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**An Exploration of Parenting: Normative  
Expectations, Practices and Work-Life Balance  
in Post-Apartheid South Africa,  
1994 - 2008**

**By**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that the research in this thesis is my own work, except where indicated with references in the text. This research has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the complexities of parenting in post-apartheid South Africa. It investigates the normative expectations surrounding motherhood and fatherhood and how employed mothers, as those who bear the main responsibility for childcare, reconcile family and paid work. It is a qualitative study which draws on 43 interviews with women and men managers in a Government Department and a Parastatal. Thirty seven interviews were with managers (21 mothers and 16 fathers), 3 with gender experts in these organisations, and 3 with Human Resources personnel. It also draws on an analysis of domestic divisions of labour in 3 households and an exploration of national legislation and workplace policies to examine how the workplace accommodates those with family/childcare responsibilities. The study demonstrates that South African parenting is complex: parental norms encapsulate the coexistence of modern and traditional values (Inglehart and Baker, 2003; Hotchfeld, 2008), rather than following a linear pattern of change from traditional to modern. Moreover, there are inconsistencies in values and normative expectations relating to gender-role attitudes and parenting expectations, as well as between gender-role attitudes and parenting practices. Incongruencies and contradictions in relation to parenting are also found between and within domains: the fast-changing workplace brought about by the new democratic government's commitment to equality and the subsequent transformation of the public sector contrasts with the 'stalled revolution' in parenting practices, especially in relation domestic divisions of labour, within the domestic sphere. Using Squires's (2005) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement to analyze South African approaches to workplace gender transformation, the study establishes that South Africa has adopted policies based on inclusion and reversal and has left out displacement, thus increasing women's representation at the workplace without challenging the status quo. To this effect the workplace has remained masculine-oriented; it is characterized by a long-working hours regime and minimal work-life balance policies. As a result mothers are facing difficulties in reconciling family and paid work. However, women mobilize support outside the workplace to cope with the demands of family and paid work. The study shows that the support networks mobilized by women are influenced by socio-economic and geographical mobility associated with the rise of the new black middle-class families brought about by the political change from apartheid to democracy. The migration of families from working to middle-class areas demonstrates the fluidity of mothering and coping strategies; while fathers remain free from childcare and family responsibilities.

## **Introduction**

My research topic has been inspired by my own experience as a single mother and as a professional woman. This resonates with Mills's (1959) assertion that our own life experiences and values influence what we choose to research. For instance, he points out that "values are involved in the selection of the problems we study; values are also involved in certain of the key conceptions we use in our formulation of these problems, and values affect the cause of their solution" (Mills 1959: 78). My experience of mothering in the context of South Africa where mothering includes having to provide for one's children, has always made me wonder how other mothers cope with the challenges of having to combine motherhood and paid work. It is that concern that drives this thesis. Moreover, my situation has been exacerbated by the fact that I have lived without a mother from an early age and she may have, presumably, played a crucial role in the up-bringing of my children. In addition, for most of my working life I have lived very far away from my extended family and therefore I have never had the privilege of family support, which I assume most other South African mothers have, as it is a cultural expectation. Thus, it has always been my wish to research on this topic to bring out the experiences of these women and make them visible, given the fact that such experiences seem to be, somehow, hidden or unacknowledged. However, in this research, even though women are central to it, I have chosen to move beyond just giving women a voice but also to include men's side of the story, by exploring their attitudes, perceptions and experiences.

This thesis draws from various literatures, to determine how working parents, negotiate paid work and family responsibilities in South Africa. I approach the study from a feminist perspective. I have employed theories of Inglehart and Baker (2000) (to explain the traditional/modern between and within various aspects and domains of parenting) and

Squires's (2005) typology of Inclusion, Reversal and Displacement (to analyze gender equality and work-life balance policies) as well as the concept of 'stalled revolution' to unearth the root-cause of parents' difficulties with regards to reconciling work and family responsibilities. Parenting in South Africa cannot be conceived in simple terms, as it involves a complex interplay of factors and concepts that bring paid work and family together, since for Africans in South Africa, providing, and therefore participating paid work, forms an important part of the parenting practice for both mothers and fathers. Moreover, parenting in this context has been complicated by the fact that South Africa is currently undergoing a transition.

Here I employ a holistic approach to look into parenting in relation to work-family reconciliation. This involves having to look into issues of motherhood and fatherhood and this includes analyzing the gender culture as a way of examining gender relations and normative expectations surrounding parenting; parental practices; gender-role attitudes; and perceptions of parenting. Moreover, since motherhood and fatherhood include the providing role, this means also looking at how the workplace accommodates those who have childcare responsibilities. To this effect I look at work-life balance and gender equality policies; the approaches adopted in developing these policies, how policy problems are framed and whether they address the root of the problem: gender-roles and relations.

Much of South African literature has focused on normative expectations on motherhood, (Walker, 1995; Magwaza, 2003; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004; Hotchfeld; 2008; Mamabolo, 2009; Frahm-Arp, 2010). Other studies had looked at mothering practice and the division of labour within households (Bray, 2003; Budlender, and Chobokoane 2002/4; Charmes, 2006; Rama and Richter), and other on work-life balance (White, 1991; Cilliers et al, 2008; Pillay, 2007; McLellan and Uys, 2009). Even as women advance in terms of employment and

careers, normative expectations on them as primary caregivers still remain. On the other hand, fathers have been allocated roles that take place and place them outside the context of family, in the public sphere and they have continued to occupy and maintain a distant father and breadwinning role. This gendered division of roles and labour has been made to appear natural, and this might be a reason why it has continued, even as women ascend the employment and career ladder. Hitherto, motherhood has mostly been studied separately from fatherhood.

Looking into fathering also includes having to look at issues of masculinities, cultural practices, such as '*lobola*' and pubertal initiation rites as well as migrant labour, all of which have a tremendous impact and influence on the practice of fatherhood in South Africa today. There is a wealth of literature on these three important aspects of fatherhood. However, although some authors have studied the connection between two different areas, such as, pubertal rites in relation to masculinities (Epstein, 1998; Milubi, 2001; Vincent, 2008; Mavundla et al, 2010) and migrant labour (Rabe, 2006; Ramphele & Richter, 2006) in relation to fatherhood (Morrell, 1998 & 2006; Rabe, 2006; Richter, 2006) none of them has looked at or brought out the connection between all three. Researching parenting therefore also means having to look into those cultural practices that have shaped and influenced motherhood and fatherhood. To this effect I look at male oriented pubertal rites: which this provincial capital shares with the Eastern and Western Cape. Moreover, initiation rites are an important feature that influences how masculinities, manhood and fatherhood are conceptualized and performed. Furthermore, there seems to be a dearth of research that brings motherhood and fatherhood together and look at them in relation to each other or parenting as a whole. In this study I reviewed all four areas related to fatherhood (masculinities, cultural practices: pubertal rites and '*ilobolo*'; and migration), to make sense

of the way fathering came to be the way it is, but more so fathering and mothering, in an attempt to understand gendered relations and parenting and how this relates to the work-family-conflict.

Similarly, although a few studies have explored the work-family-interface (Moorosi, 2007; Cilliers et al, 2008), especially work-life balance, they have not investigated the root-cause of work-family-conflict. With the inception of the new democratic dispensation, African men and women's positions and roles have evolved with the changing of the workplace over the past decade. The new democratic government has committed itself to gender equality and has facilitated the entry of women into high positions in the public sector. This was followed by changes in the South African labour legislation as well as workplace policies and subsequent change in women's status and positions. Women are now participating alongside men in high positions in the workplace almost in the same proportions as men especially in the public sector. However, workplace change has not been translated or reciprocated at the level of the household. For instance, parenting practices have remained unchanged at societal and household level (Magwaza, 2003; Moorosi, 2007; Cilliers et al, 2008). Men have continued to occupy a marginal and distant role in parenting and family life even with the increase in women's participation in high positions in the labour market. As a result, the absence of support by fathers has meant that mothers constantly struggle to reconcile the demands of work and family responsibilities. However, there is evidence that shows normative expectations relating to mothering have recently begun to show signs of change in the sense that expectations have now split to encompass both traditional-modern views (Cilliers et al, 2008; Hotchfeld, 2008). Parenting practices, however, remain unchanged. In this thesis I explore the contradictions that arise from the different pace of change in the workplace and in the domestic sphere.

The traditional-modern mix in normative expectations can be attributed to influence of the transformation of the workplace. For instance, the introduction of gender equality policies by the South African government has facilitated the entry of women into high positions. However, parents are placed in these high positions with very little or no childcare support. For instance, the labour legislation and institutional support for mothers and fathers are minimal. The implication here is that the South African legislation and the workplace is not family-friendly, in that, first it does not offer working parents options, such as flexible or part-time working, state-funded-nurseries, and adequate maternity, paternity and parental leave, as do many European and American countries (Crompton and Lyonette, 1999 & 2006; Windebank, 2007). In South Africa working parents spend long hours at work, even in the absence of work-life balance policies and this creates difficulties especially for those who are responsible for childcare in reconciling work and family roles. Mothers are hit the hardest by the lack of such support since child-care continues to be their primary role in spite of the fact that they, like men, spend long hours at work and contribute almost at the same level as men to the household income. This way mothering practices in this provincial capital are characterized by many hours of absence from home. However, this does not mean that mothers abandon their mothering role, but as Magwaza (2003) argues, by working, women are fulfilling a big part of their maternal role. Because of the circumstances that women find themselves in, they have to depend on other women to assist them with their mothering by arranging for substitute mothers to stand-in for them during the period of absence from their homes.

To sum this up, it is important to note that South Africa's workplace transformation is gradually starting to influence and normative expectations around parenting. However, as mentioned there still aren't any visible signs of change in parenting practices. I argue that the

lack of congruity in the change between the workplace and the parenting practice, the normative expectations and parental practices creates even more difficulties for employed mothers.

### ***Thesis Outline***

The thesis is structured around my research questions which are:

1. What are the normative expectations and practices surrounding parenting and gender role attitudes in households, and is there any evidence of change?
2. What legislation and policy measures have been put in place by the South African government and the workplace to accommodate working parents, and how effective are these in meeting women's and men's needs?
3. How do mothers and fathers reconcile paid work and motherhood/family responsibilities, what difficulties do they experience?
4. What are working mothers' coping strategies?

Chapter 1 reviews various theoretical perspectives on motherhood, fatherhood as well as on the work-family-interface. This chapter is divided into 4 parts: the first part looks at the theorizations of motherhood, this includes feminist debates; the Second-Wave as well as black feminist critiques. Part 2 discusses motherhood and the division of labour in South African families; which will be followed by the mothering practices within the networks of care which includes the extended family network support and the extended family network support in South Africa, and lastly the domestic labour. Part3 looks at theorizations of fatherhood and masculinities; this includes a discussion of the major influences, culture (lobola and pubertal rites) and migrant labour; and lastly, a discussion on whether fatherhood

is changing. Part 4 focuses on explaining parenting practices; which will include a discussion on the cultural lag; which will be followed by the Work-Family-Interface in South Africa and lastly, the Work-Family-Interface-Model.

Chapter 2: outlines the methodological approach I adopt. Here I set out how the study has been carried out beginning with a discussion of feminist standpoint theory, an elaboration of my research questions and methods of data collection. Thereafter, I give an account of how I gained access to the two organizations which were my research sites and discuss the research approach and process: this includes a description of my sample and of how I carried out the study. I discuss the methods I employed to collect my data and my positionality in the research process. This is followed by an account of how the issue of power relations was addressed in the study as well as the ethical considerations.

Chapter 3 outlines the policy context. It looks at equality and work-life balance legislation. It starts by reviewing different approaches to equality as adopted by European countries and South Africa. This includes Equality versus Difference approach, Gender Mainstreaming; Diversity and Intersectionality.

Chapter 4 explores policy measures put in place by the South African government to accommodate mothers and fathers at the workplace; the Equality and work-life balance legislation. What will follow are workplace policies developed in response to the mentioned legislation. The last section will be a discussion of how gender equality is framed in these measures and whether they do in fact meet women's and men's needs.

Chapter 5 draws on interviews with Managers, Human Resource Personnel and Gender Focal Points (GFP). It discusses the perceptions of all of the above-mentioned groups on Equality and work-life balance policies. Here I seek to establish all three groups' perceptions of

whether they think these policies accommodate working parents' needs as well as their perceptions on gender equality.

Chapters 6, 7, 8 are also informed by empirical data drawn from my interviews, which was the main method of data collection and forms the bulk of the findings. However, part of chapters 6 and 7 are informed also by observations that I carried out in three households. Chapter 6 explores and compares normative expectations, parental practices and the domestic division of labour within families and investigates whether or not these roles are changing.

Chapter 7 looks at the coping strategies employed by especially working mothers, as a way to balance paid work and family responsibilities. This includes the social network support which encompasses paid domestic work as well as the extended family-support. Here I focus on the role played by these support structures in childcare and domestic work.

Chapter 8 addresses the Work-Family-Interface, which looks at what happens as men and women straddle the home and the work-place, that is, the challenges and difficulties they encounter as they navigate between family and work. I show that the difficulties experienced are gendered and that women, in particular, face a lack of support both at home (from their male partners) and in the work-place.

The final chapter (9) draws together the main findings of the study, its contribution to knowledge and its relevance to ongoing policy debates in South Africa.

# Chapter 1. Parenting and Work-Family Balance

## Introduction

Parenting in South Africa has been influenced by several factors related to its transition from apartheid to a democracy. This transition has led to many other shifts within societal and state institutions. Important to this study is the fluidity and mobility of racial, economic, class, workplace and family structures and the influence thereof on parenting and the domestic division of labour. For instance, the economic, educational and employment advancement of the Africans has led to the rise of the black middle-class; their relocation from black working to middle-class residential areas and consequently the increasing nucleation of black families alongside the continuing importance of extended family networks. Workplace transformation; the introduction of gender equality policies, is considered to be one of the major influential factors that has contributed to changing attitudes and normative expectations surrounding parenting (Karlsson, 2010). Yet, the literature suggests that parenting practice remain unchanged within families (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006; Moorosi, 2007). This implies that there is a disjuncture between gender-role attitudes and normative expectations as opposed to parenting practice. Secondly, it appears that the pace of change in the workplace is much faster than at household level. The difference between the pace of change in the workplace and the family has led to work-family-conflict, for those who bear the burden of childcare and the inability of mothers and fathers to reconcile paid work and family responsibility. In this chapter I critically review feminist debates on motherhood and fatherhood, looking at how these debates have evolved over time. My focus will be on African feminist theorizations on

parenting considering the similarities and differences, in the parenting experiences of western, African-American and (African) South African families.

This chapter encompasses four substantive sections which draw on various literatures. The first part focuses on white feminist analysis of motherhood and its critique by black feminists; this critique employs the theory of intersectionality in analysing motherhood and mothering which is an important concept in this theory. The second part focuses on empirical research on mothering in South Africa which provides some evidence of conflict between “traditional” and “modern” ways of viewing motherhood. The third part turns attention to fathering, looking at theories of masculinities, the links between masculinities and fatherhood, fathering practices and associated cultural factors such as initiation rites and *ilobolo*. It demonstrates that there is a cultural emphasis on tradition, except among a few cultural groups, viz: whites, the black middle-class and professionals. The final part focuses on evidence of change in gender attitudes and practices and how this can be explained and develops a model with which to explore the work-family interface.

### **Part 1: Feminist Approaches to Motherhood**

In this section I explore evolving theorizations of motherhood starting from the Second-Wave era, including Western conceptualization of motherhood and how it differs from (but also has similarities with) African-American as well as the South African conceptualizations. However, my focus will be on African feminist theorizations of motherhood which is where I situate my argument. My research brings forth knowledge on motherhood that is situated, perspectival and different from the Western and the African-American context. Yet, no matter how extensive the differences in mothering practice and experience, the Western social construction of motherhood remains influential.

Motherhood has been portrayed as biologically determined, an essential component of womanhood and obligatory for all women. As Smart (1996: 37) puts it “motherhood presents itself as a natural outcome of biologically given gender differences, as a natural consequence of (hetero) sexual activity, and as a natural manifestation of an innate female characteristic”. It is presented as an ultimate expression of femininity and considered a woman’s biological destiny that is inevitable and inherent in womanhood. On this basis, a woman is expected to desire to conceive and give birth as well as develop a bond with the children to whom she gives birth (Diquinzio, 1999). In the same vein, women, especially mothers, are considered to have an inherent nurturing ability. As Mamabolo et al (2009: 480) note “women are expected to have maternal instinct and to love, care and nurture babies”, and Hall (1999: 337) in similar vein comments “they (women) are born with a built-in set of capacities, dispositions and desires to nurture children”. In addition, mothers are expected to “love their children unconditionally, empathize completely with them, meet their children’s needs selflessly, and be completely fulfilled and satisfied by the experience of childrearing” (Diquinzio, 1999: 89). To reinforce this, society uses very subtle ideological tactics to pressure women to fulfil this role. Hence, when a woman conforms to this societal demand, she is ideologically rewarded. As Gittins (1992: 95) puts it “by having a child, a woman becomes recognised as being a ‘real’ woman who has fulfilled her ‘true’ destiny and role in life”. Gillespie (2000), Gittins (1992) and Glenn (1994: 9) perceive these normative expectations and beliefs to be “drawn from and enmeshed in powerful, hegemonic ideological doctrines” which have shaped cultural thinking about motherhood. Feminists have challenged theories that tie women to this biological imperative and argue for women’s autonomy and freedom from domestic drudgery and the tyranny of their biology (childbearing and caring which ties women to the domestic sphere) (Firestone, 1972;

Chodorow, 1979; Eisenstein, 1981; Rich, 1996; O'Reilly, 2004). Many of them argue for the uncoupling of the bond which ties women to motherhood and femininity.

The notion of motherhood presented above was perceived by many early feminist theorists, especially those of the Second-Wave period as a patriarchal construct, where mothering is controlled and arbitrated by the patriarchal institution (Eisenstein, 1981; Rich, 1996; O'Reilly, 2004). Hence, patriarchy was used as an analytical tool with which to analyse motherhood. For these theorists the private domestic realm is perceived as a site of women's oppression. And since mothering is performed within this domain, it is deemed intrinsically oppressive. For instance, Eisenstein (1981) argues that patriarchy, as a political structure, presents motherhood, through 'biological determinism', as natural and inevitable. Here, childbirth is equated with child-caring, where child-caring, like childbirth, is regarded as natural, resulting in the relegation of women to the private realm of the home, thereby excluding them from the public sphere. She asserts that patriarchal ideology "seeks to maintain the myth that motherhood is a biological reality rather than a politically constructed necessity" (Eisenstein, 1981: 14). Furthermore, patriarchy as a system of oppression is based on political control which struggles to "limit women's alternatives in relation to motherhood and mothering [...] in order to keep their role as child-bearer and rearer primary [...] and presents politics as nature" (Eisenstein, 1981: 14). A patriarchal division of labour is introduced and reinforced in subsequent generations through socialization and modelling. Eisenstein (1981) argues that patriarchal ideology uses women's biology, which forms a minuscule part of the meaning of motherhood, to present motherhood as natural. She refutes such naturalization and argues that motherhood is "consciously organized and socially constructed" (Eisenstein, 1981: 16). In addition, she argues that mothering is disconnected from the economy and the public world and presented as static, whereas "a mother under the

feudal economy is different from the mother in the capitalist economy” (Eisenstein, 1981: 16); this implies that motherhood changes its meaning and form with time. Several authors (Firestone, 1972; Chodorow, 1979; Rich, 1996; O’Reilly, 2004) suggest that women should be freed from the reproductive work which confines them to the private realm of the family. These feminists “challenge theories that tie women’s position to biological imperatives” (Glenn, 1994: 4).

Motherhood under patriarchy seems to link with Hays’s (1996) idea of ‘intensive mothering’. Hays’s (1996) work, in the United States, presents ‘intensive mothering’ in relation to three themes. First, the mother as a primary caregiver; second, the contemporary cultural model of socially appropriate childrearing that advises mothers to expend a significant amount of time, energy, and material and financial resources in nurturing their children, whether they are employed or not; and, finally, the idea that a mother’s paid work is secondary to her mothering. Hays (1996: 8) concludes that the “ideology of intensive mothering presents child-rearing as child-centred, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labour-intensive and financially expensive”.

O’Reilly (2004: 7) expands on the idea of ‘intensive mothering’ developing a concept of ‘natural-intensive mothering’. She sees this kind of mothering as “enacted in the patriarchal institution of motherhood [...] (which) becomes the official and only meaning of motherhood, marginalizing and rendering illegitimate alternative practices of mothering [...] this normative discourse of mothering polices all women’s mothering and results in the pathologizing of those women who do not or cannot practice intensive mothering”. Importantly, she notes that women have little or no power to challenge this ideology or any other aspect of their motherhood experience.

Mothering as presented above is produced and transmitted from one generation to another as girls identify with their mothers (Chodorow, 1979). Chodorow's (1979) approach draws from the psychoanalytical perspective and employs object relations theory to shed light in how mothering is reproduced and internalized from one generation to another. She perceives mothering as "part of the operation of male dominance" (Chodorow, 1979: 78). Her theory seeks to explain how motherhood as an institution is produced and reproduced through the work of mothering. Interestingly she alludes to the fact that mothering not only reproduces new children but new mothers as well. According to her, girls learn the mothering role through their identification with their mothers, that is, through their "experience of being mothered by women" (Chodorow, 1979: 79). Conversely, boys disengage from their mothers on the basis of their dissimilarities and in this way disassociate themselves from the caretaking role. This provides an explanation of how boys and girls, men and women, achieve their appropriate gender roles and the formulation of the basic division of labour among men and women. However, Chodorow's (1979) theory has been criticized for the assumption that it was addressing nuclear, heterosexual families, disregarding gay and other family types. Importantly the major concern from the South African point of view has been whether "psychoanalytic models can be applied to the very different cultural and historical contexts in which the majority of South African women operate" (Walker, 1995: 426).

However, although patriarchy has been an insightful and very important analytical tool from which to understand women's oppression, it has been lauded but also criticised by, especially, black feminists. They argue that theorizations of mothering during the early Second-Wave period developed from the one-sided perspective of white, middle-class women, providing a limited and biased representation of motherhood. They challenged this on the basis that it marginalizes other or alternative forms of mothering. The next sections introduce us to Black

feminist thought and provide an insight to the alternative forms of mothering alluded to above.

### **Black Feminist Thought**

Black Feminist Thought originates from African-American women's resistance to oppression. Feminist theories from the 1960s to the early 1980s were pre-occupied with white, middle-class issues, while black women's intellectual ideas were excluded from knowledge production; this was despite black woman intellectuals bringing forth unique, feminist consciousness based on an "intersection of race, class in structuring gender" (Hill-Collins, 1991: 7). Until recently it was black and white men who were writing about black motherhood. In their analysis, they predominantly reflected that any form of problem with the children was seen as a failure by the black mother. Black mothers were generally perceived as incapable of child-care and child-rearing. For instance, according to Hill-Collins (1991), black mothers were seen as unable to discipline their children, emasculating their sons, defeminising their daughters, and retarding their children's academic achievement. In addition, white feminist work on motherhood omitted black women's motherhood experiences.

Thus black feminist theory and research sprang from North American Black Feminists' critique of both Second-Wave feminism and masculinism (Hill-Collins, 1991; Hendricks, 1994). Black feminists considered themselves to be bringing a contradictory (Bhavnani, 1993) standpoint which "promises to enrich contemporary sociological standpoints" (Hill-Collins, 2004: 105). African-American women, although not the only group, examined an intersection of class, race and gender in relation to mothering, paid and unpaid work. This is fully discussed in what follows.

### ***Black Feminist theory and mothering***

Black feminists challenge what seems to be the unitary and universal conception of motherhood presented by some white feminists, on the basis that it disregards the realities of non-Western mothers in other cultural contexts. They employ different ways of analyzing and theorizing about motherhood from their angle of vision, which is significantly different from that of their white counterparts. While it is true that motherhood was constructed in a way that benefits and perpetuates patriarchy, black and white feminists argued about the inadequacy of the concept as an analytical tool in relation to motherhood. Black feminist theorists added race and history to the intersection of class and patriarchy which had previously been employed by Socialist Feminists and other Feminist strands. In this way, Black feminists such as hooks (1984) and Hill-Collins (1991) and Third-World feminist theorists; Glenn (1994), and May (2008) present a different view from Second-Wave white feminist theorists, like Eisenstein (1981), on motherhood. They argue that mothers in different historical and cultural contexts experience motherhood differently and therefore hold different perceptions about what constitutes ‘good’ mothering. For instance, they problematize Eisenstein’s (1981) argument, on the basis that it takes a limited perspective and argue that “motherhood occurs in specific historical situations, framed by interlocking structures of race, class and gender” (Hill-Collins, 2006: 45). In a similar vein, Glenn (1994: 3) argues that “mothering occurs within specific contexts that vary in terms of material and cultural resources and constraints” and therefore proposes the inclusion of race and class. Although Eisenstein (1981) acknowledged the historical aspect which portrays motherhood as dynamic, at the time she did not acknowledge the intersectional aspect which takes into account the cultural diversity which shapes and contextualizes motherhood.

Black African-American feminists outline the important features of the African-American mothering experience, which dates back to slavery but still informs and shapes African-American motherhood today (hooks, 1984; Hill-Collins, 1991). They critique Second-Wave feminists who present unpaid and paid labour as relating to distinct spheres; the public sphere which is the 'male' domain of economic providing and the private domestic sphere of the 'family' which is a female domain for nurturing. Black, Third-World and several white feminists critiqued the notion of the normative family as white heterosexual, nuclear and middle-class, where a father earns enough to provide for his family, thus making it unnecessary for a mother to engage in paid work (Hill-Collins, 1991, 1994; Glenn, 1994). From this perspective, motherhood is seen as confined to the private domestic realm, which is also seen as the locus of women's oppression (hooks, 1984; Glenn, 1994). In contrast, black feminists drawing on the African-American experience, problematize the social construction of motherhood and paid work as separate and dichotomized spheres. Literature on African-American motherhood shows us that providing constitutes part of the mothering practice (hooks, 1984; Hill-Collins, 1991 and 1994; Glenn, 1994). For African-Americans the family has never been viewed as a site for women's oppression, an obstacle to paid work or burdensome because these women have never been confined to the home in the first place. As hooks (1981) and Hill-Collins (1991) suggest African-American women have been deprived of time with their families. These women, they argued, have always been forced to work for the survival of their families. Because of racial segregation, they had engaged in cheap labour in the fields, factories, laundries and white homes. This involved long hours, days, week/s or months, of labour intensive work, without seeing their children and families which prevented them from taking care of their own families and parenting their own children. It is partly for this reason that paid work was perceived as alienating, while work in

the context of African-American women's households was 'humanizing labour', in that it involved caring for their own children and family. Hill-Collins (1994: 44) suggests that African-American women consider their unpaid domestic labour, as a means of "keeping the family together and teaching family survival skills" and therefore a site for resistance rather than a form of oppression.

hooks (1984) highlights that when white, especially middle-class, women expressed that they were tired of being confined to the home and wanted to be liberated to enter the world of work, black women expressed the opposite, that is, to be released from their paid work, which was perceived as alienating and undesirable, to effectively care for their own children. To this effect it is clear that paid work was seen as separating black women from their children and family. Since women spent a lot of their time doing paid work, one is inclined to ask, who then takes care of the children and the family? Second-Wave and white feminists depict mothering as solely a responsibility of the social and biological mother and this particular 'ideal family' type dominates popular media representations, academic discourse, political and legal doctrine (Glenn, 1994). In contrast, shared-parenting is an important aspect of African-American parenting (hooks, 1984; Glenn, 1994; Hill-Collins, 1994) and research shows that this is also the case for white Americans and European families (Bott, 1971; Charles et al, 2008) (see social-support-networks). The difference between African-American families and others may be the fact that African-American mothers spend long hours, which may translate to days or week/s, away from their children, in many cases taking care of white women's children, while their own are left in the care of other women within their extended families.

African-American feminists paved the way for different groups to produce their own knowledge and develop their own standpoint based on their specific socio-political and

economic context. Hence, Third-World women, women of colour, lesbians and working class women began to challenge the social construction and representation of motherhood based on their own experiences. According to Glenn (1994: 3) these groups of women advocate the recognition of differences in experiences of motherhood among women in different contexts, insisting that “differences are as important as commonalities”. In this way they bring alternative constructions of mothering to the fore. Such knowledge, as Hill-Collins (1991) puts it, reflects the authentic standpoint of subordinated groups.

In what follows I seek to bring forth yet another version of motherhood, from the perspective of previously oppressed groups in South Africa. Mothering and fathering in different contexts may share similarities but they also differ depending on race, class, level of development and place.

## **Part 11: Motherhood and the Division of Domestic Labour in South African Families**

Like African-American feminists, African feminists fiercely challenge white researchers’ ethnocentric assumptions about universal motherhood. Their main argument is that motherhood in the South African context is shaped by several factors, including race, class, culture, history as well as factors related to its transition from apartheid to democracy, such as ‘the rise of a black middle-class’ and its migration to more affluent residential areas. This section reviews the literature on motherhood in South Africa in the early 1990s and after the first elections in 1994, as women (with the introduction of affirmative action) took up high positions in the workforce and in politics; I focus particularly on how women in senior positions reconcile motherhood and paid work and whether there has been any change in parental roles following the entry of women into these positions.

### *Theorizations of Motherhood in Africa and South Africa*

African, including South African, literature raises important points for the theorization of motherhood. As with African-Americans, African men and women have been discriminated against through an intersection of structures based mainly on race and class. First, black men and women have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, by the apartheid regime, where whites arrogated to themselves positions of power in the public sector and institutions and in turn used this power to oppress and marginalize other racial categories, particularly blacks. This is one of the reasons why black and African feminists include men in their theorizations. Secondly, blacks were further discriminated against on the basis of their class, since under the apartheid system the majority of blacks constituted the working class and whites the middle and upper classes. To this effect the black, working class was considered second-class citizens in South Africa. Thirdly, all women were discriminated against on the basis of their gender, both in the public and private spheres. To this effect most public institutions, including the workplace have a masculine culture which directly or indirectly alienates femininity. On the other hand, in the private sphere, even though women participate in both the private and the public realm, the division of labour within the family is highly unequal. Although Africans share certain forms of discrimination with African-American men and women, the fact that America is a First World country and South Africa is not makes a huge difference to the extent and magnitude of discrimination and the way mothering is experienced. To this effect, in addition to gender, race and class, intersectionality in the South African context, also includes other vectors, such as apartheid and colonialism, capitalism, geographical location, developmental (urban/rural) and other aspects and is important in analysing motherhood. Against this backdrop like Black American feminists, as well as most white feminists today, African, including South African

feminists view patriarchy as inadequate to analyze motherhood since, as Sathiparsad (2008: 6) suggests, it implies “a monolithic and totalizing system of oppression in which all men dominate all women, thus obscuring the differences between women as well as differences between men”.

Unlike second-wave, (white) feminism, where motherhood is seen as oppressive, African feminism celebrates motherhood. In most African countries, motherhood is perceived as “an attractive and desirable goal to achieve” (Oyewumi, 2001: 7; Christian, 1994; van Vlaenderen and Cakwe, 2003; Mekgwe, 2006; Mamabolo et al, 2009; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010). Much of the body of African (Oyewumi, 2001: 7; Christian, 1994; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010), including South African (Campbell, 1990; Walker, 1995; Vlaenderen and Cakwe, 2003; Mekgwe, 2006; Mamabolo et al, 2009), literature illuminates the pivotal role played by mothers in African family life. For instance, Oyewumi, (2001), Campbell (1991); Walker (1995) Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) share the view that within African family systems “mothers are a pivot around which the family is structured and family life rotates” Oyewumi (2001: 7).

