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The experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in Daveyton

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Young black women in South Africa are faced with a myriad of issues. The most significant is that of unemployment. Evidence from statistics South Africa (2013) showed that, a larger proportion of males were employed compared to females. The percentage of the employed females was highest for whites and lowest for blacks. Tied to this is the low level of education among women. Statistics South Africa (2015) revealed that 55% of unemployed youths had below matric levels of education, with women being the majority. Black women were amongst the most illiterate in South Africa compared to other races and their male counterparts. In 2013, the national unemployment rate for women with no schooling was 4.4 % higher than the national unemployment rate for men with no schooling. The former rated at 68.8 % while the latter rated at 64.4%, amongst youths aged above 25 years (Statistics South Africa, 2013). It is of utmost importance to note that the difference could be higher since these statistics do not include those of teenage pregnancies which is amongst the leading hindrances to the educational success of women, as it limits their chances of completing their schooling (Marteleto, Lam & Ranchod, 2008). Evidence shows that, young women, who become mothers at an early age, struggle to balance motherhood and the demands of schooling and may end up dropping out as a result (Oni, Prinsloo, Nortje & Joubert, 2005).

The low levels of education amongst women excludes them from the labour market and perpetuates gender inequalities and places women in an inferior position in society compared to men. The majority of women in the black community in South Africa are found in the unpaid labour market, where they spend most of their time in unpaid reproductive labour such as household work and care of older people and children, and these are not considered to be economic activities (Statistics South Africa, 2013).This places women in a vulnerable position of being dependent on others for income. Since the work that women engage in is either unpaid or underpaid, they depend on other sources for income, which is often a men employed in the formal economy. As a result, women may be forced to stay in abusive relationships and life threatening situations in order to maintain their source of income (Orr & Meelis, 2014). Furthermore, a large number of children in South Africa are born out of wedlock by young mothers. These young women are often left with the task of caring for

their children alone. According to Statistics South Africa (2015), about 69.6 % of mothers are between the ages of 20 to 34 years. Amongst the black population 45.6 % live only with the biological mother, which is the highest compared to other races. Faced with such diverse issues, it is apparent that young black women in South Africa have a triple burden of womanhood, unemployment and low education status. These challenges make one wonder how these young women manage to survive in their daily lives. The burdens are assumed to be even harder for single mothers leading female headed households where there is no or limited assistance from a male partner.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The reality in South Africa is that a large number of children live in a household where only their mother is present. In 2013 it was found that, four in every ten (41.9%) of Black African children lived in this situation, compared to only 9.9% of Indian/ Asian children (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Female headed households are characterised by poverty (Rogan, 2013) which limits the resources available to its members. The existence of poverty in these households may lead female heads to adopting risky sexual behaviours in order to escape poverty (Potgieter, 1998). Young women in these situations are faced with the double burden of caring for their children and trying to navigate their way in the labour market in order to provide financial support to themselves and the households in which they live. These factors may exert a lot of pressure on one person, hence the need to examine how unemployed single mothers, in female headed households meet these livelihood needs. Again, a lot of research has been done on female headed households and their experiences as single mothers but there is a gap in research that is aimed at understanding the experiences of unemployed single mothers heading their households.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There is a paucity of knowledge in South Africa documenting the lived experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households; hence there is a need to conduct this research in order to understand the individual's common or shared experiences of the phenomenon. It is important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon (Lewis, 2015). There is a need for more attention to be paid to the multiple and complex meanings mothers themselves attach to their experiences and how these may shape their identities (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990) especially in the African context. Furthermore, it

is anticipated that this study will aid policy makers with proper planning and implementation of programmes for unemployed single mothers in the Ekurhuleni Municipality. This study may assist researchers and social service professionals to have a holistic view and understanding of the experiences of unemployed single mothers heading their households. It is also hoped that this study will identify gaps in knowledge already available on this subject.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households?

1.5 PRIMARY AIM

The aim of the study was to understand the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households

1.6 SECONDARY OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the challenges that single mothers playing the provider role in female headed household face
- To explore the livelihood strategies that are utilized by unemployed single mothers who play the provider role in female headed households
- To investigate participants perspectives on support systems they use to strengthen their livelihoods
- To explore the experiences of unemployed single mothers when raising children in a female headed household

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study employed a qualitative research approach using a semi-structured interview schedule to a sample of 15 participants that were recruited using a snowballing and purposive sampling technique.

1.8 DEFINING CONCEPTS

1.8.1 SINGLE MOTHER

Single mother for the purpose of this research is an unmarried woman who is the main care giver for the child, is physically present for the child, provides materially and emotionally for the child, is the one who takes decisions pertaining the needs of the child without or little assistance from a male partner or family members whether cohabiting, living alone or at home.

1.8.2 UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment refers to people between the economically active ages of 15 - 64 years who are not employed but are available for work, it also includes those who are discouraged and have not taken steps to find work (du Toit, 2003).

1.8.3 HEADING A HOUSEHOLD

Female headship for the purpose of this research refers to a women who manages all the activities taking place in the household without or little assistance from a male partner residing in the household or outside.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since a few (2) of the research participants were not fluent in Zulu and English, this might have prevented them from getting their point across the way they intended and some of the meanings and understandings regarding the issues raised, might have been lost. This is mainly because when people speak different languages and come from different backgrounds and cultures, these differences may create misunderstandings in the process of communication (Ntuli, 2012). Since the women's experiences were a product of the different communities that they lived in, and of different periods of their lives, there is a need for a longitudinal study to be conducted and for a secondary method of data collection to be used to fully allow participants the time to properly reflect and introspect on their experiences before giving their responses. This method may include the use of journals where participants are given time to write their lived experiences in a journal. Due to lack of funding and time constraints, the researcher was unable to do this, but future studies on a similar topic should explore this further.

1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

This report is structured in the following way:

Chapter Two contains the literature review and theoretical frameworks. The literature review is presented in such a manner that an overview of studies conducted by other researchers and scholars in the subject is provided. The researcher focused on both international and local publications in reviewing these themes: the theoretical frameworks, definition of a livelihood and single motherhood. Then it will further discuss the challenges

faced by women, young mothers and unemployment, factors contributing to women's unemployment as well as, the livelihood strategies used by single mothers.

Chapter Three contains information on the research approach, design and methodology. This chapter provides an overview of the study designs used to explore the experiences of unemployed single mothers heading their households. It provides a detailed outline of the aims and objectives of the study, selection criteria or procedure, description of participants, the methods used to collect, categorize and analyse data as well as the ethical considerations.

Chapter Four focuses on the analysis, presentation and discussion and findings of the study. This includes background information of the participants, an overview of the main categories and themes that emerged from the interviews as well as discussions and debates surrounding the identified themes.

Chapter Five contains information on the main findings, conclusions of the research study as well as the recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a comprehensive review of existing knowledge and the different debates surrounding the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households. A search of the literature on single motherhood and female headed households resulted in a number of studies highlighting a variety of issues and topics. The chapter will first provide a detailed discussion of the theoretical frameworks utilized in this research study such as the exchange theory, sustainable livelihoods framework as well as the theory of specificity. Then, a discussion of the challenges faced by women in South Africa follows. Furthermore, the chapter will critically discuss some of the debates surrounding single motherhood and unemployment. Then it will outline the different arguments on the livelihood strategies used by women, under this umbrella it will discuss the different livelihoods such as financial capital, social capital, human capital and natural capital.

2.2 THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

Actors

The social exchange theory has its roots in economic exchange. Anthropologists discovered that all human interaction outside of the economic sphere can be interpreted as an exchange of benefits. The services that are essential to fulfilling our needs and desires can be obtained from other people; these are things like status, approval, information, companionship, services, goods etc. This theory focuses on the actors who exchange, the exchange resources, and the structure of exchange and the process of exchange (Molm, 1997). The exchanging actors can be an individual or a group acting as a single unit. When engaging in an exchange, actors weigh their options by looking at the potential costs and benefits of their alternative choices of exchange (Molm, 1997). This theory assumes that when actors value something, they will behave in a manner that will produce more of what they value.

It is apparent that actors do not only exchange goods and services for money but also exchange actions that produce socially valued outcomes that result in psychological gratification. In many instances, social exchanges do not involve an actual transfer of

resources. Instead, an actor performs a behaviour that is valued by another (Molm, 1997). The costs of performing this behaviour may produce *opportunity costs* also referred to as "rewards forgone" from person or thing the behaviour was intended for or behaviours not chosen. The second is *investment costs* which are associated with acquiring certain kind of resources (Molm, 1997). The third is the *actual loss* of a resource which is physically transferred to another. It is material resources that are lost but nonmaterial resources may not be. Lastly, there are some costs that are *intrinsic* as a result of the performance of the exchange such as fatigue, pain and unpleasantness. The outcomes of the exchange are subject to the actors interpretation and their current situation as they may be negatively viewed (costs, punishments, disutility, losses) or positively viewed (rewards, reinforcement, utility or benefits) (Molm, 1997). The outcomes of the exchange are negative when the exchange decreases resources and exchange in another. The outcomes are viewed as positive when they increases resources and exchange in the other (Molm, 1997).

The structure of exchange

Social exchange relations are a result of the mutual dependence among actors. According to Molm (1997, p.20), "some degree of dependence of social actors on one another for valued outcomes is one of the central scope conditions of the theory." The scope condition involves relations of direct exchange, generalized exchange and productive exchange. In direct exchange, the outcomes of an actor depend on the other actor's behaviour. In generalized exchange, the reciprocal dependence is indirect: a benefit received by B from A is not given directly by B's giving to A, but indirectly by giving to another actor in the network or group. Eventually, A will receive a return on her exchange from some actor in the system, but not B (Molm, 1997).

The process of exchange

The exchange process explains how interaction takes place within that structure. It involves exchange opportunities which may be defined as particular times, settings or events that provide actors with the occasion to initiate an exchange. The result of that mutual exchange is referred to as a transaction. Transactions may be negotiated and reciprocal. The latter involves actors engaging in a joint discussion process where an agreement is reached that determines the workings of the process of exchange. In this agreement, both partners benefit from the exchange and they know what they are getting for what they are giving. In the former, actor's contributions to the exchange are not negotiated. Actors initiate exchange

without knowing whether their exchange will be returned and when it will be returned. “Exchange relations develop over time as beneficial acts prompt reciprocal benefit” (Molm, 1997, p. 25). In reciprocal exchange, one only knows the potential value of their exchange. Reciprocity can be returned immediately, delayed or never returned. This is also determined by the levels of power that each actor holds as well as the norms and interpersonal relationships that exists. In the instances of power, the relations of dependence that connect people also create inequalities in power when one actor is more dependent on the other which puts the less dependent at an advantage creating a power imbalance. This power imbalance happens when one actor controls more resources that the other actor needs. This actor may use this power they possess by obtaining greater rewards at a lower cost than that of the exchange partner. The more the second actor is dependent on the first actor for rewards, the higher the cost that the first actor can impose on the second actor by not providing these rewards (Molm, 1997).

2.2.2 THE THEORY OF SPECIFICITY

The theory of functional specificity of relationships postulates that the different support systems in the individual’s life perform various functions for individuals. These functions include attachment which is normally provided by spouses and very close family or friends, social integration (provided by social activity groups), reliable alliance (provided by kin), guidance, and opportunity for nurturance (e.g. to children) (Fiori, Antonucci & Cortina, 2006). Thus, it seems that an individual with the support systems that provide for the above mentioned needs may be in a better position to function properly and achieve their desired goals. This theory is fitting for this research study as it enabled the researcher to identify as well as critically analyse the support systems and resources available to the research participants as well as the influence that these had on their functioning. The underlying assumptions of this theory blend together with those of the sustainable livelihood framework which is built on the belief that people need assets to achieve a positive livelihood outcome. According to the sustainable livelihood framework, people have different kinds of assets that they can combine to help them achieve the livelihoods that they seek. These include, human capital (skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health), social capital (social networks, membership of formalised groups or trust between people that make them help each other), natural capital (trees, land etc.), physical capital (basic infrastructure and producer goods) as well as financial capital (access to credit, income etc) (Krantz, 2001).

Additionally, individuals depend on various systems for social support. The first category is the concrete and instrumental supports which are classified as services and material goods we use to cope with life's demands. The second are information supports which are knowledge and skills that help us cope with the demands in our lives, for example, skills and training opportunities for unemployed women (Lehmann & Coady, 2001). The third category is emotional support which is provided by relationships that are characterized by understanding and safety. The last category is the affiliation supports; these come to us when we have access to meaningful social roles and when we are validated as competent. The recognition by others of our competence to perform our roles enhances belonging and enhances our sense of efficacy (Lehmann & Coady, 2001). When we have adequate support, we are able to cope best with the demands placed on us. Hence, a young single parent new to the complex demands of caring for a child will benefit a lot from receiving validation of her new role and the recognition of her growth within this role (Lehmann & Coady, 2001).

2.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is characterised by a high rate of premarital first births among the Black African population. This is mainly due to that, black Africans in South Africa underwent dramatic social change which brought a lot of strain. This change came about in the 21st century where blacks had to shift away from the social control that was exerted by families on premarital sexual behaviour. Modernity brought with it a cash economy, urbanisation, modern education, new family structures and new values and more freedom for young adults (Zwang & Garenne, 2008). Hence, today, South Africa has a high rate of female headed households that are faced with a variety of issues. According to Okojie (2003), women in Africa are exposed to different challenges; these include customary laws and norms which disadvantage women to a greater extent than men from obtaining land, credit, productive inputs, education, information and health care. The second challenge is that of gender bias in accessing basic human resources and development services such as education, training and health. The third challenge is time poverty resulting from women's multiple and competing reproductive and productive responsibilities which are performed without the assistance of labour saving technology, adequate transportation and so on.

A report compiled by the city of Johannesburg as part of the formation of their development strategy for women prior to the year 2010 clearly captures the challenges faced by women in the city of Johannesburg. Women in the city of Johannesburg do not have access to

employment and training opportunities, as a result, most women fall victim to crimes such as domestic violence and rape. The majority of women are not empowered enough to negotiate safe sex with their sexual partners making women vulnerable to HIV and AIDS infection (The City of Johannesburg, 2013). Secondly, women in the city do not have access to clinics, in some areas women have to travel long distances in order to access these facilities. Often times, these facilities have a shortage of health practitioners who should be rendering services patterning to reproductive health issues. Many women in the city struggle to afford electricity. Regular disruptions and lack of electricity have a negative impact on the lives of women since most of the tasks for which energy is used daily in the households such as cooking, washing, heating and so on are generally regarded as a women's duty (The City of Johannesburg, 2013). Electricity saves women the time of collecting fuel outside the home. It also enables women in home based income generation projects such as sewing, bread baking etc. to perform their tasks more efficiently. Another challenge is the issue of transportation. The multiple roles of women require them to take several short trips in a day, often on routes that are poorly serviced and dangerous. Access to safe, convenient and affordable transport services is a big challenge for women in the city. Taxis which are often unlicensed, un-roadworthy and overloaded and have set routes, resulting, in women having to walk long distances to access them (The City of Johannesburg, 2013).

2.4 SINGLE MOTHERS LEADING FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

a) Female headed household

According to Muncie, Wetherell, Dallos and Cochrane (1995) a household can be classified as a space where one person or a group of people are confined within that space. Female headed households refer to a woman head that is present for the household and is responsible for the welfare of the household (Chirau, 2014). Analysis of surveys in South Africa identified a number of consistent characteristics of the household head and these include: being the oldest household member, the highest earner of income in the household or the key decision-maker, this is according to Posel (2001, as cited in Rogan, 2016). In a study conducted among 30 households selected for interviews in the Durban townships, participants associated female headship with economic contributions to the household, responsibility for meeting basic needs or presiding over key decisions (Rogan, 2016), and absence of an adult male or an employed male (Rogan, 2013). The fact that headship is associated with economic contributions demonstrates that masculinity is still valued higher and femininity lower

(Staveren, 2010) because it overlooks all the activities that have no monetary rewards that woman manage in the households.

