women were better off than those who were unemployed since they did not have to wait for their husbands to give them money in order to do even basic spending that they could afford from their own salaries. Their income gave them power to make final decisions to a certain degree.

4.1.1.3 Ownership and decision-making over household's property

According to Matashane-Marite (2005) Lesotho is a patriarchal society in which customarily women are treated as minors under the guardianship of their fathers before marriage and their husbands upon marriage. As such, under the customary law, property rights of married women are vested in the husbands regardless of their occupations.

> Due to their perpetual minority status, women in Lesotho cannot be allocated land, inherit it or make decisions about its cultivation, management and use. Women also have no rights to dispose of property, save for personal belongings (excluding immovable property). Women generally only have the right to occupy and use land, rights which are not properly secured under the law (Women's Rights Project, 2001:46)

Evidence found confirm that women's status before the law, to a large extent compromised their contribution in decisions that relate to property. However, employed women were allowed by their husbands to have a certain level of control over household property. Some women reported to have power to propose the sale of livestock if there was not enough money to cater for the household needs. That often happened in households where a woman was the only breadwinner. There were still households where women were excluded from the control of the household property even when they were breadwinners. One respondent who was the only breadwinner in her household bitterly recounted that

> "We have the tap in our yard and whenever our neighbours come to ask to draw water from it, he keeps telling them that they should pay for the water directly to him. He claims everything is his and he has all the authority to do as he pleases with it. Therefore, when people come to ask for something, even if he is not home, I tell them to wait for him."

Hence, Mosoetsa (2005) asserts that, "Even though men are no longer breadwinners, they remain, because of their tradition and culture, heads of households." This means that economic status alone is not enough to reveal who participates in decision-making. Sometimes the issue of who makes decisions depends on what decisions are made about. Thus, much as some working women gain decision-making power in their households, their power alternates considerably on a number of issues.

Unemployed women were more excluded in decisions on property since they had to depend more on the support of their husbands. Though they still could not own property, working women could at least control property. One reason for that could be that men were not only expected to administer property but also to provide basic needs such as food, clothing and accommodation (Women's Rights Project, 2001). Therefore since women were able to provide some basic needs, it was convenient for their husbands to allow them to administer some household property. As a result, working outside the home had an impact on the control and ownership of household property.

4.1.1.4 Do women have control over their own lives?

While both employed and unemployed men could decide what to do with their own lives, their wives' actions were very restricted. Women could not decide to go out and seek employment without, first, seeking permission from their husbands. Disapproval from the husband was accepted as normal though it brought bitterness in some women. Hence, Mutabazi (2005: 21) maintains, "Women are compromised by a power structure which in rural communities is heavily biased in favour of men." Due to their lack of livelihood security, unemployed women submitted more to their husbands' demands and restrictions. Some unemployed women showed some desire to go to urban centres to seek employment but that ambition could not materialise because of their husbands' reluctance to let them go. One of the women whose husband worked in Bloemfontein bitterly disclosed that her brother and her grandfather had made arrangements for her to go back to school to further her studies but her husband would not grant her permission to go. She faced a very serious dilemma. She did not know what to tell her brother and her grandfather who, apparently, took initiative to help her yet she could not accept their offer. She confessed that, even when she asked her husband for permission to, at least, allow her to seek employment, her husband refused or else gave her an option of seeking employment in Bloemfontein where she would be more under his control.

Conversely, working women were much more resistant to their husbands' restrictions. For instance, those who could not afford to take care of their children had sent them to their natal homes. Though some of their spouses were not happy, they suppressed their feelings merely because of the 'control' that working women had over their own lives. One of them even declared that she believed her husband would not have let their children stay with her mother if he had had more economic leverage.

The desire for women to seek employment attracted similar reaction from men regardless of their working statuses. When the two spouses were both unemployed, women became more curious to go out to seek employment because of the opportunities they deemed available for them in the job market. Among such opportunities were: domestic work; textile employment; and being self-employed as street hawkers in urban centres. However, most of the men, even while they were not employed, very reluctantly permitted their wives to follow their ambition of working outside the home. The situation was made worse by the fact that in Lesotho, as explained earlier, women are considered and treated as minors in their households as well as in the community. That made it difficult for them to make decisions that their husbands were against. While asked to think of the possible reasons for their husbands' constant control over their lives, most of the women believed jealousy influenced most of their husbands' decisions.

> "I would have gone long time ago but he refused. I think he believes that I will see other men. But look at us now; there is no money that we can say we are expecting from anywhere because we don't know when we will be given anything by whom. At times when we are hungry and no one offers us any money, he agrees but when the time comes for me to go, he refuses", said the unemployed woman miserably.

In another, a woman had no food to cook. She had just left a job as a domestic worker. She worked for her sister for the previous three weeks before her husband came home for the weekend. Arrangements were made in time and the husband was informed well in advance. Before she went, that woman was not courageous enough to tell her husband that her sister, who was in desperate need of a domestic

worker, had asked her to go to her house to do that job. Hence, she had asked her sister to call her husband to ask for his approval. Though he had agreed to the arrangement on the phone, when he came home that weekend, he stopped his wife from going back to work. The wife had asked for the weekend off so that she could meet her husband; little did she know that she was not returning to work. Her husband condemned her for leaving her home and her children unattended in order to assume such duties for somebody else for 'little payment'. As much as she had been forced to stay home, nothing had been done to improve her living conditions that compelled her to take the job offer in the first place.