South African literature brings out the important themes that illuminate and mark the difference in the way motherhood is experienced among, especially, African families. First, the literature notes the centrality of motherhood as well as the significance of fertility in most African cultural systems. South African authors such as van Vlaenderen and Cakwe (2003: 71) point out “procreation and the securing of legitimate descendants are the main ends of marriage”. The same is the case in other African countries, such as Botswana, Nigeria (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Oyewumi, 2001, respectively). Therefore, in many African countries, including South Africa, a woman is seen as a potential mother and is valued and greatly respected for her capacity to bear children for their husbands’ lineage, for the

purposes of patrilineal descent continuity and kinship bonds (Walker, 1995; van Vlaenderen and Cakwe, 2003; Lesejane, 2006; Amoateng, 2007; Mamabolo et al, 2009). This qualifies her to be a 'real', 'proper' and 'good woman' and she is accordingly rewarded with social acceptance and approval (Christian, 1994). Moreover, in South Africa "children are regarded as gifts from the ancestors and, at times, as the same ancestors having come back to life" and are thus named after "an admired older or deceased person, such as a grandparent or even a parent" (Lesejane, 2006: 177). It is against this backdrop that adoption beyond the extended family relations is rarely considered in Black South African families. For these reasons, a woman who is unable to fulfil her reproductive role, especially in African families, is subjected to social scrutiny and stigmatization (Mamabolo et al, 2009).

Also worth noting is a finding from recent South African national (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Palamuleni et al, 2007) and local studies (Mamabolo et al, 2009), that not only do women give birth in accordance with these cultural prescriptions, but giving birth is also perceived as an extension or continuation of oneself, as well as the kinship network, especially by single, educated and urban women (Mamabolo et al, 2009). This implies that motherhood should not only be seen as tied to and/ or located within heterosexual marriage.

South African literature also shows high prevalence of single-motherhood (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Palamuleni et al, 2007). Palamuleni et al (2007) in her national study [drawn from data of the South African Demographic and Health Survey (SADHS), (1998) South African population census (1997); Department of Health (1998) and Statistics South Africa (1999)]; argues that, fertility in this context is universal irrespective of marital status. To this effect motherhood occurs early and wifehood later in life. For this reason, South African feminist authors suggest the idea of the separation of wifehood and motherhood (Walker, 1995). Another national study drawn from the 2001 census data conducted by Kalule-Sabiti et al

(2007) shows a dramatic and continuous increase of never married women in all age groups. This study indicates that 55% of women of reproductive age are single, the majority of whom are Africans. Concomitantly, as Palamuleni et al (2007) point out, South Africa has also witnessed an increase in out of wedlock births, which demonstrates that marriage should not be regarded as a determinant of fertility. This was followed by greater acceptance and a decline of the stigma attached to single-motherhood (Walker, 1995; Palamuleni et al, 2007; Hotchfeld, 2008).

There are several reasons for the increased rate of single-motherhood in South Africa, some of which are discussed below. First, female single-parenting is associated with women's increased education and high positions within employment (Amoateng et al, 2007; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Palamuleni et al, 2007). These authors allude to the role of education and formal employment as significant in transforming attitudes towards marriage and childbearing. They play a huge role in the transformation of "old traditional values into new aspirations and modern outlook and provide an alternative to marriage for women in particular" (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007: 94). To this effect, education and career mobility are also associated with delayed marriage and childbearing and "narrow(s) women's range of marriage partners since women are generally expected to marry men with the same or a higher level of education" (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007: 93), hence the lower marriage rates among educated women. Importantly, formal work, especially professional work is also associated with financial independence which makes it possible for such women to live a comfortable, self-sufficient life without husbands. Formal work, especially in high-ranking jobs, is associated with increased hours at work for women resulting in unstable marriages and divorce (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007). Furthermore, Frahm-Arp (2010: 187) suggests that men feel intimidated by independent and professional women because "women who had their

own cars, houses and income were increasingly demanding and expected their husbands to help around the house”. Some women also opt to remain single because of their scepticism about marriage; this relates to their past experiences of being abandoned by their own fathers (Frahm-Arp, 2010) or/and husbands through migratory labour, divorce, desertion and so on (Ramphela and Richter, 2006). It is important to note that migratory labour has had a greater influence since it involved mothering alone and not as wives (Rabe, 2006; Ramphela and Richter, 2006) as will be seen later in this chapter. This has resulted in mothers having to carry the burden of providing physical, emotional and financial care for the family single-handedly. Moreover, in my area of study single-motherhood is a common phenomenon (between 40.9 and 43%) (Kirsten et al, 2002; LEGPD, 2009). Importantly, as the literature suggests, motherhood provides a sense of purpose, ultimate fulfilment and happiness not only within marriage but also for single women (Campbell, 1990; Magwaza, 2003; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004; Mamabolo et al, 2009).

Another theme which distinguishes African from white mothers from both the West and South Africa is the crucial role played by black mothers in the livelihood and the survival of the family. Literature in different parts of Africa highlights the fact that providing or co-providing is part of the mothering practice, which is contrary to the Western context, where even though mothers engage in paid and unpaid work, mothering and paid employment are regarded as distinct roles (Charles, 1993). As in the early 1990s, recent studies in South Africa (Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004; McLlelan and Uys, 2009) find that ‘good mothering’ is defined in terms of an ‘ideal mother’, who is always physically and emotionally present for her children, while in reality for Africans, mothering does not necessarily involve the physical presence of women in day-to-day care of children but also includes their financial support, alone or together with the father (Walker, 1995:425). In her definition of an African

mother in South Africa, Walker (1995) perceives South African motherhood as multi-layered but emphasizes three distinct dimensions:

[...] these three dimensions are located in particular social formations, with particular family systems and productive systems, which also impact on their context. In the South African context they (mothers) are embedded in a particular social formation, with particular family systems of gender relations, in which women as mothers but also as workers, citizens and political activists are devalued and subordinated in relation to men (Walker, 1995: 424).

South African feminist writers Campbell's (1990), White's (1991), Walker's (1995), van Vlaenderen and Cakwe's (2003) and Magwaza's (2003) studies among African mothers in South Africa, unlike mothers, in the European and American contexts, who subscribe to the idea of 'intensive mothering' as alluded to earlier, consider mothers' employment as an "unselfish maternal devotion" (Magwaza, 2003: 9).

Another South African author Frahm-Arp (2010) goes on to differentiate between black and White mothering but attributes both black and white mothers a primary care-give-role:

For black and coloured women ... the dominant positive role model they had grown-up with was competent, heroic, strong mother who kept the household together, raised her children, found work even when there seemed to be none, and often looked after the family alone because her husband was away working or had left his family (Frahm-Arp, 2010: 228).

Whereas white mothers are defined as:

The person who sacrifices her own career in order to stay home, looked after her children, was the emotional centre of the family and ensured that her husband

remained in the family by taking care of him; alternatively they held the superwomen, fulltime career women and competent mother, who though often absent – delegated much of the mothering role to nanny or au pair, as their ideal (Frahm-Arp, 2010: 228).

These definitions combine both productive and reproductive aspects of motherhood, which both appear crucial to the South African definition. Moreover, although the paid work aspect is common to both, it appears a choice for white compared to black mothers

Similarly, “Asante ideology (in Ghana) endorses economic responsibility as the emotional heart of motherhood as well as its practical bottom line” (Clark, 1999: 720). A South African feminist writer, Magwaza (2003: 9) proposes that, “mothers who opt to leave their children and pursue careers, should be considered as adults who have made a choice that forms part of a maternal practice”. Similarly, a Ghanaian feminist writer, Clark (1999: 719) asserts that “a good, self-sacrificing Asante mother does not stay at home with her children, but goes out working hard for them”. The difference between African and most European mothers is that African mothers’ work, as already shown, includes spending long hours at work which may translate to days, a week or weeks without seeing their children as is the case with domestic workers (Cock, 1989; King, 2007) and women in managerial or other high positions. This is made possible by the fact that the physical care of children is not necessarily solely a mother’s responsibility but dispersed amongst women within the extended family or household, or women hire domestic workers as their substitutes for child-care as will be seen in the next two sections (Cock, 1989; King, 2007; Phillips, 2011).

Campbell’s (1990) and White’s (1991) studies were carried out among African working class families in the early 1990s in the South Western Township (SOWETO) and Alexandra Township, both situated near Johannesburg in South Africa. They analyse what day-to-day mothering entails in the South African urban context and demonstrate the important role

played by a mother in the face of social and economic constraints. These studies illustrate mothers' substantial contribution to household income as well as being overburdened with household responsibilities, while men are free from such responsibilities. Campbell notes that:

It is mothers who often take the major responsibility for managing the scarce (including financial) resources available to most working class families. It is mothers who take care of family members in times of crisis – such as sickness, unemployment, old age, detention and so on [...]. It is mothers that form the emotional nexus of the family. They advise, console and comfort family members. They mediate ties of loyalty that exist between family members. It is mothers who co-ordinate family decision-making and mediate between family members in the day-to-day business of living (Campbell, 1990: 11).

In a similar vein, Ngunjiri (2007: 4) portrays Nigerian mothers as “survivors and victors actively involved in their own emancipation”. The two quotes above, like Oyewumi (2001) earlier in this section, demonstrate the pivotal role played by mothers in family life. These authors note the resilience of mothers in the face of a myriad of challenges. Campbell (1990), Oyewumi (2001) and Ngunjiri (2007) attribute to an African mother, roles of vital importance within the family. For instance, over and above the primary caregiver and co-provider/provider role, she is portrayed as a pillar of strength, a source of solidarity and the ‘emotional nexus’ of the family. To this effect, most mothers constantly negotiate and mediate day-to-day challenges in order to live up to these expectations. Yet the power that mothers possess is restricted by male authority as well as within the household. Hence even with all these seemingly powerful attributes, the mother “does not constitute a serious threat

to this (male) dominance” within the family and therefore has no potential to challenge unequal gender relations (Campbell, 1990: 7; Clark, 1999).

Almost all studies of the normative expectations and practices of African motherhood imply that there is a disjuncture between normative expectations and the practice of mothering in this context. As Campbell (1990), Walker (1995) and Magwaza (2003: 14) point out, the “societal constructions of what constitutes ‘good mothering’ is in contrast with the reality of motherhood” and this tension between normative expectations and the practice of mothering causes friction as mothers strive to live up to the idealistic construction of mothering. Campbell notes that,

[...] contrary to the lived experience of many township families, the old-fashioned patriarchal view of the father as head of the family, responsible for all family needs, with women playing an important but subordinate role, seems to have persisted in township family ideology (Campbell, 1990: 11).

Kandiyoti (1988: 277) explains that while it is considered normative in most parts of Africa that men are providers for their families, in many cases “the woman is primarily responsible for her own and her children’s upkeep, including meeting the costs of their education”. In the same vein, Frahm-Arp (2010) suggests that South African men and women choose to conform to gender stereotypes of men’s provider role and women’s primary caregiver role even where women earn more money and contribute more to family income than men. This has been interpreted as part of the oppressive hegemonic patriarchal ideology that has been systematically interwoven with cultural practices to make these gender roles seem natural and therefore difficult for women to become aware of. Hence in both Campbell (1990) and White’s (1991) studies women believe that, even though they and their husbands together contribute towards the family income, it is still a woman’s responsibility to take care of the

husband and children and for men to lead and women to follow. Another way of explaining women's acceptance of their situation in households can be explained through Kandiyoti's (1988) concept of '*Patriarchal Bargain*' which may take the form of passive resistance in the face of women's oppression. For instance, women may choose to trade off their autonomy and submit to their husbands for the security and status they receive from being married. In this case, women may choose to continue to bear household and childcare responsibilities as a strategy to acquire or retain the protection of their husbands, thus "claiming half of this particular '*Patriarchal Bargain*' – protection in exchange for submissiveness and propriety" (Kandiyoti, 1988: 283). In addition, according to Kandiyoti (1988: 283) "women often resist the process of transition because they see the old normative order slipping away from them without any empowering alternatives". In the same vein, Chilisa and Ntseane (2010: 618) argue that "women and girls have used relational gender roles as sites for resistance and sources for empowerment". Walker (1995) argues that although the patriarchal household is seen as oppressive, it actually offers identity and support and provides membership of a social network which, in most cases, is the only effective resource, women, especially those who are poor, have.

Another important theme in the literature is that the normative expectations around mothering are child-centred, a mother is seen in relation to the children and therefore her own needs are not considered; this endorses the earlier assertion that women are only recognized through their reproductive capacity and not as autonomous individuals in their own right. This is seen in research undertaken by Magwaza (2003), Jeannes and Sheffer (2004) and Pillay (2007) who conducted qualitative studies showing that the child's needs are presented as central and a woman's life is expected to be centred around her child/ren. Jeannes and Sheffer's (2004) study was conducted among white, middle-class, professional, married mothers based in

Cape Town. It illuminates the following points: mothers were primary care-givers with inherent nurturing abilities; mothers who leave children for a career are castigated as selfish, since they are perceived as elevating their own needs above those of children's; normative expectations of motherhood portray childcare and women's careers as incompatible.

This, notwithstanding, apart from being parents, middle-class and professionals mothers, both black and white have their own aspirations and needs. For instance, mothers aspire and have the desire to be intellectual beings, without having to give up motherhood. As a result, they tend to combine the two roles. Women express the desire to engage in intellectual matters and achievements for self-fulfilment, and Magwaza (2003), Jeannes and Sheffer (2004) and Pillay (2007) show that paid work provides mothers with life-satisfaction, feelings of success and productivity.

Most of the literature on motherhood demonstrates how difficult it is, especially for professional mothers, to enact their mothering role. The small-scale studies of Pillay (2007), Moorosi (2007) and Cilliers et al (2008) on academic mothers demonstrate the difficulties faced by professional women in reconciling the two roles. This seems to be caused mainly by the expectation that women should fit into masculine organizational cultures designed for those without family responsibilities. There is no institutional support for mothers who wish to excel in both childcare and paid work so that they are 'good mothers' as well as 'good workers'. As a result women struggle as they strive to strike a balance between their two lives. Most authors demonstrate that this balance is far from being realized; in fact Pillay (2007) asserts that there can never be any balance between these two roles. First, she alludes to difficult decisions that women sometimes have to make in order to qualify to be 'good workers', but which, may jeopardise their status as 'good mothers'. All mothers in her study travel overseas to attend conferences a couple of times a year. She demonstrates the

emotional struggles that these mothers go through when they leave their children; some of the mothers reported crying themselves to sleep especially the first time they were separated from their babies, even though they had mobilized sufficient support for childcare. Moreover, some of them were forced to wean their babies because of lengthy periods of absence due to overseas work-related travelling. For this reason they expressed profound feelings of distress which consumed them throughout the conference. Two thirds of the mothers at some point have had to take their babies together with fathers on work trips, covering the costs themselves; this shows the lack of institutional support from the workplace in this regard. Furthermore, these mothers also talk about having to spend long hours working in addition to their working hours, which implies that they had little time to attend to their children. For these mothers the major source of frustration was having to make such choices but for Pillay (2007) such choices are inevitable, especially for professional mothers. These mothers expressed the need for childcare facilities and flexible hours to assist them in reconciling their two roles.

Some literature also notes racial differences in the way mothers felt about spending more time in paid work. Upon comparing Jeannes and Sheffer's (2004), Pillay's (2007) and McLellan and Uys's (2009) studies, which were conducted among white mothers, and Magwaza's (2003) study, which was conducted among both black and white mothers, there seems to be a racial difference in perceptions and attitudes towards mothering. The racial difference is first seen in terms of guilt feelings and ambivalence on the part of mothers, especially when they leave their children for paid work and are unable to attend to their motherly responsibilities. According to Magwaza (2003), Jeannes and Sheffer (2004), Pillay (2007) and McLellan and Uys (2009), white mothers experienced extreme feelings of guilt and ambivalence when they had to leave their children for paid work, as they felt they needed

to spend more time with their children. Some of these white mothers had reduced or considered reducing their hours of work in order to have more time with their children. McLellan and Uys (2009: 27) found that “for most of the participants, family responsibilities took priority over work. When work had to take preference over family, they felt unsuccessful as mothers and that they were not in control”. However, Pillay (2007) showed a different perspective: although white academic mothers cut down attending late seminars, they did not cut down on overseas work-related travelling. Moreover, these academic mothers expressed the desire to excel in both roles. On the other hand, Clark’s (1999) and Magwaza’s (2003), African mothers, did not express such guilt for leaving children for work. This may be attributed to the fact that African mothering includes providing or co-providing. It is also important to note that for African mothers working is not a choice; it is mainly necessitated by economic reasons and considered part of the culture of mothering. African mothers have to work for their family survival and sustenance (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991; Magwaza, 2003) while white women seem to have the option of choosing between part-time and full-time work. However, Jeannes and Sheffer’s (2004) participants experienced feelings of guilt for wanting to excel at work, since it means they are not good enough mothers, while Magwaza believes that paid work for African mothers is seen as a boost to self-esteem and as beneficial for mothering practice. Magwaza (2003: 11) concludes by saying, “mothering is not only about children but also the mothers who are involved in the actual practice” and therefore the needs of mothers should also be taken into consideration.

However, there is an indication of a change in attitudes and normative expectations in small scale studies (in 2008) that show that in some parts of South Africa, young black and white professionals are moving towards more egalitarian views. However, this is still at an early stage and cannot be generalized. Unlike the previous studies Hotchfeld (2008) and Cilliers et

al (2008)'s small scale studies were conducted in the Gauteng Province - in Johannesburg - as well as Pretoria (urban South Africa) among young black female (Hotchfeld, 2008) and predominantly white male and female professionals (Cilliers et al, 2008). Hotchfeld (2008: 98) shows a 'double discourse' - a "vacillation between the discourse of progressive diversity (reflecting social change) and a discourse of more conservative notions (reflecting the resilience of culturally and religiously prescribed gender norms)" in the way parenthood is perceived. For instance, on the question of parenthood, Hotchfeld (2008) shows that, while some participants alluded to the fact that we are now living in the 'democratic era' and brought up the idea of 'shared parenting' between the mother and father as 'good practice', they still gave examples of women playing an active mothering role as primary-carers and fathers being the provider and protector. The vacillation between a liberal notion of progressive and conservative roles demonstrates the fact that these African professionals are caught up between the old and new realities. In contrast, Cilliers et al's (2008) study of male and female professionals (academics) in the University of Pretoria showed a significant change of attitude among men. These men subscribed to the ideology of 'new men' and presented themselves as egalitarian. Although they depicted themselves as egalitarian they still participated in those roles that are outdoors, such as home-maintenance and servicing cars and paid the utility bills. Only very few participated more substantially in childcare, although not at the same level as women and women confirmed this claim by portraying these husbands as very supportive. However, participants also referred to women as the primary care-giver, when it came to trade-offs regarding child-care and work. Both Hotchfeld (2008) and Cilliers et al (2008) suggest that men, as well as women, are held back by the resilience of cultural norms. Such vacillation between liberal and conservative

ideologies is typical of a country which is undergoing a transition. Having reviewed theorizations on motherhood I move on to the mothering practices.

### ***Mothering Practices and Domestic Division of Labour***

In the last section we have seen how the providing role is enmeshed in the culture of mothering. However, mothers bear a disproportionate burden of domestic work as well as being the primary caregiver within families, while men enjoy ample leisure time (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991; Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Bray, 2003; Charmes, 2006). Studies carried out from the early 1990s to date demonstrate that there has been almost no significant change in perceptions of gender roles within African families, as will be seen as this section further unfolds.

The early 1990s literature indicates the gendering of domestic labour and parental responsibilities within the family. It clearly shows that for working mothers, domestic work is divided into morning and evening chores (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991). Mothers wake up early in the morning between 4 to 6h00 to prepare themselves and their husbands for work as well as their children for school. For working mothers this includes a range of domestic tasks, such as warming up the bath-water; preparing clothes for the husband, themselves and the children; preparing breakfast for the family; bathing the children and preparing their school lunchboxes (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991). Evening chores includes buying fresh supplies of vegetables after work and as soon as they get home they cook, attend to children's homework, give them a bath, wash up in the evenings and then retire for the day. Laundry is often done during weekends and is described as a 'nightmare' because of its labour intensiveness and the fact that it is time-consuming, especially for working-class families. Moreover, White (1991) demonstrates class differences in the extent to which women are

overburdened with household responsibilities and chores, which relate to the affordability of cleaning utilities and hired domestic help. For example, working-class women have to wake up much earlier than middle-class women to manually heat the bath-water for all members of the family because of the lack of electricity, whereas most middle-class families could afford electricity and to hire domestic workers and very few working-class households had washing machines. This meant that working-class women spent many more hours than middle-class women on household chores. However, White (1991) shows that the availability of a maid seemingly does not mean women are not doing any household chores, rather women share chores with maids, especially after work.

White (1991) also shows that men were free from household responsibilities and thus enjoyed substantial leisure time. For instance, most did not have to wake up as early as their wives, and they just had themselves to get ready for work. For most, by the time they woke up, their wives would already have prepared their clothes and bath-water for them. Furthermore, some stopped at the bars for a drink in the evenings and to socialize with friends before going home to have supper, while others went back home to relax, read newspapers and watch television before bed (White, 1991). The literature shows that men only participate in chores that are located outside the house, which they do mainly during weekends, such as gardening.

White (1991) reveals yet another aspect of gendered housework, where daughters engage in household chores after school and during weekends, while boys engage in learning and, like their fathers, in leisure activities; this is further elaborated on, especially in the 2000s, as will be seen below.

Having looked at the literature prior to the democratic era, I move on to analyse studies that were conducted after the achievement of democracy. Democracy (through affirmative action) has brought an improvement of women's conditions and positions, especially with

regards to employment. This has been accompanied by an increase in women's contribution towards household income. In what follows my intention is to look at recent studies, to determine whether there is any change in expectations as well as in the practice of mothering and fathering, including the domestic division of labour, in the post-apartheid era.

Recent studies show no significant change in the division of labour in parenting and other family responsibilities. Although there are high numbers of women who are mothers in senior positions at work, thereby taking on what is regarded as men's work in the corporate world, they still carry-out a disproportionate burden of household chores and child-care. This has allegedly left men with an identity crisis: they appear not only to have lost their place at the work place but also in the family (Frahm-Arp, 2010). National and regional time-use studies show no significant changes in the division of domestic roles since the early 1990s (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Bray, 2003; Charmes, 2006; Rama and Richter, 2007) and some small scale studies corroborate these findings (Moorosi, 2007). The division of domestic chores is still highly gendered and unequally distributed between men and women. For instance, National and Regional time-use studies take us through a typical weekday of men and women as well as boys and girls. Like White (1991) and Campbell (1990) recent studies indicate that women are still disproportionately overburdened with household chores. For instance, mothers still wake up much earlier than men, from 4h00 and start the day by doing household chores and childcare tasks before going to work (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006). Men on the other hand wake up around at least an hour later to prepare only themselves for work. Again, similar to White's (1991) study, in the evenings while men have some leisure time, the time-use study shows that women engage in evening household duties as can be seen below.

From 16h30 until about 20h00 most men are involved in personal care, media use and social and cultural activities. Only a few of them are involved in household maintenance, while a substantial percentage of women are involved in household chores and childcare ... for women household maintenance continues up to 10h00 (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4).

The regional time-use study endorses the findings of national time-use and local studies. For instance, it shows that women in a day spend an average of 1 hour 30 (90) minutes compared to men who spend only 19 minutes preparing meals; 24 minutes compared to the 2 minutes by men in childcare; 26 compared to 6 minutes spent by men doing laundry; and 48 and 24 minutes spent by men in household repairs. It is only on the shopping responsibility where men and women almost equally share a responsibility.

Importantly, the literature shows children's high involvement in domestic chores which is gendered and reflects adult roles (Bray, 2003; Rama and Richter, 2007) and which they are socialized into from an early age. Girls spend even longer hours than their mothers doing domestic work. Both studies make use of available national statistics from the National Time-Use studies (2000) and Survey of Activities of Young People (SAYP) (2001) to measure the extent to which children are involved in domestic work. In addition, Bray's (2003) ethnographic study – a Cape-Town Panel Study - analysed various groups of black (African; Coloured; Indian) children as a way of exploring “the social, economic and cultural context of work by children within or for the home”, highlighting the “cultural variation owing to differing norms around child-rearing” (Bray, 2003: 5). One of the major findings in Bray's (2003) study was that more African children, especially girls, engage in longer hours of core domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, laundry and ironing, compared to Indian and coloured children.

However, the literature shows an increased involvement of boys, from the early 2000s, especially in the cleaning of the households, particularly where there are no girl-children and/or mother within the family (Rama and Richter, 2007, Bray, 2003). Moreover boys in this study, like fathers (Rama and Richter, 2007), engage in the sort of domestic activities that are done outdoors and less frequently: such as cleaning the yard, gardening and household repairs. The conclusion drawn from these studies is that the participation of boys has increased even though fewer boys engage in this sort of work and when they do it is less frequently and for less time than girls. This may indicate a shift from traditional gender roles towards egalitarianism among this generation of boys but the evidence is not conclusive.

This section has sought to determine whether there has been any change in parental roles since the end of apartheid. The literature shows the resilience of traditional and gendered domestic divisions of labour and parenting with no significant changes in mothering and fathering practices. Mothers are overburdened with family responsibilities despite their increased participation in high positions at the workplace, while fathers continue to play a marginal role in family life and enjoy leisure time. However, there seem to be changes in domestic division of labour among the younger generation; there is an increase in the participation of boys in household chores.

### **Domestic Labour and Mothering Practices within Networks of Care**

Having examined literature on practices of mothering and fathering and having explored mothers' struggles to reconcile work and family, I turn to exploring how mothers cope with their demanding dual-role. As mentioned in the last section, as I was reviewing literature on parenting, it dawned on me that the parenting practices in this context are not limited to biological parents, but that mothering is a shared responsibility within a network of care:

either between the mother and other female members of the kinship network, between the mother and paid domestic workers or between the mother and both paid domestic workers and female members of the kinship network. However, before I venture into this, I provide a brief discussion of factors influencing mothering practice.

Motherhood and mothering practice, in the South African context, are influenced by several factors related to South Africa's transition from apartheid to a democratic society, among others, economic, employment and educational advancement and the rise of the 'new black middle-class'. To this effect, the South African literature notes greater fluidity and mobility of racial, class and family structures during this transitional period (Southhall, 2004; Seekings and Natrass, 2005; Ziehl, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Amoateng, 2007). For instance, local (Ziehl, 2002; Southhall, 2004) and national studies (Seekings and Natrass, 2005) show that the deracialization of the public sector has triggered upward income and class mobility among Africans which was already evident prior the demise of the apartheid era. Consequently, the rise of black middle-class families has resulted in 'residential differentiation' among African people. The 'new black middle class' migrated to more affluent residential areas such as private housing developments, just before the end of apartheid, and, after the achievement of democracy, some moved into previously white residential areas (Seekings and Natrass, 2005). Parallel to this, a significant segment of the population remains at the periphery of the economy and continues to live in poor settlements such as backyard shacks or informal shack settlements. Among these are domestic workers and farm-workers. This differentiation gained momentum with the post-apartheid breakdown of racial segregation. Southhall (2004) and Seekings and Natrass (2005) are concerned about the paradoxical outcome of deracialization: the widening of class inequalities between black South Africans, when the main intention of democracy was to reduce these inequalities.

This relocation on the part of ‘new African middle-class families’ implied separation from their networks of care, including their extended family relations, which in turn has led to an increase in ‘nuclear’ African families. To this effect, recent debates have brought forth the thesis of convergence of black and white towards a nuclear family form, with some authors claiming that black families are converging with white families and are becoming nuclear. However, it should be noted that the increase in nuclear families coexists with other types of family structures such as the extended and/or multigenerational households, teenage and single mothers, child-headed and the polygamous alongside the nuclear family within the African population (Ziehl, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Amoateng, 2007). Against this backdrop they problematize the legitimization of the normative family as heterosexual, nuclear and middle-class (Ziehl, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Bray et al, 2010; Frahm-Arp, 2010) arguing that from this ideological lens it would imply that most African families are ‘morally declining’ and/or illegitimate (Amoateng, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010; Bray et al 2010). Frahm-Arp (2010: 212) shows how the church supports the nuclear family model which is perceived to be “a key symbolic marker of successful urban living”, thus in a way demonizing the types of families that prevail among Africans. Ramphele and Richter (2006), Swartz and Bhana, (2009) and Bray’s (2010) ethnographic studies, all conducted in Cape Town (Swartz and Bhana, 2009 included Kwazulu-Natal), show that the majority of young people live with one or neither parent. Moreover, these studies indicate that most of teenagers are reared by their mothers in single-parented families, or their grandmothers. To this effect, studies illuminate not only the paternal absence, but also that of both parents. Moreover, Bray et al (2010) indicate that “children living in poorer households are much less likely to live with both parents and more likely to live with neither parents” (p52). This resonates with Cock’s (1989) and King’s (2007) studies which show a high number of mothers who leave their

children to work as 'live-in' domestic workers. Bray et al (2010: 94) conclude that "South African households are converging around diversity of household forms and not around any one of the specific forms that characterised racial groups".

Below I show how these changes have had a tremendous impact on the functioning of the family, particularly domestic divisions of labour within families. I begin with a discussion of extended family-network support in the United Kingdom and America; I then move on to the role of extended family support and paid work within the domestic division of labour.

### ***Extended family Network-Support***

A social-support-network, especially extended family network, appears to be important as part of women's coping strategies and has been used by working mothers for a long time; it continues to be integral even today especially among the working class and to a lesser extent in middle-class families. As explained in the last section, with geographical mobility, social-network support decreases and South Africa seems to follow a similar pattern to Europe in this regard. However, the extended family-network remains significant, especially for African households.

I draw from both European and South African literature which provides very insightful theory for explaining changing family strategies and social-networks. I therefore start by exploring this European literature to try and make sense of the changes that have occurred in the South African context.

Both European and South African literature show how families are embedded in and dependent on social networks for support to cope with the challenges of reconciling paid work and family responsibility. In this section although I start with studies conducted in the United Kingdom (Bott, 1971; Charles et al, 2008) my focus will be on families and extended

family network-support and relations in South Africa. All these studies show that the extent of such support is dependent upon the distance between the family requiring such support and others in its extended family network. The quality of extended family social-network-support seems to be stronger when those who need such support reside closer to other members of their extended families (Bott, 1971; Charles et al, 2008). The issue of distance can also be linked to social change. As Charles et al, (2008: 53) rightfully say, social change has brought with it “differentiation and the move from a cohesive to a mobile society”. Bott (1971: 94) asserts that “networks become loose-knit when people move from one place to another [...]” as this separates the nuclear family from its social-network-support. Furthermore, Charles et al (2008) point to the ‘occupational differentiation’ of society as well as the occupational structure that has opened opportunities for women’s employment and hence their ‘individualization’. This, they argue, leads to the decrease in solidarity of family and dis-embeds them from their extended family-networks. However, with this increase in ‘geographical mobility’ the social network-support especially extended family-support still remains a valuable asset and important to nuclear families (Charles et al, 2008; Magwaza, 2003). Some new families are still inclined not to move very far from their social networks or move back to be closer to their social network - extended families, such as parents, themselves move closer to their children’s (nuclear) families to provide childcare support, when their children start families (Young and Wilmott, 1973; Charles et al, 2008).