Moreover, countries like South Africa, the Philippines etc. have bilateral kinship systems that allow women to access support from their own set of relatives, encouraging female headship (Miralao, 1992). Furthermore, due to the strong beliefs that resulted from industrialisation, the household sphere is viewed as a woman's place (Edgell, 2006), it is then no surprise that it is mostly woman who dominate over the decisions pertaining to activities in the household such as childcare, disciplining of children, choice of crèche or school, purchase of groceries, the recreation and social activities of family members (Craig, Mullan & Blaxland, 2010). The care work performed by woman in their households contributes to the intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities of recipients (England, 2005). Woman's decisions and activities in these household is unrecognised and unappreciated (Pupo & Duffy, 2012). Nonetheless, women have become dominant in this sphere because of the workplace cultures that are built on the male breadwinner family model, limiting the fathers involvement in the functioning of the household (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). The persistent views of fathers as primary breadwinners rather than co-parents are a hindrance to men's participation in the household (Sayer, 2005). Though more women participate in the economic sphere, they still dominate the domestic sphere at home (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). Therefore, female headship for the purpose of this research refers to a women who manages all the activities taking place in the household without or little assistance from a male partner residing in the household or outside.

Additionally, female headed households in South Africa are relatively disadvantaged in terms of income and assets and over-represented among the poor. Poverty in these households is very high and often attributed to labour market disadvantages, time constraints due to commitments of managing the household, being a single earner or lack of financial assistance from the male resident, and residing in a household in which there is no adult male. Another contributing factor is the decline in family support and social networks (Rogan, 2013). Due to low levels of income in these households', heads have limited choices with regards to schooling, clothing, food, transportation, recreation, and social events. This lack of choice may leave female heads feeling powerless, hopeless and with a negative self-image (McIntyre, Officer & Robinson, 2003). Poverty stricken households place its members at risk of adopting unhealthy behaviours as a coping mechanism. "Poverty contributes to high risk lifestyles as a result of unmet emotional, interpersonal and physical needs. High risk

behaviours such as engaging in haphazard sexual activities and drug and alcohol abuse are often practiced in an attempt to cope with the need for love and attention, with loneliness and boredom, and with feelings of low self-esteem and anger" (Potgieter, 1998, p. 65), therefore placing the heads of these households at risk of adopting harmful livelihood strategies.

There is a large body of evidence from British longitudinal studies which demonstrates that girls from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to become mothers at an early age (Rowling & McKay, 2005). The vicious cycle of poverty may then continue to the young mother and her children as they experience further disadvantage in terms of health, education, work, poverty and so on, this is according to Francesconi (2004, as cited in Rowling & McKay, 2005). It has been said that the economic standing of parents is an important determinant of where children may end up in the income distribution (Dearden, Machin & Reed, 1996), which places female children born in female headed households at risk of being poor themselves and continuing the cycle to the next generation which is their children. However, this may not always be the case because some individuals are more resilient and may very well succeed under such circumstances. Female children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are resilient may be able to delay the timing of life transitions such as marriage and parenthood to a more age appropriate time (Friedli, 2009).

b) Conceptualising Single Mother

Previous research on single motherhood has tended to concentrate on the women's marital status (e.g. never married, separated, divorced and widowed) as one of the important factors in determining their membership to the group (Rowling & McKay, 2005). There are a variety of factors that need to be considered when conceptualising single mothers. Scholars have argued that things such as the view of unmarried motherhood as non-normative in the African and Western societies as well as the long history of legislating sex and births outside of marriage, abortion and adoption have helped in shaping the cultural conceptions of what is meant by being a single mother (May, 2010). Furthermore, the definition of single mothers is also influenced by the structural conditions that categorises them as single mothers. These structural conditions include things such as family ideology that defines the two parent family as superior, social norms around women's sexuality that places it within a (married or committed) heterosexual framework, women's position on the labour market which to an extent determines single mothers ability to support their children financially. May (2010)

argues that these social norms, ideologies and practices position women who parent alone as single mothers.

Wright,Noble,Ntshongevena, Barnes and Neves (2013) defined single mothers' as people who both either do not have a partner or spouse or who do not co-habit with their partner or spouse and are the main caregiver for the child under the age of 18 years. A single mother's role as a care giver or parent could be divided into three categories. The first is, effective loyalty to the child or wishing the best for the child, the second is, providing materially (i.e. financially and in kind) for the child and the third is, physical presence with and physical care of the child. A single mother may play all three roles or only some of the roles (Wright, Noble, Ntshongevena, Barnes & Neves, 2013). Single mother for the purpose of this research is an unmarried woman who is the main care giver for the child, is physically present for the child, provides materially and emotionally for the child, is the one who takes decisions pertaining to the needs of the child without or little assistance from a male partner whether cohabiting, living alone or at home.

c) Challenges that single mothers face

Single mothers are faced with a lot of challenges. Low income and unemployed single mothers experience a sense of isolation. These women are isolated from the mainstream activities of society such as recreation, education and other social activities. This limits their chances of improving their circumstances through support and friendship networks. As a result, they would experience depression and feelings of hopelessness (McIntyre, Officer & Robinson, 2003). Motherhood can lead to women having low self-esteem; this is also because of the emphasis on attractiveness by society. The images on the media of a perfect body with firm breasts, long hairless legs, clear skin and shiny hair, these images are not representative of the real everyday women who have given birth and nursed children and may have stretch marks or sagging breasts. If mothers are unable to live up to the required body image, it may result in the women not enjoying their own sexuality, feeling that their bodies are a disappointment for their partners (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990).

In a study conducted in a sample size of 24 single mothers from a low income background, with two or more children aged 14 years or younger in one of the four Atlantic Provinces in Canada, the majority of these mothers deprived themselves of food in order to feed their children. They also deprived themselves of clothes and small luxuries and accepted self-sacrifice as a socially acceptable role for all mothers (McIntyre, Officer & Robinson, 2003).

One of the many reasons that may explain the poverty of single mother households is their limited receipt of financial support from the state or the absent fathers of their children (Chant, 1997). Worse still, in a study conducted in Britain, Sumaza found that single mothers with dependent children have low rates of paid employment, are amongst the lowest paid of all workers, tend to have few qualifications, have a high level of poverty and have high dependence on public benefits (Marlow, 2006). An added disadvantage was that these women were less likely than married mothers or single women without children to have recent work histories (Marlow, 2006).

In households with children, mothers were found to have limited time for leisure than fathers, meaning that women sacrificed their time for relaxation for paid work, household work and childcare (Sayer, 2005). This is further perpetuated by the lingering ideology of good mothering, where the amount of time dedicated to providing a child with a good childhood has increased. There is enormous pressure on mothers to excel on their roles as mothers by knowing their child's every need and desire (Sayer, 2005) as well as to adhere to the undocumented rules of good mothering. Households with small children have higher amounts of unpaid child care work that women participate in compared to households without children (Dribe, Stanfors & Buchler, 2009). This is mainly due to that young children need someone to perform physical care activities such as bathing, dressing and feeding, they need to be constantly supervised and they create other domestic work such as laundry, cleaning and tidying up. Even though many fathers in industrial countries now play a more active role in childcare than in the past, it is still mothers who do the majority of the work of caring for children (Craig, Mullan & Blaxland, 2010).

In order to meet their primary responsibilities of unpaid childcare and domestic work, women tend to reduce the time they spend in paid work (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). In this regard it seems that mothering can potentially reduce the women's life chances where the accumulation of human capital through participation in the labour market is an important determinant in life chances. This is because paid work not only provides income but, also access to social networks, insurance and pension schemes, and monetary credit all of which may improve the workers bargaining power within the household (Scott, Dex & Plagnol, 2012). Due to the burden of unpaid childcare and domestic work, mothers take on part-time work. In many western European countries the mothers of young children in particular are likely to work part-time (Scott et al, 2012). As these women partake in part-time employment, self- employment or temporal employment to accommodate their childcare

responsibilities they reduce their bargaining power in the household since these forms of employment tend to be precarious as they tend to have poor working conditions, poor wages, provide women with limited career opportunities, are insecure and often don't provide benefits (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009).

2.5 SINGLE MOTHERS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In South Africa, the urban female population between the ages of 15 - 64 years made up 69.1 % and males constituted 70 % respectively. Females of the same age in non-urban areas made up 59.3% compared to 57.6 % of males (Statistics South Africa, 2013). A large number of children in South Africa are living in households where only their mother is present and their biological father absent from their lives. Over four in every ten (41.9%) of black African children were in this situation, compared to only 9.9% of Indian/Asian children (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Mothers of children aged 0 - 4 years were generally aged 20 - 24 and 30 - 34 years with a total percentage of 69.6 %. The highest proportion of (25.5%) of mothers of children aged 0 - 4 years belonged to the 25 - 29 year old age group. The majority of mothers (48.4 %) of children had never been married and only 2.2 % of mothers were divorced, widowed or separated (Statistics South Africa, 2015). Statistics of mothers with children above 4 years were not available which means these statistics could be higher than the above figures. Additionally, about 46.8 % of mothers of children aged below five years had attained some secondary education, followed by 29.3 % who had completed Grade 12, while only 12.0 % of mothers did not have a minimum secondary education. Only 11.6 % of mothers had received post-school education (any qualification higher than Grade 12) (Statistics South Africa, 2015).

South Africa has high rates of youth (15 - 35) unemployment. Unemployment refers to people between the economically active ages of 15 - 64 years who are not employed but are available for work, it also includes those who are discouraged and have not taken steps to find work (du Toit, 2003). It is generally found that employment opportunities for young women are more limited than those for young men, leading to slightly higher unemployment rates for young women (du Toit, 2003). The unemployment rate is highest among the age group (20 - 34 years) where a large proportion of unmarried mothers were identified. About 34.7 % of mothers living with their children were unemployed compared to only 9.6 % of fathers living with their children who were unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2015). In 2011, among those between the ages of 15 to 64 years, a smaller proportion of women than

men were employed and a larger proportion of women than men were not economically active. Men were more likely than women to be engaged only in market activities, while women were more likely than men to be engaged only in non-market activities. Women are thus more likely than men to be doing unpaid economic work (Statistics South Africa, 2013).

There are several factors behind the high unemployment rates among young females, these comprise of the lack of sufficient and relevant educational and training opportunities, high densities of youths in cities as they migrate from rural areas in search of better livelihood opportunities, as well as youths not being considered trustworthy (the view that girls will fall pregnant and leave their jobs) (Khosla & Kalita, 2012). It is often found that younger workers are more likely than older workers to leave their jobs as they might have shorter goals and are still discovering what they want in life (du Toit, 2003). Another factor is young people's limited social capital networks compared to older counterparts (Khosla & Kalita, 2012). This is a significant disadvantage when one is coming from a household where no one is formally employed as labour markets are accessed through existing networks (Orr & Meelis, 2014). Employers view women as risky because of their domestic responsibilities. Hence, women end up committing to taking full time responsibility of managing the home, their children's education and the health of their families (Roberts, 2005). The gendered workplace culture reinforces traditional forms of domestic division of labour (Scott, Dex & Plagnol, 2012). Therefore, it seems that the responsibilities of unpaid household labour constrains women's ability to access formal employment and any other empowerment/ self-development opportunities since most jobs do not make provisions for childcare and other household responsibilities (Orr & Meelis, 2014).

The causes of youth unemployment in South Africa have been attributed to a combination of challenges such as the reluctance of employers to hire first-time job seekers, skills mismatch between the type of worker demanded by companies and what the labour pool can supply, poor job seeking skills and methods as well as the insufficiency of available jobs (SALDRU, 2013). Another factor that denies girls and young women access to employment is the fear of violence and sexual assault. Violence and the fear of violence can lead to a culture in which young women are afraid to go outside their homes for fears of being violated (Khosla & Kalita, 2012). Again, the unfair expectation of women to carry the responsibility of unpaid care work hinders women's meaningful participation in the labour market. It can either prevent them from participating in any form of paid employment or act as a double burden when they engage in paid work (Khosla & Kalita, 2012). In South Africa, data gathered from

2000 National time use surveys revealed that women spent 5 hours on average per day performing household work, while men spent 3, 5 hours (Floro & Komatsu, n.d). The onerous share of the household and care work was mentioned to be among the reasons for the high unemployment rate among women in South Africa. Participation in care giving tasks that needs to be carried out in the household influences women's availability for the labour market, their ability to seek employment and to take up learning and socializing (Floro & Komatsu, n.d).

Improvements in the educational attainment and quality for women are deemed crucial in opening up labour market options that were previously inaccessible and in ensuring that women are empowered to make good decisions for themselves and their dependents (Department of Women, 2015). It seems that higher levels of education increased men's participation in household work but decreased those of women. Sundstrom and Durvander (2002) found research which reported that household tasks such as childcare are more equally divided when mothers are more educated and contribute more to the family income. However there is a myriad of factors that prevent women from attaining their education. In a report published by the Department of Women (2015), it was found that females failed to attend an educational institution because of family commitments and pregnancy, accounting for 14, 3% of 19 to 24 year old respondents and 21, 9 % for 14 to18 year old respondents. Pregnancy makes it difficult for young mothers to further their education, which reduces their chances of securing good employment and a high income, and increasing the likelihood of both the mother and the child falling into the poverty trap (Marteleto, Lam & Ranchod, 2008). Pregnancy and affordability combined are responsible for 55% of non-enrolments in females from disadvantaged backgrounds (The Department of Women, 2015).

Being unemployed may have physical and psychological effects on an individual. Unemployed people show a decrease in overall life satisfaction and self-esteem. Other psychological effects include increased anxiety, lack of self-confidence, pessimism, alcoholism, apathy, suicide as well as stress. The experiences of unemployed young people include all of the above as well as a feeling of uselessness and a sense that life may be meaningless (Cloete, n.d). Unemployment produces these emotions because being in employment enhances ones status and social identity. Mothers who are unemployed are more prone to experience these emotions because the isolated company of their children is often not stimulating or interesting enough (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). Furthermore, work provides mothers with a greater sense of achievement and a sense of participation than the

isolated environment at home. Unemployment brings about a sense of powerlessness to women whereas employment for mothers provides economic rewards and is a means of legitimising their independence in personal financial matters. It improves the women's participation in how the household finances should be handled (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). For some mothers, employment outside of the home is a major source of support. Mothers who work outside the home wish more for their children and place more demands on their children to show maturity and competence. In the case where mothers live far away from their families or when families are not well informed, participation in the labour force may provide these woman with sources of information, companionship and support (White & Woollett, 1992).

2.6 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY SINGLE MOTHERS

Single mothers face a variety of challenges which are aggravated by limited livelihoods in female headed households. Such livelihoods include social support, financial support and access to services and resources that are essential for survival and healthy living (Campbell-Grossman, Hudson, Keating- Lefler & Fleck, 2005). A livelihood is defined as encompassing the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is considered to be sustainable when it could cope with and recover from stress and shocks and could maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets and continue to provide livelihood opportunities for the next generation. A livelihood is also deemed sustainable when it contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term (Chambers & Conway, 1991). This conception of a livelihood is not cognoscente of the role played by the environment and society in contributing to the livelihood's ability to cope and recover from the shocks. Additionally, Dijk (2011) has argued that the definition of livelihoods does not accent the sensitivity or resilience of livelihood practices with regards to shocks and hazards. There is a need for the description and interpretation of the term to include the arrangements that people enter into in order to meet needs and desires since the means of living are acquired through society. He continued that, our capabilities, motivations and trajectories are shaped by contexts. Therefore, the definition of the concept needs to reflect a holistic view of livelihoods.