The two examples above are witnessed realities of some things rural women go through. Unemployed women have limited power to live their lives the way they desire. Even though their salary is very little, some working women strongly consider leaving their husbands when they are not satisfied with the treatment they get from them. They feel that their salary can provide for them and their children's survival. However, it remains easier for men to control the lives of their unemployed working wives. This is because, in Lesotho, when customary marriage dissolves, a wife loses her possessions and returns home to be under the control of their fathers (Women's Rights Project, 2001). Thus many unemployed women are not eager to leave their households. With no financial hold, women's independence is always under threat.

4.1.1.5 Position of women in child rearing

In one household, the woman was sitting down suckling her approximately two-year-old son. She felt it was about time she weaned the child. However, she was still awaiting approval from her husband on the matter.

My research data indicates that though children are more attached to their mothers than to their fathers, decisions on how they should be nurtured still remains the responsibility of both parents. However, it was found that, the parent with more power in the household had more say on how the children should be raised and by whom. In families where husbands are employed in a better salaried job, such decisions remain the sphere of husbands. They dictate who should carry the burden of childcare and how it should be done. While women are mostly responsible for performing the duties of child rearing, they do not have much power to make decisions on what is good for their children. For instance, women cannot hire domestic workers without approval of their migrant worker husbands even when there is a need to do so.

However, in the households where men are either jobless or do jobs that are equivalent to those that are done by their wives, women have more decision making power over child rearing. Some of the working women send their younger children to their natal homes for their mothers to assist in nurturing them since their employment does not allow them enough time to perform such duties. Since they are employed, they seem to have more power to make decisions such as that of sending children to their mothers' homes without much objection from their husbands. When asked whether their husbands are satisfied about that arrangement, four out of the ten workingwomen who were interviewed showed that even if they are not satisfied they nevertheless do not have much option but to accept the situation the way it is. The other one with the unemployed husband even mentioned that she believes the husband agreed because he wanted to rid himself of the burden of catering for children. The other woman indicated that her husband is not happy about her decision but he is forced by circumstances to accept it. The other women had decided to leave their children on their own when they went to work. One of

them reported that she pays extra fees for her youngest child who is at crèche for her caregivers to keep her till late when she knocks off work and is able to collect her.

On the contrary, unemployed women do not take their children to their homes even when they feel the need to do so. At times their natal homes are better off than their own households or their husbands' homes thus they are sometimes tempted to send away their children there for better living. However, this study has found out that generally, men do not approve of that idea. They are adamant that their children belong to their own households and should not be part of their mother's homes for whatever reason. Most of the respondents indicated that their husbands are much happier when their children grow up in their own homes not vice-versa. Husbands go to the extent of expressing their discontent verbally as one man told his wife, "You always take this child to your home as if you are not married here." In response to his comment, the wife said she had to stop sending her child to her mother for the sake of peace. Her power was really compromised by her status.

On one occasion, a working woman stayed with her retrenched mine worker and their son. Their daughter stayed in another village with her maternal grandmother. The son was around the age of twenty. For some reason, he had dropped out of school after completing his primary certificate and was not working either. For boys of his age and his level of education; circumcision school became an alternative. As such, he went to the circumcision school but he did not inform his parents before he left. Here is the story of what happened as told by his mother:

> "These children are my burden. Let me make you an example of what happened recently 'm`e (madam). He went to the initiation school; 'Thabo', my eldest son. He just disappeared, as you know they do. Instead of his father letting the teachers to circumcise him, he fetched him and brought him back home. He reasoned with him and told him 'my son, I might let you go through with this yet your mother might not be happy about it and might tell me she does not have money that is required for the proceedings. There is nothing I can do because even if I decide to sell an animal, it might get too long

> before it is bought since we are all hungry. It is better that we wait for her so that you tell her what you want.'"

It was only after she had granted her son permission that he went back to the initiation school and she paid for the required necessities.

On another occasion, another working woman stayed with her children only. Her husband resided in South Africa where he worked as a migrant mine-worker. The woman was faced with a dilemma. One of her two daughters had just passed her Junior Certificate examinations so she wanted her to move to the next school to do her Form D class. Her dream was to send her daughter to the boarding school. However, she knew she did not qualify to make such a decision. As much as she had good reasons for her choice, she had to wait for her husband to make the final decision. She admitted that she could make suggestions but her husband made final decisions. Because she did not want her husband to realise that her aim was to take the daughter to the boarding school, she told her daughter to ask him to send her there as if she (mother) did not suggest anything. The schools were opening the week following that of the interview but the child did not have a place in any school because her mother was waiting for her father to come home that weekend to make decision on which school she should go to.

The two scenarios explained above indicate that the parent with more economic power has more control over child rearing. This means employed women have more decision-making leverage if their salaries make up the major proportion of the household income. If they were the ones who mainly catered for the needs of their children, they were more involved in decision making and were allowed to make major decisions that affected their children whereas if their husbands were the main household providers assuming major responsibilities such as payments of school fees for the children, their involvement in decision making was only subsidiary. This is confirmed by Mosoetsa (2005: 177) thus, "Male domination and female subordination change over time given shifts in class and economic positions of both men and women." Apart from other aspects such as culture, it is economic

positions that shape gendered household relations in different societies including Basotho.