Interestingly, all authors show the gendered way in which families and their extended family-support operate. For instance, grandmothers participate in child-care responsibilities together with their daughters when the daughter is employed, and it is older women and their daughters that remain very close and active in kinship activities mainly because of childcare responsibility. This way (grand-) children appear to be the main reason that brings these two-

generations of women together. Furthermore, these authors show that support is not one-sided but reciprocal, in the sense that, the nuclear family provides support to their extended families. But again this reciprocity is gendered, in that the daughter provides caring support while men provide financial support to their parents.

Importantly, Bott (1971) and Young and Wilmott (1973) point out that the mother-daughter childcare arrangement may push the husband into distant fathering, as he would not be able to fit into the mother-daughter dyad. This being the case men seem to opt into a 'medium-knit' (neither dense nor loose) type, so that there is "continuity with each other and make their strongest emotional investment in the conjugal relationship. At the same time they are able to have some segregated relationships outside the family, so that a fairly defined division of labour into male tasks and female tasks can be made" (Bott, 1971: 93; Young and Wilmott, 1973).

There also appear to be class differences in the way extended family support is sought by families. This is shown by both Bott (1971) and Charles et al (2008) as they note that the working-class are more reliant on extended family-support than middle-class families. This can partly be attributed to the fact that middle-class families tend to be the ones who move further away thus making their relationship to the extended family strained and less intimate than their working-class counter-parts, while the working class tend to remain local. Charles et al (2008) indicates that working-class families tend to have denser kinship networks than the middle-class families.

### **Extended family Support in South Africa**

Having looked at European and American studies, I move to South African literature which, in part, includes network-support. Several South African studies echo the coping strategies

found in Europe and North America showing a similar pattern and trend with regards to coping strategies employed by working mothers. For instance, similar to Europe, South African studies allude to the fact that, working mothers' lives are embedded in networks of care (Magwaza, 2003; Pillay, 2007; Phillips, 2011). However, in South Africa, many children are left in the hands of especially grandmothers and aunts or struggling on their own. This was especially true during the apartheid. Bray (2010: 93) found that "local grandparents are the most frequent and sources of intimate care, especially when parents are ill or have long working hours" or in cases where one or both parents are absent. However, even currently African families who live in close proximity to their extended families, especially in townships, continue to share parenting roles with other female extended family members and the neighbourhood (Magwaza, 2003; Bray et al, 2010). This way, dis-embedding oneself from one's social net-works to more affluent areas may imply running the risk of forfeiting such a privilege: kinship bonds in some cases are disrupted.

Currently, social-network support seems to be class differentiated. For instance, like in developed countries, the working-class families seem to rely a lot more on extended family-networks than the middle-class, while increased middle-class families now rely on paid domestic work, while others on the extended family and others on both paid domestic work and family, as will be seen below.

It is important to note that a significant number of blacks, especially now that a number of families have become middle-class, also share mothering with domestic workers. In what follows I move to the second coping strategy.

## *Paid Domestic Labour*

As already mentioned the extended family network support system weakens, among African families, as a result of geographical mobility and this has led to a change in their coping strategies and increased reliance on paid domestic labour (King, 2007). Grant (1997) indicates that “domestic workers constitute the largest single sector where women are employed in the labour market”.

This section explores the institution of domestic work, paying particular attention to how it has evolved from the apartheid to the democratic era. Domestic labour remains racialized (though to a much lesser extent than during the apartheid era), gendered, invisible, oppressive, exploitative, denigrated, silenced and fraught with hierarchical power relations between domestic workers and their employers, as will be seen in what follows.

Many South African authors illuminate the intersectional oppression of domestic workers mainly on the basis of race, gender, class and geographic location occasioned by apartheid, colonialism and capitalism (Fish, 2006; Gaitskell et al, 1983; Cock, 2011; du Plessis, 2011). This supports the irrelevance of the idea of a monolithic oppression of South African women. Domestic labour is undervalued because of its link to women’s unproductive work within the domestic sphere which takes place and is hidden behind closed doors in a site for ‘gendered domesticity’ (Gaitskell et al, 1983; Ally, 2011). To this effect, domestic work has been regarded as invisible and trivial and therefore “ignored and not counted in the statistics in the economic measures of the country’s productivity” (Cock, 2011: 132) because it is labour which is not exchanged with capital (Gaitskel et al, 1983). This has contributed towards the trivialization of domestic workers in South Africa. For this reason, the domestic workers’

needs have been and are still “ignored and their voices unheard” (Cock, 2011: 132). Moreover, Cock (2011) regards invisibility as a central tenet of racism.

The racial aspect was most prominent during the apartheid era, where mostly black female domestic workers were employed in white Afrikaaner households (Cock, 1989; Grant, 1997; Fish, 2011; Grossman, 2011; Gaitskell et al, 1983). However, some of the African middle-class households, who were in the minority at the time, also hired domestic workers (White, 1991). Most black domestic workers lived in servitude in Afrikaaners’ households, under oppressive, exploitative and abusive conditions especially during the apartheid era (Cock, 1989 and 2011; Grossman, 2011). Cock’s (1989) qualitative study of African domestic workers and their white employers in the Eastern Cape attests to this. As King (2007: 44) observes, hiring a domestic worker seems like purchasing her personhood, and implies purchasing her “personal qualities, acquiescence, and obedience together with their roles as confidantes, carer, nurturer being high on the list of the employer’s requirement [...] (and) a good servant is one who meets these requirements”. For many domestic labourers, their work entailed long hours of labour intensive, emotionally and physically draining and dehumanizing work for very low pay (Cock, 1989). This type of work is either done part-time or full-time, where full-time means either ‘live-in’- living within the employer’s household, or ‘live out’ – meaning at the end of the day domestic workers are released to go to their homes. Where maids are employed as live-in, as Anderson (2003: 105) and King (2007: 116) put it, they are considered ‘permanently available’ to work long hours. Cock (1989) states that women worked an average of 61 hours per week. However, this figure was disputed on the basis that it is deceiving as many of those who are live-in work up to 85 hours per week. Most of them start between 6h00 and 8h00 and finish between 18 and 22h00 with half an hour or 1 hour lunch in-between. Part-time maids were in the minority and only did

time-consuming chores, such as, cleaning, washing clothes, ironing and cooking. Cock's (1989) study shows that full-time paid domestic work includes household chores, such as, washing walls, cleaning and tidying the house, cleaning windows, laundry and ironing, cooking for household members and serving guests, as well as child care. For some this extends to washing cars, doing shopping, washing and walking dogs. This leaves most employers very little or nothing to do. Despite their hard work, there is much evidence that points to physical and emotional abuse inflicted by employers on their domestic workers, especially in Afrikaaner households (Cock, 1989; Phillips, 2011). Therefore much research on domestic work has been undertaken to give these silenced domestic workers a voice as well as to expose the conditions to which they worked (Grossman, 2011).

There is also a class aspect to the relationship between the female employer and the domestic worker. Domestic work involves hierarchical and asymmetrical power relationships between domestic workers and their female employers irrespective of the race of the employer (Grossman, 2011). In this sort of relationship, because of the individualized nature of the employment contract, the employer wields greater power over the domestic worker by dictating and imposing on them (Cock, 1989; Gaitskel et al, 1983).

Given the fact that domestic work takes place in a private realm of intimacy and intimate relations, where enduring, nurturing, caring, loving relationships occur (Nelson, 1990; Anderson, 2003; du Plessis, 2011), one would expect the family to be an ideal place for anyone to work in. However, as seen above, this is far from being the case for domestic workers; domestic labour involves a lot of emotional labour as will be seen in what follows. As Ally (2011) rightly notes, within this space love and humiliation, intimacy and estrangement coexist. As Cock (1989) puts it, this realm involves intimate contact with the

employer. However, domestic workers are also expected to withstand emotional abuse and outbursts by their employers.

Importantly, Phillips (2011) and Cock (1989: 43) show that these domestic workers are “victims of disrupted family life”. Phillips’s (2011) study of elderly women who worked in ‘Afrikaners’ (white) households as live-in domestic workers during apartheid shows that live-in domestic workers devote a lot of time to their work, as though they have neither a life of their own nor any family responsibility, when in fact Cock’s (1989) study shows the average household size of domestic workers was 6.7 persons and in over half the sample the domestic worker is the sole breadwinner (Cock, 1989; Phillips, 2011). Despite this, they are given very little time off and in this way deprived of social as well as family life. Phillips (2011) shows that these domestic workers, during apartheid in Afrikaaner households, were neither allowed to live with their children, nor have visits from (or visit) their husbands or partners, especially at night with an intention to sleepover. This was illegal to a point where if men were found in the domestic workers’ rooms at night, they were arrested (Phillips, 2011). Cock (1989) shows that even where visits were permitted they were strictly controlled. This made it difficult for domestic workers to sustain relationships and friendships and also meant domestic workers were separated from their children.

Literature shows that democracy did not make much difference for domestic workers (King, 2007; Cock, 2011; Du Plessis, 2011; Phillips, 2011). A decade and a half after Cock’s (1989) study, King (2007) conducted a qualitative study that built on Cock’s (1989) to compare the relations between the ‘new black middle class’ and Afrikaaner employers and their domestic workers. The study demonstrated the exploitative nature of domestic labour irrespective of the race of the employer, especially in terms of work intensity and the length of work hours (King, 2007). As black women’s employment in high positions increased, the burden of

household labour and child-care was shifted to the domestic workers by the employers who were referred to as ‘black madams’ (Du Plessis, 2011) or ‘new madams’ (Phillips, 2011).

To this effect it is argued that apartheid, especially in relation to paid domestic labour, has not yet passed. Against all odds domestic workers had managed to organize collectively even before the end of apartheid (Gaitskell et al, 1983), to challenge their employers and other systems, such as the state, that continue to marginalize them. The inception of democracy in South Africa brought along with it the promulgation of policies that are relevant for the improvement of domestic workers’ conditions; the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 regulated on the employment contract and the Domestic Workers Sectoral Determination of 2002, which set minimum wage and conditions of employment specifically for domestic workers. However, although this marks a watershed for domestic labourers, the legislation is limited and therefore does not translate into any real qualitative change for domestic workers. It only provides for minimum standards which fall short of the protection of domestic workers. Most authors highlight the unintended outcomes resulting from various pieces of legislation, some of which seems to have added to the plight of domestic workers, rather than improving their conditions. For instance, Grossman (2011) decries the fact that the legislation perpetuates the status quo and therefore reproduces the problem. He alludes to the following: South African “society is so patriarchal, the division of labour is so hierarchical and gendered, that even if the law were extended and enforced, domestic workers and their work would remain denigrated and devalued” (Grossman, 2011: 135). Secondly, “laws and practices establish a hierarchy of rights and hierarchy of persons [...] (which) places the employer and her rights above the domestic worker and her rights” (Grossman, 2011: 135-6).

To sum up, the literature shows us the incongruence in the pace of change in social relations within private households and the public process of democratization (Fish, 2006). Domestic workers are far from accessing their democratic rights. It also demonstrates the huge sacrifices domestic workers make for a very low price. Firstly, these women put their lives on hold in order to free other women of their feminine role as wives and mothers; this implies disruptions in their personal relations as human, social and sexual beings and as mothers. Secondly, the separation of domestic workers from their families, especially children, suggests the disruption of the mother-child bond, which may lead to long-lasting consequences for the children. Thirdly, the nature of domestic work is deeply embedded in relationships involving a large amount of emotional work, where domestic workers are expected to endure emotional trauma while concealing their emotions.

In the next section I look at fatherhood in order to complete the picture of parenthood.

### **Part 111: Fatherhood and Masculinities**

In this section I look at how masculinities and fatherhood have been theorised. I also explore fatherhood in the South African context.

Fatherhood cannot be fully understood without looking into its major aspects and influences – masculinities and manhood. Masculinity is an important aspect of manhood and fatherhood in South Africa, but studies rarely bring out the interconnection between them. Upon scrutinizing studies that follow, one can determine that masculinity informs how men as fathers should behave. Men and fathers are often expected to be brave, hard, strong, authoritarian, have sexual prowess (especially in South Africa), be in control, protect and provide for their families and so on (Connell, 1995; Epstein, 1998; Morrell, 2001; Hunter, 2006; Reeser, 2010).

Like femininity, masculinity is considered to be natural. However, its naturalness has been problematized through comparisons within and across cultures and seeing variations in the forms of masculinity from one context to another; masculinities are perceived as multiple, diverse, fragile, temporal and fluid (Dowd 2000; White 1991; Morrell, 2001; Reeser, 2010). Based on this, researchers conclude that masculinity, as is the case with femininity, is not at all a given but socially and historically constructed and fluid (Connell, 1995; Epstein, 1998; Morrell, 2001, Reeser, 2010).

Various areas or aspects of masculinities such as masculinities and race, class and ethnicity; acquisition of masculinities in elementary/primary; schools, through undergoing pubertal rites in initiations schools and payment of *'ilobolo'*; have been researched in South Africa, however, this study focuses on those areas that are relevant towards the making of the African father such as male pubertal rites, *'ilobolo'* and migratory labour. Much of the literature on fatherhood demonstrates that the construction of masculinities differs along intersectional lines of class, race (blacks and whites), and to a certain extent ethnic lines (among different African groups – Sothos, Vendas, Tsongas, Xhosas, Zulus) as will be seen in what follows. The first difference is in the way in which masculinities are constructed and enacted in terms of race and class, as elaborated by Morrell (1998) and Epstein (1998). Morrell's and Epstein's theoretical studies point to the commonality between black and white masculinities being their power over women, but, Morrell (1998) notes, this does not make them equal. Epstein (1998) shows that white dominance and power are predicated upon the subordination of black men and women. The racial differences in masculinities can also be explained through Connell's (1995) hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities to illustrate the unequal power relations within and between various individuals or groups. He describes hegemonic masculinity as one that is dominant and marginalizes other forms of masculinities

and renders them invisible. Epstein (1998), in the South African context shows how racialized masculinities were performed during the apartheid era with one version of masculinity becoming hegemonic and dominating the non-hegemonic, in this case black men and women, thereby prescribing male behaviour. White hegemonic masculinity has been dominant and as Reeser (2010) puts it, this may be attributed to the fact that white men owned most of the wealth of the country and held powerful structural positions.

The second difference in the way masculinities are constructed and performed, in South Africa, includes the intersection of race and class. Epstein (1998) shows that the difference in the construction of masculinities within each group has, to a large extent, been attributed to apartheid, which created divisions and fragmentation within and between South Africans, for instance, divisions between the rich and the poor, blacks and whites, and among blacks, as well as amongst whites.

The fluidity of masculinities is demonstrated as society undergoes transformation be it political, developmental and/or economic. Epstein (1998) points out that those masculinities constructed during the apartheid era have undergone transformation following the emergence of the 'new black middle-class' and the accompanying changing material realities, especially among African men, in the post-apartheid era.

In this study, I go beyond race and class to include ethnicity and geographical location in considering how masculinities are constructed in South Africa. The apartheid regime created a fragmentation amongst Africans themselves with its ideology of '*bantustans*', where Africans were divided geographically into their ethnic groups as a way of creating divisions among them, restricting their mobility to their allocated areas, and limiting free movement from one place to another. Although in some areas African ethnic groups had common cultural practices, some also had distinct practices. In this study I seek to bring forth the

cultural practices that are prevalent in the province where my study took place and that construct fatherhood in a specific way.

Reeser's (2010) view that groups that fall under the category of hegemonic masculinity are those in high income groups and those who hold powerful positions does not always hold water particularly if we look at how masculinities are constructed among Africans in South Africa. Here hegemonic masculinity is not necessarily linked to economic advantage, but rather is acquired differently and informed by the social or cultural environment. Non-hegemonic masculinities are presented in three forms namely, subordinate, complicit and marginalized, and are said to be those that operate outside power zones (Connell, 1995). According to Ruxton (2004), non-hegemonic masculinities relate to minority groups, such as men in lower income groups or unemployed, racial, ethnic and religious minorities and gay men. Again it can be argued that there are marginalized and complicit masculinities as well as hegemonic masculinities within a group of the same race, class, ethnic group and of the same sexual orientation, raising the issue of intersectionality within masculinities, as discussed in the next section. The group referred to above, is from the same race, economic class and yet it is comprised of both hegemonic and marginalized/complicit masculinities.

Masculinities are portrayed as harmful to those who identify with them. Pittman (1993) points to hegemonic masculinities as toxic, because of the way they hurt men and demonstrates that some die in their quest to achieve it, as will be seen in the discussion of pubertal rites below. He points to the evidence of high death rates among men through homicide, suicide, accidents, lung cancer, liver cirrhosis and other causes while trying to live up to hegemonic masculinities. Several studies demonstrate that hegemonic masculinities are difficult to live up to and this inability poses serious limitations to men. In a similar vein, marginalized and complicit masculinities are perceived as equally dangerous and harmful.

Dowd (2000) for example, argues that some men tend to get frustrated and aggressive when they are unable to fulfil their provider role and especially when their role is taken over by their wives. In this context escalating and chronic unemployment has “impeded men from fulfilling their roles as providers accorded to them by cultural ideals and risked alienating them from the familial care nexus” (Bray et al, 2010: 49). This has also been noted by Campbell, 1990; Hunter, 2006. This may make them feel inadequate and they may respond by asserting power by means of emotional, psychological or physical violence (Dowd, 2000). Similarly, Ruxton (2004) argues that men in subordinate groups may be angered by the fact that they do not benefit from the patriarchal dividend to which they feel they are entitled and may direct their anger and frustration towards other groups nearer to them that lack power such as women and children.

Theorizations also often present masculinity as antithetical to femininity. Dowd (2000) points to the fact that masculinity devalues and stigmatizes what is labelled feminine in such a way that men are blocked from learning what is considered to be feminine roles from female role models. This is strongly endorsed by Mavundla et al’s (2010) and Vincent’s (2010) studies, as will be seen below. For example, these authors note that nurture and care are considered feminine and therefore unmanly. Also noteworthy, is Dowd’s (2000) assertion of men as homophobic. She points out that men’s reluctance to engage with their nurturing side relates to the fear of being misinterpreted as gay and thereby putting their masculinity at risk. Coming to the issue of homosexuality, Dowd (2000) shows the existence of gay families and parenting as providing evidence of men’s capacity to nurture. Ruxton (2004) contends that conformity to such restrictive definitions of masculinity lead to poor health, aggression, overwork, lack of emotional responsiveness, risk-taking behaviour and disengaged fatherhood. Dowd (2000) envisages a redefined fatherhood organized around

nurturing activities. She suggests that men should release the ‘toxic masculinity’ by rejecting “any construction of fatherhood as an independent relationship unconnected to men’s relationships with children’s mothers, or children’s reactions or consequences as a result of those relationships”, since it leaves them ‘emotionally impoverished’ and therefore unable to bond with their children and other family members (Dowd, 2000: 185). She also recommends the replacement of distant provision, protection and authoritarian and disciplinarian roles with care-giving, intimate and emotionally involved fathering roles.

The construction of masculinities in South Africa shares similarities with, but also differs from the Western context. As mentioned above, the way in which manhood is constituted and acquired is far from homogeneous but differs along class, race, and ethnic lines or their intersection, in South Africa. First, the acquisition of masculine identities follows different patterns for blacks as compared to whites. Here I focus on black masculinities. The literature shows that boys start to acquire misogynist attitudes at a very early age. Bhana’s (2005) ethnographic study on primary school boys aged between 6 and 10 in KwaZulu-Natal Province shows that the construction, negotiation and acquisition of masculine identities begins as early as the age of 6. She observed that boys acquire misogynist and aggressive kinds of masculinities drawn from ‘*tsotsi*’ (thug) images, and these co-exist with non-hegemonic, subordinate and marginalised masculinities referred to as ‘*imvu*’ (sheep) which denotes quiet, harmless and passive masculinities. This highlights the co-existence of multiple masculinities within one cultural or institutional setting. Bhana (2005) also draws attention to the fluidity of hegemonic masculinity, for example how it changes according to context, for instance in class, in the sports field, among other boys as well as among girls. This is demonstrated in the different ways masculinity is performed by school boys in different settings. Masculinities are predicated upon misogynist attitudes, power and control

over other groups who lack power, for example, girls. Boys expressed the desire to exercise control over girls by being violent to those who refuse to obey them. Similarly, these boys also displayed their power by bullying boys who lacked power. The effect of the early acquisition of masculinities cannot be underestimated as it forms a basis upon which unequal power in gender relations as well as how manhood and fatherhood are enacted in the South African context.

### ***Influence of Culture and Migrant Labour on Fatherhood***

Having discussed the early acquisition of masculinities among young boys, I will move further to determine how teenage boys acquire masculine identity in preparation for manhood and fatherhood. Given the various ways through which masculinities are acquired in different ethnic groups, I give attention mainly to those that are specific to my study area. Fatherhood, especially in my research context, can be attributed to 3 major factors: cultural practices known as the ‘pubertal initiation rite’, ‘lobola’ (bride-price) and migratory employment. These three factors have to a large extent influenced and shaped fatherhood and the division of labour as well as gender relations in South Africa. In what follows I examine how these three factors influence fatherhood.

#### **Pubertal Rites**

The literature suggests that the adolescent or teenage stage is the most critical time for the acquisition of masculinity. Various qualitative studies from different locations demonstrate the diverse ways in which manhood can be achieved. For some ethnic groups, the achievement of the status of manhood is embedded in the cultural practices of a particular group. In some groups, as soon as one reaches the stage of manhood, he is automatically expected to be ready to take on the fatherhood role, whereas in others, manhood is not simply

reached through physical growth and maturity but also by undergoing certain cultural processes unique to (a) particular ethnic group/s. Morrell's (2006) and Hunter's (2004) studies, based in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province, associate the achievement of manhood with physical and mental maturity, readiness to pay '*ilobolo*', and then, through marriage, dis-embedding from one's father's house to build one's own (Hunter, 2004 and 2006). However, Hunter (2004) allude to the fact that boys must have acquired some skills and ideas on establishing and managing (multiple, concurrent) intimate heterosexual relationships and sexual prowess, from peers and male relatives other than the father, before they can be considered as real men. In addition, in Xhosa and Zulu cultures the acquisition of fighting skills and bravery are essential expressions of manliness (Hunter, 2004).

However, for some ethnic groups, such as the ba-Sotho (North and South), ba-Tsonga, vha-Venda in the Limpopo Province as well as ama-Xhosa in the East and Western Cape, the acquisition of manhood is highly complex and requires boys to undergo pubertal rites. These provinces share two major cultural practices, 'pubertal' rites and '*ilobolo*', as well as a migratory labour history (the latter two are also shared with the Zulu culture), however, they have a different history and language and they are located in two opposite corners of South Africa.

Pubertal rites include attending an initiation school which involves seclusion for a period of over a month, being taught the issues of manhood and being circumcised. Initiation schools are regarded as powerful agents of socialization. In the provinces mentioned, pubertal rites play an integral role in preparing boys for manhood and fatherhood and form powerful sites for constructing and acquiring, hegemonic, masculine identities. Mavundla et al's' (2010) and Vincent's (2010) qualitative studies conducted in the Eastern Cape elaborate on the meaning and process of this cultural practice. Pubertal rites according to Mavundla et al

(2010: 1) are a “prolonged ceremony during which the transition to manhood is achieved”. They are considered as the only route to manhood in areas where they are practiced (Milubi, 2001; Lesejane, 2006; Vincent, 2008; Mavundla et al, 2010). Upon completion of the initiation process, a boy achieves the status of a man. The literature shows that this cultural practice is still prevalent in all the groups mentioned, for instance, it is estimated that 10,000 men are circumcised annually among one of the groups (Vincent, 2008). These groups believe that men need to be hardened to achieve the status of manhood and the transition to manhood is associated with bravery and the endurance of pain. It is for this reason that some of the main features of the ritual are severe pain and suffering through the process of circumcision, exposure to extreme hypothermic conditions as initiates are forced to sleep without blankets during winter, bathing in ice-cold water and severe beatings for trivial offences (Vincent, 2010; Mavundla et al, 2010).

As pointed out by Mavundla et al (2010) initiation schools, even though they have been a highly contentious issue in South Africa because of their life-threatening nature, are defended, especially by traditional leaders in rural societies. These groups place a high value on initiation to manhood, to a point where those who do not comply are stigmatized, marginalized and ostracized from the responsibilities and privileges of manhood (Lesejane, 2006; Mavundla et al, 2010). The belief is that those who have not gone through the initiation will remain boys (even grown and old men) and they are marginalized, treated with disrespect and publicly ridiculed by those who have undergone the ritual, especially in the Eastern Cape (Vincent, 2010; Mavundla et al, 2010). According to these groups a ‘real man’ is one who has undergone initiation and he is attributed power, authority, high esteem and social standing, as well as decision-making powers at the level of family, community, as well as on a personal level in terms of intimate and peer relationships. The privilege and esteem

associated with the achievement of manhood in this context makes every African man desire and strive to undergo this cultural practice.

Ironically, in many cases, instead of gaining manhood, some men end up emasculated. For many years this practice has attracted media attention because of the high rate of botched circumcisions which lead either to death or penile amputation for several initiates per annum as a result of gangrene (Vincent, 2010; Mavundla et al, 2010). This has not decreased the rate at which this ritual is practiced; however, there has been an increase of young boys and men resorting to clinics, doctor's surgeries and hospitals in most provinces. This supports Pittman's (1993) notion of toxic masculinities. Of concern here is the outcome of this ritual process. For instance, what kind of father or husband results from this ritual? Could it be part of the explanation for the high levels of domestic violence and violence against women and children by these men? It is possible that this is a strong basis for the formation of gender relations, in some areas, including my research area.

### ***Lobola***

The second cultural practice I look at is "*ilobolo*", which means payment of 'bride-price' or bride-wealth. This customary practice, as Kalule-Sabiti et al (2007) and Frahm-Arp (2010), suggest, is deeply entrenched in African societies. Not only does bride-price ensure the commitment of the bride and groom but also that of the two families concerned, thereby ensuring the longevity of the marriage (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007). It is important to note that '*ilobolo*' has a significant effect on gender relations and the gendered division of domestic labour as will be seen in what follows. '*ilobolo*' is still widely practiced not only in South Africa but also in other African countries (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010). The process of marriage in South Africa, as in several other African countries, is lengthy starting

from *'ilobolo'* negotiations and culminating in civil marriage. *'Ilobolo'* involves the transference of a woman from her father to her husband's lineage (Mvududu, 2002; Hunter 2004 and 2006; Madhavan et al, 2008; Hosegood et al, 2009). For instance, Hosegood et al (2009: 17) illuminates that "most Zulu families place great value on patrilineal descent legitimized by brides-wealth and marriage".

Historically, *'ilobolo'* entails a gift in the form of cattle (each of which had meaning) by the groom's family to the bride-to-be's family (Mvududu, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010). According to Kalule-Sabiti et al (2007: 89) it is a "symbol of appreciation by the groom's family for having nurtured their son's future wife". However, the onset of industrialization has led to its transmutation to a commercialized practice which involves (a) financial transaction/s (Mvududu, 2002; Hunter, 2006; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010), where bridegrooms are expected to pay exorbitant amount/s of money. This way this cultural practice has lost its meaning and is now often interpreted as the buying and selling of goods, in this case, a woman, whose educational qualifications determines her price. Families negotiate for higher prices on the basis of the woman's level of education with large sums of money being charged to grooms' families (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010).

Although the cultural practice of *'ilobolo'* slightly differs in its application from one African country to another, the common purpose is that of the payment for the bride-to-be in order to establish a relationship between the two extended families. The negotiations are conducted by male relatives from both families and the bride and her mother have no say in the discussions of *'ilobolo'* (Mvududu, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007). In all these countries it involves a series of negotiations regarding the payment, as well as ceremonies; including the acceptance of bride-groom by the bride's family and the bride in the bride-grooms' family as well as the

exchange of gifts between the two families. Moreover, meanings of these ceremonies may differ not only from one country to another, but also along ethnic lines, in that, each country/ethnic group may observe one to all of these ceremonial practices, which may be spread over months to a year, before the formal wedding (Mvududu, 2002; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Frahm-Arp, 2010).

*'Ilobolo'* has serious implication Mvududu's (2002) study was conducted in seven African countries five of which, share a border and share similar *'ilobolo'* practices with South Africa – Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Mozambique (Mvududu, 2002). Kalule-Sabiti et al (2007) is a national and Hunter (2004 and 2006) and Frahm-Arp (2010) small-scale studies conducted in South Africa. These studies raise similar concerns and gender issues associated with the practice of *'ilobolo'*. First, it is argued that it legitimizes or confers to men the right to exercise power and control over women, thereby endorsing gendered power imbalances. For instance, through this customary practice, the husband is conferred the position of the head of the family and therefore holds decision making power in all family matters, undermining women's position in families and society (Mvududu, 2002; Hunter, 2006). Secondly, *'ilobolo'* has serious implications for the reproductive rights of a woman. For instance, payment of *'ilobolo'* means the transfer of woman's reproductive capacity to the man's family (Mvududu, 2002; Hunter, 2004 and 2006). This way, a woman's fertility is highly valued for family continuity and kinship relations, as mentioned in the first section of this chapter (Mvududu, 2002; Lesejane, 2008; Hunter, 2004; Hosegood et al, 2009; Lesejane, 2006). If children are born in the marriage they are considered to be her husband's children and failure to procreate is blamed on the wife (Mvududu, 2002; Hunter, 2006). In especially rural parts of South Africa the wife is given the responsibility of finding replacement, in many cases her sister, or the husband's

family is liable to a refund (Hunter, 2006). In such cases the fact that a man might be the one having fertility problems is never considered. In the case of replacement it means the marriage becomes polygamous.

Studies on attitudes and perceptions towards '*ilobolo*' show a mixture of views. Studies conducted in urban and rural parts of South Africa yielded different results, which can be categorized under 'traditional' and 'modern' views. White's (1991) study conducted at Johannesburg, an urban area, among women, shows more modern views, in that most interviewees in this study thought that paying '*ilobolo*' is associated with the buying and selling and the treatment of women as possessions by their husbands, on the other hand, Walker's (1993) study in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province also showed a conservative-modern division of views among female semi-skilled workers and university students. The university students felt that the payment of '*ilobolo*' entitles men to control and exercise power over women while the semi-skilled workers were in favour of '*ilobolo*', while acknowledging that it may lead to the control of and violence against women. Furthermore, most students and some of the semi-skilled workers thought that the payment of '*ilobolo*' raised the expectation that women should be faithful, while it is acceptable for the man to engage in multi-sexual relations which was considered to be unfair. This can be linked to what Vincent (2010) and Mavundla et al (2010) say about male circumcision, that it permits men to engage in multi-sexual relationships. Despite this, the study highlights the fact that most of the semi-skilled women are of the view that '*ilobolo*' provides them with assurance in terms of self-worth, they feel valued and respected when '*ilobolo*' has been paid for them. This is contrary to White's (1991) study where women felt that this practice makes them feel like a possession.

These two studies suggest differences of opinion relating to urban and rural areas and levels of education with those in urban areas and who have higher levels of education taking more progressive views.