In later years, interpretations and understandings of livelihoods extended their focus to include human capital (Labour, skills, experience, knowledge and creativity available in the household), natural capital (land, water, forests, minerals and pastures), financial capital

(wages, money in a savings account or anywhere else, or a loan credit, pensions and grants), and social capital (which factors in the quality of relationships among people such as the support from family or assistance from neighbours and access to wider institutions in society) (De Haan, 2000). In the rural areas, natural capital was of most significance, whereas, things like shelter, wage labour and basic infrastructure were more relevant in urban areas (De Haan, 2000). Therefore, it seems that a livelihood consists of all the factors that contribute to ensuring that people continue living and upon which they depend for their well-being and security (Moriarty, 2002). Livelihoods in this research study refer to the mixture of individual and household strategies, developed over a given period of time that seeks to mobilize resources and opportunities (Owusu, 2007). It is also worth noticing that since the meaning that an individual attaches to a particular experience is inseparable from the context in which the experience takes place (Wissing, 2013), thus livelihoods may be understood and interpreted differently by people of different cultures, religion, gender and age group in the South African context.

In the African context ones access to a sustainable livelihood may be attributed to their connection to the ancestral spirits. According to Berg (2003), the ancestors are the living dead, members of the family who have died, but continue to live as shades. There is a human, alive relationship between the individual and his or her ancestors; they act as guides and mentors. Those that are still alive, manage to keep the connection with their ancestors through rituals. The rituals are a sign of showing respect and appreciation to the ancestors and they in turn rewarded the person through protecting them, providing good fortune or preventing bad things from happening to the individual and good health. Should the ancestors not be attended to, they withdraw their protection, and it is this broken connection that exposes the individual to all sorts of misfortunes, challenging their ability to cope with the demands of the world. As a result, some may view their lack of access to human capital, natural capital, financial capital and social capital as threats from the ancestors who had turned their backs on the individual or as some form of punishment from the ancestors for neglecting them or for the broken connection between the individual and his or her ancestors. In the African world-view, disconnectedness can cause severe suffering and misfortunes (Berg, 2003).

In the cases of unemployment in a household, networks in the communities in which these households exist may provide the necessary services for the survival of these households as safety nets (Sterveren, 2010). The strategies that women adopt for their livelihood are

determined by a range of socio-economic factors. More importantly, women are forced to seek alternative means of earning incomes due to the high rates of unemployment and unavailable or inadequate support from the male partner (Massiah, 1989). Thus women make their living by combining a complex web of activities and interactions (Rahman & Akter, 2014). Women in urban areas also engage in a wide range of self-employed activities in the informal economy such as street vending, domestic work, sex work and waste-picking, all of which present various risks and vulnerabilities (Kholsa & Kalita, 2012). The livelihood strategies adopted by women are also influenced by factors such as age, education, household income and geographical location to mention but a few.

Rahman and Akter (2014) conducted a study to 4195 households from 139 villages in Bangladesh and identified a few factors that played a significant role in determining the livelihood choices of households. Though the study was conducted in the rural areas, its findings are of significance to this study as it is the researcher's assumption that similar determinants may influence households from disadvantaged communities. Firstly, the study found that the level of education of a household head and its members had an influence on non-agricultural livelihood options in addition to agricultural livelihoods, whereas uneducated households settled for low paid wage employment. According to Barrett et al, 2001 (as cited in Rahman & Akter, 2014), noted that households with low levels of education often lacked the necessary skills to undertake non-farm livelihoods and that households with more educated members were more prone to participate in the non-farm sector. For example,

> "the working class in Nigeria often confines its activities to labour intensive, capital scarce, and low-returns operations, while the professional class draws on its access to financial and political resources to get involved in more efficient income generating activities" (Owusu, 2007, p. 454).

Secondly, Rahman and Akter (2014) found that the quality of the infrastructure in the area in which households lived and their proximity to the city influenced non-agricultural livelihoods. Non-farm activities decreased with distance from town suggesting the importance of physical market access to livelihood choice. Again, ownership of land also played a crucial role since those with access to large sizes of land were more likely to rent out the land to tenants as a livelihood. However, land poor households chose wage employment as a livelihood choice. Lastly, low income households had limited livelihood choices as they could not undertake more profitable activities (for example business) due to lack of start-up

capital and human capital (for example, skilled labour). Owusu (2007) also argued that the nature of the activities of the household members depends on their access to resources, skills, and socioeconomic status (particularly gender and age).

2.6.1 FINANCIAL CAPITAL

According to Scoones (1998), financial capital includes cash, credit/debt, savings and other economic assets, including basic infrastructure, production equipment and technologies which are essential for the desired livelihoods of the people or group involved. Marlow (2006) contends that more women than men enter into self-employment because it is highly flexible both spatially and temporally, it is easy to access and it enables the individual to test their ability to work under their own terms. Self-employment also acts as a stepping stone into wage employment. Kellard et al (2002 as cited in Marlow, 2006), found that previously benefit dependent women who entered self-employment boosted their employment credibility and improved their self-confidence. These women became more self-assured when seeking employment and felt better prepared for the formal work environment.

The entrepreneurial activities that women participate in are usually an extension of their domestic duties; they usually involve selling prepared foods, agricultural products, crafts, and clothing, cosmetics, and small household furnishings. Small-scale women traders are involved in supplying much of the food to people in large cities such as Harare, Kinshasa, and Nairobi, as well as in provisioning their local village and household units (Akinboade, 2005). Women constitute more than two thirds of street traders in the main cities of Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo and more than half in Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal and South Africa (Khosla & Kalita, 2012).

The majority of these are survivalist micro enterprises and are unable to transit into fully fledged business due to poor product quality, lack of marketing skills and project management skills, poor funding etc. (Monyai, 2011). Other activities that the majority of youths in Africa engage in are in the informal sector as shop assistants, farm herds, clerical assistants, typists, stewards and cooks in hotels and restaurants, in street trading and prostitution. Only a small proportion of youth are engaged in the formal sector. Many are found along the streets of major cities, selling apples, oranges, cell phone cards, telephone headsets and assorted goods (Okojie, 2003). Some women ran small businesses such as 'spaza' shops but many of these underperform due to a lack of institutional support (The City of Johannesburg, 2013).

The majority of self-employed women engage in small business because of the responsibility to provide subsistence needs for their children and other family members. In Kenya, 85% of married women traders reported that they had responsibility for the provision of food; 78% for clothing; 35% for house rent; and 25% for school fees. Similar findings exist for unmarried women too (Akinboade, 2005). As a result of the lack of better opportunities, young women partake in prostitution in African towns and cities, while some are trafficked abroad to engage in prostitution (Okojie, 2003). It is estimated that there is between 5 000 and 10 000 sex workers in Hillbrow alone. There is growing evidence that a growing number of girls drop out of school and engage in sex work. The reasons for this have been found to be poverty and unemployment as well as the burden of family responsibilities due to family disintegration (The City of Johannesburg, 2013).

In a study conducted in the households in the Alexandra township, Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2000), found that there were a variety of livelihoods strategies adopted by the residents to survive, cope and prosper, these included renting rooms, membership to informal savings clubs, bulk buying schemes, communal eating arrangements and labour intensive solutions to housework to reduce costs such as the use of fossil fuels for cooking even in electrified areas. According to Sterveren (2010), the women's caring roles require complementary financial resources which force households to engage in informal saving, borrowing and lending. More than a third of all Alexandra residents belonged to stokvels which were essentially saving groups. Some of the household coping mechanisms were illegal such as the criminal activities that marginalised youths partook in as well as the illegal occupation of land by squatters (Beall, Crankshaw & Parnell, 2000). Additionally, the government has ensured universal coverage of the Child Support Grant where mothers receive R380 per month for their children; this has made significant contributions to halt intergenerational poverty. According to Patel, Hochfeld, Moodley and Mutwali (2012), the Child Support Grant has enhanced women's power and control over household decision making and the resources available to women.

2.6.2 HUMAN CAPITAL

People and communities have stores of value that can be passed from one generation to the next. People embody human capital in the form of knowledge, education, skills, training and other valuable abilities (Rath, n.d). Often mothers or women would apply their budgeting skills when resources are scarce. They are the ones who spend most time looking for

discounts and deals and they would put extra time and work into substituting for the lack of purchasable consumer items (Fodor, 2006). Again, young women have access to information through cell phones, social media, radio, and television and so on. Young women are able to access information regarding available employment opportunities, educational and skills development programmes and workshops and so on. However, women from disadvantaged communities and households may be unable to utilize this livelihood strategy as a result of their circumstances. A report from The Presidency (2014) highlighted that women watched less television compared to men. Given their reproductive responsibilities of caring for families, women's time spent on household chores makes it more difficult for them to access information.

There are a number of programmes implemented by government and NGO's for young women to participate in. One of these is the South African Women Entrepreneurs Network (SAWEN) which provides support services to women through effective network forums, training and capacity building programmes and the provision of pertinent business information and advice that leads to business opportunities (The Department of Trade and Industry, n.d). Another initiative by the Department of Trade and Industry is the Bavumile skills development initiative which is a women's empowerment capacity building initiative aimed at identifying talent in the arts and crafts and textile and clothing sectors. The program places emphasis on both skills development and the economic empowerment of women. The program recruits women with skills in embroidery, sewing, weaving and beading. Lastly, this program provides specialist skills training and assists women to establish their own enterprises, skills in packaging, customer services, and basic book keeping and registering a business (The Department of Trade and Industry, n.d).

Furthermore, a while ago the government introduced the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which is founded on four sectors, infrastructure, environment and culture, social and economic. The programme is comprised of three sub programmes namely, community health worker, early childhood development and home community based care programmes (The City of Johannesburg, 2013). There is not enough literature of statistics to show its progress or its impact on the empowerment of women and providing sustainable livelihoods for women. The number of children attending early childhood development facilities has accelerated due to ECD development efforts jointly implemented by the department of social development, basic education and health. These services have provided women with the opportunity to participate in employment opportunities with the support available for their

role of caring for children (The City of Johannesburg, 2013). Again, there are microfinance schemes that provide social insurance and economic opportunities for women, these empower individuals within the family and household and their communities. For instance, the school feeding scheme stabilises food consumption for the poor, enhances access to education for the poor and socially excluded children, thus building their human capital and improving their life time earning potentials through linkages with education services (Monyai, 2011).

2.6.3 SOCIAL CAPITAL

Scoones (1998), described social capital as social resources such as networks, social claims, social relations, affiliation and associations upon which people rely on pursuing different livelihoods. Communities and societies are stores of social capital in the form of traditions, customs, identity, organizations, laws, and institutions that are passed on to future generations (Rath, n.d). The traditional culture does not recognize a nuclear family structure but rather cherish and practice the extended family system whose membership includes grandchildren, grandmothers, nephews, aunts etc. The woman is never isolated since there are always family members, a clan or the community to assist in looking after her children (Asu, Ekwok & Chimezie, 2014). Even though cultural traditions have weakened as a result of modernity, grandmothers are still a strong support system for single mothers in terms of playing the caring role to their children while they go to work or partake in income generating activities. According to Ko, Mehta and Moug (2006) the elderly are often expected to take on the role of caregiver and parent to their grandchildren. Though this may be beneficial to the young mother as this provides them the opportunity to access developmental and empowerment opportunities, it becomes difficult and challenging for the elderly person to deal with the generation gap. The elderly find it difficult to adjust to today's parenting styles which have changed since they were young mothers and fathers themselves, thereby making it frustrating for them raising children from a different generation (Cohen, 2005). As a result, the elderly experience numerous psycho-emotional difficulties (TIoubatla, 2009).

Furthermore, as a response to prevailing socio economic environments and unresponsive political institutions and organisations and failure by these to generate sufficient means of livelihood opportunities, young people feel excluded and marginalised. Young people would then turn to violent protests and wars as a means of livelihoods (Okojie, 2003). Again, Women usually maintain close contact with kin and friends in order to ensure that the elaborate process of borrowing money in times of financial crises is smooth (Fodor, 2006).

Additionally, in a study conducted in Alexandra, it was found that women ensured social capital through affiliation with religious organizations (Beall, Crankshaw & Parnell, 2000). Social ties have an important effect on both cash and noncash resources. Noncash resources are also very beneficial for young single mothers as these may include a friend or relative, who may watch their children for free, or other low cost child care arrangements or living with a friend or relative who would charge the mother little or no rent (Edin & Lein, 1997). A study conducted in Boston, Chicago, Charlenston and San Antonio to 100 single mothers (wage and reliant and benefit reliant mothers) found that welfare mothers who did not work were more reliant on receiving help from community groups, charities to supplement their earnings and had limited personal networks. Contrary to this, low wage earning mothers had better personal networks as they were more likely to have network ties with others who were better off and could provide steady cash help (Edin & Lein, 1997).

The government has ensured that women's voices are raised through the establishment of participatory spaces and structures to promote agency. This has been done through ensuring that women are equally represented in parliament, in decision making and policy spaces (The Presidency, 2014). However, these mechanisms seem to benefit women in the middleclass and upwards and less so those from the lower classes. This assumption is motivated by that, women from the lower classes are still disempowered and exposed to a lot of social injustices. In some communities there are Non-Governmental Organizations such as Lovelife, Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), People Opposed to Women Abuse (POWA) and many more that conduct workshops teaching women about their human rights. Such workshops empower young women to use their own voices despite living in conditions where their human rights may be compromised through patriarchal constraints and economic instability (McCracken, Unterhalter, Marquez & Chelstowska, 2015). Furthermore, labour laws and specific policies on maternity benefits and protection in the workplace have assisted young women of child bearing age to retain their jobs, supporting their reproductive roles (The Presidency, 2014).

2.6.4 NATURAL CAPITAL

Natural capital includes all aspects of the natural environment that provide income, services, resources, or benefits. Natural capital includes raw resources such as oil, timber, and fish. It includes life support services such as climate regulation, nutrient cycling, waste treatment, soil formation and other ecological processes that keep us alive. Natural capital also

encompasses hunting, subsistence, and outdoor recreation resources as well as aesthetic and cultural benefits derived from nature (Rath, n.d). Urban natural resources also include trees for amenity provision in parks or homesteads, water for services such as irrigation and sanitation as well as waste or rubbish and grass (Twyman & Slaters, 2005). Urban resources also encompass things such as access to grazing land for those with cattle's and goats in the townships. In Khayelitsha, a township in Southeast Cape Town, it was found that poor households had livestock as a form of livelihood (Twyman & Slaters, 2005).

Waste is a popular source of livelihood in poor households in the townships. According to The Department of Environmental Affairs (2014), waste pickers tend to be equally divided with males constituting 50.7% and females at 49.3 % with ages ranging from 16 years to 83 years. Most of which are blacks, constituting 94.5 %. These waste pickers usually collect items such as plastic, paper, cans, glass, bottles, bricks, copper, food, clothing and fabric and cardboards. Females are mostly among those collecting cans and glass and bottles at 54%, followed by 53% who are paper collectors and 52% who are plastic collectors. Men on the other hand are concentrated among those who collect copper, metal, food and fabric or clothing. The average amount earned is R1 430 monthly with the highest being among those collecting steel (R6000), bricks (R 4 100) and copper (R 2257) which are mostly men. Whereas, women are largely saturated among those collecting boxes and cardboard making the lowest amount which is R 627 monthly. This demonstrates the disadvantages that women face in accessing sustainable livelihoods. Women in this case often lack the necessary resources such as large vehicles or man power to collect heavy items such as bricks and metal.

Furthermore, the community work programme has ensured that women participate through the development and maintenance of food gardens in local Clinics and Schools. However, it is mostly older women who participate in these programmes (The Presidency, 2014). The Municipal Indigent Policy approved in 2005 to provide indigent with free basic water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal. The access to these services has eased the burden of household chores for vulnerable and poor households as women in the cities no longer have to travel to faraway places to fetch water and firewood. Constitutional rights and cultural rights as well as the gendered focus on reforming access to land has created an enabling environment for women to access, own, control, use and manage land and also access credit facilities. However, due to the dominance of cultural practices in rural areas women continue to be denied access to land (The Presidency, 2014).