Similarly, unemployed women contribute to child rearing by taking care of children through monitoring their day-to-day activities. Wrong doings and unacceptable behaviours of the children are often blamed on their mothers who unfortunately cannot make major decisions about parenting. For instance, one participant in the study had this story to tell, which is mainly driven by the patriarchal nature of the household of an unemployed woman. A mother of two girls heard about her older girl's close relationships with boys. She locked the child in the room and whipped her. Her girl's misbehaviour affected her terribly because, during the interview, she kept on mentioning that her husband, who was working in the mines, would hold her accountable for her daughter's mischief if he found out. As soon as she realised that her fourteen-year-old daughter was pregnant; she took her secretly to the local nurse's surgery to carry out an abortion, which fortunately, was without complications. She did not mention that to other household members for the fear that the news might accidentally reach her husband who would be mad at her.

Unlike with working women, in the households of unemployed women, the study has established that it is only the husbands who decide whether the children should go to school or drop out of school. The only contribution that women are allowed to make when their husbands decide to send children to school is to suggest which schools the children can go to. Some of the interviewed women stated that they do not have the power to make such decisions since their husbands are the ones working, and therefore paying school fees. Hence, men make dominant decisions on issues such as that one. This concurs with Morrell's (2001) argument that men's power over women and the work they do has always been used to define their masculinity. They thus use those qualities to dominate decisions that relate to their children in order to feel like real fathers whose voices are mostly heard. As one respondent explained;

> "If the child has to change from a primary school to a secondary school, I tell him so that he decides whether he can afford another school or not. And if he says he

> cannot send a child to school, there is nothing I can do because I am not working."

In a nutshell, the study has found out that women gain more decision making power while they are employed even though the degree of their power is determined by factors such as the economic status of their husbands. Conversely, unemployed women are in the periphery of the household decision-making. Their limited financial security forces them to be more submissive to almost all their husbands' decisions. On the other side, working women, though their work in the textile industries earns them a comparatively little income, gives them power to take some decisions and sometimes to implement them without approval from their husbands. Though the husbands remain household heads with a final word in almost all households of women interviewed, working women still retain some sort of respect from their husbands in relation to decision-making. That is, they have a platform to make suggestions or even to refute some of the decisions taken by their husbands. The latter is more evident in households of the female textile employees whose husbands are unemployed while the former happens in most households of the textile employees irrespective of their husbands' working status. Hence it is plausible to conclude that women's employment influences household decision making.

4.1.2 Sharing of housework in rural households

Another aim of the study was to evaluate whether women's employment has any influence over the way roles are performed within rural households. This is because when men began to migrate in large numbers to work in the mines in South Africa there was a significant shift in the gendered division of labour. Other household members had to devise means of closing the gap that was left by migrant men on housework. According to Magrath (2005), while men began to migrate to South Africa, women took it upon themselves to allocate duties to children to ensure that men's absence was not felt within the households concerning housework.

In order to assess whether women's employment influence changes in the way housework is shared in their households, the study also engaged unemployed rural women. This was meant to determine whether somebody else in the household is doing women's work when do salaried employment or their employment meant an added burden on their usual duties.

4.1.2.1 Gendered roles

> "Everyday 'm`e (madam), I wake up at 3:30am in the morning and start cooking. While I am still cooking, I sweep the floor of the house. In the afternoon again, I sleep at 10:00pm because I would be preparing for supper and cleaning up the mess in the house. That's my duty everyday. In addition to that, I sometimes do washing in the afternoon and put it outside to dry in the morning before I leave. I have got no choice but to do these."

It is amazing how women coped with such workloads everyday. In this study, women indicated that generally they perform tasks such as cooking, drawing water, taking care of children, cleaning the house, doing laundry and cleaning the yard. Life seems much better for some of the working women who are assisted by their older children. Female children in particular, do the household chores to assist their working mothers during the working days. Nevertheless, not all of the working women have children who are old enough to assist them with housework. As such, they have to perform household chores before they go to work and late in the evening when they come back from work. They do what Hochschild (1989) calls 'the second shift' which basically means providing labour at work and at home. "Women's work in rural communities thus combines domestic service and 'productive' work: it is often said that rural women must bear double burden" (Brydon, 1989:58).

On arrival at a household of an employed woman to conduct an interview on a Sunday afternoon, she was sitting outside her house with some of her children. The

woman looked very exhausted yet there was still laundry around her. Even before the interview she explained apologetically that,

> "I am so sorry that you find me in this mess. I couldn't even go to church because Sunday is the only day I spend at home so I have to deal with my children's mess. In the morning people would think I was moving to a new place because I shifted the furniture to clean thoroughly as these children only clean on the open surface. As you can see I haven't had a bath since morning because I have been working like a slave."

Though that woman did not do much of the housework during the week in view of the fact that her older girls did what she should have been doing, she still had to do too much of it during the weekend. This confirms Hochschild's(1989)argument that instead of leisure and relaxation, women did a second shift during their days off from work. Unemployed women were better off since they had all the time to themselves to do housework. This is further confirmed by Wheelock (1990) who found through the American based study that working women work more than housewives through the week. Hence, most of the unemployed women do not seem to demand any assistance from other household members as they consider housework their typical routine occupation. But this is not meant to suggest that all housewives are happy with the amount of work they do. It is only that they are groomed in such a manner that make them accept the gendered division of labour as it is.