### ***Migrant Labour***

Digging deeper into the literature, to explore the cultural specificity of fatherhood in my study area, I identified migrant labour as yet another integral factor which seems to have hugely influenced parenting, especially fathering practices in most of South Africa. Migrant labour started in the early nineteenth century and continues to date (Rabe, 2006). Before that most Africans were living a self-sufficient, subsistence lifestyle and enjoyed abundant land ownership. When the apartheid regime came into power it usurped and restricted Africans' right to land ownership through the Native Lands Act of 1913, this way ensuring that Africans live under poor conditions in remote rural homelands (Hunter, 2006; Rabe, 2006; Townsend et al, 2006). In addition, through racial segregation policies (Separate Development Act) Africans were removed and kept far from sites of production (big cities), which whites gave to themselves, Africans' mobility was restricted and they were confined to the homelands. At the same time, the state imposed taxes on black people, this forced African fathers to leave their families in search of work (to pay taxes) which, at the time, was only obtainable in the mines which were usually far away from their rural homes. However, there is much evidence that even women migrated to cities to look for work as maids in white people's, especially 'Afrikaners', homes (Ramphela and Ritcher, 2006; Madhavan et al, 2008; Townsend et al, 2006; Swartz and Bhana, 2009). Labour migration was the only legal means of departure from the homelands (Hosegood et al, 2009). Homelands can therefore be seen as resource of cheap labour for the mines and industrial sectors. Hosegood et al (2009:

4) reports that “despite political transformation male and female labour migration and family dispersal persists”. For instance, currently labour migration forms a significant part of migration (40.4%) in the province under study (Kirsten, 2002; Townsend et al, 2006). This province is one of those hugely affected by migrant labour, and is among the areas worst affected by poverty; Madhavan et al (2008) highlights that people engage in labour migration because of economic insecurity and unemployment. Gauteng seems to be the preferred migrant labour destination for fathers in this province (Kirsten et al, 2002) compared to other areas, which also favoured Cape Town (Hunter, 2006; Ramphele and Richter, 2006).

Here I review literature in available studies on commonalities and differences in the experience of fathers and those who are fathered by migrant fathers from various provinces. The first study I look at is Rabe’s (2006) which was conducted on the experiences of fathers from various provinces and African countries, at the Johannesburg mineshaft. However, this study does not disaggregate the experiences of these fathers according to their places of origin. The second is Posel and Devey’s (2006) study which draws from household survey data for the period 1993 to 2002 to explore how many children in South Africa live without a father. The third is Ramphele’s and Richter (2006) study among 16 African youths whose families were originally from the Eastern Cape but were reunited with their fathers as soon as the apartheid racial segregation laws were relaxed. These families settled in Crossroads squatter camp, in Cape Town. The fourth is Swartz and Bhana’s (2009) study on teenage and young adult fathers of Cape Town and Kwa-Zulu Natal. The fifth is Townsend et al (2009) and Hosegood’et al’s (2009) ethnographic studies, in the Province under study. All of these are qualitative studies.

As is the case for motherhood, intersectionality is important in understanding fatherhood in South Africa. Migrant labour is relevant for racial, ethnic and urban/rural differences in the

way fatherhood is experienced; not only do South African men experience fatherhood differently from their Western counterparts, but there are differences between and within the various racial ethnic, urban and rural groups within the country.

First, the literature shows that migrant labour contracts on the part of black fathers contribute to the racial difference in the experience of fathering and to the way fatherhood and gender relations are shaped and practised (Morrell, 2006). Among African fathers, the difference in their experience of fathering is also attributed to the urban-rural divide. For instance, African fathers were forced to migrate from the rural to urban areas in search of work, mainly in the mines, leaving their families behind. They were barred from bringing their families with them. This means African white and urban-based fathers experience fathering differently from rural fathers, since urban and white fathers have the privilege of living with their families. The province in my study falls into the rural category. The migrant labour system has played a crucial role in the disruption and fragmentation of African, especially rural, family life, for all provinces concerned (Townsend et al, 2006; Vlaenderen and Cakwe, 2003; Ramphele and Richter (2006). For instance, migratory labour has been deemed responsible for gendered parenting roles and the invisibility of fathers in family life in the sense that it has pushed them into distant fathering and mothers into lone parenting without their husbands (Townsend et al, 2006). Thirdly, most rural fathers were accommodated in same sex-hostels, to prevent them bringing their families to settle near the mines and were only allowed annual visits to their families (Kirsten, 2002; Ramphele and Richter, 2006; Posel and Devey, 2006). This played a major role in the disruption of family life and intimacy culminating in the abandonment of families. As Kirsten (2002), Townsend et al (2006), Rabe (2006) and Ramphele and Richter (2006) assert, rural families began to see less and less of fathers, as fathers began to develop relationships and had children with urban women.

Several studies show that African children are the mostly likely to live without a father not only because of the migrant labour system, but also because of desertion and occasional contact (Posel and Devey, 2006; Ramphele and Richter, 2006; Swartz and Bhana, 2009, Townsend, 2009). For instance, Le Roux (1994 cited in Wilson, 2006: 27) found that only 34% of African families with children under the age of 19 consisted of both parents as compared to 87% of white and Indian. Posel and Devey (2006) study found that 45.8% of all children below the age of 15 lived without a father, 50.2% of African children below the age of 15 live without fathers, and 55% of children in rural areas lived without a father. Similarly, Swartz and Bhana's (2009) study conducted in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Cape Town indicate that nearly two thirds of their respondents grew up without fathers in their households. Townsend et al (2006) in the area in my study found that an average of 20% of children under the age of 21 lived with their fathers while Hosegood et al's (2009) study of children below 5 years found that 34% of children lived with their fathers compared to 97% who lived with their mothers. Studies show the high prevalence of children living without fathers in all the provinces studied.

The disruption of rural family life has led to some of the major problems outlined by Morrell (2006) and Ramphele and Richter (2006): a fragmented social structure caused by the removal of the black male adult population from their homes and communities; the domestic instability brought about by men who have abandoned their homes, stopped sending income home, divorce and social dislocation; men's involvement in multi-sexual relations - "an urban woman to satisfy immediate sexual needs and the rural wife to keep the home stable" (Ramphele and Richter, 2006: 73).

It is also important to note that working in the mines for men, as Morrell (2006: 4) puts it, was "physically hard and the environment was brutal; it produced men who were inured to

pain, hardship and violence”. This links with what teenage boys go through in the initiation schools – the brutal beatings and exposure to hypothermic conditions. We should consider the impact this exposure to brutality has on the type of fathers and on unequal gender relations, especially between the mother and the father, in South Africa.

Upon the achievement of democracy in South Africa, the migrant labour situation began to improve, in the sense that fathers could travel home more frequently, quarterly and in some cases on monthly basis, and wives were allowed visits to the mines. According to Rabe (2006), fathers who are currently working in the mines, see themselves as better fathers than their own fathers; they are more involved and have closer relationships with their children.

### ***Is Fatherhood Changing?***

Theories of fatherhood provide in-depth explications of how men acquire misogynist attitudes, which militate against involved fathering. With the change and improvement in women’s social and employment status and positions and their increased contribution to household income, the normative expectations and attitudes around fathering, have experienced a shift. In this section I explore the extent to which attitudes and practices around fathering are changing.

Several researchers, in the West had extolled the emergence of ‘new fathers’ who were described as being as capable as mothers and more nurturing and emotionally involved than their fathers, and sharing childcare and house-chores with their wives. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, literature in North America and the United Kingdom claimed that gender-roles were becoming egalitarian. Mead (1967: 36) lauded the arrival of ‘new’ and ‘involved fathers’ who “share very fully with mothers in the care of babies and little children”. In the same vein, a national study by Young and Wilmott (1973) in the United Kingdom,

proclaimed the increased participation of fathers in childcare and house-chores; they found that the majority (72%) of husbands participated in house-chores and child-care but that husbands' participation in household-chores varied according to class with middle-class men participating less than working-class men. However, they acknowledged that domestic gender roles were still segregated, (Young and Wilmott, 1973). The media carried images of 'new fathers' who shared child-caring and house-chores with their wives (Wall and Arnold, 2007).

However, the belief that nurturing fatherhood is replacing the distant-breadwinner male role was subsequently contested by many authors. For instance, many American authors, for instance, LaRossa (1988), Dowd (2000), Wall and Arnold (2007) and Williams (2008), point out, that "the parenting practices have not kept pace with the change in attitudes and normative expectations" (LaRossa, 1988: 452). The shift in normative expectations came with the assumption that, following women's movement into the labour market and the second-wave feminist movement, men's movement into involved fathering would be inevitable and male authority would slowly be eroded (LaRossa 1988; Wall and Arnold, 2007; Williams, 2008). To this effect many authors examine this 'new man' against actual conduct, to determine whether involved fathering is in fact a lived experience (LaRossa, 1988; Williams, 2008; Wall and Arnold, 2007). LaRossa (1988), Wall and Arnold (2007) and Williams (2008), despite the decade of difference between the first and the last two articles share the view that "theoretical formulation runs ahead of conduct" and that a new man has more to do with "hope than reality" (LaRossa, 1988: 452).

A small-scale qualitative study on the domestic division of labour among men and women conducted in the UK yielded more or less similar results as Larossa (1988) in terms of the gendered and asymmetrical practice of domestic labour (Baxter, 2002). First, like Larossa

(1988), this author shows men's slight involvement in domestic work, as compared to women. However, he demonstrates that husbands tend to do mainly traditional outdoor activities which are concerned with household maintenance, home improvement and car maintenance, the kinds of tasks that do not need to be done frequently and on a daily basis. Second, a significant number of households outsource some of the duties which are supposed to be done by men, such as gardening, and home maintenance/repairs. This further reduces men's household tasks and leaves them with even less to do. LaRossa (1988) and (Baxter, 2002) acknowledge that fathers are spending more time with children compared to fathers in the 1950s to 1970s who occupied a distant breadwinning role but, despite this, fathers still do only a fraction of what mothers do in terms of child care. LaRossa (1988: 452), Wall and Arnold (2007) and Williams (2008) attribute this to various complex reasons some of which are, policy short-comings, workplace culture, and the wage gap between men and women that discourage men from taking on parenting responsibilities coupled with the persistent cultural expectation that fathers have greater breadwinning responsibilities.

Wall and Arnold (2007) suggest that to "transform child-rearing into shared work among equals requires change at the level of policy, ideology and actual paternal behaviour and each of these reinforce the other" (Hays, 1996 cited in Wall and Arnold, 2007: 523). Williams (2008: 490) notes that the "cultural stereotypes, like the breadwinning role, continue to hold men back from playing more active roles, notably in what are regarded as traditional mothering activities".

Similarly, there are various bodies of evidence that suggest changing attitudes towards gender equality in South Africa. But are these translated into practice? There are several initiatives and activities relating to gender awareness-raising among men in South Africa which began in the second-half of the 1990s. Several awareness raising projects, programmes and

campaigns by the Commission on Gender Equality, the Government's Office of the Status of Women in collaboration with men's movements and the civil society organizations challenge traditional ideas and practices of fatherhood (Daphne, 1998; Morrell, 2006; Peacock and Botha, 2006). Daphne (1998: 24) highlights the existence of a national gender awareness raising project, a non-governmental organization, the Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET) for men and women, which started in 1996, and was run across all provinces. It aimed to raise awareness gender awareness and establishing steps towards conscientization of men as a way of undoing the harm brought about by sexism. Peacock and Botha (2006) mention the emergence of men's movements throughout the provinces (such as South African Men's Forum and provincial subsidiaries) which have committed themselves to the promotion of gender equality.

Several small scale studies on young fathers in South Africa show a shift from traditional towards modern fatherhood. First, Peacock and Botha (2006: 285) agree that "there are signs that many young fathers are rejecting notions of fatherhood and manhood that have for many years put them in a box and dictated how they should be real men". Similarly, a huge research and publication project on fathers has been started by the Human Science Research Council and edited by Morrell (2006), some of which forms literature for my study. Morrell (2006) indicates that in a national survey with young men aged between 18 and 32, the majority expressed the desire to be involved fathers. In the same vein, Sathiparsad et al's (2008) and Swartz and Bhana's (2009) studies in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, among black and coloured teenage fathers supported Morrell's findings; teen-fathers described 'traditional' fathering as absent, financial (those who provide financially but are emotionally uninvolved in their children's lives) and angry fathering, which is practised by their own fathers (Swartz and Bhana, 2009). Sathiparsad et al (2008: 12) demonstrate a

paradox as they show that “alongside dominant construction of manhood, teenage boys distanced themselves from the patriarchal values and practices” and portrayed themselves as helpers of their mothers alongside their sisters. Although most still perceive a good father as ‘a provider’, contrary to their views about their own fathers, they described themselves as present and caring but strict fathers motivated by their experiences of living without fathers.

The shift in gender-role attitudes is not evident in relation to fathering practices. South African National and Regional Time Use Surveys (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006) show that fathering practices have not all been translated to practice. Fathers still do not participate in family responsibilities and only to a minimal extent in childcare; it is only young men and boys who have been shown to participate in certain household chores and not others, which suggests a generational difference in childcare and domestic labour participation by men.

#### **Part 1V: Explaining Changing Parenting Practices**

Various bodies of literature indicate a shift in gender-role attitudes over time. However, there are unevenness and complexities in such change across countries and cultures. These changes are contextual and are complicated by levels of development: educational, employment and economic levels, generational differences and other factors, as will be seen in what follows (Charles 2002; Inglehart and Norris, 2003; Swartz and Bhana, 2009). International studies by Inglehart and Norris (2003) and Inglehart and Baker (2000: 49) juxtapose “massive cultural change and persistence of distinctive traditional values”. They refute the thesis of ‘*convergence*’ of traditional and modern values as a result of modernization and economic development, and recognize the resilience of traditional values and beliefs which still, to a large extent, continue to influence cultural changes alongside

modern values, especially in agrarian and third world countries. Inglehart and Baker (2000) provide empirical evidence from 65 countries worldwide, of which South Africa is one, which demonstrates that values do change but still continue to reflect countries' cultural heritage. For instance, they show that the change in values is path dependent rather than linear as modernization purports it to be. According to Inglehart and Norris (2003) and Inglehart and Baker (2000: 49) modernization and economic development, tend to "push societies in common direction, but rather than converging, they seem to move on parallel trajectories shaped by their cultural heritages". This way, although modernization and economic development bring about pervasive changes in prevailing values and beliefs, there are traditional values and beliefs that persist. According to Inglehart and Baker (2000) South Africa and Nigeria show the least change. From the perspective of modernization the two countries are regarded as backward. Based on the above, they suggest revisions in modernization theory to take the above assertions into account. Inglehart and Norris (2003) used the same data to examine changes in gender role belief systems. Their findings are very closely related to those above. Basically these findings project different world-views between First-World and Third-World countries. Amongst their findings are: gender-role attitudes across countries vary according to a country's level of modernization and economic development, but are also path dependent. For instance, agrarian nations were found to be the most traditional in terms of gender-role attitude, while, industrial societies in the early stages of transition showed egalitarian alongside traditional views, and postindustrial societies were found to be the most egalitarian in their beliefs about the roles of women and men (Inglehart and Norris, 2003: 47). Secondly, they illustrate a substantial generation gap, which is coupled with a difference in terms of economic circumstances. For instance, they allude to the fact that in postindustrial societies, younger generations hold far more

egalitarian views than their parents and grandparents, whereas in poorer agrarian societies the generational difference was insignificant. In addition, the support for gender equality is stronger among those who are educated, secularized or less religious, and unmarried.

As seen in the previous section, the literature suggests changing attitudes towards gender equality in South Africa. However, these have not been translated into practice. Changing attitudes may be attributed to awareness campaigns initiatives by the government, Non-governmental and Community Based Organisations and independent bodies alluded to in the previous section. Secondly, the previous section also shows the changing perceptions and attitudes of young fathers which have been accompanied by a significant number of boys and young men participatory in household chores. The next section attempts to make sense of the lack of change with regards to father's familial roles.

### **Cultural lag**

The inability of employed mothers to find a balance between paid work and family may be attributed to a lack of congruence between the pace of change in the work-place, particularly women's improved positions, and the slow changing gender roles in the domestic sphere. In the previous sections we have seen how resilient are 'traditional' normative expectations, gender-role attitudes and domestic divisions of labour. However, in recent studies we are beginning to see a slight change in gender-role attitudes, with traditional views being expressed together with modern ones, especially among the younger generation.

Hochschild's (1990) work is useful in explaining such a position. In her American ethnographic study she demonstrates tension and friction caused by the incongruence between fast-changing women as they move into higher positions in the workplace, and the very slow pace of change in men's participation at household level as well as the unchanging

organizational culture. In this way, she reveals a disjuncture between beliefs and actual behavior. She refers to this as “stalled revolution”, which results in women struggling to reconcile the demands of employment and family responsibility. She identifies three types of gender strategies (a plan of action through which a person tries to solve problems at hand, given the cultural notions of gender at play) (1990: 15): the ‘traditional’ (breadwinner for men and homemaker for women) the ‘egalitarian’ and ‘transitional’ – which encompass different combinations of traditional and egalitarian patterns of work responsibilities. “A typical transitional man”, supports the idea of an employed wife but that the wife should also retain her primary-caring role (Hochschild, 1990: 16). She points out that most men and women in her study were transitional in that there were tremendous contradictions in what people said they believed and their actual practice. Some men said they subscribed to egalitarianism, whereas in practice they were ‘traditional’. The example she gives is that even though men and women both worked equal hours, women would be the ones to rush home to prepare dinner, while men go out for entertainment or sports; men also sleep longer hours and read newspapers more often, while the women do household chores. Thirdly, another contradiction was demonstrated in the beliefs of husbands and wives; fourthly, some dual-earning couples adopted egalitarian paid work, but maintained traditional patterns of work responsibilities at home. She therefore concludes that “more couples wanted to share and imagined that they did” (Hochschild, 1990: 20). However, she concludes that at this point in history few do share, hence declares that American society is currently in a state of ‘stalled revolution’. She argues that men and the workplace culture have not adjusted to the new reality (Hochschild, 1990).

Gershuny et al’s (1994) study questions the idea of the 'stalled revolution' and considers that it may be that adaptation is slow or gradual rather than stalled. They question the timing of

Hochschild's (1990) study since it was conducted in the early 1980s among people who might have been brought up during a period "when the traditional 'strategies' went virtually unquestioned. They posit that adaptation is a gradual process, and it might be that "most couples are at present only partially or imperfectly or incompletely adapted" (1994: 156), thus implying that Hochschild's (1990) conclusion might be premature. Gershuny et al's (1994: 183) study of the domestic division of labour shows that although the domestic division of labour is still asymmetrical, there is "regular, steady, and substantial growth in men's proportional contribution to unpaid work", implying that the "adaptation of the division of domestic labour, in short, lags behind the change in paid work patterns". Gershuny et al's (1994) study does not suggest that the gendered domestic division of labour is anywhere near symmetrical but merely indicates that, through comparison with an earlier study, there is an increase in men's participation in domestic labour while, on the other hand, employed women's participation is decreasing. They believe that eventually this increase will take us "some way towards an adaptive partnership conclusion" (1994: 179) and explains men's lower participation in unpaid housework through the idea that adaptation is gradual.

Although Hochschild (1990) used the term 'stalled revolution', her explanation does not mean that there is no change at all. The fact that she distinguishes between three gender strategies and places most of her participants under the 'transitional' gender strategy means that the pace of change is not the same in any one place. Given the uneven pace of change in South Africa, it is difficult to determine exactly where among the three strategies South African men can be placed. South African literature portrays African adult men as still 'traditional', teenage and young adult African men as transitional, and white men as 'transitional'.

## **Reconciling Work and Family**

Parenting includes providing for household members which means participating in paid employment and in the South African context, the provider role is not limited to the father (Campbell, 1990; Walker, 1996; Frahm-Arp, 2010). The literature shows that both mothers and fathers in African families have long been engaged in income generating activities – both formal and informal - but mothers constitute the majority of those involved in informal income generating activities (Campbell, 1990; Walker, 1995; Aryee, 2005).

However, paid work is gender segregated, with African women working in the lowest positions for very low wages. For instance, they are employed in whites' households as maids for long hours (Cock, 1989) as well as in commercial, agricultural farms alongside their husbands and in some cases were paid in kind. With the advent of the new democratic order women, alongside men, now occupy decision-making positions at senior levels in the labour-market. Despite the move towards gender equality in employment, however, mothers continue to bear the burden of household responsibilities, as well as navigating between work and family unassisted by their spouses (Moorosi, 2007; Cilliers et al, 2008).

This section addresses the interface between the workplace and the household given the increase in women's participation in senior positions at the workplace. I determine what happens as men and women straddle domestic and paid work, and encounter challenges as they move between the two equally demanding spheres. It has been generally agreed that work and family are not at all independent and that they influence each other in both positive and negative ways (Poelmans, 2005; Cilliers et al, 2008; Pillay, 2007). Work impacts on the way family operates and vice-versa. Much literature has focused on the negative aspect, better known as work-family-conflict which *seems* to be the more prevalent and problematic

than the positive aspect. It is important and interesting to note how writers have distinguished between the work-family-interface (work influencing family) and family-work-interface (family influencing work) as well as the unequal ways in which this interface takes place. Work tends to interfere with family more than vice-versa, while some address cultural differences in the way the work-family-interface is experienced (Yang, 2005).

It is clear that women's entry into senior positions in the workplace was without any renegotiation of gender roles (Crompton, 1999; Jenkins, 2004). The expectation by sociologists was that the influx of women into the labour market would automatically be followed by a shift in the domestic division of labour towards egalitarianism (LaRossa, 1988). Since this has not been realized, women, especially mothers, struggle with the pressures and tensions of combining work and family responsibilities. The dual-role places severe constraints on women's labour market activities due to the restrictions associated with domestic and child-care duties. This has led to conflict and overload of work and family roles especially for employed mothers, given that women have had to continue mostly unassisted by the husband or partner with the caring role; this is referred to as work-family-conflict. Work-family-conflict is thus described as the result of incompatible pressures from an individual's work and family roles (Rhoeling et al, 2003, cited in Windebank, 2007). Role overload, which is used inter-changeably with role strain, as well as work-family-conflict, on the other hand, is linked to increased time at work, organizational norms that reward long hours at work rather than performance (Duxbury, Lyons and Higgins, 2008). It is defined as "a time-based form of role conflict in which an individual perceives the collective demands imposed by multiple roles (e.g. parent, spouse, employee) are so great that time and energy resources are insufficient to adequately fulfill the requirements of the various roles to the satisfaction of self and others" (Duxbury, Lyons and Higgins, 2008: 130). As a result those

faced with such a situation, such as mothers, suffer psychological discomfort from their inability to fulfill both roles. Given the difficulties faced by mothers, especially those in senior positions, as they attempt to reconcile the demands of home and paid work, I now explore whether or not the workplace has been adapted to accommodate them.

### ***Work-Family-Interface in South Africa***

The South African based literature on black families, as already seen, shows that most women, whether working- or middle-class, are faced with a struggle to balance paid work and family responsibilities. As discussed in the second section of this chapter, the transformation that has been brought about by the democratization of South African society has led to the opening of educational as well as employment opportunities which, in turn, have led to the economic transition of some black individuals and families from the working-class to middle-class. This was followed by an unprecedented exodus of many black middle-class families from black communities to previously white middle-class residential areas, and the decline of their social-support-network system, particularly the extended family support but also friends and neighbours, which is much needed and valued by working mothers. This mobility has jeopardised their coping strategies. In most cases, women are left with only spousal support to count on. However, spousal support especially among black families seems not to be dependable when it comes to parenting practice. Partly for these reasons women were faced with challenges with regards to combining work and childcare and other family responsibilities.

Moorosi's (2007) small scale study among black middle-class families has demonstrated the lack of support of husbands of women, who worked in managerial positions, who would not allow domestic workers to do certain house-chores such as cooking, but demanded their

wives to cook for them even though they worked late. However, even with white professional groups who have articulated much more progressive views, as in Cilliers et al's (2008) study, we still see work-family-conflict where women academics suffered role-overload in terms of work, on the one hand, and family-work-conflict, on the other, where these women bring family conflicts to the work-place, which affect their work performance. Interestingly, unlike in Moorosi's (2007) study, many portrayed men as supportive partners who subscribed to egalitarianism. Nonetheless, despite the supportive role these men are said to play, when it comes to work trade-offs, women are the ones who sacrifice their work by working part-time, as a work-life coping strategy, thereby "succumbing to the broader discourse of women as primary care-givers and as a necessity to centre the child's needs and subordinate women's" (Cilliers et al, 2008: 110; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004). In addition, the sort of work men engage in within households shows that they are nowhere near egalitarianism. It is worth noting, though, the racial difference in gender-role attitudes, where the white seem much more progressive than the black sample. However, Hotchfeld's (2008) study shows that the gap between whites and blacks gender-role attitudes is narrowing.

In summary, Moorosi (2007) and Cilliers et al (2008) studies above bring out the difference in the family-work-interface experience between black and white middle-class couples. Based on the above studies, the traditional gender roles still persist, in black families, to a larger extent than white families. For instance, the lack of support and high demands by husbands in African families on their wives, in these studies, are still pervasive as compared to their white counterparts. The lack of support coupled with the loss of family social support for African mothers in these families leads to increased work-family-conflict compared to white mothers. Hence most mothers have resorted to using paid domestic work. This demonstrates the importance and necessity of the social support system for mothers to help

them cope with their daily challenges, although shared parenting between the mother and the father would also be very useful.

To analyse difference in the challenges that African mothers in South Africa face as they straddle paid and reproductive work, and their coping strategies I use Aryee's (2005) model on work-family- interface.

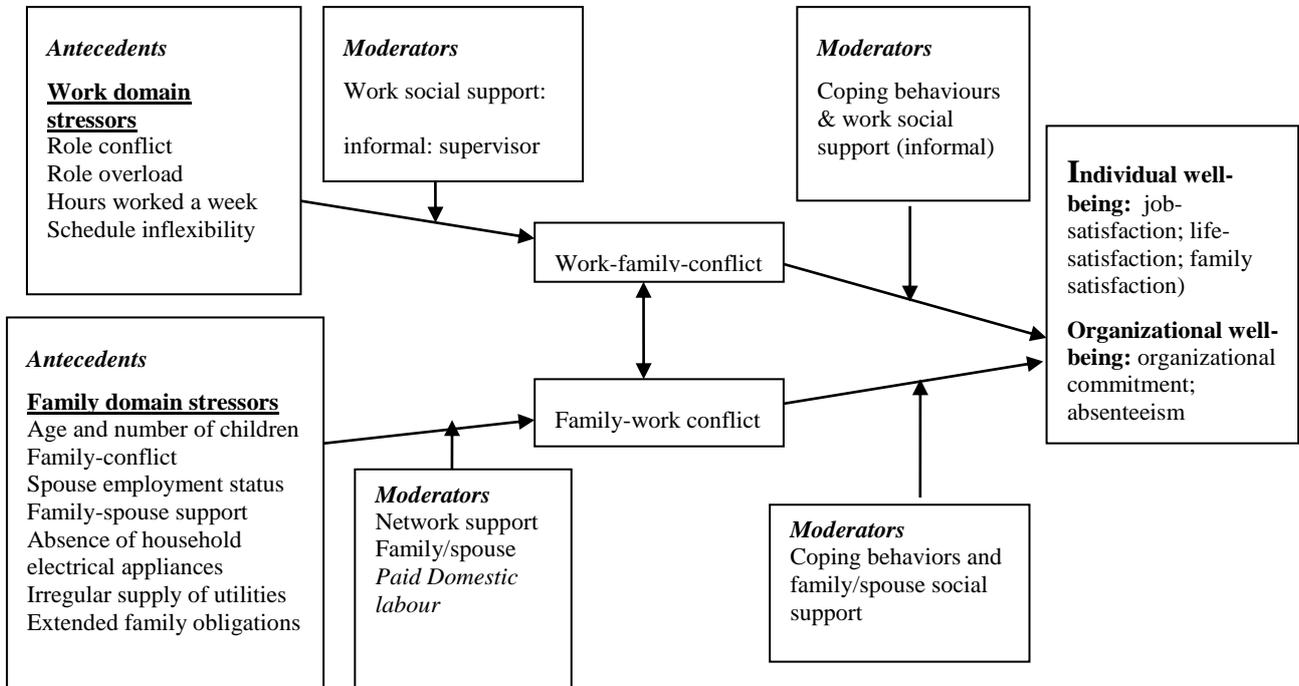
### ***Work-Family-Interface Model***

Aryee's (2005) work on work-family-interface in urban sub-Saharan Africa highlights the long history of women, the majority of whom are mothers, in income-generating activities in the informal sector of the economy and for, especially South African women, paid domestic labour. With the inception of democracy, formal employment opened doors to strategic positions for women, however, the government did very little to change the work-place culture to accommodate mothers. This as well as intransigent gender roles, has meant that mothers face the challenge of reconciling equally demanding work and family roles and have had to constantly deal with the interference of paid work in family and vice-versa. Aryee's (2005) model seems to be the most relevant to my study since it is based in Sub-Saharan Africa which South Africa is part of and reflects the important dynamics of the work-family-interface in the South African context. For this reason, my study draws on Aryee's (2005) model of the work-family interface in Sub-Saharan Africa. This model is useful for my study in that it focuses on the implications of family and paid work demands for working mothers as well as the challenges of combining paid work and family roles.

As can be seen in the model below, Aryee (2005), like other work-family-interface theorists, has "embraced a bi-directional conceptualization of work-family-conflict/family-work-conflict (which) describes the experience of family interfering with performance of the work-

role while family-work-conflict describes the experience of work interfering with performance of the family role” (Aryee, 2005: 263).

**Figure 1.1 Aryee's Work-Family-Interface-Model**



Aryee’s (2005) model constitutes a causal chain which links stress and well-being and has extended Poelman’s (2005) western model of the work-family interface to suit the Sub-Saharan-African context. He sought to examine contextual influences on the dynamics of the work and family interface in sub-Saharan Africa. His point of departure is that performance of paid work and family responsibilities require considerable amounts of time and energy, both of which are scarce resources and sometimes need to be performed simultaneously which often deplete one’s energetic resources and lead to family-work-conflict. Building on Poelman’s (2005) model, Aryee (2005) identifies, what he refers to as ‘antecedents’ [“that which trigger tension and frustration culminating to work-family-conflict” (Aryee, 2005: 263)] of family-work-conflict in the Sub-Saharan-African context which differ from but also

are shared with those in Western households. The initial point in the causal chain, as shown in the model, is antecedents of family-work-conflict and work-family-conflicts and their moderators linking stress and well-being. Antecedents such as the age and number of children; family conflict, family or spouse-support are common to households in both the Western Sub-Saharan contexts, however, Sub-Saharan-Africa suffers frequent power cuts and interruptions to the water-supply caused by the inability of developing countries to keep up with rapid urbanization. Secondly, the absence of modern domestic technological cleaning equipment and household appliances intensify and increasing the time devoted domestic labour. Lastly, family (especially daughters') responsibility for the care and maintenance of the elderly and other extended family obligations, such as, funerals, weddings and other such gatherings contribute to the challenge of combining work and family roles. These may trigger tension and frustration culminating in work-family-conflict. The moderators of these antecedents and stress reactions to family-work-conflict are identified as social-network support, which is used as a coping mechanism. Families in the West emphasize only spousal support, and Aryee (2005: 265) adds extended family members, which may consist of elderly parents, sisters, friends and neighbours. Maids are considered a middle-class preserve because of the expense involved. These moderators can lessen the negative consequences of family stressors (Frone, 2003). Importantly, Aryee (2005) provides an insightful explanation for the Sub-Saharan-African collectivistic orientation of life and support for the nuclear family. He defines the nuclear-family in relation to the extended family which explains why the nuclear family enjoys shared parenting with extended family relations. The nuclear family is valued by its extended family for its importance in family continuity as well as its care for elderly members, and therefore receives support from the extended family in raising children. The elderly parents in the extended family constitute sources of support in terms of

child-care and the performance of household chores. However, due to rapid modernisation and urbanization this sort of support is in decline.