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a concise explanation and discussion of the social exchange theory and the theory of specificity. With regards to the former, the discussion focused on the actors, the structure of exchange and the process of exchange. Additionally, the chapter provided a definition of livelihoods, female headed households and single mother. Then, it highlighted that unemployment was highest among females between the ages of 15-64 years. The factors that contributed to this were mentioned to be that youths were considered untrustworthy (the view that girls will fall pregnant and leave their jobs) and that young people had limited social networks. Another factor was the expectation that women should be responsible for the household domestic labour which constrained their abilities to access formal employment. Other factors included but not limited to skills shortage, low levels of education, etcetera. Furthermore, it was discussed that women in urban areas faced a myriad of challenges such as poverty, pressure on woman to excel on their roles as mothers, lack of training and exposure to employment opportunities etcetera. Woman employed a diversity of livelihood strategies in order to generate income such as street vending, waste picking, education, sex work, stokvels, borrowing money and accessing childcare services from family members. The next chapter outlines the research design and method of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of unemployed single mothers heading their households. The study intended to describe their experiences in a holistic manner through understanding the challenges they experienced, the livelihood strategies they utilized as well as their support systems. This chapter focuses on the methodology adopted in order to understand the experiences of unemployed single mothers heading their households. Methodology was an essential part of the research study as it provided a clear work plan of how the data needed would be gathered, analysed and presented. In This study, a qualitative approach was employed. The researcher deemed it important to use a qualitative approach given the nature of the question being asked and the concepts used in the study. It became significant to focus not only on the individual responses of the participants, but to also consider the context in which their experiences were created. Thus, the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to make linkages between the person and their environment. This chapter also looks into the research sampling strategies, data collection methods, and instrumentation applied for this study.

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach, defined as "an approach that studies things at their natural setting and attempts to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Creswell, 2007, p. 36). Thus, in order to find out the experiences of single mothers on the issues being raised, it was mostly appropriate to use the qualitative approach as this allowed for deeper probing by the researcher and aided in obtaining rich detailed data (Neuman, 2000). Again, this approach allowed the researcher to report on multiple perspectives on the issue through identifying the many factors involved in the situation, and describing the larger picture that emerged (Creswell, 2007). Despite the advantages, qualitative research has its weaknesses. The major disadvantage of this approach is that, researchers have to spend enormous amounts of time on the field collecting data and participate in a long process of data analysis (Creswell, 2007).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative research has a wide variety of designs (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), this research study used multiple case study design. Yin (1994, as cited in Kennedy & Luzar, 1999) described a case study as an empirical inquiry that studies a contemporary phenomenon within the context in which it occurs. The cases may involve an individual or several individuals or an event (Creswell, 2007). There are three types of case studies: the single instrumental case study, the collective or multiple case studies and the intrinsic case study. This research used a multiple case study which included selecting a single issue which was identified as unemployment in order to illustrate the issue of single mothers heading their households while unemployed. One of the advantages of using this design is that the use of multiple cases allows the researcher to show different perspectives on the issue (Creswell, 2007). The researcher spent two months collecting data in Daveyton to a sample of single mothers who met the criteria for taking part in the study. The amount of time spent on the field collecting data enabled the researcher to get a detailed account of the participants' experiences and the meanings they attached to them. Using case study methods allowed the researcher to closely examine a limited number of individuals from a small geographical area (Zainal, 2007). However, case studies have their limitations, one of these have been mentioned as the lack of representativeness and rigor in the collection, construction and analysis of the empirical material (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). Another disadvantage that has been identified is that, deciding on the boundaries of the case may be challenging. The researcher may need to set boundaries that appropriately surround the case since some cases do not have clear beginnings and ending points (Creswell, 2007).

3.4 POPULATION

A population can be defined as a group of potential participants to whom the researcher wants to generalise the findings of a study. Results can only have meaning when they can be generalised from a sample to a population (Salkind, 2006). The population in this research study has been identified as unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in Daveyton, a township in the Ekurhuleni Municipality, Gauteng. There were several reasons that led the researcher to choosing this area for the study. The first was its relevance, mainly because Daveyton is characterised by high levels of unemployment amongst youth. Young people of working age were seen in the middle of the week wandering the streets carrying bottles of alcohol. Worse still, there is a huge drug abuse problem amongst the young man in

the area. Most of these young men are addicted to a drug known as nyaope. Moreover, Daveyton has a high school drop-out rate among females caused by exposure to pregnancy while still attending school. Consequently, they seldom get the opportunity to complete their studies because of the demanding role of being a mother. As a result, they end up either unemployed or temporally employed in the local retail shops or self-employed in the informal sector (City of Ekurhuleni, 2015).

3.4.1 THE RESEARCH SITE

Daveyton is a township near Benoni in Ekurhuleni East. This township was established in 1955 when 23 225 African's were relocated from Benoni and Etwatwa. Daveyton is 12 Km away from Benoni and is also boarded with other towns like Springs, Boksburg, Brakpan and Kempton Park (Mashabela, 1988). Daveyton has a population of 148222 combined from all the five municipal wards. The population comprises of immigrants who speak various languages like Shona, Portuguese and Arabic, it also includes but not limited to local languages such as Ndebele, Shangaan (Tsonga), Zulu, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Setswana, Xhosa and Swati (Sacks, 2010). The local residents also call this township "Vutha" because it was the first township to have access to electricity.

Most parts of the township are clean. However the local business centre where the Mall and Taxi rank are situated is dirty and congested with informal traders occupying large spaces, making it impossible to walk about. The majority of these informal traders are woman selling vegetables, fruits, snacks and sweets etc., some sell wings and plate hair. Informal trading is very popular in this area, this is due to the high rates of unemployment and low levels of education among residents. Another popular means of making money in the area is through running "shebeens" which are popular spots that sell alcohol. Furthermore, those who have access to land, rent their yards to those who are homeless allowing them to erect shacks in exchange for a monthly payment of R 450 or R1000 for renting a backroom house. Some houses have more than six shacks in their yards because it is their only source of income. For some, it is a way of supplementing their income. Again, some members of the community utilise the three recycling stations available by collecting tins, cardboards, plastics and metal and exchange them for cash (City of Ekurhuleni, 2015).

There are a variety of educational facilities available in the area such as 29 schools, a library with a free Wi-Fi connection, an FET college and UNISA campus as well as more than 40 early childhood development centres (City of Ekurhuleni, 2015). The township has three

government Clinics, one is operational 24 hours a day. The modes of transportation are taxis and metro rail trains. There are several informal settlements in the area which are characterised by poverty and over crowdedness. Furthermore, there are various NGO's in the area that assist with poverty alleviation. An example is an organisation called HOPE that works with mothers and children. Their requirements include mothers of children below the ages of six years to attend parenting skills workshops. Once the mothers have completed the program, they receive food parcels for six months. The local municipal social workers also have a diversity of programs available for woman and children (City of Ekurhuleni, 2015).

3.5 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

3.5.1 THE USE OF PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

This research study comprised of 15 unemployed black single mothers leading female headed households ranging from the ages of 20- 33 years. The sample size was motivated by that case study methods are unique in the sense that they allow for the researcher to study a small number of subjects of interest in great detail (Zainal, 2007). It is apparent that one cannot generalise from this sample size but the aim is to "generate insights, anomalies and paradoxes which later may be formalized into hypotheses that can be tested", this is according to, Hochchild (1981, as cited in Neuman, 2000, p. 198). Again, the researcher chose to focus on this cohort because of the statistics which revealed that 69. 6 % of mothers in South Africa are between the ages of 20 to 34 years. The statistics also show that amongst the black population, 45. 6 % live only with the biological mother, which is the highest compared to other races (Statistics South Africa, 2015). Since single mothers could not be easily identified in the area, the researcher used subjective information such as going to the locations where mothers usually visit in order to include them in the research study (Neuman, 2000). This method of sampling is referred to as purposive sampling where cases are selected according to a preselected criterion relevant to the research question (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). The participants were selected according to their age, gender, marital and employment status. They had to be unemployed females between the ages of 18-35 years. The participants also had to be divorced, widowed or never married.

Ten of the research participants were recruited from outside the gates of the Daveyton main Clinic as they were coming out from getting their children immunized and examined by the nurses. This decision was motivated by that, the majority of the population preferred using Daveyton main Clinic over others because it is the most efficient and the largest (City of

Ekurhuleni, 2015). The participants were approached with a warm friendly smile followed by greetings and introductions. All the participants were very welcoming and enthusiastic about taking part in the study. Then, the researcher exchanged contact details with the potential participants in order to arrange a meeting time and date of the interview convenient to them.

3.5.2 THE USE OF SNOWBALL SAMPLING

The researcher also used the snowball sampling technique to locate the remaining participants. Snowball sampling is associated with non-probability sampling, which is a sampling method identified with qualitative research methods (Neuman, 2006). The limitation with non-probability sampling is that they rarely determine the sample size in advance and have limited knowledge about the larger group or population from which the sample is taken (Neuman, 2006). Snowball sampling enables the researcher to make contact with some of the social networks of the existing research participants, requesting their participation in the research study (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). The researcher was referred to five other participants by some of the participants who had already taken part in the research study. Two of the five participants were tenants in the same yard as the referral source. The other three participants were friends and neighbours of the referral source.

3.6 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Lived experiences always involve interpretation of what happens in life, of what makes our perceptions, feelings and actions meaningful. Experience also includes how we interpret the events or things that take place in our daily lives. Experience is communicated through narrative where events are linked to other events, where earlier events are understood as causing later events (Pickering, 2008). Hence, the researcher utilised in-depth interviews which allowed the participants to tell their own stories in their own words. In-depth interviews enabled the researcher to have a conversation with the research participants with the goal of learning about the participant's perspectives and experiences. Through in-depth interviews the presence of an interviewer allows for questions to be explained if necessary to the interviewee (Neuman, 2000). Since the interviews were conducted in Isizulu because it is the most widely spoken and understood language in the area, some participants who were from outside the Gauteng province and had been living in Daveyton for less than three years, requested the researcher to elaborate on some of the questions. These were Tsonga speaking participants who had not yet adjusted to the local lingo.

Moreover, there are certain disadvantages to conducting in-depth interviews. One of the limitations of conducting in-depth face to face interviews is that, the interviewer can introduce bias. Such bias may emerge from the way in which questions are phrased, the researcher's appearance, tone of voice and so on (Neuman, 2000). Hence, the researcher ensured that the questions on the interview schedule were not leading questions. Furthermore, another disadvantage is that respondents may wish to give socially desirable responses (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2011). However, the biggest disadvantage in face to face interviews is the high cost (Neuman, 2000), this was one of the prominent challenges that the researcher faced when collecting data. Since the research participants were from three different sections (Sotho, Xhosa, Shangaan sections) in Daveyton, the researcher had to take a local taxi to the participants' homes which cost R20 per trip. In cases where money was short, the researcher had to travel on foot. This delayed the data collection process enormously and caused a lot of stress and anxiety for the researcher. Nonetheless, the questions of an in-depth interview are usually pre-determined, but for this research some of the questions were formulated in the interview setting. The researcher found that some of the interviews brought about a new subject or issue that the researcher did not anticipate before going to the field and these were added to the interview schedule compelling the researcher to request another short interview with the participants that had already been interviewed. An example is the issue of physical abuse and cheating that occurred in the intimate relationships of the mothers which had an adverse effect on their emotional well-being, running of the household and parenting roles.

According to Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003), the choice of venue for in-depth interviews is often left to the participant. It will usually be their home, or their workplace. All the participants in this study were interviewed from the comfort of their homes. Since the participants had never taken part in a research study before and were unsure of what to expect, they preferred to be interviewed in a space where their safety was guaranteed. This proved to be an advantage for the researcher as it allowed the researcher to observe the participants surrounding environment. Again, the researcher was able to observe some of the mother's interaction with their children. It seemed that the researcher was able to establish rapport with the participants because they were all very warm and relaxed in the presence of the researcher. This was achieved through the researcher's openness and willingness to reveal the shared identity with the participants as a mother and resident of Daveyton. Furthermore, the researcher blended in the participants' culture through not overdressing so as to not offend or stand out (Neuman, 2000), instead the researcher wore casual clothing such as jeans

and sneakers and dresses which were a true representation of how the researcher normally dressed on a daily basis. Since the researcher was not familiar with some of the streets where the participants lived, after getting off a taxi, the researcher would call the participants to come to the researcher's current location. While walking with the research participants to their homes, the researcher would break the ice by getting to know the research participant children's name, their date of birth and would exchange basic information about the sex and age or date of birth of the researcher's child. The researcher would also exchange information about where about in Daveyton the researcher lived. When the participant and the researcher arrived to their destination, the participant would seem more relaxed. The researcher's disclosure seemed to have allowed for relationships and a sense of trust to be fostered. Some writers such as Graham (1984) and Oakley (1981) supported the exchange of information and feelings between the interviewer and the interviewee and believed that the reciprocal exchange of these helped achieve intimacy (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003).

However, there are disadvantages to this exchange such as that the participant may hold back from giving detailed information of the phenomenon on the assumption that the researcher knows what it is like (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003). While on the field, the researcher found this irrelevant for the current research study because the researcher's disclosure about being a mother created a space where participants felt safe talking about difficult aspects of motherhood that someone without children and not familiar with the area may not have been able to comprehend. There were a couple of instances where the research participants were eager to learn more about the researchers experience of juggling motherhood and university studies. In these cases, the researcher would show an interest in the participant and not talk about herself (Thompson, 2000, as cited in Neuman, 2000). Instead, the researcher would divert the conversation back to the participant by informing them that the interview was about their experiences and would be given the opportunity to find out more about the researcher after the interview. Often times, the researcher ended up staying longer than expected in the participants home giving advice and guidance where requested and making referrals. For example, one of the participants had a low self-esteem and felt trapped in a toxic relationship with the father of her child and felt powerless because of her employment status. She desperately needed to speak to someone since she did not have any close friends in the area. She enquired about how she can go about getting a job as a domestic worker and the researcher made a call to a person who had the information and gave this information to the research participant. Noticing that some of the participants lacked information about the

NGO's available in the area for volunteering purposes; the researcher shared some of this information and referred the participants to the local municipal social workers offices to get more information.

The interviews were not longer than an hour; the longest interview was an hour and the shortest was forty five minutes long. All the interviews were recorded; however the researcher also took notes of the participants' non-verbal behaviour, environment and some of the conversations that were not captured during the interview. According to Neuman (2000), field researchers should take note of the physical environment of the participants such as neatness, hairstyle and dress because they affect the way participants interact with the researcher. Hence, the researcher kept a note book where observed findings of the surrounding environment were jotted down. The researcher noticed that in the households where participants were tenants in a shack, it was extremely hot inside, very small in size and there were no chairs where the researcher could sit. The researcher was often offered a sit on top of the bed. Since in the African context it is frowned upon to stand when one has been ordered to sit down (Ntuli, 2012), the researcher would kindly accept this gesture by smiling and sitting on the bed. A smile can be understood as a sign of acceptance and understanding (Ntuli, 2012). Another aspect that was noted was that almost half of the participant's physical appearance with regards to their hair styles needed restyling while their children on the other hand especially girls, had beautiful hair that looked neat and tidy. When the researcher arrived in five different houses, they were dirty and untidy and the participants would apologise for the mess. Neuman (2000) postulates that, people who do not take care of their appearance such as grooming, shaving or wearing deodorant send out a symbolic message by their appearance. According to the researcher's interpretation, the participants may have limited the time they spend on self-grooming and lowered their housekeeping standards in order to prioritise childcare, and this may constitute as good mothering (Muncie, Wetherell, Dallos & Cochrane, 1995).