Hiring domestic workers is one of the options widely used by working women who are mainly employed in the formal sector. However, that option is not feasible for textile employees partly because the salary they earn cannot enable them to pay for domestic work. Again, for some of the women who felt that with financial assistance from their husbands they can afford domestic workers, their husbands refuse. Therefore, rural textile employees rely on other household members for assistance in housework. Without help from other members, housework becomes their sole responsibility.

The study has further established that while unemployed husbands could assist with housework, there are issues of masculinity. There are very few men willing to take over the duties of their wives. Very few exceptions of women receive help from their husbands with housework. Some men help with doing the household chores that were initially done by women whereas others help with supervising the children in doing such chores. According to a respondent whose husband was a migrant mine worker, the children did household chores while she was at work but her husband, while present at home, helped her by making sure that they did things right. In addition, while at home, the husband woke up early in the morning to warm the water for her to bath as a way to acknowledge that her work was tiring thus she needed assistance. On top of that, the respondent also mentioned that her husband sometimes washed his and her clothes though he did not wash those of the children. However, as with the study carried out in pre-war Lancashire by Roberts (1995), both men and women described men's part in housework as 'help' not 'responsibility'. This was because men considered housework as the obligation of their wives and did it as a 'favour'. Women employment therefore did not completely change existing gendered relations but made a difference in household where men were also working.

4.1.2.2 Masculinity within Basotho society

While socialisation theory is widely critiqued by many a scholar, this study showed that it was still applicable for Lesotho in some cases. The way in which men and women were socialised from childhood determined their contribution to housework. The study showed that men fail to do household chores that were initially a woman's domain since that compromised their self esteem. Performing certain duties such as cleaning the house or childcare is believed to make them appear powerless in the face of their peers. Rural men who do such household tasks, as cleaning the house and doing laundry are not looked upon as man enough. Unemployed men, because they already feel their masculinity is at jeopardy, are very averse to housework. Consequently, some women whose husbands are unemployed cannot receive any assistance from their husbands who believe that it

is the duty of women to do housework. They believe that they will lose their power by not assuming their roles as household providers and are not ready to do things that would harm their dignity even further. To them, it is deemed inappropriate for a man to wash dishes or clean the house and laundry as that makes them feel as though they are taking the place of their wives. One employed woman of an unemployed man had this to say, "I will find him seated when I come from work waiting for me to cook and give him food."

Therefore, the results show that women's employment does evoke some change in the way housework is conducted within rural households, whereby men are taking up tasks that were initially the domain of women although this is happening slowly and to a small magnitude. This finding of the study confirms Beer (1982) and Wheelock (1990), studies done in America which show that though women still do more housework in their households, the amount of housework undertaken by their husbands increases with women's employment. Men treated housework as feminine and more suited to women. Thus, when they grew up, boys were made to believe that housework was women's work. Doing it compromised their masculinity and exposed them to mockery. Similarly, the same societal influence on the way housework was handled emerged in Lancashire as Roberts (1995) states,

> "There were, of course changes…. In pre-war Lancashire, the husbands of textile workers often (but not always) carried out a wide range of household tasks that included scrubbing floors, bathing children, cooking, washing and bed making. They rarely did work such as window-cleaning or donkey-stoning [cleaning hearthstones] which exposed them to the sight and therefore the possible mockery of passers-by."

It is the gendered regulation of forms of labour that inhibits men's participation in housework. While very few men helped with indoor activities, as did those from Lancashire in Roberts (1995) study, the majority of rural Basotho men did not help with housework at all. From all women interviewed, four women (three employed and one unemployed) indicated that they were helped in several housework activities such as cooking, drawing water, washing dishes, cleaning laundry, childcare. Nonetheless, none of them indicated that they were helped with indoors

or compound cleaning. Otherwise, the remaining majority of women said that they were either helped with cooking only or received no help at all. Those who reported being helped with cooking emphasised that this was done on request and rarely voluntarily. Thus one can conclude that women's work has a very slight influence on the way housework is shared within these households.

4.1.2.3 Women's domain versus men's domain in housework

The study has revealed that women's roles are not entirely restricted by their assumed domains. Expectantly, the duty of every woman is to take care of the household especially during the absence of their spouses. This means, making sure household members, including children are well fed, clean, and healthy and a house is clean. On top of that, if the household is in possession of animals, it is also supposedly their duty to make sure those who are responsible for looking after them do a good job. Within Basotho society, tending animals has always been, and remains the sphere of men yet the study shows that, when there is a need, women also help. For unemployed women, their long day comprise their typical household tasks; supervision of tasks performed by other household members; and field work during the growing and harvesting season if there happens to be good rains to enable farming. On the other hand, working women do additional duties during the weekends, which compromise their relaxation and leisure time. To unemployed women, the load of duties they carry out is accepted as normal "Truly, the work does not bother me. Maybe it is because this is what I have been doing all the time" commented unemployed woman. Conversely, working women complained of an unbearable burden since they could not handle even their own presumed duties. One of them even stated that she was always fatigued from bearing a double burden. Hence Glass and Fujimoto (1994) argue that time spent on housework is universally associated with increased depression. This was found to be more so with women as they seemed to care more about who does the housework because they felt that burden to be unfairly placed on them. Likewise, DeMaris et al, (1993) study found that men's participation in housework reduces employed women's feeling of depression and make them enjoy higher levels of marital satisfaction.

This might be the reason why some of the employed respondents in this study mentioned that they were contemplating to leave their husbands.