Aryee (2005) identifies work-place antecedents as: role-conflict, role-overload, role-ambiguity, hours of work per week, schedule inflexibility, job security and so on. As a way to reduce work-family-conflict and to enhance work-family-facilitation, work-place moderators are identified as social support; this is divided into formal - organizational family friendly initiatives designed to assist working parents to reconcile family responsibilities and paid work to ameliorate the negative consequences of work-family-conflict, and informal supervisor and co-worker support. As the model shows the Sub-Saharan context still lacks family friendly policies to assist working employees reconcile paid work with family responsibilities. Aryee (2005) suggests the workplace support system should not only be the supervisor and workplace colleagues (as Poelman's, 2005, model suggests) but also a change in the organizational culture into a family-friendly culture through the introduction of family-friendly policies, in addition to the existing statutory maternity leave, such as, parental-leave and policies regulating working hours; flexible-work arrangements and employer supported child-care which are considered to be a "critical resource in ameliorating the negative consequences of stress and well-being" in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in the West (2005: 265). As Aryee (2005: 265) suggests "these moderators may help reduce work-family-conflict by providing greater flexibility, reducing work-hours, and providing child-care assistance". However, in the absence of work-place formal support in Sub-Sahara-Africa social support is obtained primarily from the family domain in spite of the changing family system. This implies that moderators also depend on an individual's interpersonal skills which are important in negotiating or mobilizing social support. For instance, in the

workplace one has to maintain good relations with the supervisor and colleagues and at home with family, friends and neighbours.

Frone (2003) points to work-related stressors as predictive of work-family interference, whereas, family responsibilities and stressors appear to contribute more directly to family-to-work interference. To this effect, social support in both domains is perceived as a primary determinant of reduced levels of conflict. However, for Frone (2003) the support system is merely the supervisor at the workplace, and the partner within the family, which he associates with reduced work-to-family interference and family-to-work interference.

Grzywacs and Marks (2000), in another United States study, also found a correlation between the support or lack of it both within the family and the work-place and work-family-conflict. For instance, they found low levels of support at work to be strongly correlated with negative spillover from work to family especially for women. Secondly, spouse-affectual support appeared to have more influence on reduced work-to-family-conflict for men than for women. Lastly, spouse support was also closely related to reduced, negative spill-over from family to work for both men and women. This suggests that men benefit more from spousal support than women, since they receive the support of their wives, and also that people should mobilize support by establishing workplace and home relationships as effective antidotes to the negative effects of work-family-conflict. These studies seem to ignore the existence of diverse family types. For instance, they emphasize spousal support, when there are a considerable number of single-headed households, as a result of the high divorces rates, widowhood and the never married. Additionally, the emphasis solely on supervisors as a support system at the workplace, (Frone, 2003), does not guarantee equal support for all employees; support may only be directed to those who are mostly favoured, while others are left out.

The next factor linking stress and well-being is outcomes of family-work and work-family-conflicts and moderators of these relationships. As shown in Aryee's (2005) model, work-family and family-work-conflict are linked to several individual and organizational outcomes, such as job and life satisfaction, depression, organizational commitment, absenteeism, turnover and role performance. Aryee (2005: 265) proposes that "adequate support intervenes between stress and well-being by reducing the stress reaction". He suggests that social support at this point in the causal chain performs a buffering role because it enhances one's cognitive and behavioural coping abilities thereby enabling one to manage the stressful situation.

Importantly, Yang (2005) employed a gender-role expectation theory to highlight the idea of cross-cultural difference in the way work-family-conflict is experienced across countries. She compares sources of work-family-conflict and demonstrates the significance of family-life in Chinese culture compared to Canadian. She highlights the influence of culture in the magnitude of work family role pressures. For instance in China both work and family demands contribute to work-family-conflict, whereas in Canada only family demands do. She also indicates that the impact of work demands is greater in China than in Canada. Yang (2005) notes that cultural values have differential effects in the way work-family-conflict is experienced. To this effect factors such as family related support and gender role obligation as well as in the allocation of time and prioritization between work and family have great influence in the work-family-conflict. Thus, gender as the major predictor of work-family-conflict based on gendered responsibilities, where women experience inter-role conflict differently from men among the Chinese people. For instance, she found that men experience greater interference between work and family, meaning that for men the work role intrudes upon the family. On the other hand women, because of their major responsibility for

household chores, experience greater interference between family and work, which means that women's family roles intrude into women's paid work. This way the gender role differentiation featured as a major factor in China as compared to the Canadian French.

What is highlighted here once more are the diverse ways in which the interference between the two spheres is experienced depending on the cultural context and also that it is gendered, and raced.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter has shown how theorizations of motherhood and fatherhood have evolved over time. We have seen how the Second Wave, white feminist theorizations, most of which employed patriarchy to analyze motherhood and women's oppression, were critiqued by black and African feminists on the basis of their inability to capture black women's experiences and the resulting attention to the importance of 'Intersectionality' on the basis that it encompasses different bases of oppression.

The literature reveals the centrality of motherhood in African families. Motherhood appears to be a desirable, valued institution, not only within families but also within the entire kinship system on the basis of family continuity. Furthermore it is not only desirable to those who are married, but also to single women, some of whom talk about motherhood as self-continuity and extension rather than only family continuity. Literature also shows that mothering is not a solitary role limited to biological mothers, but is dispersed among female members within the extended family and/or to domestic workers; this means that current definitions of mothering are being challenged. Mothers are hardly present to do the active mothering by themselves; since they work long hours alongside fathers, but almost always ensure that they leave their children cared for in their absence. There is also a high

prevalence of single-motherhood and a concomitant reliance on extended family networks and/or paid domestic labour to share the mothering role. The literature clearly demonstrates that the transition from apartheid to democracy has brought about a transformation of various societal and state institutions and lack thereof in some; the transformation of these institutions is complex rather than linear as envisaged by modernisation theory. Important societal and state institutions currently undergoing (uneven) change are the family and the workplace. The family has undergone structural change while parental practices within this domain remain unchanged. Following the move from the working class to middle-class, some claim that African families are converging, like white families, from extended towards nuclear families. However, the thesis of ‘convergence’ has been refuted by other sociologists on the basis that nuclear families co-exist with other types of families, such as extended, single female-headed families and others.

In the same vein, Inglehart and Baker (2000), Inglehart and Norris (2003) and Hotchfeld (2008) have demonstrated the same about cultural values and practices; they refute the thesis of convergence of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ values (especially with regards to gender-role expectations and cultural practices), by demonstrating that these move in parallel trajectories rather than converging. However the parenting practice and the domestic division of labour remain unchanged which highlights a ‘cultural lag’, which is explained through ‘stalled revolution’ within the domestic domain. In the South African context, alongside the move towards gender equality in the workplace which is influenced by the increasing movement of women to senior positions is the resilience of the traditional gender culture which can be attributed to the deeply ingrained attitudes inculcated through cultural practices, such as pubertal rites and *ilobolo*, which are still widely practiced to date. These customary practices legitimize and endorse unequal gender relations in African families. The

incongruence between change at the workplace and lack thereof at household level has meant that women face the challenge of work and family reconciliation, which mothers are currently experiencing. This has seemingly been exacerbated by the separation of these families from their social networks such as their extended families.

However, the practice of parenting, in my study context cannot only be explained through cultural practices but also through migrant labour. Although customary practices such as '*ilobolo*' and pubertal rites constitute major influences of fatherhood, migrant labour seem to be equally important in analyzing fatherhood. The impact of migrant labour does not only mean distant fathering but also the absence of the father; the fact that men have to go through pain and trauma of undergoing 'initiation' to achieve manhood; and the fact that men have to pay '*ilobolo*' to acquire a wife works against the movement towards involved fathering and thus egalitarianism. All this makes fathering unique, especially in my research context. For as long as such practices are still prevalent, it is highly unlikely that unequal gender relations will dissipate. Thus motherhood will continue to be trapped within such complexities of manhood, masculinities and fatherhood. Again this means African women will continue with the struggle to reconcile motherhood and work responsibilities without their husbands' or children's fathers' help. Among whites, where manhood is arrived at through human development, it is likely that there may not be such resilience in social norms and values. To this effect parenting, with white fathers seem to have begun changing towards egalitarianism.

The literature has shown that the lack of congruity in the change within and between the societal and state institutions, has led to the experience of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict and mothers' struggles in paid work and family reconciliation. Moreover, it has outlined work and family antecedents that trigger such a conflict. The work-family-conflict is and its antecedents are culturally determined in that culture influences the magnitude of

work- and family-role pressures. This study therefore combines all the theories mentioned above to make sense of the complexity of socio-cultural change in South Africa.

## Chapter 2. Methodology

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I provide a critical account of the approach, research methods and design of the study. I start with a discussion of feminist methodology, which is followed by the research questions. I then discuss the theory behind research methods employed, which include interviews, observation and analysis of documents. Thereafter I provide an account of how I negotiated and gained access into research sites, including the practical challenges I encountered during fieldwork and I give an outline of the sample of the study. This is followed by a discussion of how data was collected, the various methods of qualitative data collection methods employed in this study and issues of rapport, positionality or the researcher's social positioning, power relations and reflexivity during the research process. This is followed by a description of the methods of analysis employed in this study. Lastly, I discuss the ethical dilemmas I had to face in the field.

### **Standpoint Theory**

This research employs feminist standpoint theory which comprises “approaches to research informed both by feminist theories and by a concern to explore the situated positions and experiences of women and men and the effects of gender processes on one or both sexes” (Deem, 2002: 836). Feminists' point of contention is based on the premise that prior to feminism, sociology “systematically privileged male knowledge, experience and interests” and “propagated masculinist notions of reason and science” (Ramazanoglu, 1992: 208/9), thus “reflecting only a vision that is available to the dominant group (in this case men)” (Gouws, 1996: 67), while it excluded, marginalized and belittled women and other oppressed

groups (Smith, 1988; Bhavnani, 1993; Luff, 1999; Narayan, 2004). Feminists considered the exclusion of women from the making of ideology, knowledge, and culture, which implies the absence of women's interests and experiences in knowledge production, an unfair practice (Smith, 1988). Women therefore, as Harding (2004) puts it, needed knowledge of their own. Against this backdrop they considered developing knowledge grounded in women's experiences (Naples, 2007). Furthermore, it is important to note that "feminist ontology is born out of the experience of and acting against oppression" (Stanley, 1990: 14; Luff, 1999: 690).

It has been argued that early (white) feminists had deliberately excluded experiences they considered contradictory to their own, in knowledge production, to avoid fragmentation in feminism. To this effect they presented their arguments in monolithic terms, thus resulting in the exclusion of the experiences of the women of colour (Stanley, 1990; Bhavnani, 1993; Nash, 2008). This way knowledge lacked women's diverse experiences of oppression across cultures and contexts. For standpoint theory, however, it is precisely these contradictory and diversified experiences which are important because women's culturally diverse collectivities aimed at producing knowledge that addressed their specific problems (Harding, 2004). Standpoint theory thus emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a feminist critical theory about power relations in the production of knowledge (Harding, 2004). It rejects the definition of knowledge and truth in totalizing terms, in favour of situated, local and communal constitution of knowledge (Haraway, 2004 ) where knowledge is defined as "a particular rather than a universal" (Hekman, 2004: 234). It suggests very insightful ways or criteria for producing knowledge, for instance, feminist standpoint theorists argue in favour of multiple and diverse epistemological locations and non-dominative feminism. Haraway (2004: 89) describes such knowledge as "partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility

of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology”.

Feminist standpoint theory also suggests that no one standpoint or knowledge should be regarded as more privileged than another (Ramazanoglu, 1992; Hekman, 2004). Furthermore, it maintains that knowledge should include ‘subjugated’- marginalized, silenced or thrown away knowledges, so that the experiences of women and other oppressed groups become a source of critical insight (Hill-Collins, 1991; Luff, 1999; Hartman, 2000; Haraway, 2004; Archer, 2004: 461; Pillow and Mayo, 2007). Hartman (2000: 21) refers to this as “insurrection of the subjugated knowledges”. Such knowledge, Haraway (2004) maintains, promises a more adequate, sustained, objective, transforming account of the world. In the same vein, Bhavnani (1993) argues that feminist ‘objective knowledge’ should consist of controversial and conflicting or even overlapping experiences and interests of women, as this may mean multiple and different standpoints, which Harding (2004) believes brings fresh perspectives to standpoint theory. The objectivity referred to by standpoint theory is in contrast to the positivist meaning, since according to feminist research ‘objectivity’ means ‘situated knowledge’.

Feminist standpoint theory emphasizes the importance of positionality, that is, “the researcher’s awareness of his or her own subjective experience in relation to that of her or his participants” (Deutsch, 2004: 889), and what Hodkinson (2005) refers to as ‘initial subjective proximity’ in relation to interviewees, as well as the researcher’s role in the research process. Furthermore, Hodkinson (2005) points to two key factors which determine the level of proximity between the interviewer and the interviewee: the socio-cultural locations of the researcher and the researched as well as the level of importance of those researched to the

research, which may imply differing levels of proximities in terms of different groups of those researched to the researcher (this is discussed at length under interviews).

It is also important to note that standpoint theory valorises difference and intersectionality which accounts for the many ways women experience being a woman differently across varying cultures and histories and across race, class, sexuality and language (Pillow and Mayo, 2007; Stanley, 1990).

Feminist standpoint also addresses the status of the researched in knowledge production. Here the researched are regarded as an important part of knowledge production. For instance, the researched are considered to be subjects rather than objects of research. This is seen in Acker's (2006) and Smith's (1988: 105) studies as the researched in their studies enter the research process as active subjects:

sociology of women is the standpoint of the subject [...] (it) preserves the presence of subjects as knowers and as actors [...] (it) does not transform subject into objects of study or make use of conceptual devices for eliminating the active presence of the active and experiencing subject [...] creates the space for an absent subject, and an absent experience that is to be filled with the presence of spoken experience of actual women speaking of and in the actualities of their everyday worlds (Smith, 1988: 105).

The recognition of the researched as knowers and therefore subjects, as mentioned in the quote above, can be linked to the notion of 'epistemic privilege' and 'double vision'. 'Epistemic privilege' implies that the oppressed/researched are seen to possess better knowledge of their situation, and therefore possess "critical insights into the conditions of their own oppression" than those who live outside these conditions, who may not understand

the emotional complexities of living under such conditions (Narayan, 2004: 220; Wylie, 2000). Yet outsider perception is also valued in that those who research from outsider positions may be able to see what is obscured from the inside point of view, for instance, things that may be taken for granted by insiders but may be important to the study. Also related to this is ‘double vision’ which denotes “the view that oppressed groups, whether women, the poor or racial minorities may derive an ‘epistemic advantage’ from having knowledge of the practices of both their own contexts and practices and those of their oppressors” (Narayan, 2004: 220). For example, the domestic worker who inhabits both her own and her employer’s household.

The fact that the researched are in fact the knowers or have ‘epistemic privilege’ puts them in an important position in terms of knowledge production. It can be argued that this important position places them very close to equal with researchers. Coincidentally, feminist research emphasizes the maintenance of an equal relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer (Stanley, 1990; Ramazanoglu, 1992; Luff, 1999; Acher, 2004; Hodkinson, 2005; Bhavnani, 1993; Oakley, 1981; De Vault and Gross, 2007). I discuss this aspect at length under South African black feminism below.

Feminist standpoint has been criticised on several grounds. Firstly, as already hinted above, the main criticism is based on difference which is feared would bring about fragmentation and hence division/s among feminists. This we see in Hekman (2004), who out of genuine concern has raised important questions and calls for the re-examination of the theses of difference on the basis that:

If we abandon a single axis of analysis, the standpoint of women, and instead try to accommodate the multiple, potentially infinite standpoints of diverse women, do we

not also lose the analytic force of our argument [...] how many axes can our arguments encompass before they slip into hopeless confusion [...] if we abandon the monolithic concept of a ‘woman’ what are the possibilities of a cohesive feminist politics? (Hekman, 2004: 227).

Like many other feminists, Hekman (2004) lacks clarity on what standpoint theory is precisely about. As can be seen in the quote below she seems to miss an important point about standpoint theory, as she misconstrues it to be about being individualistic rather than “historically shared, group-based experiences [...] (or) groups having shared histories based on their shared location of power” (Hill-Collins, 2004: 247).

If we take the multiplicity of feminist standpoints to its logical conclusion, coherent analysis becomes impossible because we have too many axes of analysis. Ultimately every woman is unique; if we analyze each in her uniqueness, systemic analysis is obviated (Hekman, 2004: 349).

Having been influenced by the feminist way of conducting research, I seek to articulate the experiences of black South African men and women since, as Hartman (2000: 20) puts it, these are “located at the margins of society” and rarely researched; they appear to have what Hartman refers to as ‘subjugated knowledges’. In this research I seek to bring out such ‘subjugated knowledges’ and to provide knowledge that is situated, perspectival and different. What makes it different is that I am comparing men’s and women’s experiences and attitudes to bring out the challenges which arise through gendered relations. With this piece of work I hope to produce knowledge from black employed mothers and fathers – how they reconcile work and family responsibilities as well as the difficulties they face as they

straddle the paid work and family domains. Therefore I give equal recognition and value to both male and female participants as subjects of my research.

Having discussed standpoint theory, I now proceed to Black feminist standpoint in which my study is embedded.

### ***Black feminist Research***

Black feminist standpoint brings a paradigmatic shift to feminism. It provides a unique ‘angle of vision’ which is based on experiences that emanate from mainly two (but not limited to) distinct but intersecting features – race and class. Black feminist thought starts from the premise that women in black societies share some common experiences of oppression brought about by different systems of racial domination, such as slavery. This experience qualifies them for an Afro-centric standpoint. However, black women share a history of gender oppression with their white counterparts, which qualifies them for yet another standpoint – the ‘feminist standpoint’. Therefore, as Hill-Collins (1991: 206) puts it, “black women have access to both Afro-centric and the feminist standpoints, an alternative epistemology used to rearticulate a black women’s standpoint should reflect elements of both traditions”. Ironically, early feminist theory suppressed black women’s ideas, mainly to avoid fragmentation (Bhavnani, 1993). But, black feminists interpreted this as race and class bias which they claim was not acknowledged in early feminist theory (hooks, 1984). However, it is erroneous to claim that all earlier feminist theorists overlooked, especially, the class and gender intersection in the sense that some Second-Wave feminist theories, such as, Marxist and socialist, have always argued against class and gender oppression.

Black feminist theory sprung from North American Black feminist critique of early feminists’ presentation of experience in totalizing terms and their dominance in feminist politics (hooks,

1984). Moreover, Black feminists offer a fresh insight to standpoint theory, by embracing a paradigm based on the intersecting systems of oppression of race, class and gender.

Black feminist thought consists of ideas produced by Black women [...] assumes that black women possess a unique standpoint on, or perspective of, their experiences and that there will be certain commonalities of perception shared by Black women as a group [...] while living life as Black women may produce certain commonalities of outlook, the diversity of class, region, age and sexual orientation, shaping individual Black women's lives has resulted in different expressions of these common themes (Hill-Collins, 2004: 105).

Black feminists also emphasize self-definition:

Black feminist thought consists of specialized knowledge created by African American women which clarifies a standpoint of and for women [...] (it) encompasses theoretical interpretations of Black women's reality by those who live in it" (Hill-Collins, 1991: 22).

However, although self-definition is important it is also problematic in the sense that it may mean people should limit themselves to only write about their own experiences which could result in people not learning outside the area of their own experiences and contexts. Hill-Collins (2004) later acknowledged that researching from the perspective of an outsider helps one to identify taken for granted issues that would not be legible to one who is researching from the insider point of view. However, it is important to note that she considers African Americans as outsiders in their context and that as outsiders they have been able to critically evaluate the positions of their oppressors against their own positions within the context that denigrates them.

Although black women experience life differently from white women, black women themselves have different and diverse experiences depending on the socio-cultural and economic as well as geographical context. Having introduced the context within which black feminist standpoint originated, what follows is a discussion of black feminist standpoint within the South African context.

### **African Feminism**

As with African-American feminism, African feminism has sprung from African feminist critique of Western, male and white feminist hegemony in knowledge production. For African gender scholars and activists, western conceptualizations of feminism neither relate to African realities (Essof, 2001; Nnaemeka, 2003; Mekgwe, 2006; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Ampofo et al, 2008) nor does it “fit into prescribed notions of African traditions” (Mupotsa, 2007: xvi). Western formulated feminism does not recognize “social, economic and cultural disadvantages suffered by women in non-western societies” (Jacobs, 2011: 22; Gouws, 1996) which has led to its rejection by African feminists. Over and above African-American feminist demands, which include the incorporation of intersections of race and class considerations in feminist theorisations, African feminists demand the expansion of the analytical horizon to take into considerations issues such as, activism, culture, colonialism, ethnicity, imperialism, geography and economic development. Furthermore, another distinct feature of African feminism is that it considers men as part of its theorization (Mekgwe, 2006). It is beyond the scope of this study to present a comprehensive picture of these debates, I will therefore only focus on those that are pertinent to my research.

In response to white feminist hegemony, various intellectual engagements have been organized as an attempt to ‘indigenize’ and reorient feminist theory to “accommodate

country-, culture- and class-specific gender issues” (Jacobs, 2011: 23). What has emerged from feminist debates and discussions is that the concept ‘womanism’, a term which was coined by an African-American feminist writer, Alice Walker, and introduced to Africans by black feminists (Mekgwe, 2006; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010), seems to be preferred to the term feminism on the grounds that the latter is un-African. Apparently, what followed soon thereafter was the emergence of ‘African womanism’ introduced by Clenora Hudson-Weems, a concept that would supposedly capture African realities (Mekgwe, 2006; Jacobs, 2011). However, although it is claimed that this concept embraces men as partners (Jacobs, 2011), ‘womanism’, it can be argued, is a single-gendered concept which does not seem to have space for men. Other African feminists advocated for the retention of the concept of feminism arguing that it should be indigenized to suit the African context (Essof, 2001), while others were “vacillating between endorsing and refuting it (feminism)” (Mekgwe, 2006: 17). In this way African feminism sprung into existence. I look first at *nego*-feminism and the need for feminists to resist imperialism before looking at how these debates are being played out in South Africa. Nnaemeka (2003) proposes *nego*-feminism (the feminism of negotiation) as the appropriate concept for African feminisms. This theory addresses the gap between theory and practice and more accurately reflects African culture and activism in its theorization. For instance, first it links the academy, that is, theory and research, with activism. For most African feminists the disjuncture between activism and feminist theory has been one of their major sources of dissatisfaction with Western white feminism. The lack of synergy between the two was referred to as ‘empty theorising’ by Africans (Nnaemeka, 2003; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010). ‘*Nego*-feminism’ implies that African women, who are often portrayed as powerless ‘victims’ in western feminist theorizations (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010), are actually agents of their own empowerment. African gender scholars and activists

have sought the kind of feminism that would make a difference in the lives of Africans, including ordinary black women, by engaging them and academics as partners in improving their conditions and positions, in knowledge production, theory-making and publication. For this reason, *Nego*-feminism places academics with the grassroots constituencies outside the academy which Nnaemeka (2003) refers to as the ‘third space’ of engagement. Nnaemeka (2003: 360) describes this space as:

“not the either/or location of stability; it is the both/ and space where borderless territory and free movement authorize the capacity to simultaneously theorize, practice theory, and allow mediation of policy. The third space allows for the coexistence, interconnection, and interaction of thought, dialogue, planning and action”.

By this Nnaemeka (2003: 360) seeks to revisit “the processes of theory making and knowledge construction in an environment of unequal power relations and cultural difference”.

Second, Nnaemeka and other African feminist proponents suggest adopting methodologies, concepts and theories that resist imperialism in research (Nnaemeka, 2003; Mekgwe, 2006; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Jacobs, 2010). To this effect, a myriad of (feminist) writers in Africa and other Third-world countries (among them Nnaemeka, 2003; Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010) including South Africa (Funani, 1992; Gouws, 1996; Hendricks and Lewis, 1994; Mekgwe, 2006) have challenged imperialism in feminist research and argued for the deconstruction of universalization in feminist knowledge production. For instance, they raised important questions about the issue of unequal power relations in research or knowledge production/theory formation between the West and the South as well as between

the researcher and the researched. For instance, Nnaemeka (2003) points to the marginalisation and the silencing of Third-World voices in international feminist theories and publications. She demonstrates that Third-World scholars are included in international publications as co-authors only when there is the need to include issues pertaining to specific countries from whence these Third-World scholars come. Other than that, Third-World scholars are considered not to have the capacity “to dabble with the intricacies of theory as an intellectual, scientific abstraction that requires brain power to fashion and comprehend” (Nnaemeka, 2003: 366). Nnaemeka, (2003: 362) therefore argues that the “imperial nature of theory formation must be interrogated to allow for the democratic process that will create room for intervention, legitimation and validation of theories formulated elsewhere”.

In the same vein, Chilisa and Ntseane (2010: 618) criticism of the Western feminist theory is based on “deficit theories on non-Western society” on the basis of the omission of African perspective/s in feminist theorization/s. Furthermore, they highlight the ‘othering’ of knowledge systems produced from non-Western societies by Western authors “by creating itself (the West) as the norm and other knowledge systems as inferior” (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010: 618). To this effect they importantly point to the “discontent among non-Western feminists that some western feminisms have used Western female-based structures of language, concepts, theories and models of reality and world views as a criteria against which experiences of all non-Western women as well as non-Western men can be known and written about” (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010: 618).

In South Africa, feminists’ debates were mainly centred on issues of representation (Gouws, 1996). These included heated exchanges between academics and activists through a journal named ‘*Agenda*’. Women academics seemed to be mainly comprised of white women and activists were Africans. Issues under discussion as outlined by Gouws (1996) are divided

into 3 broad categories: the under-representation of women in academia; the issue of misrepresentation of black women's oppression; and the question of who has the right to represent whom. All seemed to be related: black women were against white academics writing about black women. With regards to the issue of representation, South African black feminists such as Nkululeko (1987) and Funani (1992), like African-American feminists, had brought forth a fierce argument on the idea of self-definition where African feminist writers would reflect on their own realities and generate their own concepts, theories and constructs before opening the space to other feminist researchers. These writers understandably do not see the possibility of members of the oppressor group, who do not have any idea of what it is to be African in South Africa during the apartheid era, producing reliable and valid knowledge about the experiences of the oppressed. For instance, Funani (1992) describes the private daily experiences of black women emanating from their oppressive conditions related to poverty, and does not see how members of the oppressor group who have almost always had affluent or lavish life-styles, could possibly access and/or understand the magnitude of black African's experiences.

However, white South African feminists, such as, Gouws (1993) and Fouche (1992) seemed to disagree with the idea of the exclusion of white feminist research of black women's experiences although for different reasons. While Gouws (1993) disagreed with the notion of self-definition, she interestingly refutes Fouche's (1992) idea of white women and men speaking 'for' black women and suggests that white women should speak 'about' black women's experiences rather than 'for' black women. However, both Third-World including Africans, together with some first-world feminist theorists, have made insightful contributions that highlight the importance of bringing forth both the insider and outsider version in the knowledge system, as will be seen in what follows. As Narayan (2004) argues,

limiting people to produce knowledge based on only their lived experience would be a mistake; this implies that knowledge production should not be limited only to those who inhabit that particular context. Hill-Collins (2004) and Wright (1997) take this argument further by highlighting the importance of allowing an outsider perspective which would identify issues that are hidden from the insider point of view. For instance, culture because it is part of the everyday, taken-for-granted, practice, appears to be natural (Wright, 1997). Moreover, Nnaemeka (1995: 85) adds that “the insider brings ‘cultural information/native sense’ while the outsider brings ‘literary knowledge’”. On the other hand, Nnaemeka (1995) also argues that the outsider, in this case the researcher from the West, sees the insider (the researched, from the South) as “an ‘informant’ who brings the information with which knowledge is constructed, and not as a knowledge builder who is capable of producing and transforming knowledge” (Nnaemeka, 1995: 85).

Furthermore, Sunde and Bozalek (1993), Wright (1997) and Hartman (2000: 22) propose the collaboration of the researcher and the researched in the production of knowledge that studies should be grounded in the subjects’ experience and speak in the voices of oppressed people and unearth ‘subjugated knowledges’. Importantly Hartman (2000) and Jacobs (2011) suggest that the role of the expert should be relinquished by researchers and that they should listen to the voices of the researched, their narratives, and their constructions of reality. However, even though Nnaemeka (1995) concurs with the idea of collaborative research, she agrees that it is possible for outsiders to research as ‘inside outsiders’. However, she argues that this “requires a lot of hard work and a high dose of humility” (Nnaemeka, 1995: 86) and later cautions that (many) Western researchers refrain from including African scholars as their co-authors. Instead African scholars are being instrumentalized into collecting raw data

which Western scholars, in turn, manufacture into knowledge; while the researched are made instruments through which knowledge and careers are built (Nnaemeka, 2003).

Many of western white as well as South African feminist proponents seem to have moved beyond this sort of research, and since the early 1990s, have demonstrated an awareness of these power relations which they attempted to address in their research. For instance, feminist writers, such as Wright (1997), have worked in collaboration with African women scholars and activists in Botswana and Lesotho. Similarly, many white South African feminists have successfully integrated into the lives of Africans, fought against apartheid alongside black women, to a point where some of them were incarcerated together with black women over anti-apartheid campaigns (Funani, 1992; Fouche, 1993; Gouws, 1993). These white women had formed research alliances with black women academics and activists. In this way they had denounced the expert role in research, referred to by Hartman (2000), Nnaemeka (2003) and Jacobs (2011), and managed to gain a better insight into black people's experiences of apartheid than most other white feminists. This implies that they had the insider-outsider point of view which, in my view, is more advantageous than merely an outsider or insider position.

The above insights and practical examples attest to the necessity as well as the advantage of acquiring both insider and outsider perspectives, whether in collaborative or individual research, as these can be complementary, enriching and could provide a more complete and perhaps 'truer' picture of the experiences of the researched, as long as researchers include their 'positionality' and/or self-reflexivity in the research process.

With this in mind, in this piece of research I seek to produce knowledge that is situated in South African Black (African) men and women's experiences by exposing the contradictions

as well as paradoxes embedded in the way mothers and fathers experience their family life through their own voices, as Hartman (2000) suggests.

Having discussed the approach I adopt in this study, its advantages and benefits, I proceed to describe the research area.

### **The Description of the Research Area**

Mothering and fathering in different contexts may share similarities but they also differ depending on race, class, level of development and place. The population in the province under my study is 5.7 million of which the majority (97.07%) are blacks; 0.06% coloureds; 0.39% Indians; 2.42% whites and 0.17% others (Provide Project Background Paper, 2009). This province is made up of 5 districts, all of which use 3 indigenous languages, English and Afrikaans (Provide Project Background Paper, 2009). The average household size in my study area is with the exception of the Indian population, higher than that of South Africa as a whole with coloureds constituting the largest household size (6.59), African households around 5.2 and whites 2.97. Africans dominate both agricultural and non-agricultural households. Around 98% of the African, compared to 1.64% of the white population, live in agricultural households; 5.75% of the African households are involved in subsistence farming and, for some, agriculture is their main source of income (Provide Project Background Paper, 2009). The province contributes almost 7% of the GDP of South Africa (LEGDP, 2009-2014). It has good agricultural potential, mineral reserves and tourism resources. Africans form the largest proportion (over 95%) and whites over 3% of the national labour force in this province. Agriculture is an important sector which accounts for just over 1% of the workforce and contributes almost 2.7% of the province's value added GDP (LEGDP, 2009-2014). The province is well known for its rich fruit and vegetable, tea, cotton and timber

production. Approximately 99.09% of the workers in the agricultural sector are Africans. The province is well endowed with mineral resources, which is the crucial sector of the economy and contributes almost a quarter of its Gross Domestic Product (LEGDP, 2009-2014).

However, the province is characterized by high levels of poverty, much higher than the national average, due to extreme inequalities and a highly skewed income distribution between blacks and whites. Africans constitute 99% of the population compared to 1% whites. Although there has been an increase in employment rates since 1994, unemployment has also been high in the province.