3.6.1 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

In order to learn about the experiences of unemployed single mothers, the researcher utilised a semi-structured interview schedule comprising of both open ended and closed questions to guide the collection of data. The interview schedule (see Appendix D) required the participants to share what influenced their decision to become a mother, to describe their experiences of raising a child, their perceptions of motherhood, their challenges, educational

and employment history, support systems, livelihood strategies and so on. According to De Clerck, Willems, Timmerman and Carling (2011), the semi-structured interview schedule is an instrument for researchers to ensure that none of the important issues to be discussed are left out of the conversation. The semi-structured interview schedule works as a guide of a good and productive conversation. While conducting interviews, the researcher seldom had to refer to the interview schedule. This was due to that, the researcher invested enormous amounts of time studying the interview schedule before going to interview the research participants. Another reason was that most of the participants' stories were told in a manner that automatically answered most of the questions that were in the interview schedule. It seemed that the mothers were in great need of someone interested in their lived experiences and would listen without judgement or interruptions.

A pilot study was conducted prior to the actual study. A pilot study means to test the interview schedule with a small number of participants prior to conducting the actual interviews. The instrument should be tested on the same criteria of people that will be included in the real study (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2011). In order to test the instrument, two females between the ages of 22-24 from Daveyton were interviewed. It was explained to them that the interview was for piloting purposes and that the findings would not be included in the actual study. According to Phellas, Bloch & Seale (2011), the people used during the pilot study should be excluded from the final sample as their experience of seeing the earlier questions may make them answer the differently. Through piloting, the researcher was able to identify problems and gaps with the instrument. The researcher was also able to polish her interviewing skills and modify the phrasing of some of the questions in the interview schedule.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis includes organising and adding meaning to the large amounts of data collected. The researcher followed five steps when organising the data gathered. Firstly, the researcher became familiar with the data set through converting recordings into transcripts and reading and rereading the data and making notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Secondly, emerging themes or concepts from the data set were identified, labelled and sorted (Richie et al, 2003). Thematic content analysis was used to identify the major themes that emerged from transcriptions, to acknowledge and represent the multiple voices and perspectives of individuals that participated in the study (Tsheko, 2007). Once the themes were identified, the

third step was coding, this involved the researcher coding or marking interesting features of the data that were perceived as relevant to the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Fourthly, the researcher reviewed the themes by checking if the themes worked in relation to the coded extracts and then kept analysing and refining the specifics of each theme and the overall story that the analysis told, generating clear definitions and names for each theme until the researcher produced a good account of what was revealed by the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During analysis, the complexity of the stories shared by the participants soon became more apparent as the data slowly revealed how the participants' meanings were shaped by the dominant social narratives in their social environment (Miller, 2007). The final step was for the researcher to produce the report which includes a final analysis of the phenomenon being studied. The report includes selected extracts as examples, final analysis of selected extracts relating back to the analysis of the research question and literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

When someone is reading a research study, he/she needs to be assured of the credibility of the findings. In qualitative research the term trustworthiness of the data is used. In order to enable the reader to determine whether the methods used in the study are appropriate and the results are viable interpretations (Kawulich & Holland, 2012), there are four criteria's that have to be met, which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bradley, 1993).

3.8.1 CREDIBILITY OR VALIDITY

Ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004). Credibility refers to the truthfulness or accuracy of the research. There are two types of validity, internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to what extent has an authentic/ credible account of participant's experiences or understandings been captured and reflected in the findings and conclusions (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Internal validity was improved through spending enough time in the field, looking for discrepant evidence as well as asking for feedback from strangers or colleagues after they read the research findings (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.2 TRANSFERABILITY

Is referred to as the extent to which findings from a sample can be applied to another setting or larger population (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Transferability was improved through providing thick descriptions in the research report on the phenomenon being studied so that the readers would be able to establish the degree of similarity between the researchers study and other studies (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.3 DEPENDABILITY

Refers to the extent to which similar findings will be generated if the study was repeated with the same or similar respondents (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Dependability in this research was ensured through thorough explication- explaining in detail how the research was conducted, how data was gathered, how the research instrument was designed and so on (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.4 CONFIRMABILITY

Refers to the extent to which conclusions of the research are independently confirmed (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Here steps were taken to help ensure as far as possible that the researcher's findings were the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). The researcher ensured confirmability through being transparent and clear about how personal biases might have impacted on the research. The supervisor also checked in order to ensure confirmability.

3.9 LIMITATIONS

Since the study was only conducted in Daveyton with a sample of 15 participants, the sample size was not sufficient to fully capture the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in the Gauteng province or South Africa as a whole. The generalisations from the findings of the study may be limited as a result of the small sample size due to the inherent differences in the nature of urban problems. Hence, external validity (generalization beyond the city to other urban areas) may have been compromised which is one of the limitations of the case study method (Tesfamariam, 2007). In order to ensure that issues of reliability were minimized, the researcher explained in detail how the research was conducted, how the data was gathered, how the research instrument was designed and so on. Again, careful and meticulous design of the interview schedule was done. Information from

various relevant documents was reviewed and used. The study also ensured that validity is achieved; through spending enough time in the field, looking for discrepant evidence as well as asking for feedback from strangers or colleagues after reading the research findings. Validity was further ensured through only including questions that were relevant to the research study in the interview schedule in order to ensure that the issue at hand was assessed effectively. Objectivity was ensured through asking open ended questions that allowed informants to show their feelings, views and emotions more and avoiding leading and limiting questions.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.10.1 INFORMED CONSENT

The study was carried after informed consent was obtained from the participants. A 'participant consent form' was handed out to all participants where they willingly gave their consent to participate in the study (see appendix B & C). Moreover, none of the participants were coerced into participating or deceived in any manner regarding the study and this fact was verbally disclosed to all participants accordingly (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). The participant information sheet provided information about the study, detailing participant's rights to confidentiality and withdrawal from the study at any time. The participants were given an opportunity to have their questions answered before signing the consent form. In cases where the participants did not understand English, the researcher also read aloud and translated the information contained in the participant information sheet and the participant consent form in IsiZulu which was the researcher's home language which the participants also understood.

3.10.2 ANONYMITY

According to Ogletree and Kawulich (2012, p. 70), "ethics in research includes safeguarding and protecting the identities of participants. Anonymity means that the researcher does not know the identities of the participants. Anonymity was not achieved in this study because the researcher knew all the research participants. However, the participant's information was removed from the entire transcript to ensure that no one would be able to identify them (see appendix A & B). It should be noted that no matter how much care is taken by the researcher, complete anonymity is virtually impossible, Christians (2005 as cited in Ogletree & Kawilich, 2012).

3.10.3 DECEPTION

Deceit can take various forms; one type of deceit involves conducting the research without the knowledge of participants or failure to present herself as a researcher so as to facilitate data collection. Another form involves shielding feelings to appear neutral to participants (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). In order to avoid deception all participants were given a participant information sheet that contained all the necessary details of the study together with details of what was expected from the participants in order to avoid any false expectations (see appendix A).

3.10.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality means that the researcher knows, but will not tell. It presupposes a relationship of intimacy or trust between two or more persons in whom private or secret information is shared on the understanding that the information will not be repeated to an unauthorized person or persons, Fombad (2005, as cited in Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). Confidentiality was maintained through using pseudonyms to protect the identities of the participants. It was only the researcher and the supervisor who had access to the recordings of the interview. The recordings and interview transcripts did not contain any information that revealed the identities of the participants (see appendix B & C).

3.10.5 DO NO HARM

It is the responsibility of the researcher to make sure that participants are in no way harmed as a result of their participation in the research study. This can be physical harm. People can be harmed psychologically or emotionally, and their reputations can be damaged (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). In order to ensure that participants were not scarred emotionally by sharing their stressful experiences with the researcher, the researcher provided counselling to the participants by way of referral to other social work professionals in Daveyton if sensitive aspects were highlighted during the interview that caused emotional distress. Lastly, no animals were used in the study, given the subject matter at hand.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined that this research study employed a qualitative approach because it allowed the researcher to report on multiple perspectives on the issue. It was further discussed that the research study applied multiple case study designs which allowed the

researcher to closely study a limited number of individuals (15) in Daveyton. This area was chosen due to the high levels of unemployment, drug use and low educational levels among females. The participants were recruited using purposive and snowballing sampling techniques. The researcher used in depth interviews in order to gather data on the lived experiences of single mothers. The researcher also used a semi-structured interview schedule comprising of both open and closed ended questions to guide the collection of data. The data was analysed using thematic data analysis. The chapter also discussed trustworthiness of the research study through a detailed explanation of how the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were attended to. Lastly, the chapter outlined the limitations of the research study as well as the ethical considerations such as informed consent, anonymity, deception, confirmability and do no harm. The next chapter contains findings of the research study on the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households. It provides a discussion of the themes that emerged during the data analysis stage.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study undertaken was to examine the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households. The study used in-depth interviews to a sample of 15 research participants from the Daveyton Township. These participants were recruited using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. This chapter presents the findings of the study comprising of the socio demographic profile of the research participants, and a discussion of the main categories and themes that emerged from the data gathered.

4.2 SOCIO – DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS N=15

Table 4.2 presents the socio-demographic profile of participants.

Participants	Age	Dependants	Education	Place of residence	Relationship status
Risuna	27	2	N5	Rental	Cohabiting
Zama	26	2	Studying toward a teaching degree (3rd year)	Boyfriend's home	Cohabiting
Blacker	20	1	Grade 11	At home	In a relationship
Zodwa	26	1	N6	At home	In a relationship
Amukelani	22	1	Grade 12	Rental	Cohabiting
Dayz	30	2	Grade 12	Rental	Cohabiting
Penelope	25	2	Grade 12	At home	In a relationship
Nontobeko	27	3	Grade 11	At home	In multiple relationships
Tshego	31	2	Grade 11	At home	In a relationship
Glenda	29	1	Grade 12 & computer certificate	At home	In multiple relationships
Dimpho	27	2	Grade 11	Rental	Not in a relationship
Mfanelo	33	4	Grade 12	Boyfriend's home	Cohabiting
Palesa	20	1	Grade 12	At home	In a relationship
Amahle	23	1	Grade 12	At home	In multiple relationships
Ofentse	25	3	Grade 12	Boyfriend's home	In a relationship

4.2.1 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIFTEEN PARTICIPANTS

All of the research participants' children (excluding one) are recipients of the Child Support Grant.

Risuna is a 27 year old mother who comes from a two parent headed household in the rural areas. She has an older sister and two younger siblings. Risuna has two children from two different fathers. Her oldest daughter is 8 years old and her youngest son is 3 years old. She had her first child in her first year of Collage. She has been living in Daveyton for only two years. She is currently living in a shack with her son's father. Her partner is the main breadwinner. Risuna has worked in a retail shop before but she is currently unemployed and has been volunteering at the local Police station for four months and has applied to study teaching at UNISA in 2018. Risuna has been unemployed for three years and has been staying in Daveyton for 3 years.

Amahle is 23 years old and her son is 2 years old. She is staying in a four room RDP house with her younger siblings. She plays the mother role to her younger brothers (3) and sister (1) because her mother seldom comes home. She completed her Matric when she was 21 years old and has been unemployed for 2 years. She does not have any work experience. Amahle comes from a female headed household. Her mother is the main breadwinner. She was born and raised in Daveyton.

Zama is a 26 year old mother who is originally from the rural areas and has been living in Daveyton for 3 years. She comes from a female headed household with seven siblings. She has two children, one is 4 years old and the other is a two months old. She raised her child in the rural areas for a year before coming to Daveyton. She has never worked before and has no experience of community work. However, she is currently in her 3rd year of studying teaching at the University of South Africa. She is staying with her partner and children in a two bedroom back room house. Zama's partner is the main breadwinner.

Blacker is 20 years of age and has a daughter who is three years old. She had her child when she was doing Grade 11. Due to her responsibilities as a mother and lack of support from family members, she never got the opportunity to complete her studies. Consequently, she has never been employed and has never volunteered. Blacker is staying in a four room RDP house with her mother, three younger siblings, older sister, her child and niece (4) whom she

looks after. She comes from a female headed household with her mother and older sister as the main breadwinners. Blacker has been living in Daveyton for more than 10 years.

Zodwa is 26 years of age and her daughter is two years old. She had her child in her final year of her Marketing diploma. She has some volunteering experience from a local organization that specializes in the environment. Zodwa has no formal work experience and is currently living with her mother, daughter, grandmother and younger sister. Zodwa is from a female headed household with her mother as the main breadwinner. Zodwa was born in Daveyton.

Amukelani is a 21 year old mother to a 4 year old child. She has no work and community work experience and has matric. She fell pregnant when she was still doing matric. She is currently living in a shack with her boyfriend. Her boyfriend is the main breadwinner. Amukelani has a younger sister and is from a female headed household. Amukelani has been staying in Daveyton since she was a child.

Palesa is 20 years of age, and her daughter is 3 years old. She had her child when she was still in Matric. Regardless, she managed to pass her matric. She has never worked before and has no community work experience. She has been staying in Daveyton for three years. She is originally from the rural areas. She has five siblings. She is currently staying with her mother in a five room house. Her mother is the main bread winner.

Dayz is 30 years of age and has two children, the oldest is 08 years old and the youngest is 02 years old. She became a mother at the age of 22 years. She has worked before as a PA and retail assistant. She has matric. She has been living in Daveyton for two years. She lives in a shack with the father of her child. She has no community work experience. Her boyfriend is working but he is not the main breadwinner.

Penelope is 25 years of age and is the current care giver and mother to two children between the ages of 7 and 12 years. These are her sister's children who passed away four years ago. This was mainly due to that her mother was an alcoholic and therefore un-fit to care for the children. When she completed her matric she volunteered with Lovelife for a year and afterwards became part of a learnership program in the Hospitality sector. She is the sole owner of the four room RDP house that her mother left for her. She has been unemployed for two years.

Nontobeko is 27 years of age; she ended her education in grade 11. She has three children, her oldest is 7 years old, her second is 4 years old and her youngest daughter is 2 months old. Her children have different fathers. She was born and raised in Daveyton and is currently staying with both of her parents, her older sister and all three of her children. She has work experience but does not have any community work experience. She has been unemployed for 7 years.

Tshego is 31 years old and has two children. Her oldest son is 11 years old and is residing with his father. Her youngest son is 5 years old and is from her second relationship and has been living with her for five years. Tshego was born and raised in Daveyton. She is currently staying with her child in a four room RDP house that she inherited from her mother. She ended her education in grade 8.

Mfanelo is a 33 year old mother of 4 children. She had her first child when she was 16 years old. She has been living in Daveyton for 11 years and is from a female headed household. She is currently staying at her boyfriend's house in a small shack with her three children and their father. The oldest is 11 years old, the second one is 6 years old and the third is 18 months old. She worked in a firm that made steel for 5 years and was retrenched. She has been unemployed since 2015. Despite falling pregnant at a young age, she completed her Matric.

Glenda was born and raised in Daveyton, she is 29 years old and has a son who is 10 years old. She is living with her mother and brother in an RDP house who is employed as a domestic worker. She has volunteered to three different organisations in the area in the past seven years. In between these years, she took a computer course for three months and graduated. In order to make ends meet, she has taken part in a "stokvel" with her peers from the same street where she lives, however, this did not work out. Now, she makes money through selling branded shoes and umbrella's to her peers and the networks which she established during her days of volunteering, these include teachers from the local schools. She completed Matric and went to a collage to study marketing but fell pregnant in her first year and never went back since.

Dimpho is 27 years old and has never been employed because she does not have an identity document. She has two children, the oldest is 6 years old and the youngest is 3 years old. Dimpho is currently renting a shack with two of her children. She has a younger sister. She ended her education in grade 8. She has been living in Daveyton for 17 years.

Ofentse has three children from different fathers. She is currently staying with all her children and the father of her youngest child (2 years) in a four room house that her boyfriend inherited. She comes from a female headed household. Ofentse has four siblings. Ofentse is 25 years old and has an older sister who is 27 year old and two younger brothers. Ofentse had her first child when she was 16 years old who is now 9 years old, and her second child is 5 years of age. She has never worked and has no community work experience.