Though there is a change in the state of affairs in rural areas of Lesotho, in other aspects, change seem to be very sluggish. According to Epprecht (1996) and Bonner (1990) rural Basotho women had been wage earners in the labour market from as early as the beginning of the twentieth century. However, a large proportion of rural women have been recently absorbed into factories while a large number of men are being retrenched from their jobs as mine workers. But household gendered relations have not always reflected this recent reinvention of the male breadwinner model. It is indicated in Ishii-Kunz and Coltrane (1992) that, some researchers report that when the household workload increases, husbands assist wives by doing 'nicer' tasks such as playing with the children so that mothers can prepare meals or clean the house (Bark and Berk, 1979; Coleman, 1988). In line with this, among the tasks that were initially the roles of women, the majority of Basotho rural men could only help with cooking once in a while. Instead of helping with other 'nicer' tasks to enable their wives to do major tasks, rural men would enjoy undisrupted leisure. That was despite the fact that working women helped with manly housework duties during the absence of their husbands. Their employment did not reduce their responsibility for housework.

4.1.2.4 Housework and leisure within rural households

> "During the week when we come from work, I know that if he arrives home before me, he will draw water from the community tap or cook food. But during the weekend, forget. Everything is done by me." One woman explained.

Another one reiterated,

> "My husband can help me with any other thing except for cleaning. During the weekend, if I am not home, he will rather collect water. As for cleaning, never my dear, he can't."

The above statements from women whose husbands were also employed in the textile industries show that men, even though they do sometimes help with housework, often claim their time for leisure and relaxation. They share household chores with each other throughout the week. Nonetheless, when women do more housework during the weekend, their husbands are disinclined to assist even while they are at home.

From several experiences of women, it is clear that housework remain women's burden. The work they do outside the home thus adds more duties. They do not have any time to relax even while they are off from their salaried work. Hence one woman said, "'M`e we don't have time to sit down with our children to show them our love." Likewise, another respondent argued that, when the weekend approached, her husband and her son made sure the washing basket was filled with dirty laundry for her to wash and they would just help her with collecting water from the communal tap. However, she adamantly pointed out that they would only do this if she complained. The other woman whose husband was also unemployed recapitulated, "My husband would rather sit there and watch me do washing and clean the house during the weekend."

In most cases, men helped with the housework only when they were asked to do so. That was more evident in the households of unemployed men. Mafeteng is a drought stricken district and fieldwork is not that intense except rarely when there is some rain. For those men who did not own animals or whose animals were looked

after by children or hired shepherds, there was not much work throughout the year except for occasional casual jobs. However, men were not willing to take part in housework. They only helped in making sure that animals were properly looked after. Whether employed or unemployed, most rural men spent most of the time drinking beer and chatting with friends. Even those who did not go out to drink alcoholic drinks spent most of the time home doing nothing. When asked to explain her unemployed husband's typical day, a woman declared that:

> "He wakes up, ask for warm water to bath and just sit there or visit his friends. All he can do is to polish his shoes. He can't cook or prepare food for himself. He will rather buy food from the shop if there is nobody to cook for him. When I am sick, my children help me. They give me food in the morning before they go to school and come during break to provide me with other things I may need since their school is near home. He would also be waiting for them to give him food."

A similar trend is witnessed across the world. It is evident from some research done in some countries of the world that women do more housework while men enjoy more time for leisure even when women are employed on a full time basis. Rogers (1980: 156) found that "in most if not all cases, women's work is seen as much more arduous and time consuming than men's." "Once men return from their work, they tend to relax: to eat, bathe, gossip and/or drink" (Brydon, 1989: 59). The two studies above thus exposed that, even when their wives were employed and men were not, they continued to have more time for leisure and little time for housework while for employed women, there was overload of duties to perform.

4.1.2.5 Parenting

In essence, the role of parenting is the responsibility of both parents in a family. However, several factors such as differences in culture, emerging power structures and economic roles have played some part in determining the parenting roles of each partner in the household. Walker (1995) tries to come up with a better understanding of the definition of motherhood and what determines it. According to her study, there are several factors beyond race that are perceived to shape motherhood amongst black women. Among others, she discusses the significant role played by Christianity, the state, and the individual black women themselves. Her argument is that, motherhood can better be understood as a social identity that consists of aspects of the individual's self-image, positively or negatively valued according to norms and values of one's social group.

Women do more parenting as most women strive to live up to the ideal image of perfect motherhood. It is stated in Sanchez and Thomson (1997) that there are social and personal barriers that inhibit equity in housework with special reference to childcare. Firstly, several men do not identify themselves as primary parents and family work partners but as helpers in parenting and family work (Gerson, 1993; LaRossa and LaRossa, 1981; Thomson, 1993). Secondly, some men use male privilege to avoid the most unpleasant family and parenting tasks while most women are reluctant to give up their status as primary parents and housework managers (Coltrane, 1989, 1986; Hochschild, 1989; Major, 1987). These experiences are very much replicated in rural Lesotho where women take their pride from proving that they are 'good and responsible wives' through caring for their husbands and children. In Basotho society, young children are generally a wife's responsibility. Men have their way of distancing themselves from parenthood responsibilities alongside their role as providers.

In rural areas, in the majority of households, children spend most of their growing years with their mothers while their fathers generally spend most of the time working outside homes. Even when they are unemployed, men spend most of their time during the day in local bars or in company of their friends playing games.