In the next section I outline the research questions.

### **Research Questions and Design**

The focus of this research is on women and men in managerial positions in the public sector. Through affirmative action and other gender equality policies, men and women of colour have acquired positions of responsibility, especially in the public sector. However, since women are still considered primary-carers, this research seeks to determine whether the legislation and workplace policies reflect mothers' as well as fathers' needs. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the normative expectations and practices surrounding parenting and gender role attitudes in households, and is there any evidence of change?
2. What legislation and policy measures have been put in place by the South African government and the workplace to accommodate working parents, and how effective are these in meeting women's and men's needs?

3. How do mothers and fathers reconcile paid work and motherhood/family responsibilities, what difficulties do they experience?
4. What are working mothers' coping strategies?

In order to answer these questions I adopted a combination of qualitative data collection methods: interviews and observation; I also collected and analysed legislative and workplace policy and other relevant documents from the organisations under study (DeVault and Gross, 2007).

### **Methods of Data Collection**

In this section I discuss interviewing and observation and show how mainstream social science research methodology differs from feminist methodology.

#### ***Interviews***

In feminist research semi-structured and unstructured interviews are frequently used; interviews take the form of “conversations with a purpose” (Burgess, 1989: 102). In order to steer the course of the conversation or the interview, questions may be presented in the form of themes or topics using the semi-structured or unstructured approach which creates an atmosphere where interviews can be made pleasurable and casual (Burgess, 1989).

The bi-directional nature of conversations implies that feminist interviews are characterized by reciprocity, which is one of the important features of feminist interviews. In my opinion the issue of reciprocity can be linked to and starts from the establishment of rapport which is yet another important feature of feminist research. Feminist literature comes up with various insightful and useful, but also confusing, ways of establishing rapport. Importantly, the establishment of good rapport is associated with the achievement of the desired results. To

acquire such rapport some suggest an ability to strike a balance between under-rapport and over-rapport (Moser cited in Oakley, 1981). In contrast, others highlight the importance of forming friendships with interviewees (Oakley, 1981; Burgess, 1989) which, in my opinion, requires more reciprocity in the conversation in order to develop the intimacy that is required to take the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee to friendship. The question is how possible is it to establish friendship while guarding against under- and/or over-rapport? Secondly, where do we draw a line between over- and under-rapport? The two suggestions seem to be problematic, if they have to be done together. Oakley (1981) suggests that the interviewer should, in the process of an interview, reciprocate by answering the interviewee's questions when asked, to establish the required rapport and that by so doing may assist in getting the quality and depth of the information required. This implies that the two, establishing rapport and reciprocity are interrelated, for instance, to achieve good rapport the interview has to be reciprocal and to achieve good reciprocity one has to establish good rapport.

Also tied to good rapport and reciprocity is the issue of power relations between the interviewer and interviewee. Although good rapport and reciprocity may not mean equal power relations, they may, in my opinion, be useful in reducing the extent of unequal power relations between the interviewer and the interviewee. For instance, during my fieldwork, I observed a correlation between reciprocity and power relations; the greater the level of reciprocity between the interviewer and interviewee the less unequal the power relations. Similarly, good rapport is associated with a more equal relationship between interviewer and interviewee.

Another reason for the preference for interviews in feminist research is that having committed itself to collecting and representing the voices and perspectives of marginalised

groups such as women, it is through such conversations that one is able to unearth subjugated knowledge and elicit women's experiences, bringing them to light and subjecting them to systematic analysis thereby making them visible and 'hearable' (DeVault and Gross, 2007; Hartman, 2000). For instance, DeVault and Gross (2007: 18) regard this method as the best way to bring forward "a wealth of previously untold stories – those of marginalized peoples, and also those that the more privileged may have kept hidden, awaiting a receptive audience (or a skilful interlocutor)". Parallel to this, Sampson (2008: 924) talks about "giving a voice to the voiceless". This voice can only be elicited through such conversations or interviews.

Interviews are criticised mainly because of the short-term nature of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee which makes it highly probable that a researcher can manipulate the situation. Burgess (1989) outlines ways in which a researcher can manipulate the researched: the researcher has control over a set list of questions that have been formulated before the interview and which are to be answered rather than considered, rephrased and re-ordered, discussed and analysed.

As a way to boost the validity of data, I decided to use observation as my second method of data collection, which presented me with an opportunity to observe gender roles within their setting.

### ***Participant Observation***

In participant observation, "the researcher is the main instrument of social investigation" (Burgess, 1989: 79). This involves joining and participating in a group or organization and observing social interaction as it occurs, in a natural setting (Burgess, 1989; O'Reilly, 2008). O'Reilly (2008: 152) describes participant observation as a means of "participating in order to observe, notice, record and try to make sense of actions and events [...] it involves an

element of standing back intellectually and reflecting on things, writing them down and thus objectifying them, asking direct questions in order to address research question". O' Reilly (2008) goes on to explain that the extent of participation ranges from spending some time in the research setting to full immersion in the culture of the group. Participant-as-observer involves situations where the researcher participates as well as observes by developing relationships with participants.

The advantage of using this method is that the participant observer has the opportunity "to collect rich detailed data based on observations in natural settings" and to obtain different versions of events that are available, compare them against each other and use the data from observations with theoretical insights to, for instance, make sense of any paradoxical behaviour (Burgess, 1989: 79). Burgess (1989: 79) points out that, "observations can be used to support or refute ideas about human behaviour and to generate questions that can be used in future research".

However, participant observation can be criticised on quite a number of counts. Firstly, positivists problematize participatory observation on the basis of 'value-free' or 'objective' research. Their concern is that, since participant observation involves being part of the context under observation, participant observers may develop an affinity with their subjects to a point where it would be difficult for them to disentangle their stance from that of their subjects. However, this has been addressed by feminist research which regards 'value-free' research as a myth because no researchers can detach themselves from their research and we are influenced by our values from moment we identify the problem. Secondly, observers "may influence the research context as well as being influenced by it themselves" (Burgess, 1989: 80) in the sense that the presence of the observer may alter the behaviour of the group under study. On the other hand, observers may be "handicapped by the assumed role"

(Burgess: 1989: 81). Thirdly, the observer may get engrossed by their roles to the point of forgetting to gather and record data. The suggestion here is to take frequent breaks from the field in order to record, reflect and analyse the data collected (Burgess, 1989; O'Reilly, 2008). As Hill-Collins (1991) and O'Reilly (2008) warn, too much familiarity with the research and the socio-cultural context also means that as an insider it is easy for one to overlook or take for granted certain aspects within the research setting, which would be of importance to the research and that would have been easily identified by an outsider.

Having discussed the methods I chose for my research, I proceed to provide an account of how I negotiated access to the research sites that were chosen for the study.

### **Negotiating Access**

Being a single mother of two school-going children meant that the time and the duration of the interviews was determined and constrained by the United Kingdom's school terms and also my financial situation. I was therefore compelled to time my fieldwork in South Africa to fit within the duration of the school holidays. This gave me only two months within which to complete my field work. Before I venture into a discussion about my access to research sites, it is important to highlight how informal contacts were crucial to the success of my entire research. My completion of fieldwork was facilitated by informal contacts who happened to be former academics and ex-colleagues who I came to know of in the field.

My initial plan was to conduct research in two Government Departments in one of the provincial capitals of South Africa; one Department was known to be predominantly male and the other female dominated. The rationale for this selection was to determine if and how working parents are accommodated in Departments and whether the presence of more women (mothers) at the workplace influences the way family policies are developed. My initial

plans were shattered by the lengthy bureaucratic process that had to be followed in order to gain access, especially in the Department known to be female dominated. Because of time constraints, and as a way of avoiding this lengthy, bureaucratic process, I substituted one of the Departments with a Parastatal; with the expectation that access would be easier, because my host was working there. This did not affect my research substantially; if anything it added diversity to my choice of public institutions and gave me an opportunity to compare two different types of public institution. Moreover, the Parastatal was female dominated.

Negotiations for access into the research site started two months before I left the University of Warwick. I tried several ways of contacting the two Departments through email, using the addresses found on the Departments' website, and telephone, but there was no response. It was at this stage that I remembered an old friend and former colleague who I knew to be working in one of the Departments who I thought could connect me with the gatekeepers in the Departments. After almost two weeks, she sent me the names as well as email addresses of people who she thought were heading the research offices of the 2 organizations. By the time I contacted them, it was almost time to leave for fieldwork. One of the Departments replied, connecting me to its research office. The research office manager responded a day before my date of departure, for field work, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008, by email, informing me that, to be granted permission to conduct research in their Department, I would have to send my research proposal and a letter stating how research ethics would be taken into consideration during my field-work in the Department, and that this letter needed to be approved and signed by two members of the university research committee. I immediately sent the proposal. However, the problem was getting the ethics letter. The university, at the time, was already on summer recess and most of the staff members were on holiday. I therefore had to leave

without the letter of ethics on 15/07/08. The second Department had not responded to my emails.

Upon my arrival in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 16/07/2008, the first responsibility I had was to arrange for my sons' care until the completion of my field-work. I left them in Johannesburg and left for field-work at the Provincial capital of my study, which is around 400km from Johannesburg.

Before leaving for field-work, I visited the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) office in Johannesburg to collect copies of the legislation I needed for my study. I also spoke to a friend about my experience with one of the Departments whose requirements I was not able to meet because of time constraints. He offered to connect me with an influential person in the female dominated Department who, he said, might be able to bypass the red-tape. He immediately called him, explained my problem and made an appointment for me to see him upon my arrival at the provincial capital of my study. On the morning of 24/07/08, I visited the Department and discussed my research with this person and subsequently the Research Office Manager. The research manager explained that the Department had come up with a more stringent policy that requires one to apply months in advance to be able to conduct research, through the submission of the research proposal and the letter of ethics which have to undergo scrutiny by the research committee of the Department, which sits once in a month. Lastly, a researcher is required to present findings on completion of data collection to the Department's research committee. I realized that this was not going to work, and I discussed the problem with my host who recommended that, given the time constraints, I should carry out my research in the Parastatal for which she worked as a manager. In the meantime I decided to approach the second government Department, where the manager had not responded to my emails.

## *Parastatal*

As I have already mentioned, as soon as I realized that entry to the female dominated Government Department was a problem, I decided to conduct interviews at a Parastatal, on the suggestion of my host. She assumed that access would not be a problem. This turned out not to be as easy as we both had anticipated. First, after she had connected me to the manager of the relevant section of the Parastatal, the manager consulted with her senior, who happened to be the senior manager in the Human Resource section. After consultation with her senior, the manager advised that I should write a letter to request permission to conduct research in their organization. However, since I had time constraints, which she was aware of, she gave me permission to interview in her section, with immediate effect. She introduced me to her colleagues and I subsequently made appointments with them. However, despite interview arrangements, I was turned away three separate times on the basis that people were busy. At this point my host requested individuals from her section to participate, which is when I started with the interviews. Secondly, after conducting 14 interviews I began to struggle to get people to participate. I still had not received a response from the regional manager on whether my request to conduct research in this organization had been approved and this was towards the end of the second week after I had submitted the letter. I asked the only senior manager who had participated in the study to assist me in looking for more participants. The person he referred me to agreed to see me but was not willing to participate. Nonetheless he referred me to his colleague. At this point I found myself face to face with the senior manager of Human Resources, who had instructed that I should write a letter of request. He brought my research to a complete halt. He had no idea that I had been conducting interviews in their organization and without a letter of approval for that matter. However, unaware that I had already been conducting interviews, he indicated that if the

person who had referred me to him had participated prior to approval he would be in serious trouble. I decided against making him aware of the fact that I had already done some interviews. He asked me to wait for the letter of approval before I started with interviews. To this effect I and my host had to re-strategize for a way forward. We arranged for me to continue with the interviews outside the organization. Hence the last three interviews were conducted in interviewees' homes. My target number of participants in this organization was a total of 22 from 3 categories as detailed in table 2.1. However, I managed to do only a total of 19, as will be seen in table 2.2 in the next section.

As seen, the issue of access was quite complicated in all the organizations involved and these presented different sets of problems in accessing the field. I would like to highlight a few points with regards to access which had quite an impact on the research process. In all organizations there seemed to be formal procedures designed to control access for researchers. However, what I found striking was the fact that in one of the organizations, there seemed to be confusion as to who the gate-keepers were. For instance, I was directed to the senior manager of the Department's research directorate whom I believed to be the gate keeper and I am inclined to think that he also believed himself to be. The risk senior manager, however, thought the procedure had not been followed and pointed out to specific people who should have been involved in the approval. My question is if there was a policy or procedure on research access, why the apparent confusion?

Furthermore, it seemed that the formal route is not always an effective means of accessing the field. For instance, formal communication was not effective in establishing the access route. I tried sending emails over two months before my departure with no response. But because of my awareness of the ineffectiveness of distant communication in the South African public sector and its institutions, I did not refrain from going to the field. What seems to work is

when one is physically there, so that one establishes informal contacts to assist in gaining access. My position as a lecturer placed me in a better position for me to establish effective connections with ex-academics who played a crucial role for me to complete my interviews. It is also noteworthy that most of the informal contacts I had established were ex-academics, the two males were previously in the same university where I am currently employed, and the two females, including my host, are former-colleagues in the university where I was previously employed. These academics committed themselves to assisting me, especially after my research was brought to a halt in the government Department.

More evidence of the futility of going the formal route is that when I got to the Parastatal, I was asked to write a letter requesting permission to conduct my research and was expected to wait for approval before starting my interviews. When I was prevented from interviewing my contact organized for the last three interviews to be conducted at home. This implies that had I not started at the time I did, I would have never started. Even after I was stopped and asked to wait to be granted permission, I never received any letter to grant me access to carry out the research.

Despite these problems I managed to conduct 43 interviews as detailed in the next section where I describe my sample, and then go on to discuss the research process.

### ***Government Department***

This Government Department (which in this study will be referred to as a Department) is divided into three sections and each section consists of several different directorates. The research directorate was part of the main office but housed in a separate building. It is quite small and a friendlier environment than the main office, as there was only one security officer to deal with, compared with the main building where one has to go through a whole security

check system starting from the gate right up to the entrance of the building. On my first visit the security officer directed me to a senior manager via a manager of research and I considered myself fortunate to find him in his office, especially because I had not made prior arrangements to see him on this particular day. However, I had indicated the month of my arrival in the email. We discussed the topic and the sampling of my research. He listened with keen interest and responded positively. He indicated that I could begin the interviews the following week on a Tuesday (29/07/08). Seeing his positive response, I requested that he also connect me to the Gender Focal Point (GFP) which is a structure which forms part of the national Gender Machinery. They are located in national and provincial Government Departments and Parastatals to ensure that Departments incorporate gender considerations in all their policies, projects, programmes and practices and ensure that all senior staff members are gender sensitized. He immediately phoned the senior manager of the office and arranged an appointment for me for the following week. He subsequently introduced me and explained the purpose of my visit to the members of staff in his directorate and requested them to make themselves available for interviews, starting from the following week (29/07). Incidentally, one of the managers he introduced me to had previously worked at the University where I am employed. However, although I had seen his face at the university, I had not spoken to him before. I made an appointment to see him the following Tuesday together with other members of staff. However, this ensured access to only one directorate within the Department, with limited numbers of staff who were parents.

This account demonstrates the importance of informal networks in the facilitation of the interview process. Although my former colleague was not a suitable candidate for my study, he was indeed helpful in facilitating the progress of my interviews. The senior manager whom I had met initially and expected to assist as promised was never in his office. In light

of this, my former university colleague stepped in and introduced me to some of his colleagues in other sections of the Department. At a later stage he also introduced me to the head of the Human Resource Department, who provided me with the documents I needed for the study and introduced me to her subordinates, and asked them to assist me with other documents I needed as well as to avail themselves for interviews. When I finished interviewing all of her staff in that section, they agreed that I should come back the following morning so that they could introduce me to other members of staff, in other sections, who were suitable for the study. This made me realize the importance of informal networks in order to facilitate access to the research site.

Another example of the importance of networks was demonstrated when I was introduced to a senior person in Risk Management, which is located in the HR-Department, by an HR officer whom I had interviewed. I was taken aback by the indignation of this manager when I explained the purpose of my visit. She asked me if I had been granted permission to conduct research in their Department and whether the head of Department as well as the head of security knew about it. When I explained that I had been liaising with their Research Office, before I came to South Africa who had given me the go ahead, she explained that I, together with the senior manager of the research office, should have followed a certain procedure and that I was supposed to be granted written permission and allocated a person who would accompany me, introducing me to the relevant people for my research. She made a few calls to her colleagues to enquire if they knew about my presence and then turned to me and advised that I should go back to the research office and ask the research director to follow the correct procedure. Again my informal contact salvaged the situation.

After my encounter with the risk manager I went back to the research office. The senior manager was out of the office so I spoke to my former colleague, who suggested that for the

sake of progress I should quietly move to another section of their Department which was located less than 2 kilometers from the research directorate. He personally took me there and connected me to yet another former colleague, who was also previously employed at the University I worked for, who now worked as a senior manager in one of the directorates in that section. I made an appointment to meet with him the following Monday.

The following Monday I went to his office and we discussed my research and the sample. My new contact was also not suitable for my study, but, just like my first informal contact, he assisted me in finding participants for my study in his section. He introduced me to a few senior managers most of whom agreed to participate, these senior managers in turn introduced me to their managers and a few of their junior managers whom they knew to be suitable candidates for my study, and thereafter he left to attend various workshops and meetings out of the province. However, he also introduced me to his secretary and instructed her to assist me if the need arose. During interviews in this section, I met yet another old acquaintance of mine, also a former academic, who worked at the university where I had been temporarily employed before my current employment, who also assisted me towards the end of my interviews. At the end I had interviewed twenty participants for my study.

As this account shows, informal networks may be a crucial resource to the research process and progress. Had it not been for them, I am inclined to think that my research in that Department would have come to a halt. To gain access to the Department I ended up having to use informal means, especially ex-academics, despite my initial attempts to formalize my entry. This demonstrates also that my status as a lecturer facilitated my access, progress and completion in the sense that it was former academics that came through for me in this Department.

Secondly, from my experience, I have also realized that the Department appears to have developed procedures to be followed with regards to research access. However, it seemed, either managers were not aware of any such procedure/s or they simply ignored them. First, my entry to the Department was not formalized, even though I had made a formal approach. I had not received any communication to indicate that I had been granted permission to conduct research in the Department. However, when I appeared I was immediately allowed by word of mouth to start with my research. Secondly, I told my contacts about the incident with the Risk Manager. However, to me it seemed the managers were not worried by this. They seemed to be determined to assist in the completion of my interviews, and I am not sure if they checked that there was any procedure to be followed in this regard. At the time I was consumed by my own concerns about the implications of my inability to complete the interviews, within the time available, and in the process I completely overlooked the ethical implications of the whole incident to my participants and my informal networks. Nonetheless, managers also, seemed not to be concerned about the issue of procedure nor the fact that they might be putting their jobs at risk. When I completed my interviewing in the Department, and having had such scary experiences, I was so sure that my experience in the Parastatal would be better, that I was actually looking forward to it.

## **Research Approach and Process**

### ***Sample Selection***

With most feminist researchers the emphasis is on women as subjects of research. However, I identify with Deem who posits, “if gender is regarded as a process infused by both masculinities and femininities, both women and men need to be researched” (Deem, 2002: 842). I also concur with Ostrander (1984) who clarifies that feminist research needs also to

explore the lives and actions of men or those who are powerful to uncover experiences of the marginalized. My research for the same reason includes men as subjects of inquiry. The research is about how parents negotiate paid work and family responsibilities. It looks at gendered experiences of parenting to gain an insight into gender relations within households as well as in the workplace. This includes also exploring gender-role attitudes, gendered relations, experiences and perceptions as well as in/equality in parenting. Secondly, I argue that if we are to win the battle of gender oppression the focus should be shifted from women and men should be also brought on board, since they, like women, need awareness-raising and education on gender issues. This cannot be achieved by separating women and dealing with them in isolation from the social relations in which they are embedded.

My approach to sample selection falls within the ambit of convenience sampling, and particularly snow-ball sampling. My initial contacts assisted me in gaining access into the organizations. They also connected me to my informal contacts as well as to a few initial participants who met the selection criteria. Informal contacts played a major role in the identification and selection of interviewees. This was true for both the government Department and the Parastatal. My sampling is divided into three categories: (1) parents employed at different management levels; (2) HR-personnel and (3) the GFPs. The selection criteria were as follows: In Category 1, I needed to have fathers and mothers employed at managerial level, who are also parents of children below the age of 16. My original sampling plan was to interview more women than men (as women are the main subjects of my research). With the second and third categories, I needed both men and women for each category and from both organizations. The rationale for the gender balance was to explore whether gender shaped perspectives on family policies. The original sampling plan is outlined in the table below.

**Table 2.1 Original Sampling Plan**

<b>Sample Groups</b>	<b>Gvt Dept1</b>		<b>Gvt Dept2</b>		<b>Total</b>
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Managers	12	6	12	6	36
HR-Personnel	1	1	1	1	4
Gender Focal Points	1	1	1	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>

This plan was altered mainly due to the time factor. As mentioned I only had two months available within which to complete my research which limited my choice of interview subjects. Second, the sampling also depended upon the availability of managers in their offices during the time of the fieldwork. Both organizations were positioned at provincial level and are providing services in 5 districts within the province under my study. This meant that, for most managers, a great deal of work is based at district level and they undertake a lot of work-related travelling. In addition managers also travel to meetings, workshops and conferences in and out of the province. Third, and very important, what also shaped the sample selection was my encounter with former colleagues, who I came to know during the field work, some of whom, even though they did not qualify to participate, were instrumental in introducing me to those who did qualify to participate in my research. These former academics took it upon themselves to make my fieldwork a success, for which I am grateful. Against this backdrop, I had to interview whoever was available and met the criteria within the time-frame set for field-work. This affected my sampling plan in 4 ways as can be seen in the table below. First, I ended up with a slightly smaller number (43) with regards to the overall sampling. Second, I ended up with a larger number of parents (37) than I had envisaged. Third, the gender distribution of participants was affected: the numbers of the mothers and fathers were less balanced than planned, as I ended up with more fathers and

fewer mothers in both organizations. Fourth, interviews of HR and GFPs were fewer than planned, especially in the Parastatal while they were as planned in the government Department. The table below shows the achieved samples in the 3 categories outlined above: managers drawn from the population of the managerial staff in the Government Department and Parastatal, the HR-personnel and Gender Focal Points.

**Table 2.2 Study Sample**

	<b>Gvt Dept1</b>		<b>Parastatal</b>		<b>Total</b>
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Managers	11	9	10	7	<b>37</b>
HR-Personnel	1	1	1	0	<b>3</b>
Gender Focal Points	1	1	1	0	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>43</b>

For more detailed information pertaining to the managers see Appendices 7 and 8.

### ***Collecting Data***

In this section I discuss the methods of data-collection in this study which consisted of interviews, participant observation and the collection and analysis of policies and related documents. I began my interviews in July 2008. I had originally envisaged these methods in the form of a 3-staged-plan, starting with the collection of legislative and policy documents, which would have been followed by interviews and then observations. However, because of time constraints, all three methods were done concurrently. Most interviews took place at the interviewees' places of work with the final three taking place at the interviewees' homes. I chose semi-structured interviewing as a data collection technique, as suggested by feminist research proponents, to enable participants to give their own accounts on the issues arising

from the negotiations of their dual-role. In addition, in order to gain more insight into parental practices and the division of labour within households, I decided to undertake observations, which I started as soon as I entered the field site. The observations were not necessarily linked to interviews; in fact it is only one of the three households where I undertook observations, was home to one of my interviewees. All three households, however, were middle-class households with career oriented parents and at least one of the partners worked in a public service institution; observations were done only at household level (this is discussed further under observation). I also collected documents on organizational policies.

### **Interviews**

For the government Department and Parastatal I developed three different semi-structured interview schedules for three different sets of employees: parents employed at the managerial level Human Resource personnel and Gender Focal Points. Drawing on a feminist perspective, I used face-to-face semi-structured interviews as my main data collection technique to explore and elicit parent's accounts of their experiences; their attitudes and perceptions of gender-roles; and family and gender equality policies. The questions ranged from closed- to open-ended questions and narrations. I had planned to audio-record the interviews, however, I had problems in operating the recorder I had borrowed from my Department, which was given to me without a manual. It took me a long time to understand how it worked, hence most of the interviews were not recorded, I took notes instead (see appendix 5). Only a few were recorded towards the end of my fieldwork. The use of a digital recorder would have saved me time especially in narrations in the beginning of the interviews, because these were long, and having to take notes meant going over the narration again to let the interviewee fill in gaps.

The problems of access I encountered in both organizations made my data collection process frustrating, stressful and hectic. Having to deal with rejection in both organizations, while also having to find a way forward, instilled a fear that I might not be able to complete my research and was my major source of stress during fieldwork. Under normal circumstances two interviews per day would have been sufficient given the time taken for each interview, especially when interviewing women, and the fact that I was also doing observations. However, because of the difficulties I encountered, at times I undertook more than 3 interviews a day which made it hectic and mentally draining. Moreover, this was further exacerbated by the different groups involved in my study, that is, managers, HR personnel and the Gender Focal Points who I interviewed concurrently. But the fear and anxiety urged me to push on.

Having different groups as participants in my study complicated the way I positioned myself within the research process. This highlights a researcher's variance in levels of familiarity with different groups, as also pointed out by Hodkinson (2004). This suggests that the difference in levels of familiarity between the researcher and each of the groups involved, results in different levels of proximities between the interviewer and interviewee. For instance, with regards to the African women under study, I consider myself to be an insider. However, in relation to men, although I am an insider with regards to the socio-cultural context, I am an outsider in terms of gender, which reduces my level of familiarity with men compared to women. This was also the case with the other two categories. These multiple identities certainly hold different implications and challenges in terms of my positionality and the relationships I formed within the research sites. In what follows I will discuss my experience of interviewing mothers (as an insider) as against interviewing fathers (as an insider-outsider), drawing out the implications of gender for the interview process.

### **Researching as an insider: Mother-to-mother Interviews**

To a large extent I identified with the female interviewees and participants on several grounds: not only in terms of gender and race, but also we shared an identity as mothers and career women from the same geographical location and cultural context. This means that we experienced motherhood and challenges in reconciling motherhood and paid work in similar ways. For these reasons, I would say my positionality with relation to women managers is mainly as an 'insider'. As Hodkinson (2005) highlights, researching as an insider offers potential benefits, for instance, my insider status was instrumental in leveling the playing-field for me and my female interviewees (mothers) in the sense that it enhanced rapport and reciprocity; on the other hand, it assisted me in reducing power differentials between me and participants, as will be seen in what follows. This was evident in the way women responded to the questions that I asked; motivated by their awareness that we shared the status of being mothers and career women, the interviews took a conversational form. Women, just like me, seemed to identify more with the topic as compared to men, and were therefore asking me questions on particular issues of interest. In the process I found myself disclosing my personal experiences, which appears to be common in feminist research (Oakley, 1981). Also noteworthy is that, although researching as an insider is mostly beneficial, especially when it comes to generating rapport it could also be quite problematic and warrants caution, especially during the data analysis. For instance, I found it difficult to exercise restraint from integrating my own values, based on my own experiences (as an insider), into the interpretation of the data. My supervisor was of great help in this regard, in the sense that she alerted me to this by pointing out areas that needed to be revised because of this particular problem.

As suggested by Hodkinson (2005), the groups within this research differed in terms of the level of importance. My study included three groups and I considered mothers to be the most important group because, from my own experience, I knew they experienced multiple problems in reconciling work and family. My positionality as an insider in addition to my chosen method of data collection, particularly the semi-structured interview were quite instrumental in reducing power differences between me and my female interviewees thereby creating a more egalitarian interviewer-interviewee relationship. Women were able to express themselves with ease and my interviews with women took more time than those with men.

I had estimated that each interview would last one-and-a-half to two hours. However, the duration of interviews varied extensively between most men and women. With women the time taken was almost twice the estimated time because of the conversational nature of the interviews coupled with reciprocity and more rapport, as we sometimes shared our motherhood experiences. Interviews of men, on the other hand, took approximately half the time taken by those of women. On average, the women's interviews lasted 3 hours. Women seemed to have a lot more to say than men and the interviews presented an opportunity for them to express their feelings on issues that affected them, especially their difficulties in combining work and family responsibilities as mothers. Secondly, the venue for interviews proved to be important for the quality of the data gathered. The work-place provided a perfect and conducive space for the interviews, especially in terms of privacy, since most of the interviewees had their own private space in their offices. The quality and depth of the responses of the interview process was in most cases greater than most of those conducted in households. Two of the three home interviews had all sorts of disturbances. These two home interviews were done during weekdays after work in the evenings and these women had no

domestic workers, whereas the third took place on a Saturday afternoon, when the children were out to play at their friends' houses, and she had a domestic worker who was on duty at the time. In the first two households, the women had just arrived from work and were doing their evening chores - preparing the evening meals for their families. One of them had 10 year old twins and a fourteen year old. A few times we had to take a break for her to attend to the children and to serve the evening meal. Similarly, with the other interviewee, the interview dragged on to supper-time, she started cooking when I was already there and finished while I was interviewing her. Now and then she would excuse herself to fetch things from other rooms. However, her children were a bit older and were not really of much disturbance.

Also noteworthy and interesting is the way interviews can turn out to be experienced as a learning process for both the interviewer and the interviewee. This is demonstrated by the way I personally have learnt from the interviews as mothers were relating their thoughts, experiences, and the challenges of combining motherhood and employment. As also experienced by Luff (1999) in her research, many of the women came up with thought-provoking and intellectually engaging responses which challenged my own views on parenting. For instance, Portia's, Gloria's and Faith's<sup>1</sup> accounts on their mothering practices deeply challenged my parenting skills. Faith's narration on how she spends her time with her teenage son, and the sort of discussions they engage in, are quite insightful. I concur with her that parents need to talk to their children about life issues that could prepare them for life and to clarify or fill the gaps in terms of the information they get from peers which could easily mislead them. However, what I found most challenging were especially issues related to sex,

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<sup>1</sup>I have used pseudonyms

which she and Portia seem to emphasize. This suggests how interviewers may be in the same critical plane as interviewees (Harding, 2004). The most insightful part of Faith's narration (see chapter 5) is where she indicates that she watches and thereafter discusses the news with her son. I think this is a good way of sharing and teaching our children about what is happening around them and would really like to be able to do that with my sons.

In such cases, as Luff (1999: 696) argues, "rapport can be experienced as challenging and provocative in certain research situations and can act as a stimulus to new thoughts about the research process and the emerging issues" and this was indeed my experience. Similarly, most mothers, towards the end of the interview, said that the interviews had taught or given them something to think about, since they were not aware of arrangements made in the workplace to accommodate mothers in other countries and they had previously not even thought of challenging gender roles. In this way the study has raised awareness on the part of my interviewees.

Lastly, in feminist research it is not only the researcher who gains from the research, as some literature, especially mainstream social science research, seems to suggest, but the end results of research can be utilised for the benefit of interviewees and other women. For instance, the role of the interviewer in feminist research, more often than not, is transformed from that of simply a data collection instrument to one that promotes "a sociology for women" (Oakley, 1981: 48) or feminist research goals and ideals. One of the main objectives of feminist research is to make women's experiences visible, and possibly amplify their voices in public discourse, this way uncovering their hidden and untold stories and making them known, by drawing from the accounts of women themselves and documenting them (Oakley, 1981; Bhavani, 2007; De Vault and Gross, 2007), which is also my aim with this study. For instance, one way in which the end product can be used, is in awareness and consciousness-

raising, as a way of transforming patriarchal society to one that is egalitarian and where social justice prevails. As can be seen, interviews with women were not only interesting but also empowering, not only to the interviewer but also to interviewees.