A total of 15 females consented to participate in the study. The age range of participants was 20 to 33 years. The total number of participants interviewed was 15 and all the participants were permanent residents of Daveyton. Twelve participants had lived in the area for more than five years while three had lived for less than five years. The participants spoke a variety of languages which included: (3) Tsonga, (4) Zulu, (2) Xhosa, (3) Northern Sotho and (3) Southern Sotho. Six participants indicated they only had one child, six participants had 2 children, two participants had three children and only one participant had four children. Four of the participants were tenants while eight of the participants were living at their parents' house and only three participants were residing at their boyfriend's home. Six of the participants were in a committed relationship, one participant was not in a relationship, and five participants were cohabiting while three participants indicated were involved in more than one relationship at the same time. The majority of the research participants (eight) only had Grade 12, two of the participants were pursuing a higher qualification and only one participant was in possession of a higher qualification. Four participants had levels of education below Grade 12. Lastly, five of the research participants had work experience and only four had volunteering experience.

4.3 MAIN CATEGORIES AND THEMES

The findings are presented in five categories, namely 'perceptions of motherhood', 'decisions and motivations around motherhood', 'the manifestations of motherhood', 'coping strategies' and 'livelihood strategies'. The category of *'perceptions of motherhood'* describes the participants understanding of motherhood. The category of *'decisions and motivations around motherhood'* describes a range of factors that led participants to becoming mothers. The category of *'the manifestations of motherhood'* comprises of the consequences of being a single mother and parent. This category includes sub-themes such as, *'change in relationships', 'stress', 'trepidation'* and *'power struggles in the household'*. The category of *'coping strategies'* has a sub category which looks at the *'support systems'* utilized by single

mothers to cope in their daily lives. The last category describes the *'livelihood strategies'* used by the single mothers to provide for their families.

4.4 This table describes the main categories and themes that emerged from the study

Main themes	**Sub- themes**
Perceptions of motherhood	
Decisions and motivations around motherhood	
Manifestations of single motherhood	❖ Change in relationships ❖ Stress ❖ Trepidation ❖ Power struggles in the household
Coping strategies	Social support ❖ Romantic partners ❖ Family members ❖ Traditional healer
Livelihood strategies	❖ Financial capital ❖ Social capital ❖ Human capital

4.4.1 PERCEPTIONS OF MOTHERHOOD

Most of the participants had negative views of motherhood. Nine out of the fifteen participants viewed motherhood in a negative manner, as something that required a lot of self-sacrifice.

> *"Becoming a mother for me has been a life changing event that has resulted in having no time for myself, it's like my needs do not exists anymore because I have to consider the needs of my child first. For example, my father gave me R300 to go and change my hair style, but noticing that my child's hair had been untidy for weeks, I sent her to the hair dresser instead" (Interview, Dayz, 03 October 2017).*

> *"I don't remember the last time I bought myself underwear because with every cent that I get, I have to think of my two children. I have to put their needs first before my own" (Interview, Risuna, 02 October 2017).*

Seemingly, motherhood interfered with the participants' ability to sustain their sense of self or individuality (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). These findings are similar to those that were found in a study conducted in the four Atlantic Provinces in Canada to a sample of 24 single mothers from a low income background, with two or more children aged 14 years or younger. The study found that the majority of these mothers deprived themselves of food in order to feed their children. They also deprived themselves of clothes and small luxuries and accepted self-sacrifice as a socially acceptable role for all mothers (McIntyre, Officer & Robinson, 2003). There are a variety of factors that may have shaped the women's view of motherhood. These may include whether it was a planned or unplanned pregnancy, women's support systems such the partners and families involvement, the women's age, etcetera (White & Woollett, 1992). Society has defined woman as caretakers of children (Roberts, 2005) and has taught women that being motherly means being selfless and putting others first as it is evident in how the efforts of Princess Diana and Mother Theresa are celebrated, conveying that it is good for women to sacrifice themselves for the good of others (Stanousky, 1999). Hence, some women may experience mothering as oppressive, exhausting, confining and a sure way of ensuring that women remain in an inferior position in society (Roberts, 1995). However, society expects women to have an innate desire to mother (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). Thus, some women may also view motherhood as fulfilling and a great source of joy and happiness (Roberts, 1995).

All of the participant's first and second pregnancies were unplanned. Thirteen (13) out of the fifteen (15) had their first child before the age of 22 years.

> *"I am very careful about going to the Clinic to get my monthly injection (contraceptive) because I do not want to have another child… children are so demanding" (Interview, Palesa, 17 October 2017).*

Another participant when asked whether she would consider becoming a mother again, this is how she responded:

> *"My child is now nine years of age and I have made sure not to have another one by constantly going to the Clinic to get contraceptives… I do not wish even in my wildest*

dreams to have another child. I raised my son alone and it was torture so I do not wish to go down that route again" (Interview, Glenda, 12 October 2017).

This could have meant that motherhood interfered with their ability to fully enjoy their teenage and early adulthood years. Hence, the unpleasantness associated with this concept. The research findings indicate that all the fifteen participants had the desire to be mothers some day before their unplanned pregnancies occurred. As a result, only those participants with not more than one child (6 participants), had a change of heart regarding the importance of motherhood and becoming mothers again. It seemed their reactions to motherhood were merely motivated by the unpleasant experiences they went through as mothers. This identity became something they did not like associating themselves with (but were compelled by circumstances) or to experience again. Additionally, their experiences were exacerbated as most of them had their children when they had barely settled into adulthood.

4.4.2 DECISIONS AND MOTIVATIONS AROUND MOTHERHOOD

Nine out of the fifteen participants revealed that their pregnancies occurred without their knowledge and awareness.

"I fell pregnant because I was not taking contraceptives and I did not know about contraceptives and sex. I was very young and he was my first boyfriend. I was very inexperienced and when I found out, I was very disappointed with myself" (Interview, Mfanelo, 18 October 2017)

"I was not using any form of birth control but we always used condoms, it so happened that the person I was dating blindsided me by tearing the condom. Even when I started experiencing the symptoms of the pregnancy, I did not realize that they were signs of the pregnancy because I did not think I would fall pregnant while using protection. I was so angry with him for tricking me like that, but I eventually forgave him because I couldn't stay angry forever" (Interview, Blacker, 27 September 2017)

"At the time I was still living in the rural areas and did not know anything about how to prevent falling pregnant. Pregnancy was not something I was paying attention to at the time. I was not even aware that I was pregnant until I was told by his mother that I was pregnant … and I was very upset because being pregnant was not part of my plan. I was planning on furthering my studies but now that I was pregnant, I had to

put everything on hold in order to raise my child" (Interview, Zama,19 October 2017).

Some women plan their children's arrival and spacing accordingly while other women do not have a plan. For other's their pregnancies are unplanned and come sooner than they expected and decide to carry their pregnancies to term. Others upon realising that they are pregnant, they terminate their pregnancy (White & Woollett, 1992). It seemed that the participants were young and ignorant as they lacked the knowledge that engaging in unprotected sex and not taking precautionary measures would result in pregnancy. However, some (4) of their partners were aware of this fact as they were older and mature. Therefore, the participants seemed to have engaged in what is termed reciprocal exchange. According to the exchange theory this kind of exchange involves actors not knowing what they will be getting for what they are giving, not knowing whether the exchange will be returned and when or how it will be returned (Molm, 1997).

The decision to become parents was not negotiated and planned. Upon engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse, the participants assumed the outcome would be pleasant, instead, the outcome of their exchange was viewed by them in a negative light as it yielded intrinsic costs such as sadness and unpleasantness (Molm, 1997) that came with being pregnant and becoming mothers. The participant's partners withdrew information about pregnancy as the possible result of both the actors' actions, and this withdrawal placed the male actors in a more powerful position placing the female actors at a vulnerable position. The participants lacked the necessary skills and information to fully comprehend the terms of the exchange. This may have been caused by a variety of factors. Some of the circumstances that place young girls to become teen mothers are the partner's age (typically five or more years older). Other factors include ignorance, curiosity, gender based violence, power imbalances in sexual relationships, family conflict (The Department of Social Development, 2014) and parents having little or no time for their children to discuss about sex and the usage of contraceptives (Thobejane, 2015)

4.4.3 THE MANIFESTATIONS OF SINGLE MOTHERHOOD

a) *Changing relationships*

Eight of the participants' relationships were negatively affected and changed with the introduction of a child.

> *"Whenever the baby's milk or nappies were finished, I would call my boyfriend and inform him about the situation. We would argue and exchange harsh words on the phone because he did not like me calling him. After hours of quarrelling, he would promise to bring the items, but days would go by without him doing so. On such days I would be so frustrated and angry, and forced to make alternative arrangements" (Interview, Zodwa, 28 September 2017).*

> *"My boyfriend started changing when our daughter turned 18 months old and we were always arguing about money, food and rent. To this day, we are still arguing about the same things. He has impregnated another girl and has lost interest in the family we have built; he is frequently away and doesn't come home for days. I have to fight and threaten him first before he contributes money to buy things for our daughter" (Interview, Amukelani, 03 October 2017).*

The arrival of a new baby who has demanding needs can change the nature of the couple's relationship. Both females and males feel overwhelmed by the role of parenting. Couples may find the transition to parenthood very difficult because they are used to a greater sense of order and control in their lives. In the 1980's, both women and men seemed less prepared for the emotional demands of childbirth and less skilled emotionally in dealing with issues that arise in their relationships (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). Again, a baby increases the amount of work in the household. Therefore, parents have to find extra time and energy and have to cut back on other activities, increasing the potential for conflict (White & Woollett, 1992). Both fathers and mothers are likely to conflict with each other over the allocation of time. Much of the emotional work following the birth of a first child involves redefining and renegotiating roles in the light of the new responsibilities (Muncie et al, 1995). Mothers often experience overload and need more assistance which leads to conflict as fathers see their roles in more traditional terms and unable to recognise that childcare is physically and emotionally draining (White & Woollett, 1992). However, the conflict is not always the result of having a child, but rather a reflection of a poor relationship before the woman became pregnant (White & Woollett, 1992).

One of the participants indicated a change in her sexual relationship once she had her first child. This change resulted after the birth of her child.

> *"Within two months after the birth of my son, I found out that my boyfriend was cheating on me. He seldom comes home and never spends time with us. He is*

> *constantly bringing me down and looking for an opportunity to create an argument so he would leave. One time he told me that my breasts were no longer as attractive as they used to be and that I should wear a bra when we have sexual intercourse. Even when I bath at night and he is there, I switch off the lights because I am ashamed of how I look" (Interview, Risuna, 02 October 2017).*

This was very striking because according to the researcher's observation, the participant looked very slim and attractive but had internalized her partner's emotional abuse to a point where the participant believed it. According to Llewelyn and Osborne (1990), motherhood can lead to women having low self-esteem due to the emphasis on attractiveness by society. The images on the media of a perfect body with firm breasts, long hairless legs, clear skin and shiny hair, these images are not representative of the real everyday women who have given birth and nursed children and may have stretch marks or sagging breasts. If mothers are unable to live up to the required body image, it may result in the women not enjoying their own sexuality, feeling that their bodies are a disappointment for their partners.

b) *Stress*

Only one participant claimed motherhood was not a source of stress for her because her mother was the one responsible for her children. While the other participants claimed to have experienced huge levels of stress as mothers.

> *"My child is 2 years and six months old but she is still crawling and unable to walk without assistance… she holds on to things around her for balance. This really worries me because children her age know how to walk. So, I have to carry her on my back wherever I go and it is very tiring. … She was hospitalised recently because she just had fits unexpectedly. I went to visit her at the hospital yesterday and I just wanted to cry seeing her lying there helplessly. But… all I can do is hope that she gets better" (Interview, Dimpho, 02 November 2017).*

> *"I remember one time when my baby was still a few months old and I was left alone with her and she just kept crying. I rocked her and walked up and down but she wouldn't stop crying. I ended up putting her down on top of our bed and left her there and went outside and cried because I did not know what to do or how to make her stop" (Interview, Palesa, 17 October 2017).*

Stress refers to the experiences that result from the interaction between the person and the environment through over- arousal and under arousal resulting in physical or psychological distress. Stress is both positive and negative. Positive stress is the positive emotional state that arises from the negative ones. Negative stress refers to feelings such as anxiety, anger and sadness (Aldwin, 1994). Motherhood can be a great source of stress for women. Children can be a source of anxiety, with parents constantly worrying about their children's health, safety and well-being and their behaviour and development (White & Woollett, 1992).

c) Trepidation

Six of the participants education was interrupted because of their pregnancies and mothering roles. Four of the participants were unable to complete their education or had to put it on hold due to pregnancy while their male counterparts continued with their lives uninterrupted. Their roles as mothers continue to interfere with their daily functioning.

> *"I cannot afford to take my child to day care because I am the one who does everything in this house while my boyfriend spends his money as he pleases. My father offered to pay my tuition fees at a local college in any course of my choice. But, I cannot go because my child does not attend day care, and me going back to study means that my father will stop sending me money which I use to provide for my child" (Interview, Dayz, 03 October 2017).*

> *"It is really difficult to do anything outside of the house when you have children. I wake up early in the morning and bath both my children and make breakfast for everyone. Then, carry my two month old baby and accompany her older sister to crèche. I really struggle when I have to go to campus to get something or to the bank because it is far away and often have no one to babysit for me and have to take her with me and rush back to fetch my oldest daughter from crèche. Most of the time I just end up not going until someone is available to baby sit. So I miss out on a lot of opportunities" (Interview, Zama, 19 October 2017).*

Motherhood may be a sure way in which women are shackled into an inferior status (Roberts, 1995). Low income and unemployed mothers experience a sense of isolation from mainstream activities of society such as recreation, education and other social activities because of their mothering roles. This limits their chances of improving their circumstances through support and friendship networks. As a result, they experience depression and feelings

of hopelessness (McIntyre, Officer & Robinson, 2003). The unfair expectation that women should carry out the responsibilities of unpaid household work hinders their meaningful participation in the labour market (Khosla & Kalita, 2012), their ability to seek employment and to take up learning and socializing (Floro & Komatsu, n.d). In this sense, motherhood can be viewed as a trap that keeps women in a low position in society. Townships were built under the apartheid government and are secluded from proper facilities like top quality educational institutions, malls, banks and so on. Women have to travel long distances and spend a lot of money on transport to access these. It would therefore seem that the apartheid 'bantu' system contributed negatively to the women's strenuous role of mothering.

Upon finding out they were pregnant, four of the research participants were kicked out of their parents' home and had to seek a new place to live.

> *"When I disclosed to my mother that I was pregnant, I was kicked out of the house and because I had nowhere else to go, I went to leave with my boyfriend. I went back, but I was permanently kicked out by my father when he came back from jail" (Interview, Amukelani, 03 October 2017).*

When a young woman falls pregnant, the willingness of family members from a nuclear household to provide support may wane with the introduction of children (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). This is what happened to four of the participants who found themselves in a lonely, steep and bumpy curve (Miller, 2007) where they were forced into cohabiting with their boyfriends.

d) Power struggles in the household

Eleven participants reported that their partners often punished them by not providing for their children. Some were severely punished both physically and emotionally when they attempted to establish other alternative means of making money and left the relationship.