Women are then left with a burden of raising the kids with very limited help from their husbands. While nursing, rural women spend sleepless nights feeding babies, tending them when they cry for attention, and changing their nappies. None but only two women involved in this study admitted their husband did carry out such duties while they were away. One of the two women was inhibited by her demanding employment from taking care of her two and a half years old son who had to be left home with his father. She worriedly indicated that her son looked neglected because his father had to go with him to the grazing land to graze his animals. This showed that, the guilt of parenthood that women have sometimes inhibited change in gendered household relations even when their husbands were ready to assimilate change.

In many families studied in this research, children grow up with less attachment to their fathers. They look up to their mothers for all sorts of needs. Men would go to an extent of apportioning blame on their wives for their children's failure to perform housework right. It remains a mother's responsibility to make sure that their children eat the right type of food. There are no intimate relations between fathers and their children in many households. Whenever they want something, children turn to their mothers. Some women reiterated that their children fear their fathers. Consequently, their employments draw their children even closer to them because the wives' salaries enable them to satisfy their children regardless of their husbands' counteractions.

The above findings confirm studies by psychologists and sociologists which contend that, "Mothers, more than fathers, assume responsibility for the day-to-day feeding and supervising younger children, and are more apt to provide them with emotional and physical comfort" (Barnett and Baruch, 1987; Leslie, Anderson, and Branson 1991; Thomson and Walker, 1989 in Ishii-Kunz and Coltrane, 1992).

Several researchers have discovered that in quite a number of societies, women take more responsibility for childcare than other members of their households and as a result they do more housework (Sanchez and Thomson, 1997; Glass and Fujimoto,

1994, Wheelock, 1990). In several instances during this research, women reported that they were always at loggerheads with their husbands every time their children misbehaved. Children's ill behaviour was habitually attributed to women's failure to perform their childcare duties properly. This confirms Ishii-Kunz and Coltrane (1992: 629) argument that "Child care and housework are treated as onerous activities that are avoided by more powerful family members – husbands – and relegated to less powerful members – wives and daughters." Empirical data for this study has revealed that while all women do housework, women who are not working have enough time for child care than their employed counterparts. For women who are employed, housework and childcare constituted an added burden on their busy day-to-day schedule. Working in textile industries is tiring and frustrating, as workers have to clock in very early in the morning and knock-off very late in the evening. This leaves working women with a very limited time to look after their children. Working women reported that their children are mischievous merely because they do not have time to monitor their actions because of their lengthy absence from home. Equally important, they cannot help their children with schoolwork or even to check whether children do their schoolwork properly. As a result, their school-age children are reported to perform badly at school. A working woman said, "We do not have time to teach them housework or even to sit down and cherish them. Our children do not feel our love."

Lynne et al's (1988) conclusion that husbands are more likely to do childcare when there is time available for them to do so was proven wrong in this study. Basotho women who are employed in textile industries while their husbands are jobless are found to do the same amount of childcare and other housework tasks as those whose husbands are employed full time. Those whose husbands are working are even better off since their husbands sometimes assist them with housework. Some women even take their children to their natal homes to lighten their housework burden yet their husbands are not employed. Regardless of their working status, rural women perform childcare with little to no assistance from their husbands.

Generally, working outside home does not seem to relieve women of their typical household tasks but it constitutes an additional burden. Lucky are the women who have older girls to whom they can entrust the sharing of their housework tasks. Boys, just like men, do not assist much with the housework. They only assist with lighter tasks that do not make a significant difference on a woman's typical working day. One other thing that differentiated unemployed women from working women in this study was their level of acceptance concerning workloads they had. Working women were especially dissatisfied when their unemployed husbands could not help them with housework. But it was remarkable that working men were empathetic enough to offload their wives off some housework burden while they were present. The fact that it is socially acceptable for women to carry heavy housework loads, made it difficult for them to get help from their husbands unless their husbands realised the need to help them.

4.1.3 LEVEL OF CONFLICT IN RURAL HOUSEHOLDS OF EMPLOYED WOMEN for women selves of the housework burde work load, the fact that they earn litle

Men and women use their households as private spaces where they interact most of the time. Because of their individual differences, their interaction sometimes results in conflict. This part explores the existence and causes of conflict in rural households. The idea was to find out whether women's employment would be a source of gendered household conflict. Issues discussed below were found to be some of the causes of conflict in rural households.

4.1.3.1 Working women's absence from home

> "In the evening when I get home, sometimes his anger is unbearable. Although he knows that we knock off late and our taxi does not arrive exactly at the time when we knock off, he always fights over my late coming. The taxi sometimes arrives here at around seven. He sometimes locks the gate on me and when I come and find it locked I have to go and sleepover at my neighbours' houses."

> "'M`e (madam) here at work, knock-off time is 5:00 but there is something called repairs that we do after 5:00 which keeps me here till 6:00. After that, it does not mean I get a taxi immediately. That means I get home very late and he will be complaining that, 'others have arrived earlier and you are only coming in now but according to what you always tell me, all your salaries are the same."

The above statements give a rough reflection of experiences of women who were employed in textile industries. Their husbands could not hide their dissatisfaction about their late coming from work. That was despite their awareness about problematic knockoff times and transport bottlenecks that their wives had to battle with on a daily basis. Working women experienced continued conflict over those issues from their employed and unemployed husbands. The situation was worse when their husbands were jobless. That meant a persistent household conflict since their husbands were there and could witness their late-coming everyday.