Having discussed my experience with interviewing as an insider, I turn to my experience of interviewing men where I was an insider-outsider.

### **Interviewing men: outsider-insider**

I found interviewing men to be quite different from interviewing women. Unlike with women, my positionality with men was more complicated and therefore difficult to define. For instance, on one hand, my gender meant that I was positioned as an outsider in relation to men. On the other hand, sharing the same cultural context with these men positioned me as an insider. In the case of men, my positionality as an insider had different implications from that of women. It was not as beneficial as it was with my interviews with women. As an insider, my awareness of cultural norms, values, beliefs and expectations, and therefore knowing what is acceptable and what is not, especially in terms of how women 'should' relate to men; my subjective knowledge of the fact that men still hold positions of power in families and that women are subordinate to them; coupled with the fact that men's authority is rarely challenged by, especially, female members of the household, made it difficult for me to ask certain questions of them, especially those which appeared to overtly challenge their domestic roles, such as: "Do you think men and women should have equal rights/responsibilities at home and at work?", "Is having a job the best way for a woman to be an independent person?"

These questions are certainly not comfortable for an African woman to ask an African man (in the South African context). I suppose this is, in part, caused by the intricacies of my

complicated positionality, that is, the outsider/insider status that I occupy with regards to men. My discomfort in asking certain questions, I believe, demonstrates the inherent power these men still wield over women. In addition, although I am aware of the cultural expectations and beliefs held by most men and women, it was still disturbing to have to listen to statements which were so traditional, to the point of being misogynistic, which can be seen in my discussion of Moss's response in chapter 6. No other male interviewee was this extreme but I found it very difficult to restrain myself upon hearing such responses. In this case I found myself jumping to women's defense in one way or the other.

The length of time for interviews with men, as mentioned, was much shorter, than with female interviewees. Unlike women interviewees, there was much less reciprocity with male participants and most responses were shorter, more abrupt and more concise. For instance, questions on difficulties experienced by working parents regarding combining work and family responsibility elicited a one word answer, while women expressed several multi-faceted and complex difficulties. Men's responses were a simple 'No' to questions like, "As a parent do you at times experience difficulties regarding work and home commitments?" and therefore led to no elaboration when asked "How do you handle them?" because, unlike mothers, they did not experience any difficulties. The only question to which men gave substantial answers was in their narration of how their day was spent, where they related mainly what their jobs entailed. Most women's responses to this question portray that their day starts far earlier than men's, they wake up earlier than men to do morning chores, preparing children for school and their husband's and their own departure for work. Furthermore, a woman's day does not end with knocking off from work, as most men's do. Most men knock off from work to go and relax with friends or at home, while women's work goes beyond the work-place to include the 'second shift' of house-chores after work, like

preparing meals, helping children with their school work, giving them a bath and preparing them for bed. Most of the families are assisted by their maids, however, a significant number of women do the domestic work and childcare by themselves. Men did not have much share in the practice of care work compared to women and therefore did not experience the difficulties of having to balance the two roles, which I shared with mothers. Given this, I would say my positionality in this case lies somewhere in the middle of the insider-outsider continuum.

Moreover, men's responses to my questions on gender equality were contradictory and in some cases made me question the honesty and validity of their responses. For instance, most of them claimed to support gender equality at the workplace, but not at home, which to me did not make sense. I could not understand why they would support equality in one area and not the other. Others said that they supported gender equality both at home and in the workplace, despite appearing to do the opposite in practice which became evident when they were narrating how their day is spent as well as what their responsibilities are at home. According to their own accounts of how they spend their weekdays, men did absolutely nothing at home despite the fact that women had great difficulties with reconciling work and family responsibilities. This suggests that although they pay lip service to ideas of gender equality they do not put these ideas into practice. My experience of power relations with men and women is discussed in the next section, since these power relations seemed to pervade the whole fieldwork process.

### **Power Relations in Research**

My research experience has made me question the possibility of complete non-hierarchical or egalitarian relations within the research process. The fact that I had taken the issue of power

relations into consideration in my research approach does not mean that I succeeded in eliminating power differences during my research. I might, to a certain degree, have managed to minimize the power relations since I had already been sensitized in this regard. However, my experience in this research counters the possibility of total elimination of power.

The issue of power relations had come into play throughout the research process. Firstly, it is important to note that it may not be possible for the researcher to totally eliminate power in research. Most feminist research literature only consider power relations on the part of the researcher, forgetting that power may also be exercised by the very organizations or people that we seek to research, which a researcher has no control over. For instance, my success in the field was hanging on the cob-web (or by a thread) as it was dependent upon certain individuals in the field, who had the power to grant or withhold access to the research site which meant that my research could have failed. It is clear that without informal networks, the 'gate-keepers' would have succeeded in bringing my research to its knees. To this effect, the informal networks as well as the gate-keepers hold tremendous power in terms of access or accessibility to the field of research.

Secondly, it is without doubt that as a researcher, over and above the fact that I had designed the study and controlled how it was conducted, I had the power to do what I wanted with the data, including defining how the study would be analysed and written up; I believe this to be the case with a lot of other researchers. At the end of the field-work I was in full possession of the data; I removed it from the field and took it back to a European academic setting without any guarantee that my research subjects would ever see the product thereof; this is clearly against feminist research principles. Furthermore, as a PhD student it is true that I needed the data, for my own gain, that is, to acquire a qualification. By the end of the field-

work I immediately had to fly back to the United Kingdom without going back to the field to at least show my subjects how the data was going to be presented. I never kept in touch with any of my research subjects or networks. However, even if I had wanted to go back to the field, which I did, the fact that I had time and money constraints, coupled with the fact that I already had problems with the gate-keepers which could have put the research subjects as well as my research in a precarious position, made a return visit unviable.

Lastly, not only is it the gate-keepers who wield power in research, but this research has proven that the participants themselves wield a lot of power. In this research male interviewees (when it is a woman who conducts the research) wielded a lot of power especially during the process of interviews. This brings me to the issue of gender in research. As seen in the section above, my interviews with male participants provide evidence of unequal power relations. As already seen, the power which male participants possessed surfaced when I needed to ask them certain questions which as an insider I understood to be inappropriate in terms of culture, and therefore felt uncomfortable asking.

### ***Observations***

As mentioned I did observations concurrently with interviews and they generated a separate body of data from the interviews. I observed families who were not necessarily among my interviewees. As mentioned, it was only one family, my host family, where the mother was also one of my interviewees.

I chose families I knew – old acquaintances. The reasons behind this are: first, I assumed that it would be difficult and perhaps awkward to ask my interviewees, whom I did not know that well, to let me into their houses to live with them and observe them for days. In this sense, I assumed that it would have been easy for my presence, as a stranger, to influence the

behavior of family members. Secondly, knowing how I am, the fact that it would not be easy (and therefore would take a long time) for me to integrate into a new environment was a risk I did not want to take, given the time constraints. In all households, I gained access through the wives. I identified old friends, former colleagues and acquaintances with whom I had worked before my current employment and who I knew worked in government Departments and Institutions. The observation took place with 3 families outlined in table 2.3 below. Both husbands and wives in these households are professionals. The purpose of the observations was to observe how domestic work was distributed among family or household members, including the maid. This included observing: mainly the roles and responsibilities of members of households; domestic chores – daily, weekly chores, the time spent on each chore, how they are done; the activities within the household. Below are the three households I observed, the length of time the observations took, the household composition and the occupations of the couple.

**Table 2.3 Description of Observed Households**

<b>Dates of the Observation</b>	<b>Household Composition and ages</b>	<b>Husbands and Wife's Occupation</b>
<b>1. 26/07/08-03/08/08</b>	Husband (45); Wife (40); 4 children (18, 17, 13, 4); helper (22)	Husband: Senior Lecturer in a University Wife: Manager - Parastatal
<b>2. 22/08/08-27/08/08</b>	Husband (41); Wife (39); 2 children (13, 5); helper	Husband: Senior Manager – Local Government Wife: Optometrist – Local Hospital
<b>3. 27/08/08-03/09/08</b>	Husband (47); Wife (39); 4 children (14, 8, 8, 6); helpers (wife's sister & husband's sister); 2 gardeners.	Husband: consultant – Management & Development of Radio Stations. Wife: Senior Manager – Legal Services Government Department

My original plan was to do non-participant observation of my host at her place and of work as well as in her home for four weeks to observe gender relations between men and women at the work-place as well as the division of labour in the household. My host only agreed to be observed at home but not at her place of work, the reasons being that she spends most of her time in the field and at meetings and workshops in and outside the province and was seldom in the office. She was only in the office twice a week on average, to write reports on her site visits and work and attends meetings and she explained that I would not be able to travel with her because it is against the organization's regulations, especially because I would obviously not be covered by the organization's travel insurance. I asked if I could be allowed into the organization's meetings. She explained that I would have to be granted permission to do so. For these reasons I had to abandon the idea of doing observation at the work-place. Besides, doing observations at the workplace it would not have worked well given the fact that I already had enough on my hands carrying out interviews within that limited time. In the event I only managed to do household observations.

I had planned to do observations upon completion of interviews, but I realized that I could not wait to finish the interviews before doing observations, given the limited time for my fieldwork. I carried out participant observation, in 3 households instead of one, because I felt one household could not represent households in the provincial capital; neither would the three, but at least three provide a broader picture of household activities than one. The extent of participation varied because of the different lengths of time spent within households. The first household's observation was planned long before my arrival in South Africa as I was negotiating for accommodation. I lived in this household from the outset to the end of my fieldwork, except during the two weeks when I stayed in the other two households to do observations. This means that the extent of participation in household 1 was more extensive than in other households; I lived a full month in HH1, while I stayed a week in the other 2 households.

Taking field notes was extensive and time consuming especially during the first week of observation. During this time I spent most of my time observing and writing every detail as I was waiting to start on interviews and negotiating access. However, I was careful not to influence the way things were done, as explicated below. Note-taking became easier after the first week, as I got used to it and everything, including domestic work, was routinized. Later, I was able to leave the household and do my interviews and when I came back I would ask the domestic worker to fill me in on what she and the others had done in my absence. At this point I was familiar with the domestic worker and others in the household.

My positionality within all households was favourable on several grounds and I consider myself to occupy an insider status in all 3 observation sites. It was neither difficult to gain access to the research sites, in contrast to the interviews, nor to fit in with the families, given my level of familiarity and proximity to these families. Firstly, I am familiar with the socio-

religio-cultural context. Moreover, I personally knew most families and members very well, with the exception of the youngest children, extended family members and domestic workers. However, I did not take that for granted. Influenced by insights from feminist research, I strategized on how best to quickly blend into the research setting as a way of avoiding making my presence felt and/or disturb families' normal lives, as noted by Burgess (1989) and O'Reilly (2009). First, I refrained from writing notes in the presence of others. However, occasionally I would disappear to note down times and events. In the evening I would then expand on the notes and put everything into the laptop. Second, I was also familiar with the culture and activities within the families, as also pointed out by Hodkinson (2005). Therefore without any difficulties I fitted into every household's activities, such as the evening bible discussion and prayer, and on Sundays I joined them for a church service, especially in HH1. Third, my familiarity with the culture also assisted in the understanding of how things are done within households, such as household chores. Whenever I was around during cleaning time I would assist with the cleaning of the house and childcare as well as with the washing up after the evening meals. This seemed to have contributed to reducing power differences between myself and the observed, especially domestic workers.

### **Establishing Friendships**

During my stay in these 3 households I established different relationships with different members of the households. First, I found myself having established closer relationships with the domestic workers than other members of the households. I attribute this to the fact that I spent more time with them than other members of the families, when observing them during their chores and also assisting, especially when everyone was away at work and school, during the first week and a half and when I did not have any interviews to do during the day. As I assisted them with the chores, I used this time to get to know them. We opened

up to each other and talked about our families, children and ex-husbands or partners, where we came from and other general topics. During our conversations I gathered that none of these domestic workers had a husband or partner. Our closeness was further enhanced by the fact that we had something in common – like most of the maids I had left my children in the care of someone else and it was apparent in our conversations that we both missed them. I sympathized with domestic workers, especially the one from HH1, given the huge amount of work and responsibilities she was faced with on a daily basis.

Secondly, observations provided very interesting lessons on childcare and challenged me in so many ways. I developed special relationships with, especially, the teenage girls in HH1. However, in all households my relationship with the children was constrained by the unequal power relationship, which is expected between adults and children as it is normally the way children are expected to relate with adults in the African culture. Children are expected to show a high level of respect towards any adult in the society. Furthermore, as I was observing HH1 from an insider point of view (knowing what is expected from an African girl-child in terms of housework) influenced the way I judged the three teenage girls from HH1. Girls, at this stage of their human development, are expected to be industrious. It was therefore disturbing to see them not assisting the maid in the way that is expected of them, especially when they were available and when the maid seemed to be under a lot of work-pressure. However, although these girls were not as industrious as would be expected from girls of their age, I admired them for two reasons. They were committed to their schoolwork and they were influenced by Christian principles and used these principles as a motivation towards their academic achievement. During the Bible study and prayer every Wednesday evening they usually brought the challenges they faced especially pertaining to their schoolwork as prayer items and we would all pray for each other. I was humbled by the fact

that this family always prayed for my fieldwork success. Their motto was “there is nothing one cannot achieve as God’s child”. In this way they really inspired me and they challenged my own Christian faith. I therefore had a very interesting time with this family. My relationship with children in the other households was at a different level because of the brevity of the time I spent with them. The children were still young but very respectful. It turned out that the little boys in HH3 were more industrious for their age, unlike the girls in HH1. I developed such admiration for these little boys in HH3, who were so respectful and obedient, but what I found appealing about them was that they did not give the aunt, who was their designated caretaker in the mother’s absence, any problems when they were supposed to do their chores – like washing dishes or cleaning their school shoes etc. They did everything without complaints, fighting or resistance. This gave me something to think about with regards to my own childrearing skills.

I also had special relationships with the couples, especially the wives within the families. However, given the type of work they were doing, they came home late in the evenings, and at times did work-related travelling. For instance, the HH1 and HH3 wives were doing a lot of work-related travelling and therefore came home late. Men in the families were very seldom around.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

This section sets out my approach to data analysis. I used qualitative methods of data analysis for the three sets of data, collected through interviews, observations and analysis of documents. As mentioned earlier and the values influence data analysis and the entire data-collection process. Moreover, we inadvertently carry our values with us throughout the research process without realizing it. This was most apparent during my observation,

especially in HH1 given the expectations I had with regards to the girls' assistance within the household. It may also be true that I apply the same views and attitudes in my data-analysis though I have tried to be reflexive about their effect.

### ***Interviews***

I used thematic analysis as one of the qualitative methods of data analysis. My analysis was done in 3 stages: the first stage involved the transcribing of data; the second - familiarizing myself with the participants' responses; the third stage - first order, second order and third order coding.

As I have already mentioned, some of the interviews were recorded and some were not, I therefore had to transcribe the interview notes and/or recordings (where applicable) and began by transcribing almost immediately after the interviews each day, except where I was too tired to work during the night. In such a case I would do the following night. What I transcribed was guided by the research questions. I therefore only captured information which provided answers to the research questions.

The second stage involved reading through the transcripts a number of times, to familiarise myself with the interviewees' responses in relation to the research questions and the focus of the research. As I was going through the transcripts over and over again, I began to identify emerging and common themes and how they related to the research questions. Some of the themes were unexpected but related to the research topic, there was, however, no research question that addressed them and this meant going back to refine the research questions. This stage also involved going back and forth between the transcript and the interview to ensure that themes were captured from participants' words.

The second stage of coding involved going beyond description, to interpret what the participant said, thereby capturing larger segments of the data. This involved combining several related labels into one, for example. The codes were identified in the first stage as follows: absenteeism, late-coming, inability to attend workshops, sleepless nights, fatigue – which at this stage I put together – into a category labelled disrupted work life.

The third stage of coding involved drawing out the over-arching themes within the data. This involved looking for and identifying larger-scale or general patterns which incorporated several of those identified at the previous levels. This meant the further reduction of themes down to a few key ideas. For example, guided by the research questions, I started by identifying women's difficulties in combining paid work and domestic roles and labelling each of them in the transcripts. This was followed by putting the similar or related ones together under one theme. Furthermore, I continued with this as I was putting my data into chapters, where I had to further summarise and to identify over-arching themes, which involved further reduction of these themes into more general concepts.

### ***Observations***

As mentioned, observations produced a separate body of data. My analysis included a description of the household, the family structure and its implications for gender roles, the division of labour among household members, what is involved in these roles and how tasks are done and by whom. All households basically followed a similar routine of household chores; they were, however, influenced by household dynamics.

The main themes to emerge were: household description and composition and an over-arching theme, Domestic Division of Labour with 2 sub-themes, household chores and childcare. Household chores were further broken down into sub-sub-themes, which included

cleaning, laundry and ironing, cooking and child-care. Here there were emerging themes that were unexpected; these included, the role of the domestic worker within the household; the issue of class and the hierarchical relationship between the maid and the employer who was mainly the wife in the household; the exploitative nature of work done by maids; the removal of the maid from her family, which in some cases means her children are left with inadequate care from other family members. This meant that I was also gathering data on women's experiences of combining motherhood with low paid domestic work which was unanticipated.

### ***Analysis of Documents***

Lastly, I also analyzed legislative and policy documents which were related to gender equality and family responsibility. The rationale for this was to determine how working parents were accommodated at work and the sort of approach used to address gender equality and issues of childcare. This way I sought to find out how issues regarding gender were framed within policies.

### **Ethical considerations**

Before I began any fieldwork I had planned how I was going to take account of ethical issues in the research process. Although I had already had signs of the possibility of problems in the field, I was completely unprepared for them. I followed feminist research requirements to "secure informed consent from participants, to conduct the interview in ways that are sensitive to participants' concerns and feelings and to protect the identities of interviewees by using pseudonyms" (Devault and Gross, 2007: 187). With this in mind, I obtained consent from each and every interviewee and participant in observations. I began by informing participants about the overall purpose of the study, and told them that they were welcome to

withdraw from the interview and observation process or even to withdraw the information they had provided if they so wished. As soon as they agreed I asked them to sign a consent form (see appendix 1) to affirm that the interview was voluntary. I also informed them that I would use pseudonyms, which I did, to ensure confidentiality. My encounters with the senior risk manager, in the government Department, as well as the Human Resource senior manager in the Parastatal, raised serious ethical implications for my interviewees. When I thought about this afterwards, I felt it was selfish of me to have continued with the interviews when there was a possibility that this could put my interviewees in a precarious position in terms of their employment. While I did not want my research effort to perish, I did not want to land my research subjects in trouble. Against this backdrop, anonymizing organizations seemed a necessary step. I have therefore removed the names of the organizations and those of places (town, city and province) or occupations that could link the study to the organizations and their location.

Also noteworthy, is that during the process of field work I had to disappear from the main office, where I was interviewing when my research was brought to a halt and sneak into another directory, which was located away from the main office; this raises the question of whether, after this encounter, my research was overt or covert. I never intended for it to be covert and it wasn't for the participants who were all aware of what I was doing; however, as far as the organizations were concerned I had not formally been given access and was undertaking research without the necessary approval. However, the dilemma I found myself in put in a position of such uncertainty.

Within this chapter I have tried to illustrate how my position as a mother and a career woman has had an impact on the research process. First, I have demonstrated how my profession as a lecturer helped me in fostering informal contacts with former academics, who were

important with regards to access to participants as well as being very instrumental in the successful completion of my research. In this way, informal contacts were quite crucial to my research progress and completion. Secondly, my positionality with women has assisted me in generating rapport and reducing power differences between myself and my female interviewees.

To answer my research questions, I have adopted a Black South African feminist standpoint to explore parental experiences in a country which is undergoing transition. The standpoint theory is important to draw out, disentangle and illuminate the parallels and contradictions that prevail in parenting practice in a changing context. It is feminist in the sense that I seek to explore the gendering of the parenting experience and the implications thereof for mothering and fathering. As I explored women's and men's gendered experiences, I found myself at home with women as they shared their experiences which I identify so much with. I believe that this had a positive impact on the quality of my findings, which is very important for the study. The next two chapters (3 and 4) are the analysis of legislation and national policies and organizational policies, respectively.

## Chapter 3. **Approaches to Equality**

### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature on and outlines equality approaches and their evolution. Policy interventions (including in South Africa) have adopted gender equality approaches, which have generally evolved from equal treatment to special treatment or positive action; gender mainstreaming and, most recently, diversity and intersectionality. The last one appears to be the most suitable analytical tool for the South African context given the complexity of the inequalities. South African legislation acknowledges diversity and intersectionality has been integrated into its most recent legislative documents, which are ‘soft laws’.

### **Equality Policies**

In 1994 the first democratic elections replaced the apartheid regime (which operated under unjust and repressive laws) with a constitutional democratic government. With its commitment to gender equality, the new democratic government focused its attention on replacing the discriminatory laws with new ones in line with the new constitution as well as International Human Rights agreements. It also included women’s representation in parliament with the number of women escalating from 8 to 111 in 1994, and 119 in 1999; this resulted in South Africa having the second highest population of female representation in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region (Myakayaka-Manzini, 1998). Fundamental to the new order is the achievement of a non-racial and non-sexist society.

The South African context is complex. This is due to several factors related to its colonial and apartheid history and relates to the composition of its population. The current

classification of racial groups in South Africa is problematic. It is important to note that, unlike many other countries such as the United States, where racially oppressed groups are a minority, South Africa was ruled by the white minority (who only constituted 13% of the population). First there is clear demarcation between black and white. However, the black population is subdivided into Africans, Coloureds and Indians with Africans being further divided into nine ethnic groups. Amongst the blacks the Africans are by far the majority ( $\pm 80\%$ ) of the population, and they have suffered different forms of oppression. Furthermore, within each group are women who are further discriminated against on the basis of gender, which makes them the most marginalized among all disadvantaged groups and therefore the most targeted for affirmative action.

### **Approaches to Gender Equality**

Below I begin with a discussion of four gender equality approaches and thereafter analyze how gender equality is conceptualized in the South African context.

#### ***Equal versus Difference***

The first and second equality approaches that I look at are equal and special treatment approaches. I discuss the two in relation to each other mainly because of the conflicting views of feminists on the two approaches, which were understood to be antagonistic to each other, as will be seen in what follows.

The struggle for equality commenced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as early feminists advocated equal opportunities, treatment and rights (Cockburn, 1991: 19). Equal treatment refers to “actions that guarantee women equal rights and the same opportunities as men in the public sphere” (Booth and Bennet, 2002: 434) which implies that men and women are treated on the basis of sameness. Later, in the 1970s the struggle for gender equality took a different form, which

encompassed the notion of difference or special treatment (special measures taken on behalf of those who are disadvantaged, for instance, women, to level the playing field, intended to bring about equality of outcome). The implication of this second approach is that equality for women does not necessarily mean living the same as men and therefore all workers should be protected on the basis of their special needs, thereby advocating for a “different but equal approach” (Walby, 2005: 326).

The notion of ‘difference’ has been a contentious issue in the history of feminism. For instance, there have been fierce debates among feminists on how ‘pregnancy’ should be treated in legislation and workplace policies (Bacchi, 1990; Walby, 2005). Consequently special actions, such as ‘paid maternity leave’, have been put in place “discriminating in favour of women as a sex in order to make progress towards equality of outcome” (Cockburn, 1991: 31). Linked to this is the idea that legislation on pregnancy can be transformatory if it is implemented in a way that challenges the ‘status quo’, for instance, by promoting equal involvement of mothers and fathers in childcare (Walby, 2005). This happens in countries like Sweden and Norway where men and women are given (almost) equal time off for childcare after birth. Yet, pregnancy legislation can also perpetuate women’s roles as primary carers. Moreover, many feminist theorists, such as Crompton (2007) argue the unlikelihood of policies alone leading to the transformation of gender relations. The notion of difference has, also been used in defense of the recognition of, and respect for cultural differences rather than their erosion. Lastly, the notion of difference is also seen in arguments about diversity and intersectionality, and in black against white feminist debates in the 1980s, which emerged especially out of black feminists’ dissatisfaction “that white feminism in proclaiming all women as sisters and all different from men, ignored black women’s experience of oppression by white women” (Cockburn, 1991: 27). They argued for

the acknowledgement of differences on the basis of an intersection of, among others, sex and race/ethnicity.

At the time those who were advocates of equal treatment were against special treatment because they feared that if employers had to make special provisions for maternity they might refuse to employ women to avoid the need for such provisions. However, equal treatment is widely criticized on the basis of its implications, that women would be expected to perform to the standards set by men (Walby, 2005) and that men are the standard against which women are measured (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000: 387). Cockburn (1991) most importantly warns that if past history and present circumstances prevent women from taking up the opportunities offered or competing on equal terms, equality will never be achieved.

Another form of special treatment is 'positive action' which refers to the adoption of specific measures on behalf of women, to remedy past discrimination, and as a way of leveling the playing field. According to Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000), one form of positive action is affirmative action aimed at rectifying women's previous disadvantages in comparison to men. This has been translated into legislation and work-place policies. However, as Cockburn (1991) suggests, equal and special treatment or positive action take a short-cut or integrationist route to equality (Jahan, 1995) which is insufficient to bring about real gender transformation as will be seen in the discussion below. For example, these approaches seem to address the problem of women's representation and equal rights rather than unequal gender relations. Hence, a different approach which would address unequal gender relations was sought: gender mainstreaming.

## *Gender Mainstreaming*

The third equality approach that I look at is Gender Mainstreaming. According to Unterhalter and North (2010) this approach emerged in the 1980s and gained prominence when it was adopted by the UN Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), in the Fourth World Conference for Women (FWCW) in 1995, as the policy approach to address gender inequality across nations. The BPA requires the establishment of institutional mechanisms to carry out the implementation of gender mainstreaming across nations. For instance, strategic objective 8 in the BPA requires each member state to: first, establish or strengthen national machineries for the advancement of women, which should include various structures within and outside government; second, to incorporate gender concerns into legislation and national policies, programmes and projects; third, to generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data. The BPA was widely accepted and adopted by most member states, of which South Africa is one.

It is important to point out that most of the countries that are signatories to the BPA, including South Africa, are also signatories to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and came into force in 1981. In this convention state parties are required to take all measures to bring about the advancement of women. Among others: article 10-11 requires state parties to eliminate discrimination in areas such as education and employment and article 16 advocates for equality in marriage and for women and men to have the same rights and responsibilities as parents.

Gender mainstreaming shifts the focus from women to gender. Some authors suggest that it addresses men's feelings of resentment brought about by the use of positive action approach,

in that such approaches “targeted funding and reserved opportunities for women which often places women in opposition to men and sometimes in opposition to other women” (Booth and Bennet, 2002: 438). However, gender mainstreaming had equally been met with opposition and resistance, mainly from men, as gender equality norms are introduced into institutional thinking and compete with traditional norms (Walby, 2005).

There are several ways in which gender mainstreaming is conceptualized, using different theoretical vocabularies and ranges from a unitary, to a dual and a trilogy approaches to mainstreaming gender in organizations. Among the early conceptualizations is Cockburn’s (1991) distinction between the ‘long’ and the ‘short agenda’, where the ‘long agenda’ implies taking a root and branch approach to gender inequality. This entails addressing unequal gender relations, the structures and systems that lie at the root of subordination and which perpetuate gender discrimination (Cockburn, 1991). This does not only focus on the workplace, but also emphasizes the need to address patriarchal domination in other domains such as the household as well as in society at large. In contrast, the ‘short agenda’ implies adopting the ‘narrow’ approach to addressing gender inequality, by focusing on issues such as gender representation in high positions at the work-place. This leaves gender and power relations which means that the root of the problem is not being addressed.

In a similar vein, Jahan (1995) distinguishes between ‘integrationist’ and ‘agenda-setting’ approaches to gender mainstreaming. Here integrationist is synonymous with Cockburn’s (1991) short and agenda-setting with her long agenda. For instance, similar to the short agenda, the integrationist approach seeks to address women’s issues without challenging existing policy paradigms (Walby, 2005). This means that just like the short agenda approach, it focuses on addressing women’s representation without interrogating unequal gender relations, and precisely because of its narrow conception of gender inequality, it is

most likely to be adopted. However, this is not likely to lead to any substantial change. On the other hand, agenda-setting seems to be very closely related with the idea of the long-agenda which entails the reorientation of the existing policy paradigm to prioritize gender equality in an organization's objectives. This entails "changing decision-making, structures and processes, rearticulating policy-ends and means from a gender perspective" (Squires, 2005: 372). The integrationist and the 'short agenda' approach are criticized on the basis that, as Unterhalter and North (2010) rightly say, gender is conceived as an add-on to already existing policies, projects and/or programmes. Neither approach aspires to destabilize or challenge the status quo, but to achieve mainly a gender balance in high positions in politics and the workplace; this implies that it leaves other areas and domains intact. On the other hand, agenda-setting is criticized on the basis of its limitation in not moving beyond women's inclusion in decision-making.

Other gender mainstreaming proponents, like Booth and Bennet (2002) propose a three-fold framework which they named a 'three-legged-stool' as the most suitable approach to gender mainstreaming. This draws from three perspectives: 'equal treatment', 'the women perspective' and the 'gender perspective'. They point out that, first, the gender perspective aims to transform men's and women's lives through reorganizing society and achieving a fairer gender redistribution of responsibilities, while also drawing on the other two perspectives: equal (opportunities) or sameness and special treatment (difference) [see last section]. This three legged stool appears to be a complete package required for the advancement to gender equality. The authors emphasize that for an effective outcome, the three should work complementarily rather than in isolation from each other. Moreover, Booth and Bennet (2002: 435) give insightful advice that gender mainstreaming should be

context specific “to address the peculiarities of its own equality history including legislative base [...]”.

Similarly, Squires (2005) also uses a trilogy of concepts in relation to gender mainstreaming. She places mainstreaming within a typology of inclusion, reversal, and displacement, which she says have emerged incrementally, each improving on the earlier approach. Inclusion, like the integrationist approach, encompasses ensuring gender representation and equal opportunities and therefore takes the short agenda approach; reversal encapsulates positive action and is based on difference; displacement encompasses mainstreaming diversity and importantly, deliberative mechanisms, in the form of women’s forums, to counter the technocratic approach, which is in line with South African feminists Hassim (2003), Gouws (2005) and Karlsson (2010), as discussed in the next subsection. She proposes that these have to coexist in order to mainstream gender and should work complementarily. Furthermore, she sees this combination as a transformative approach to gendered power structures. However, in recognition of the diverse nature of inequalities, as Squires (2005) rightly says, there is a need to replace gender with diversity mainstreaming. I am in agreement with the combination of all the above but suggest the replacement of gender and diversity with intersectionality. For this reason this discussion moves to a discussion of mainstreaming diversity and intersectionality.

It is important to note that proponents of gender mainstreaming, such as Booth and Bennet (2002), Walby (2005), Woodward (2009) and Unterhalter and North (2010), recognize intersectionality or diversity which can be seen as an intersection of diverse forms of inequalities including class, age, ethnicity, religion disability, sexual orientation. These are elaborated in the next section. However, some have raised concerns about gender being

swallowed up within intersectionality and becoming invisible (Woodward 2009); these concerns are addressed in the next section.