> *"When my boyfriend and I broke up, I started noticing changes in his behaviour. He stopped sending money for our daughter, when I called him he would not pick up his phone or would sound annoyed on the phone. I remember one time I had to borrow money from a lone-shark to buy nappies and he promised to pay it back but he denied ever saying so and I had to ask my mother to pay it back on my behalf" (Interview, Zodwa, 28 September 2017)*

> *"When my boyfriend and I ended our relationship due to cheating, he stopped sending money for school fees, food and transport for our son. I found myself a nice guy who took care of my needs and my child. … It happened one time that my ex-boyfriend saw me at a local pub with my new partner and followed me outside and beat me to a pulp and said I was embarrassing him. Since then… his family came to apologies for his behaviour and we got back together" (Interview, Glenda, 12 October 2017).*

Power depends on one's ability to accumulate and control resources, on the threat and capacity for violence, on social status and knowledge and competence (Muncie et al, 1995). Often times, the respect and authority that a women is accorded comes to her by virtue of her role as a mother and falls within the boundaries of traditionally defined women's role (Llewelyn & Osborne, 1990). For mothers, their power derives from their control over the daily routine and their child's lives, their domestic knowledge and emotional relationships with their partners and children (Muncie et al, 1995). According to the social exchange theory, when one actor is more dependent on the other, this puts the less dependent actor at a more powerful position, creating a power imbalance. This power imbalance exists when one actor controls more of the resources that the other actor is in need of. The more powerful actor may use their power to obtain greater rewards at a lower cost than that of the exchange partner. The more the second partner is dependent on the other actor for rewards, the higher the cost that the first actor can impose on the second actor by not providing the rewards (Molm, 1997). It seemed that the mother's unemployment status and dependence on their partners as the major financial supporter of their children placed them in a vulnerable position. The fathers utilized this knowledge to their advantage in order to keep the participants in the relationship. Fathers withdrew their rewards (providing for children) so they would maintain the power that they inherited within the patriarchal culture.

4.4.4 COPING STRATEGIES

a) Drinking

The participants used a diversity of resources to elicit support, these were, romantic partners, family and traditional healers. Five out of fifteen participants indicated that they used going to pubs to drink alcohol during weekends as a coping strategy.

> *"I have accepted that my life is not going anywhere since I do not have an ID and cannot get a job, so instead I drink just to have fun for a few hours. It is not easy seeing your younger siblings living their lives, while yours is stuck. I have tried*

everything and went to different social workers but all my efforts have amounted to nothing. I have accepted that whoever bewitched me has succeeded and that maybe this is the life I was destined for" (Interview, Dimpho, 02 November 2017)

"People on the streets assume that I am living well because I live in a big house, but they don't know what I am going through. I have gone through a lot of things and I have found friends who understand my struggles and pain and we all drink our problems away. I am truly happiest when I am not sober" (Interview, Nontobeko, 26 October 2017).

According to Llewelyn and Osborne (1990) unemployed mothers are more prone to be negatively affected by unemployment. This is due to that the isolated company of their children is often not stimulating enough. Hence, they may experience a sense of powerlessness. Some studies according to, Smith (1985) have suggested that the unemployed may adopt coping strategies such as drinking more alcohol than the employed. Furthermore, according to Potgieter (1998), members from poor or low-income households are more likely to adopt unhealthy behaviours as coping mechanisms resulting from unmet emotional, interpersonal and physical needs. These may include engaging in haphazard sexual activities and drug and alcohol abuse as a means of coping with the need for love and attention, with loneliness and boredom and with the feelings of low self-esteem and anger**.**

b) Romantic partners

Five out of fifteen participants indicated that they could count on their partners as an effective source of support. One participant was leaving apart from their partner, while the other was cohabiting. Three of the participants were residing at their parents' home.

"…even when I was battling with bi-polar and the stresses of raising two children that were not my own, my boyfriend was very supportive and understanding. He was always there for me when I needed him and would bring us food when we did not have any. I have never met anyone who is so patient and supportive, and I wouldn't have survived if it were not for his efforts" (Interview, Penelope, 23 October 2017).

"I always turn to my boyfriend when I am not feeling well emotionally and he always knows how to comfort me. When I was pregnant with our child, he would buy me fruits and all the things I craved" (Interview, Amahle, 30 October 2017).

The responses that were given by the participants could have been motivated by that their parents compensated for the lack of uncertainty of resources by substituting their own resources for those of the non-resident father or a poorly endowed couple (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). Only one participant out of five of those who are cohabiting mentioned their partner as supportive.

> *"My boyfriend left us for two months without coming back to buy us food or to pay rent, when I texted him and asked for money, he said I should use the money I received from government for my two children. And I had already used this money to buy nappies and sent the one I received for my oldest daughter to my mother who is staying with her" (Interview, Risuna, 02 October 2017).*

> *"… I have never met a man like him who does not care about his child; he does not care whether she eats or starves. You know… I once left him with our daughter while I went to the shops to buy something, when I came back my child was starving and he was waiting for me to come back to feed her. Another time we were out of sour milk for the child and I asked him to buy it but he said he did not have money and a friend of his came to visit and he bought him beer…" (Interview, Dayz, 03 October 2017).*

These experiences may be attributed to that; cohabiting couples are less socially integrated than married couples and hence less able to provide support for each other and to cope with the stressful situations of raising a child (Barrington, 2001). One would expect that a joint living arrangement would provide greater access to diversity of resources, and that proximity allowed for higher levels of social and emotional support. When a couple is romantically involved and shares children, it is said that the father may be more willing than other adults to provide economic support or to pool resources (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). However, this was not the case in this research study. It was found that couples in cohabiting relationships had less support from their partners compared to couples who were living separately at home with their parents and extended family members. In cohabiting relationships, it was found that the mothers had full responsibility of parenting and caring for their children.

The fathers played a very distant role of economically contributing at a minimal. Mothers were the ones who worried about the well-being and functioning of the household, taking care of the children, disciplining and making sure that they had everything that they needed such as, groceries and so on. The fathers only provided money; some of them sometimes

contributed money that covered all the expenses in the household but often times they contributed too little or nothing, leaving the women to seek out alternative means. Three of the participants indicated that their partners sometimes contributed nothing and would boast that the women should use the money that they received from the Child Support Grant to cover the expenses. It is therefore fitting to conclude that the Child Support Grant maybe shielding some of the men from taking responsibility as fathers, further perpetuating father absence and disempowering women as they are compelled to parent alone and play the provider role in partnership with government instead of the fathers. This argument makes one question the assumption that the Child Support Grant has enhanced the women's power and control over household decision making and the resources available to women (Patel, Hochfeld, Moodley & Mutwali, 2012).

c) Family members

Twelve out of fifteen participants said that their families were their greatest source of emotional and financial support in dealing with the hardships they faced as mothers.

> *"My family and my boyfriend's family were very supportive before and after I had my child. Because both my boyfriend and I were unemployed at the time, they bought me clothes when I was pregnant. Since I was in my final year at collage, immediately after giving birth, they took the child for two months, just so I would be able to focus on my studies. On weekends she visits her paternal family, she is very close with her paternal and maternal family and both of her grandmothers still spoil her rotten" (Interview, Zodwa, 28 September 2017).*

> *"I was still in my Matric when I fall pregnant so…my grandmother who lives in the rural areas offered to care for my child as I was in no position to properly care for him and my younger siblings at the same time" (Interview, Amahle, 30 October 2017).*

> *"… My mother had to ask someone to fill in for her at work for three months in order to care for my child during the day while I was attending classes. But in the afternoon it was my turn to care for the child" (Interview, Mfanelo, 18 October 2017).*

In the South African context, physical care of the child is often not the sole responsibility of the mother, but is delegated to other family members such as grandmothers or older female siblings (Walker, 1995). Some single mothers are well supported by their families who

provide financial assistance and help to look after the child. Under such conditions, children benefit from their relationships with their grandparents, uncles and aunts (White & Woollett, 1992). Parents or fictive kin may be more willing than others to provide housing for free or at a low cost. They may also be willing to provide emergency childcare, parents or other kin may have a substantial interest in the mother's future and therefore may be willing to provide regular assistance so that the mother can work or continue with their education (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002).

Four (4) participants mentioned that cultural differences in both families caused some strain in the couple's relationship and the child's relationship with the paternal family.

> *"When my second child was three months old, his father's family came and requested to take the child to perform a ceremony for him in order to introduce him to his father's ancestors. So… my mother is a strong Christian women and she told them that we did not believe in such things and refused for them to take the child… to this day we do not have a relationship with them and they do not do anything for him" (Interview, Nontobeko, 26 October 2017).*

> *"My boyfriend came to pay damages for our child and his family thought that by paying damages the child would take his father's surname but were very disappointed to find out that in the Zulu culture, it does not have the same meaning… after that meeting, they kept their distance and don't request for her to come visit during the June and December holidays like they had been doing in the previous years" (Interview, Blacker, 27 September 2017).*

Family members are a great source of support; however they can also be a great source of conflict in an unmarried couple sharing a child. Democracy has accorded young people in South Africa the freedom to form romantic relationship with people from different races or tribes. Since this is a fairly new phenomenon in South Africa, there aren't any norms and set of standards that these relationships can look on for guidance. Hence, these relationships may struggle and be more susceptible to influence from extended family members.

d) Traditional healer

Only one participant indicated that she turned to social workers and a traditional healer to seek assistance in coping with her troubles as an unemployed single mother.

> *"My daughter became blind when she was a year old and I took her to different doctors and specialists but they did not know what might have caused the blindness. I then went to consult a traditional healer seeking answers. He told me that the blindness was caused by the ancestors who wanted an introductory ceremony "ukuphahla" to be conducted where the child will be properly introduced to the ancestors. When I informed the father he was not interested, the healer said I must go to the field far away and introduce her to my ancestors… after a couple of days, my child's eye sight was restored" (interview, Dimpho, 02 November 2017).*

In the African context, some believe in turning to the ancestral spirits to seek guidance or meaning of their misfortunes. According to Berg (2003), the ancestors are the living dead, members of the family who have died, but continue to live as shades. There is a human, alive relationship between the individual and his or her ancestors; they act as guides and mentors. Those that are still alive, manage to keep the connection with their ancestors through rituals. The rituals are a sign of showing respect and appreciation to the ancestors and they in turn reward the person through protecting them, providing good fortune or preventing bad things from happening to the individual and good health. Should the ancestors not be attended to, they withdraw their protection, and it is this broken connection that exposes the individual to all sorts of misfortunes. Some may view their misfortunes as threats from the ancestors who had turned their backs on the individual or as some form of punishment from the ancestors for neglecting them or for the broken connection between the individual and his or her ancestors. In the African world-view, disconnectedness can cause severe suffering and misfortunes (Berg, 2003).

4.4.5 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

a) Financial capital

Fourteen participants were dependent on the Child Support Grant as a stable source of income. Six out of fifteen participants engaged in entrepreneurship to supplement the Child Support Grant. Two (2) of the research participants who had inherited land from their deceased parents were renting it out as a livelihood. While thirteen (13) of the participants were land poor and were forced to seek other livelihood options such as selling second hand clothes, shoes, umbrellas, and snacks and sweets (3), plaiting hair (1) as well as volunteering (1). Other participants (08) were dependant on their partners and family members for livelihoods.

"My mother introduced me to a lady that she goes to church with who sells second hand clothes for a living. So… because my daughter grows out of her clothes before they are worn out, I give them to this lady to sell at a price higher than the one we both agreed on in order to get her share" (Interview, Zodwa, 28 September 2017).

"So I knew I was not going to get a well-paying job with my Grade 10, so… when my mother and brother passed, I rented my brothers shack to a young lady and her boyfriend and two other shacks as a means of making money because the child support grant alone is not enough" (Interview, Tshego, 25 October 2017).

"… I also make extra money from braiding people's hair, I do 'twist', 'straight back', 'Da brats' and 'weaves', but I am only busy when its month end because that is when people have money" (Interview, Ofentse, 03 November 2017).

The strategies that women adopt for their livelihood are determined by a range of socio-economic factors. More importantly, women are forced to seek alternative means of earning incomes due to the high rates of unemployment and inadequate support from the male partner (Massiah, 1989). Thus women make their living by combining a complex web of activities and interactions (Rahman & Akter, 2014). These include self-employed activities in the informal economy such as street vending, domestic work, sex work and waste-picking, all of which present various risks and vulnerabilities (Kholsa & Kalita, 2012). The entrepreneurial activities that women participate in are usually an extension of their domestic duties; they usually involve selling prepared foods, agricultural products, crafts, and clothing, cosmetics, and small household furnishings (Akinboade, 2005). The majority of these are survivalist micro enterprises and are unable to transform into fully fledged business due to poor product quality, lack of marketing skills and project management skills, poor funding etc. (Monyai, 2011). According to a study conducted by Rahman and Akter (2014) to 4195 households from 13 villages in Bangladesh it was found that ownership of land played a crucial role in securing livelihoods since those with access to large sizes of land were more likely to rent out the land to tenants. In this study similar findings were found since

b) *Social capital*

The majority of the participants (8) mentioned using their family members to acquire money as a livelihood. It seems that parents have had to assume responsibility when the parents of the children are not in a suitable position to provide proper financial support for their

children. Out of fifteen, one (1) relied on fictive kin, two (2) used 'stokvels', three (3) borrowed money from friends and money launderers, while four (4) relied on more than one male partner for income. Three (3) out of the fifteen participants mentioned stealing as a livelihood.

> *"My landlord noticed that my boyfriend had been gone for weeks and left my son and I without food and money to pay rent and she gave us tinned fish that she got from the food stokvels she played with her neighbours because her children did not like tinned fish (Interview, Risuna, 02 October 2017).*

> *... My boyfriend likes promising me that he will buy the things that are needed by the baby but ends up not doing those things. So I have learned to steal his bank card because I know his pin and buy the things I need for the child and keep the receipt to show him what I did with the money. ... Yes we fight afterwards but we end up reaching an understanding when he sees the things I bought and their value (Interview, Amukelani, 03 October 2017).*

It seems that single mothers have a variety of livelihood strategies that they employ. The most sustainable and reliable seems to be the family structure. It is evident from the evidence above that indeed the woman is never isolated since there are always family members, a clan or the community to assist the women in looking after her children (Asu, Ekwok & Chimezie, 2014). Since insurance strategies may be more binding when an emotional bond exists (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002), women usually maintain close contact with kin and friends in order to ensure that the elaborate process of borrowing money in times of financial crises is smooth (Fodor, 2006). Contrary to this, stealing may not be considered a sustainable livelihood because it cannot provide livelihood opportunities for the next generation (Chambers & Conway, 1992).

c) *Human capital*

Only one (1) participant was already in position of a higher qualification, while one (1) was in the process of completing her degree and one (1) had already applied to a higher learning institution to study teaching. It seemed that the participant's career decisions were largely shaped by their roles as mothers. Nine (9) out of fifteen only had a desire to secure employment so they would be able to effectively provide for their families. While five out of

the 9 participants mentioned that studying and reading books was not something they liked pursuing.

> *I chose to study teaching at UNISA because it is the only career that will enable me to provide for my family and have enough time to spend with my children. As a teacher, I will be able to be the kind of mother I am expected to be because of the short working hours and holidays in between (Interview, Zama, 19 October 2017).*

> *I hope to get a job as a security guard because then I will be able to support myself and my child… this is the only job I will be able to get with my Grade 12 (Interview, Palesa, 17 October 2017)*

Admittedly, only five (5) of the participants had some work experience, two had experience of working in the retail sector, one in the hospitality sector and the other in the industry sector. All four participants occupied low paying positions. These findings shared similar characteristics with those found in a study conducted in Britain by Sumaza which found that single mothers with dependent children have low rates of paid employment, are among the lowest paid of all workers, tend to have few qualifications, have a high level of poverty. These women were less likely than married mothers or single women without children to have recent work histories (Marlow, 2006).