On top of that, going to work too early and coming back very late in the evening also resulted in other forms of conflicts. Some of the working women pointed out that their husbands were not satisfied that they were being taken care of by children who particularly cooked and prepared food for them. With particular reference to those whose husbands were unemployed, women indicated that they have realized that the only thing that stopped their husbands from forcing them to quit their jobs was the need for money. Otherwise they could have ordered them to stop working so that they take care of them. One of them said her husband complained that his children cooked food that tasted awful. The other one said,

> "He expects me to stay here to cook for him and do other household tasks. But if I stay here cooking for him what do I cook because there will be no food; paraffin; nothing?"

4.1.3.2 Sharing of household labour

The findings of my study reveal that men expect their wives to spend more time at home doing housework and proper child rearing while both men and women prefer men to spend more time on paid work so that they could support their families financially while their wives perform household tasks fully. At the same time, other researchers have found that as much as a majority of women do most of the housework, very few consider the arrangement unfair. However, working women studied in this research were aware of the inequity between themselves and their husbands in housework sharing. The reason for that might be their exposure to life outside home. The orientation they got as working women presumably changed the way they viewed inequity.

Kluner's et al, (1996) study found out that dealing with work and family roles can lead to marital conflict. Married women were expected to perform housework despite their fulltime employment. They were still expected to carry out their routine housework such as cooking, cleaning, drawing water, and childcare. Failure to perform such duties was purportedly a cause of household conflict. According to Kluner et al, (1996) men and women preferred wives to do less housework than they actually did while husbands were expected to spend less time on paid work than they did. According to Greenstein (1996) the orientation that women have, manifests in increases in conflict with their spouses. Unlike unemployed women, employed women are exposed to a lifestyle that makes them aware of certain indicators of inequality within their household. Awareness of such inequality often influences a new form of behaviour that changes the way some of the working women view certain gender related issues in their households. Several working women interviewed in this study were not happy about their contribution to household labour as they perceived it unfair but unemployed women could not pose such claim. That might be the result of the orientation of working women though this is not meant to overrule the fact that the amount of time available to each one of the two sets of women can influence their differing attitudes. Considering that their work was very demanding on their time, working women deemed it unfair for their husbands to expect them to cook and do other housework during the week. This

was more apparent in households where husbands were jobless. Therefore, it can be relevant to argue that, working out side the home influences gendered household relations in a way that generates conflict.

4.1.3.3 Household Income spending

During my stay in ‘’Mathato’s household, her husband ‘Tokonye’ was at home for his annual leave from the mines. One day around 10’oclock in the morning, ‘’Mathato’ was cleaning the kitchen when ‘Tokonye’ came in from outside. He walked passed her and opened the kitchen unit. He grabbed a can that contained coins, he picked some of them and reached for the empty seven fifty millilitre bottles of beer and moved out. Within few minutes he was in a company of three men from the same village drinking beer outside his house. As he came in to collect more coins, the wife irritably asked, “What do you want ntate (daddy)?” to which the husband responded “No. Concentrate on what you are doing. I want my things here.” ‘’Mathato’ looked very angry though she could not express her anger openly. I could not tell whether her reaction was a result of respect for him or presence of non-residents in her house (I, the researcher). The following day, ‘Tokonye’ continued to take the money without notifying his wife, repeatedly bought locally brewed beer and drank with other people who came by. When she got fed-up, the wife decided that we should walk to visit her sister who stayed nearby. I then realised that because she was unemployed, ‘’Mathato’ felt powerless and could not react to her husband’s unacceptable behaviour.

Situations such as the one cited above were also found to be sources of ongoing conflict in the working women’s households. When they worked and earned their own salaries, women tended to take revenge on their husbands’ actions through planning their salaries on their own. Some of them indicated that they could not involve their husbands in spending of their salaries because they (the men) used their money on themselves while they were still working. In this case, women’s employment becomes a cause as well as an effect of the ongoing gendered rivalry in

their households. This is confirmed in the words of a very angry woman who was unemployed:

> "I always wonder, 'is this person serious or what.' I think he does this because it's his money I am not working. So he can do whatever he wants with it. I also want to go out to work and when I work I will show him my really self."

It is worthwhile to note that, more than women's employment; failure of both spouses to plan household income spending collectively was a main source of conflict. As I was doing this study, I could sense a lot of hidden conflict going on in quite a number of households. It was a result of women's dissatisfaction which they suppressed while they were not working. Several households had a similar trend of unemployed women who were not satisfied by the way their husbands spent their money yet none of the women interviewed were brave enough to confront their husbands. The 'controlled' conflict manifested when women were working and were able to express their dissatisfaction either verbally or through actions because they felt a little more financially secure.

In the same way, unemployed men in particular, according to the women interviewed, complained about the way their working wives spent their salaries. One woman quoted her husband as saying, "I don't see the reason why you are working because I can't see the money." Another woman stated that her husband often complained about what he called 'unnecessary spending' that he insisted she did. From the majority of women, it has been found that women were allegedly accused of spending a lot of money on spoiling their children. One woman who was not working but married to a street vendor declared that she could not take any money and use it without her husbands' permission because that normally resulted in a fight. Apparently her husband denounces her for wasting money over unnecessary things such as buying good food to please the children. Since men are perceived as the powerful members in their households, they usually act on their dissatisfaction in a way that puts conflict in a spotlight. There is a battle of interests as women's work bestow them power to resist their husbands' actions.