4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter revealed that the majority of the single mothers entered into motherhood by accident as many of the pregnancies were unplanned. This seemed to have influenced their perception of motherhood as unpleasant. Their interpretation of motherhood as requiring a lot of self-sacrifice motivated some to manage their fertility better. The introduction of a child had a negative influence in the personal lives of the participants. This manifested itself in participants feeling stressed and trapped. Parenthood also introduced power struggles and changes in the participants' relationships. In order to deal with the challenges that came with motherhood, the participants utilised different f coping strategies such as eliciting emotional support from family members, romantic partners and traditional healers. This chapter also revealed that participants used a diversity of livelihood strategies in order to secure livelihood such as selling second hand clothes, food, renting land and running a hair business in order to secure financial capital. In terms of social capital, the research participants indicated that they asked or stole money from family members or their romantic partners as a livelihood. Many

of the participants had low levels of education and had little interest in furthering their studies as a livelihood but preferred securing employment over the other. The next chapter provides a summary of the research findings as well as recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide a summary of the main findings in relation to the research objectives such as a) to investigate the challenges that single mothers playing the provider role in female headed household face b) to explore the livelihood strategies that are utilized by unemployed single mothers who play the provider role in female headed households c) to investigate participants perspectives on support systems they use to strengthen their livelihoods d) to explore the experiences of unemployed single mothers when raising children in a female headed household. Lastly, the chapter will discuss the recommendations.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS

5.2.1 Objective 1 & 4:

- ***To investigate the challenges that single mothers playing the provider role in female headed household face***
- ***To explore the experiences of unemployed single mothers when raising children in a female headed household***

Motherhood is experienced differently by women. For some women mothering may be exhausting and confining while for many motherhood is life's greatest joy (Roberts, 1995). The majority of the participants revealed that motherhood as a social identity presented them with a low sense of self-worth from which they were compelled to sacrifice themselves for the good of their children. Mothers placed their needs last and prioritized those of the children. These findings were similar to those found in a study conducted by McIntyre, Officer and Robinson (2003) in Canada where mothers had accepted self-sacrifice as socially acceptable for all mothers. On the other hand, it was found that the hardships that some mothers faced in their mothering role changed their views of motherhood as something they would not like to experience again. Motherhood to those with only one child led to fertility control becoming extremely important.

The mother's perceptions of motherhood could not be separated from their bad encounters as mothers. According to White and Woollett (1992), some women plan their children's arrival and spacing accordingly while other women's pregnancies are unplanned and come sooner

than expected. More than half of the participant's children were unplanned due to lack of information about contraceptives and the risks involved when engaging in unprotected sex. However, some of the participant's partners had this information and decided to forge ahead with the plan of impregnating the participants' without their complete awareness. This placed the male actors at a more powerful level and women at a vulnerable position where they were not equal partners in the decision of becoming parents. Motherhood for the participants brought about varied consequences in their personal lives. Many of the participants' indicated that the arrival of a child was accompanied by changes in their intimate relationships. Some writers have argued that difficulties in a relationship may not be the result of a child but a reflection of a poor relationship before the women became pregnant (White & Woollett, 1992). However, the introduction of a child in the participants' relationships was accompanied by increased levels of conflict, disagreements, and a loss of commitment and sexual desire by their partners. Motherhood also introduced enormous stress for mothers which came in a form of worrying about their children's health, safety and development. According to White and Woollett (1992) this is a normal part of motherhood as children usually present parents with anxiety, worry over their health, safety and well-being and development.

Another aspect that was mentioned was that motherhood became a trap for single mothers as some of the research participants upon discovering that they were pregnant, found themselves in a lonely, steep and bumpy curve (Miller, 2007) as they were kicked out of their parents' homes and compelled to seek alternative accommodation. Due to limited choices, they opted to cohabit with the fathers of their children, which placed them in a vulnerable position of being dependent on their partners for support and accommodation. Women felt trapped also in the sense that their movement outside of the household were limited as they relied on family members for babysitting before they could travel anywhere. Most had to carry their children on their backs when they had to travel. Marteleto, Lam and Ranchod (2008) postulate that pregnancy makes it difficult for young mothers to further their education, which reduces their chances of securing good employment and a high income and increasing the likelihood of both the mother and the child falling into the poverty trap. Many of the participants' said that their education was interrupted when they fell pregnant and limited their chances of taking part in higher learning institutions. As a result, participants have had to settle for low income survivalist strategies that limit their life chances. Another aspect that came up was the power struggles that were apparent in the participants' households. This

theme was motivated by the social exchange theory where the children's' fathers often punished the mothers physically and emotionally when they attempted to leave the intimate relationship. This punishment took a form of beating the women or withdrawing rewards to the mother such as providing for the child so they would maintain the power that they inherited within the patriarchal culture.

5.2.2 Objective 2:

To explore the livelihood strategies that are utilized by unemployed single mothers who play the provider role in female headed households

According to the sustainable livelihood framework, people have different kinds of assets that they can combine to help them achieve the livelihoods that they seek. These include, human capital (skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health), social capital (social networks, membership of formalised groups or trust between people that make them help each other), natural capital (trees, land etc.), physical capital (basic infrastructure and producer goods) as well as financial capital (access to credit, income etc) (Krantz, 2001). Almost all the participants were recipients of the child support grant but some engaged in entrepreneurship to supplement the child support grant. A few who had inherited land from their deceased parents were renting it out as a livelihood. These findings resembled those found in a study conducted by Rahman and Akter (2014) to 4195 households from 13 villages in Bangladesh where it was found that ownership of land played a crucial role in securing livelihoods since those with access to large sizes of land were more likely to rent out the land to tenants. Other participants applied strategies such as selling food, second hand clothes, shoes and umbrellas and plaiting hair. While others were dependant on their partners and family members for livelihoods.

For social capital, a few of the participants resorted to illegal ways such as stealing their partner's bank cards and taking money from family members' wallets. Someone mentioned using fictive kin where they received food from their landlord while some borrowed from friends and money launderers. For human capital, a lot of the participants had never gone to a higher educational institution. Only a few were involved in community development and had acquired new skills. A majority of the participants were not interested in learning new skills through enrolling in a higher educational institution but were more keen on entering the labour market so they could effectively provide for their households. Though the participants did not fit the traditional definition of a single mother who is a women that did not have a

partner or spouse or who does not co-habit with their partner or spouse and are the main caregiver for the child (Wright, Noble, Ntshongevena, Barnes & Neves, 2013), the findings brought closer to the surface that many women living with their partners are the ones pulling the strings on financial, social and emotional parenting. These strings operate from the support provided by other lovers outside of the current relationship, parents, neighbours, welfare benefits, informal business such as selling of goods (Akujobi, 2011).

5.2.3 Objective 3:

To investigate participants' perspectives on support systems they use to strengthen their livelihoods

A large number of the participants mentioned their family members as their greatest source of emotional and financial support in dealing with the hardships they faced as mothers. Family members provided members with childcare services enabling them to complete their educational studies. These findings were similar to those mentioned by Single-Rushton and McLanahan (2002) that kin may provide the mother with childcare and regular assistance so that the mother can work or continue with their education. However, family was also a negative support system as it increased conflict in the couples or parents relationship. This was found in couples with differing cultural beliefs. Another support system that came up was traditional healers and ancestors where the performance of certain rituals reduced the challenges that the participant experienced as a single mother.

According to Potgieter (1998), members from poor or low-income households are more likely to adopt unhealthy behaviours as coping mechanisms resulting from unmet emotional, interpersonal and physical needs. These may include engaging in haphazard sexual activities and drug and alcohol abuse as a means of coping with the need for love and attention, with loneliness and boredom and with the feelings of low self-esteem and anger. Some of the participants mentioned using drinking alcohol and going to pubs as a coping strategy. The social support systems that the participants used were their romantic partners, family and traditional healers. The few that mentioned romantic partners as an effective source of support were those residing with their parents and extended family. This could have been motivated by that parents usually compensate the lack of uncertainty of resources by substituting their own for those of the non-resident father (Single-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). By filling this gap, parents reduced strain or negative feelings in the couple's relationship allowing for a proper flow of support between the couple. In contrast, mothers in

cohabiting relationships were found to have insufficient support from the fathers. Mothers in these relationships had the full responsibility of caring for their children. Fathers played a very distant role of economically contributing at a minimal. Mothers were the ones who worried about the well-being and functioning of the household, taking care of the children, disciplining and making sure that they had everything that they needed such as, groceries and so on. This may have been due to that, cohabiting couples are less socially integrated than married couples and hence less able to provide support for each other and to cope with the stressful situations of raising a child (Barrington, 2001). Some fathers expected mothers to survive on the child support grant while they used their income for other things not concerning the functioning of the household. Therefore, it seemed that the provision of the child support grant by the state has been interpreted by some fathers as the state's acceptance and replacement of responsibility for their roles as providers. Thereby burdening women with the responsibility of playing the provider and parenting role with the state instead of the fathers. This challenges the argument put forward by Patel, Hochfeld, Moodley and Mutwali (2012) that the child support grant empowers women.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Since it came up in the research study that some of the mothers' pregnancies were unplanned and the mothers were not emotionally prepared for the challenges they encountered along the way, it seems more preparation is needed. Childbirth and parenthood in the traditional environment was viewed as an on-going continues process starting from early in life (at initiation schools for instance) and continued through close supervision of the new mother by trusted elders (Brindley, 1985). Hence, there is a need for the elderly members of our communities to be involved in establishing programs that enhance the women and men's knowledge and awareness of the challenges that come with parenthood and ways of manoeuvring around them. This could help mothers feel more in control and boast their self-confidence. There is a need for more support and educational programs that are aimed at enhancing the mother's earning capacity. These might empower the mothers. However, these need to be accompanied by affordable or free childcare services since mothers may not be able to attend skills development programs if they are not relieved of their childcare responsibilities. There is a need for programs that educate fathers of the importance of being involved in their children's lives and for policies that legally bind fathers to provide financial

support for their children and for harsh sentences to apply to non-compliant fathers. More employment opportunities tailor made for mothers need to be created.

5.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

As women continue spending more time in domestic tasks and childcare, they miss out on a variety of opportunities. For example, in South Africa data gathered from 2000 national time use surveys, it was found that women spend 5 hours on average per day performing household work, while men spend 3, 5 hours (Floro & Komatsu, n.d). The onerous share of the household and care work was mentioned to be among the reasons for the high unemployment rate among women in South Africa. Participation in care giving tasks that need to be carried out at home influences women's availability for the labour market, their ability to seek employment, to take up learning and socializing (Floro & Komatsu, n.d). It is my belief that the family unit is one of the most important institutions that need to be targeted when addressing the issues of women empowerment and gender equality. In order for women's development to take place in developing countries, it is essential to fix the power imbalances of division of labour that exists in the household. Emancipating women from the obligations of domestic household labour and childcare would enable women to focus their energies in development opportunities provided by the state or any other organization. It is my view that any government initiative aimed at empowering women would not succeed unless/ until the core issue of unpaid domestic and care work is addressed and this work is equally distributed among both genders.

Government policies on gender equality need to be at the fore front in changing the existing cultural norms and values surrounding women's participation in unpaid domestic and childcare labour. There needs to be a shift in the political agenda to move away from the traditional male identity as breadwinners to males as core- parents and equal partners in the performance of household work and childcare. Both childcare and domestic household work need not be recognised as the important work done by women but as work that is vital for human functioning and survival and should be granted sufficient time by the state and employers for both males and females to perform. This is mainly due to that, if the family unit is dysfunctional or unorganised, it ultimately affects the functioning of both the males and females in the labour market. My recommendation is that governments in developing countries provide day-care centres that are well run and maintained as well as easily accessible to all parents. This would not only afford young mothers the time to participate in

paid work and education but would also relieve a lot of grandmothers of their unpaid caring tasks and would use that time for participating in community development programs, leadership roles or leisure. My suggestion is for government to treat day-care centres like schools, for these centres to be government owned, this would ensure that they are properly run and monitored, putting mothers at ease when leaving their children to go and work. This may reduce the death of children in these centres, ensure that teachers in these centres are qualified and well paid for their jobs thereby increasing the quality of service provided.

5.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is my recommendation that further research be conducted to understand the impact that the lack of access to childcare facilities has on the personal development of mothers. I would also like to suggest that research be conducted on the possibility of free childcare services in disadvantaged communities. Future research consideration should be given to fatherhood and role played by men in care giving.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated how the four objectives that were outlined in the first chapter of the report were achieved. The first object was looking at the challenges that mothers playing the provider role in female headed households face. These challenges included, stress, financial problems, feeling trapped, change in the participant's romantic relationships and limited levels of education that limited the life chances of the participants. The second objective discussed the livelihood strategies that the participants utilized in order to provide for their households. These strategies involved asking for assistance from kin, stealing, renting land and selling goods and services. The last objective addressed the support systems that the participants used to strengthen their livelihoods. It was highlighted that the participants relied on family members who provided them with childcare services enabling them to complete their educational studies. Other support systems that were mentioned by the participants were, traditional healers, drinking alcohol and romantic partners. This chapter also made recommendations for practice, social development and further research.

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APPENDIX A

TITLE OF THE STUDY:

The Experiences of Unemployed Single Mothers Leading Female Headed Households in Daveyton

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Good day,

My name is Nompumelelo Mbanjwa and I am a postgraduate student for the degree Master of Arts in Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research into the experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in Daveyton. It is hoped that this information will contribute to the paucity of knowledge with regards to this issue. It is also anticipated that this information may help with understanding the challenges that single mothers leading female headed households face and improve interventions on how best they can be assisted.

I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. Your participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. If you agree to take part, I shall arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable to you. The interview will last approximately 1 hour to 1hour and 30 minutes. You may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering.

With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. No one other than my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and interview schedules will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

As the interview will include sensitive emotional issues, there is the possibility that you may experience some feelings of emotional distress. Should you therefore feel the need for supportive counselling following the interview, I have arranged for this service to be provided to you by social workers in the Daveyton and Etwatwa Ekurhuleni Metropolitan

Municipality situated at Jerry Moloi library next to Apex and Daveyton Customer Care centre opposite the Library. They may be contacted at 011 999 6675.

Please feel free to ask questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted on 071 4624 915 or at nompumelelo.mbanjwa@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Victor Chikadzi on 071 7695 742 or at victor.chikadzi@wits.ac.za . Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request. If you have any concerns and complaints about the study, please contact Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact details: Chairperson: Jasper.Knight@wits.ac.za or the administrator: Shaun Schoeman on 011 717 1408 or shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za.

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

Yours sincerely,

Nompumelelo Mbanjwa.

APPENDIX B

TITLE OF STUDY:

The experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in Daveyton

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. I have been briefed on the research that Nompumelelo Mbanjwa is conducting.

I understand what participating in this research means that:

- ☐ My participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time I so choose without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I have the right not to answer any questions that I do not feel comfortable with.
- ☐ Any information I share will be held in the strictest confidence by the researcher, and any information that may identify me, will be removed from the interview transcript.
- ☐ There are no foreseeable benefits or particular risks associated with participation in the study.
- ☐ A copy of my interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research
- ☐ My responses will be used be presented in conferences, book chapters, journal articles or books.

Optional clauses:

- ☐ I hereby request a copy of the research report

Pseudonym name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX C

TITLE OF THE STUDY

The experiences of unemployed single mothers leading female headed households in Daveyton.

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO TAPING OF THE INTERVIEW

I understand that:

- The recording will be stored in a secure location (a locked cupboard or password protected computer) with restricted access to the researcher and the research supervisor.
- The recording will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed
- When the data analysis and write-up of the research study is complete, the audio recording of the interview will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study
- The transcript with all identifying information directly linked to me removed, will be stored permanently and may be used for future research
- Direct quotes from the interview without any information that could identify me may be cited in the research report or other write – ups of the research.

Pseudo name: ……..

Date: ……..

Signature: ……

APPENDIX D

TITLE OF THE STUDY:

The Experiences of Unemployed Single Mothers Leading Female Headed Households in Daveyton

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. How would you describe your experience of motherhood?

2. What are the circumstances that led to single motherhood?

3. What are your day to day activities?

4. How would you describe your surrounding environment and what are the resources available to you to assist you with your mothering role?

5. What are the challenges that you face as a single mother?

6. How long have you been unemployed for and please describe the circumstance that led to your current status of being unemployed?

7. What are the economic challenges that you face in providing for your family?

8. What are the livelihood strategies that you have been using?

9. What are some of the challenges you have encountered using these livelihood strategies?

10. What are the support systems you use for your financial, physical and emotional well-being?

11. What skills and knowledge do you possess contributing to your livelihood?