4.1.3.4 Jealousy and abuse of alcoholuying food that pleases the children. thins a street vender declared that she cannot take any money and use it without his husb

Men have a tendency to control women's sexuality and that causes conflict. Women reported that when their husbands saw them talking to other men on one-to-one basis, they were caught by suspicions that resulted in household conflicts. Both working and unemployed women experienced this at some stage in their life. However, in the case of working women, men felt more insecure as their wives' work outside home increased their chances of meeting more men at their work place and along the way to and from work everyday. According to a majority of respondents, men preferred to see their wives staying at home and looking after their households instead of being exposed to the outside world. Women's attempt to counteract gave rise to gendered conflict in their household.

Again, conflict was not brought about by women's behaviour that resulted from working outside home. Instead, the thoughts and perceptions about changes in their behaviour resulted in household conflict. External pressures such as insecurity and feeling of powerlessness can make people feel jealous and sometimes resort to abusive behaviour. Studies show that low self-esteem, isolation from social support, a manipulative nature, and a desire for power and control are some of the factors that lead to domestic violence (http://.social.jrank.org, 2008). Some of the men who had lost their jobs shared some of these characteristics. That goes for working men who felt that their wives employment posed a challenge to their authority.

4.1.3.5 Does women's employment gain them respect in their households?

This study has established that conflict is sometimes a result of lack of respect for women. Under the influence of alcohol mainly, some men and women become verbally and physically abusive. Alcohol abuse normally resulted in out-of-control behaviour that manifested in anger that became the basis of spousal conflict in households. An incident was witnessed in one household where a woman, despite that kind of abuse, could not react to the situation because of her dependence on her husband. Her husband would come home late throughout the weekend he spent home. On arrival, he would speak on top of his voice so that everybody woke up. The wife had to wake up to give him food while his sons had to wake up to feed his horse and take it to the stable.

Incidences such as the one revealed above most commonly apply in unemployed women's household. Many of the working women studied in this research did not receive that kind of treatment even when their husbands were drunk. As one woman puts it, "I don't wish to tell lies, my husband respects me. When he comes home drunk, he will rather sleep than do things that he knows I don't like."

From the countervailing experiences of the two women cited above, it was perceptible that women's level of respect is to some degree influenced by their working status.

CHAPTER5 CONCLUSION

The study has explored the impact of women employment on gendered household relations. This was assessed over three themes of gender aspects of household relations, which are: decision-making; division of household labour; and determinants of conflict. From each of the three themes, several conclusions were drawn regarding the impact of women's waged employment.

With regard to decision-making, women's waged employment gives them power to make decisions on income spending. That is, when they earn their own salary, women are able to decide what to do with their income and are also involved in the planning of their husbands' salaries. However, the study has found that the degree of their control over household income is very much determined by their husbands' economic status. Empirical evidence has shown that, when their husbands do not earn any salary, women enjoy overall control over income spending. When their husbands' income is equated to their own income, there is collective decision making on spending but women still have a better decision-making leverage. Lastly, there is collective decision making when their husbands earn more salaries although their husbands have more power in decision-making.

The study has established that, despite the customary laws in Lesotho that vests ownership of property on men, by virtue of being engaged in salaried employment, some women gained a control over household property. They also have more control over their own lives and lives of their children though to some extent that is influenced by the economic status of their husbands.

However, women's employment does not seem to bring any significant change on their load of housework. Instead, it increases the burden on their usual duties. Their day becomes longer while their leisure is more compromised. Among the things that inhibit change in gendered division of labour is masculinity that result in men's reluctance to assist with household tasks that were initially done by women. On parenting in particular, women's employment does not influence change partly because of their reluctance to give up their status as primary parents and housework managers as other researches have revealed. While employed, women paid work constitute their second shift as Hochschild (1989) has discovered in her research.

The findings also show that women's waged employment triggers conflict. The fact that women spend most of the time at work does not make their spouses happy. Instead, their husbands feel more jealous because their wives are more exposed to the outside world. Coming home late after work also prompts conflict between working women and their husbands. Nonetheless, waged employment empowers them to resist conflict instead of suppressing it.

Despite the fact that waged employment sometimes influences conflict as the study has noted, however, the study has also shown that women gain respect as a result of working in salaried employment. This has been justified through comparing the experiences of working women with those of the unemployed women. In the areas of decision-making, household division of labour and conflict, working women receive different treatment from their husbands as compared to their unemployed counterparts. This generally confirms that, waged employment influences the way women relate to other members of the household, particularly their husbands.

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APPENDIX

An interview schedule

The impact that rural women's engagement in textile industries of Lesotho has on the gendered relations in their household: A case study of Mafeteng, Lesotho.

Three themes that guide the research are:

- To find out whether there is any conflict that results from women's employment in textile industries in their rural households.
- To find out how decision-making in the rural households is affected by full-time employment in the textile industries.
- To find out whether women's employment in the textile industries affect how housework is shared amongst the household members?

Interview schedules for rural women that are employed in textile industries and those that are not employed.

1. How many are you in your family.

2. What do you do for living? What about other members?

3. Are you employed in any full time employment?

a. If yes, where are you employed?

b. Can you please tell me your typical working day, when do you wake up? When do you go to work? What do you do when you get home from work?

c. How does your employment interfere with your relationship with your family?

4. Apart from the salary income, is your household in possession of any economic resources (such as animals, land, etc.) and how are they controlled?

5. Is your husband working?

6. Do you share household chores with other household members?

7. How do you plan your family income?