Many countries, such as the European Union countries and South Africa, have adopted gender mainstreaming, taking the long agenda approach seeking to transform gender relations but legislating it as a 'soft law'. This way it is not legally binding, in that, there is "no allocation economic and human resources [...] no time-table for action, no specific measures for implementing gender mainstreaming, monitoring its application, and sanctioning non-compliant actors" (Lombardo and Meier, 2008: 104). For instance, the EU sets targets but the implementation of policies is left to member states and monitoring is done only through annual reports on progress made by each member state. Similarly, South Africa, like other signatories of CEDAW, is required to address inequality, as articulated by article 18 of the CEDAW and to write a progress report to be presented at the Women's International conferences that would follow, approximately after every ten years; beyond this there is no accountability (Walker, 2003).

Gender mainstreaming has become watered down as an approach to challenging the status quo and is thus criticized on many grounds. Some authors decry the lack of clarity in its conceptualization and objectives which results in difficulties in its implementation (Gouws, 2005; Lombardo and Meier, 2008; Hassim, 2009; Karlsson, 2010) and because of this lack of clarity its transformative potential is lost (Lombardo and Meier, 2008). There are also concerns that the focus on gender mainstreaming could result in the abandonment of policies and positive actions on behalf of women, in which case three-fold approach is preferred. Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000) and Eveline, Bacchi and Binns (2009: 201) highlight the tendency of gender mainstreaming to "portray gender as fixed oppositional categories of men and women, a theoretical stance that they see as denying the complex ways in which power

and privilege circulate in specific social contexts”. In line with this is the concern that gender inequality should not only be addressed in public and workplace policies while leaving other domains untouched. In this case, as Unterhalter and North (2010: 391) argue, “this might mean achieving equality in one domain, but leaving in place grave injustices in another”. These authors propose “confronting the marginalization or trivialization of matters concerning gender or women’s interests mean organizations may need to look beneath processes that assure a surface equality, but in fact maintain deeply entrenched misogynist ideas” (Unterhalter and North, 2010: 391).

### ***Mainstreaming Gender in South Africa***

In this section I look at gender mainstreaming in the South African context. In South Africa gender mainstreaming, as in other countries, has been introduced in compliance with International, Regional Instruments, among others the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Fourth World Conference for Women Beijing Platform for Action (1995), and the Southern African Development Co-operation of State Declaration on Gender and development (1997).

Here I review the debates on gender mainstreaming in South Africa. These debates bring to the fore a myriad of challenges with regards to its implementation, which has resulted in a high level of despondence, to a point where South African feminists question its capacity to bring about substantial institutional changes. I start by outlining the theoretical framework which most South African feminists use to assess the impact of gender mainstreaming.

Many South African feminist authors have employed the Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) approaches to explain the impact of the implementation of gender mainstreaming in South Africa. They also use Molyneux’s (1985) concepts of

‘Practical Needs’ and ‘Strategic Gender Interests’ (Klugman, 1999; Walker, 2003, Karlsson, 2010). WID is defined in similar terms to Squires’s (2005) ‘inclusion’ and ‘reversal’ approaches, in that it addresses women’s ‘practical needs’, which are immediate and welfare needs, such as improving women’s living conditions in relation to the family, thereby ensuring that they are supported in their existing gender roles, especially within the family (Molyneux, 1985); this leaves gendered power relations untouched. On the other hand, the GAD approach is in line with the ‘Agenda-setting’ and ‘displacement’ approaches and entails the overhaul of structures that perpetuate gender inequality, thus addressing the root cause of gender inequality in both public and private domains. Klugman (1999) and Karlsson (2010) concur that South Africa has taken the WID approach to address gender inequality, which suggests that it has addressed mainly women’s representation and ‘practical needs’ and this implies having used ‘inclusion’ and ‘reversal’ approaches. For instance, Klugman, (1999) demonstrates that gender mainstreaming in the Department of Health has resulted in an increased number of health care centres, free healthcare for pregnant women and children and so on (Klugman, 1999). As can be seen, the WID approach poses a very limited challenge to the status quo. According to Karlsson (2010), the GAD approach emerged after the failure of the WID approach to address the root-cause of gender inequality. To this effect the GAD approach emerged to bring about substantive change towards gender equality. Walker (2003) acknowledges that although national gender policies highlight differential power relations as serious challenges facing South Africa and therefore seeks to address them; to date this has not been realized. It has been argued that policies alone are not by themselves sufficient to bring about substantial institutional change (Crompton, 1997; Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2009). The studies below acknowledge the South African government’s commitment to gender equality. In response to the international instruments mentioned above, South Africa, from

1995, has developed national policies addressing inequalities. As will be seen in the next section, South African legislation has started by addressing issues of equal and special treatment in the late 1990s. In the 2000s, gender mainstreaming policies which incorporated a gender perspective to policies, programmes and projects, was introduced.

The introduction of gender mainstreaming was initially met with high level enthusiasm by feminists, activists and other groups as this approach appeared to be a panacea for South African women's gender oppression problems. And it seemed relevant to this context on the basis that it had been designed to challenge the rigid and deep-rooted cultural beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality, which to date appear to be a major challenge faced by South African society and its institutions (Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2009). This way not only does it seek to transform the workplace but also other related domains such as the family and society at large, thus adopting 'displacement' approach in addressing gender inequality.

A Gender Machinery, which is comprised various structures within and outside the government. Those who are located within the government are the Office of the Status of Women (OSW) and the Gender Focal Points (GFPs). GFPs are structures which form part of the Gender Machinery and located in line ministries and responsible for implementation of the National Gender Policy (their functions are fully outlined in chapter 4). On the hand those outside government are independent bodies such as the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) and the civil societal organisations] were established to ensure that gender concerns are institutionalized, as envisaged by the Beijing Platform for Action.

Authors outline many obstacles encountered during the process of gender mainstreaming, which stalled it and rendered gender equality unachievable. This section takes us through a myriad of challenges encountered during its implementation, especially in government

Departments, as revealed by Walker's (2003) and Karlsson's (2010) empirical studies in the then Departments of Land Affairs and Education, respectively.

Walker's (2003) study entailed analysing policies, documents as well as interviews of government officials. In contrast, Karlsson (2010) employed a case study and ethnographic approach to explore how gender mainstreaming had been implemented within the Department of Education. Walker (2003), Hassim (2003) and Karlsson (2010) highlight a disjuncture between policy and practice. These authors allude to a high level of commitment at the national policy level. For instance, Walker (2003: 124) states that some of the policies in the Department of Land Affairs "provide an excellent vehicle for redressing gender imbalances in land access and land ownership and will help government meet its international commitments"; 30% of the land transferred to blacks through the Land Restitution and Distribution programme was to be given to women. Although an inclusion and reversal approach are adopted here, the programme challenges the deep-rooted on-going patriarchal cultural perception in relation to land in South Africa that women, on their own, can never acquire land, especially in a rural context (Friedman, 1999; Cock and Bernstein, 2001; Walker, 2003). Nevertheless, this commitment was found to be less forthcoming at especially the operational level. Although it appears as if gender is trivialised at this level, studies seem to demonstrate a genuine lack of knowledge, understanding and capacity to mainstream gender, given the fact that there was little or no training in this regard (Albertyn, 1996; Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2003; Karlsson, 2010). There was general lack of gender awareness at all levels, including among those who are in charge of the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Moreover, government officials, project managers and Gender Committees (GenComs) at district levels were not aware of Departmental gender policies, while some referred to generalized statements in international documents in their district

gender work. Karlsson (2010) found that the provincial Department of Education relied on the Employment Equity Plans which were Departmental responses to labour legislation rather than the Gender in Education Policy. In the same vein, Walker (2003) demonstrates that project managers seemed totally lost with regards to gender issues. Some simply did not incorporate gender in their work. Furthermore, government officials found Gender Policy difficult to implement claiming that gender policy guidelines were unclear and difficult to follow.

Secondly, these studies also found that government officials, project managers and GFPs' themselves, seemed to be uncertain of what their task entailed due to the lack of clear prescriptions, especially in the GFPs' mandate (Hassim, 2003 and Karlsson, 2010). Thirdly, gender work had taken the inclusion approach and was treated as an 'add-on' or given low priority at all levels (Chisholm and Napo, 1999; Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010). Fourthly, gender work was under-resourced in several ways: among others it was allocated a limited budget and was under-staffed (Chisholm and Napo, 1999; Hassim, 2003; Walker 2003; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010). The challenges outlined above may contribute to the multi-faceted challenges experienced by GFPs' whose task is mainly to drive the implementation of gender mainstreaming and to ensure that gender equity concerns are integrated in government Departments (Hassim, 2003; Chisholm and Napo, 1999). Studies imply that GFPs' challenges emanate mainly from the fact that recommendations that GFPs should be employed and located at the office of the Director General, by both International Instruments and the National Policy Framework on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2001), so that they can have authority to influence decision-making, were ignored. Instead, as Karlsson (2010), Walker (2003) and Hassim (2003) found, in Government Departments, GFPs' are employed at lower level positions as

Deputy Directors and some as Equal Employment Opportunity Officers. They are located under Special Programmes in Human Resource and administrative divisions and gender is part of the responsibility of the Transformation Unit (Karlsson, 2010). Under Special Programmes, GFPs' are expected to juggle multiple functions, including gender equality, rights of women and children, people with disabilities and so on (Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010). Many of the challenges seem to emanate from the GFPs' lack of authority related to their weak institutional location (Walker, 2003; Chisholm and Napo, 1999; Hassim, 2003; Karlsson, 2010) as well as from the multi-tasks allocated to them by the Department which may mean that time given to gender work is limited. Lack of authority has meant that GFPs are unable to influence decision-making in policy development (Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2003). Karlsson (2010) observed that GFPs' were only drawn in to comment on issues at a relatively advanced stage; once again this implies the treatment of gender as an add-on to already developed policies at a point where GFPs' inputs add no value. The literature reflects resistance and antagonistic attitudes by other government officials towards gender mainstreaming in government Departments. Hassim (2003) and Karlsson (2010) are concerned about the lack of support by other government officials towards gender mainstreaming and GFPs. For instance, Karlsson (2010) indicates that GFPs are usually undermined by other government officials because of perceptions that they do not know what they are doing. In the same vein, Hassim (2003) finds hostility and resistance by other government officials to any attempts to mainstream gender. The resistance is said to be extreme at district level. Meer (1999), Cock and Bernstein (2001), Hassim (2003), Walker (2003) note the rigid and deep-rooted patriarchal attitude that GFPs are met with at district level. At this level patriarchal norms are strongly defended by, especially, traditional leaders who are custodians of tradition as alluded to in chapter one. This resonates with Walby

(2005) who has alluded to the fact that gender mainstreaming is likely to be met with great resistance and hostility as attempts are made to integrate new gender norms into state and societal institutions in competition with traditional norms. Friedman (1999), Meer (1999), Cock and Bernstein (2001) and Walker (2003) show that women are treated as minors by traditional leaders, who seem, to a large extent, to be in control of land distribution. Walker (2003) reveals that when the opportunity for land ownership was opened up to women, most of them were interested in co-ownership rather than independent ownership. Friedman (1999) explains that women who seek land without their husbands are likely to suffer alienation and ostracism not only in relation to their husbands and traditional leaders but also the community as a whole (Friedman, 1999); this explains the reluctance of women to operate autonomously. Traditional leaders appear to have great influence and power and are rarely challenged. To this effect women remain submissive to gain the protection of men, in this case, husbands, traditional leaders as well as the community as a whole, as seen in chapter 1. Moreover women have more to gain by being submissive and obedient in such societies than when they challenge authority. Thus they resort to submission and propriety in exchange for the protection of the husband and the traditional leader. Society provides women with the sense of identity and belonging as well as the social networks (Karlsson, 2010) needed to have a meaningful life in their communities and without which life may be unbearable.

Included in these debates is the fact that there have been successes in increasing gender representation, which some of the GFPs believed to form a big part of gender mainstreaming. For instance, as mentioned earlier in this section, some GFPs rely on Employment Equity Plans to mainstream gender in government Departments, which implies that the Department takes Cockburn's (1991) 'short agenda', Jahan's (1995) integrationist or Squires's (2005)

inclusion approach to gender mainstreaming. There have, in fact been debates around the issue of whether women's inclusion in the state has in fact translated into more 'substantial' or 'effective' representation. Hassim (2003) argues that women's inclusion does not automatically lead to their influence in decision-making. Like Walker (2003) and Karlsson (2010), Hassim (2003 and 2009) found that South Africa has taken Cockburn's (1991) 'short agenda' or Jahan's (1995) 'integrationist' approach, that is, among others things it has achieved are increased women's representation and addressing women's 'practical needs' as shown earlier in this section. However, as Unterhalter and North (2010: 391) rightly says, "the small gains of integrationism and 'adding in' women were often unable to compensate for the difficulties in achieving substantive strategic advances towards agenda setting in policy and practice". For this reason, there has been disillusionment with state efforts in dealing with gender inequality.

Authors show that even though gender mainstreaming was designed to take a long agenda or agenda setting approach to challenge "tradition, entrenched behaviour and power relations", it has been difficult to use it to transform masculine oriented government institutions (Karlsson, 2010) and patriarchal attitudes in both the government Departments and rural communities (Walker, 2003). The failure of gender mainstreaming to transform these institutions has been attributed to the fact that it is a foreign approach that has been associated with a transfer of the initiative from feminist activism to the state, and the associated use of bureaucratic technical approaches to address issues of gender oppression and inequalities (Hassim, 2003; Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010). The authors question the capacity of gender mainstreaming on the basis that it is a bureaucratic approach which takes a top-down approach as opposed to the bottom-up approach which has been used

by activists and which was more effective in the South African context. Moreover, many authors criticise it for ignoring the issue of diversity.

Hassim (2003) attributes the failure of gender mainstreaming to the fact that it is a foreign approach which has been introduced by donor agencies and which may not be suitable for addressing local, deeply-entrenched patriarchal attitudes and institutions. In a similar vein, Gouws's (2005) criticism of this approach is based on the premise that women, who have always been active agents in the struggle against racial and gender oppression in South Africa, are relegated to being powerless victims of political processes in need of state intervention which proposes an already defined 'gender solution' which is uncontested and unquestioned. Her main concern, like Karlsson (2010) and Hassim (2003), is the fact that in the process "women's subjectivity and the activism around women's issues become suppressed. Where the driving force around gender activism used to be women's experience, mainstreaming turns it into a technocratic category for redress that also suppresses the differences between women" (Gouws, 2005: 78). In addition, Hassim (2009) argues that gender treats men and women on the basis of sameness which in the process trivializes women's needs. This is in line with Meer (1999), Gouws (2005) and Unterhalter and North (2010) who believe that gender mainstreaming has resulted in the depoliticization of women's gendered experiences and interests.

While there are important gains that have come out of the gender mainstreaming strategy to gender inequality, these relate to a short agenda, integrationist or inclusion approach, that is, increasing gender representation especially at the workplace and providing for women's practical needs. This notwithstanding, increased representation of women has not been translated into more substantial changes, that is a move towards a fairer distribution of power and egalitarian gender relations and division of labour within institutions, households and

other domains. Suggestions for solutions brought forward by feminist authors take us back to activism in civil society. Although many of the authors seem disillusioned by gender mainstreaming as a technical approach to inequality, most still have some faith in it but suggest that it is insufficient on its own to transform highly unequal gender relations (Unterhalter and North, 2010). It can also be argued that the limited resources, such as limited financial and human resources (lack of trained personnel) allocated to gender work questions the government's commitment to transforming gender relations. This way it has been impossible to achieve the desired goals. Some seem to take the view that a combination of both gender mainstreaming and activism is necessary (Hassim, 2003 and Karlsson, 2010). Moreover, writers point to unprecedented achievements when women engage activism in dealing with issues of oppression.

Many of these feminist authors problematize a gender-based approach to inequalities on the basis of its disconnection from other social inequalities such as race and class and its tendency to flatten difference (Crenshaw, 1991; Friedman, 1999; Walker, 2005; Hankivsky, 2005; Squires, 2005; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010); this is explored in the next section.

### ***Mainstreaming 'Diversity' and 'Intersectionality'***

I look at both diversity and intersectionality together, because the two are often used interchangeably but without a clarification of the distinction between them. As this section unfolds, we begin to get a clearer picture of the distinction between the two approaches.

Apart from the criticisms discussed above, gender mainstreaming has also been subject to much debate because of its limited ability to challenge overlapping or intersectional oppressions, such as “when sexist and racist practices intersect in black women's lives”

(Eveline et al, 2009: 1). To this effect, these two approaches, are the latest to have “emerged in response to the inability of various singular analyses of structural inequality to recognize the complex interrelation between forms of oppression” (Squires, 2008: 55), as well as in response to black feminists’ dissatisfaction with, especially, the deployment of gender as a singular analytical tool to address gender inequality (Acker, 2006; Hankivsky, 2005) on the basis that it excludes black women’s lived experiences. Intersectionality has been widely accepted and employed by most feminist theorists in their works to explain inequality.

Many of the proponents of intersectionality and diversity claim that “most studies have focused on one or another of these categories, rarely attempting to study them as a complex, mutually reinforcing or contradicting processes” (Acker, 2006: 442). Such a claim is not entirely true, however, since many feminists, from as early as Second-Wave feminism, have, to some extent, studied the intersection of gender and class or, as Nash (2008: 3) clarifies, race and gender “without explicitly mobilizing the term intersectionality”. But, as Crenshaw (1991: 140) notes, the “intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism”, implying that the two are “too simplistic to capture the complexity of lived experience” (Nash, 2008: 5) especially of those who are multiply marginalized subjects, such as black women who are considered quintessentially ‘intersectional subjects’.

Intersectionality and diversity address various strands of inequalities, among others, gender, race, class, sexual orientation, religion, etc (Squires, 2005; Nash, 2008) rather than just gender. According to Hankivsky (2005), intersectionality includes the combinations of various oppressions which together produce something distinct from any one form of discrimination alone. Arguably this can be used to define diversity as well. However, Crenshaw (1991) uses the metaphor of ‘traffic intersection’ to capture the multiple systems of

subordination that often overlap and cross, a metaphor which gives us a clear explication of what intersectionality means.

On the other hand, diversity may not necessarily mean intersectionality. Although, like intersectionality, it may involve various strands of oppression, it does not necessarily mean they are intersectional, and they may be treated as separate. Hankivsky (2005) recommends the embrace of 'diversity mainstreaming' which could reflect a deeper understanding of intersectionalities. To this effect, it could be argued that diversity may be mainstreamed without recognizing intersections between gender and other vectors of oppression.

In light of these criticisms, it is clear that we should no longer be talking of gender mainstreaming as a viable approach to inequality, but employing a broader approach that is inclusive of all forms of oppression, which includes "understanding gender and the interface between gender, race, class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality and power" (Hankivsky, 2005: 978). In the same vein, this broader approach should not lose sight of the analytical category gender as an important axis of oppression. I argue that there is a need for a move to the intersectionality approach, especially for countries such as South Africa, which are made up of diverse, multiracial and multicultural populations and concur with Squires (2008), when she says that "it simply doesn't make sense to look at gender equality in isolation from diversity" (2008: 367).

Squires (2008) importantly notes that intersectionality deals with structural inequalities and operates with groups as the subject of equality rather than individuals, but is attentive to the cross-cutting nature of structures of oppression and the overlapping nature of groups. However, dealing with multiple inequalities and groups, as is the case in South Africa, especially those with contrasting ideological make-up or cultures, can prove to be quite

challenging. Moreover, the group-based approach has been criticized on the basis that it brings about fragmentations within and between groups.

Squires (2005) importantly, like South African intersectionality proponents, Gouws (2005), Hassim (1991 and 2009) and Karlsson (2010), suggests converging mainstreaming with theories of deliberative democracy (which is an important aspect of Squires's displacement), to include democratic participation and decision-making with the emphasis on impartiality through inclusivity. This places emphasis on inclusion and dialogue with diverse groups, which would offer "rich resources to counter technocratic tendency in the integrationist model of mainstreaming" (Squires, 2005: 381). Essentially Squires, envisages a theory that includes notions of inclusion, reversal and displacement, which would entail mainstreaming "equal opportunities, women's perspectives, complex equality": which recognizes diversity inclusive deliberation through deliberative mechanisms, such as citizens' forums (or activism) respectively (Squires, 2005: 384). This seems to be a most important and relevant theory for South Africa, given the complexity and diversity of the population, for the reasons outlined in what follows.

### ***Diversity and Intersectionality in South Africa***

This section addresses the question of diversity and intersectionality which forms a huge part of this country's history of the struggle for liberation. The South African context is complicated by the multiple differences and oppressions that characterize South Africa's past and present. The majority of the population has suffered oppression on the basis of one or more vectors of oppression among them: racial, class and gender-based oppression under the capitalist, apartheid and patriarchal state. However, the state had also created artificial divisions among Africans which gave rise to yet another significant vector of oppression,

ethnicity. Moreover, within these vectors of oppression there are issues relating to urban and rural divides, which create further inequalities within inequalities or minorities within minorities. For this reason the struggle against apartheid was mainly for the inclusion of these excluded groups in the political process. Hence, feminist writers turned their focus to engage with issues of diversity and intersectionality. However these intersections are not fully captured within some South African policies, as discussed in the next chapter. Against this backdrop gender mainstreaming has become not only conceptually flawed but flawed as an approach to address other inequalities. There is a need to converge gender mainstreaming with other vectors of inequalities, taking into cognizance the intersections between and within them, thereby retaining the transformatory nature of gender mainstreaming in pursuit of an integrated equality agenda. It is equally important that the deliberative mechanism aspect, which is activism, is reintroduced in order to facilitate a transformative approach.

Intersectionality debates, in South Africa, seem to have started from the development of a concept of 'triple oppression' where race, gender and class were interpreted as additive by many feminist writers (Hassim, 1991). Hassim (1991) notes some of the issues associated the usage of 'triple oppression' in explaining gender inequalities. For instance, she notes that using the notion of 'triple oppression' creates the idea of black women as quintessential, 'triplely oppressed' and according to her, this has led to the establishment of a women's wing within the broader national liberation movement (Hassim, 1991: 68) instead of autonomous feminist movements. This also means that the complexity of and intersections between and within these inequalities are overlooked.

As an extension of a broader nationalist movement, the women's wing prioritizes national over gender issues, thus adopting an anti-feminist approach. Moreover, as Hassim (1991) notes, the establishment of women as autonomous subjects as well as issues relating to

gender relations, such as the unequal division of labour and childcare, which are issues of vital importance to mothers, are dismissed as ‘soft’ or non-issues. To this effect ‘triple oppression’ has been problematized as too simplistic to capture the complexities of multiple systems of oppressions or inequalities (Hassim, 1991). First, it is rejected on the basis that it implies additive relations between vectors of oppression, among other, race, class and gender, which implies that it ignores the intersections between them. Secondly, gendered relations are left untouched. This way, according to Hassim (1991:68); it “lacks depth, and works only at a very general descriptive level” and therefore limited in analyzing and explaining gender inequalities.

The notion of ‘triple oppression’s’ dismissal of the ‘feminist label’ (Hassim, 1991; Giesler, 2000; Cock and Bernstein, 2001) implies that women may not be ready to break from patriarchal chains, arguably because of the sense of protection they seem to acquire from men’s presence (Hassim, 1991).

Meintjes (1993), on the other hand, argues that the South African history of intersectionality started with the recognition of two vectors of oppression, race and class, and, later, ethnicity, which suggests that the recognition of gender came last. She suggests that gender intersects and is embedded in class, race and ethnicity (Meintjes, 1993), which implies that gender cuts across other vectors of oppression thereby illuminating its importance. Gouws (1999) interestingly brings in the power dimension within and between the above mentioned groups by pointing to the non-recognition of the power imbalance embedded within them, which again point to minorities within minorities. All these accounts acknowledge complexity in the way that gender intersects with other vectors of oppression, such as, class, race age, geography, ethnicity and sexuality, as well as in the way some vectors of oppression might be hidden within others.

Meintjies's (1993) idea of difference suggests building of coalitions based on differences; this is popularly known as 'unity in diversity' in South Africa. However, Gouws (1999) seems to counter this coalition idea by stating that it undermines diversity, and points to one of the popular national' slogan, '*simunye*' (meaning we are one). Meintjies's (1993) idea of a coalition of differences is operationalized in the formation of a Women's National Coalition (WNC), which sought to unite women of widely diverse groups, as feminists and activists fiercely fought for the inclusion of women in the country's transitional negotiations in the early 1990s as will be seen in what follows.

The formation of the WNC highlights a watershed in South African feminist history, as women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds - activists, academics, interest groups, and individuals -came together across racial, ethnic, class, religious, political, geographical and ideological lines challenged the male-dominated negotiations for the transition from apartheid to a democratic society (Albertyn, 1994; Giesler, 2000; Cock and Bernstein, 2001; Hassim, 2003). This represents a turning point and a new dawn for South African feminist history. Moreover, it is also a strong affirmation of diversity. This coalition was formed around the same time as the negotiations for the transition from apartheid to a democratic South Africa were taking place in the Conference on the Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1992. It was formed, in part, to influence these negotiations as well as the writing of the Constitution, which was imminent. For the first time women were challenging male hegemony and domination in politics, even though they still did not want the feminist label, demands and needs were articulated through an uncompromisingly feminist voice. This exercise culminated into the Women's Charter, and was informed by the views and aspirations of 2 million women from diverse backgrounds. South African women fiercely battled for their inclusion in the male dominated CODESA negotiations using all sorts of

forms of resistance, including strikes, campaigns and sit-ins (Hassim, 2006; Giesler, 2000) and by these means, women were able to participate in crafting the new democratic order in South Africa.

Furthermore, with regards to the Interim Constitution, women demanded the inclusion of certain clauses that would capture gender oppression, among these being the recognition of and protection of women from cultural practices that discriminate against them. This involved fierce and persistent struggles against traditional leaders up to the eleventh hour, before final approval.

The WNC provided women with an unprecedented collective identity which was accompanied by the “acceptance of women’s multiple realities and the need to recognize differences and explore the concrete social realities of women from different cultures and ideologies, at different stages of life cycle, and with different sexual preferences” (Cock and Bernstein, 2001: 143). Moreover, as Cock and Bernstein (2001) note, the WNC was seen as a shared ground where women articulated their diverse needs and interests, again engaging the notion of displacement.

However, as expected of a widely diversified group, the WNC was riddled with serious tensions, conflicts, antagonistic attitudes and animosities between groups (Giesler, 2000; Cock and Bernstein, 2001) some of which were along racial lines. Some felt that their ideas were marginalized, while others felt that some groups were dominant; this resulted in threats to pull out. Although the coalition drew its strength from its diversity, this also generated serious weaknesses, such as immobility when the coalition stalled from time to time as deadlocks were reached (Giesler, 2000). This is commensurate with Squires (2005) who illuminates the contradictions and antagonisms associated with multiple inequalities and groups, which may pose a threat of fragmentation to the coalition as these different groups

compete in pursuit of an integrated equality agenda. Cock and Bernstein (2001) echo this concern, especially in relation to the adversarial nature of the WNC. To this effect these authors have suggested that leaders take measures to equip themselves with the necessary skills of handling diversity which is common among multiple groups.

However, with the hard work, determination and devotion of some remarkable women who were exposed to international feminist work while they were in exile, and others from academic and legal backgrounds, together with activists, South African women managed to transcend these divisions; they brought together all the issues which had been tabled and ensured that all groups' issues were represented (Cock and Bernstein, 2001; Hassim, 2006).

It is important to note that struggles for inclusion were not in vain; issues of diversity and intersectionality were enshrined in the Women's Charter, South African constitution and equality legislation, as will be seen in the next section.

In summing up, as a country characterized by complex intersectional inequalities, I concur with Hassim (1991 and 2006) that South Africa requires an approach that would take into cognizance the complex interface of intersectional vectors of oppression as outlined earlier in this section. The WNC history, outlined above, provides lessons to be considered in the application of intersectionality mainstreaming together with activism, which constitutes Squires's (2005) notion of displacement. This may serve as a springboard towards its successful implementation. Among lessons that are learnt, are how to deal with adversarialism or antagonisms associated with engaging multiple inequalities. This highlights the need for proper preparation for such a venture.

The implementation of intersectionality and activism or displacement can be done through engaging democratic participation which would involve inclusive deliberations between all

diverse groups represented. I concur with Squires (2005) that a more transformative approach would be one which combines inclusion, reversal, and displacement, rather than just the technocratic approach, is necessary. However, I argue that intersectionality should replace diversity in the above approach, so that we do not lose sight of inequalities that are internal to groups.

Next I look at framing analysis, a method that sheds light, in part, on why gender mainstreaming could not bring about substantive equality.

### **Framing Analysis**

Framing analysis can be used to assess how problems are defined in policy and to evaluate the effectiveness of approaches to inequalities. This entails, as Lombardo and Meier (2008) expound, an evaluation of the ‘diagnosis’ (problem) and ‘prognosis’ (solution), and whether problems or issues are framed in a manner that would address the root of the problem. They use ‘framing analysis’ to assess the framing or meaning of gender equality in EU-political or policy discourses. Upon examining family friendly policies these authors note that problems related to paid work and parenting are framed as a problem of the reconciliation of paid work and childcare by working mothers, which was identified as a dominant frame. The issue of reconciliation of childcare and family responsibilities came up as dominant in the framing of the prognosis as well. Yet, inequality issues were less prevalent in the framing of solutions and more minor in family policies. The inability to reconcile paid work and family responsibilities was perceived as a woman’s problem and not a man’s. In this way women were defined as the problem. For this reason, it is women who are targeted by family policies while men are simply encouraged to take up family roles.

Furthermore, the problem of reconciliation is presented as a labour market need which requires changes in the labour market only, while other areas, such as individual, family as well as wider society, are not taken into consideration. Hence, authors argue that the framing is not at all approached from a gender perspective and lacks a feminist voice. The fact that reconciliation is not seen as both parents' problem as well as a gender relational issue is evidence of this. Similarly, on the issue of gender inequality in politics, Lombardo and Meier (2008) note that on the issue of underrepresentation of women in politics, just as in family policies, both the diagnosis and prognosis is about women only and not men. The problem is framed in terms of women's low numbers in political institutions and gender inequality as structural inequalities and sources of discrimination, again located in the labour market. Women are seen as the "main problem-holders with men implicitly or explicitly as a norm" (Lombardo and Meier, 2008: 115) therefore they are the ones to struggle with the achievement of gender parity. Men are excluded from both the diagnosis and prognosis. This way the framing of both the diagnosis and prognosis do not take gendered relations into consideration. Lombardo and Meier (2008) therefore conclude by calling this the EU 'broadening-without-deepening' approach to gender equality, in that policy-making activity on gender equality confirms a broadening approach in terms of concepts and agenda but shows no deeper-reading into gender equality.

Framing analysis will be useful, in this piece of research, to determine how problems in the South African legislation as well as in national and workplace policies are framed. At the same time it will reveal the level of commitment by the government to gender transformation and equality.

## Conclusion

Having reviewed literature on approaches to equality, I have worked out that Squires (2005) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement is most suitable for this study. She seems to have built up on South African feminist concerns. For instance South African authors have problematized gender mainstreaming for taking a foreign technocratic approach, which renders black women, who have always been active agents in their liberation struggle, as victims in need of intervention. They therefore call for activism to be reinstalled in policy making. Moreover, they suggest the combination of gender mainstreaming and activism which they believe will be more effective in mainstreaming gender, which, to a large extent, I also agree with. Squires (2005) supports the reinstallation of activism but suggests the replacement of 'gender mainstreaming' with 'diversity mainstreaming' on the bases that mainstreaming only gender leaves out other forms of inequalities. Gender mainstreaming is interpreted in three ways: first, as integrating a gender perspective in policies, programmes, and projects; (ii) second, as a dual approach: which involves inclusion and reversal; lastly, a tripartite approach: which involves using inclusion (sameness/equal opportunities), reversal (special treatment/difference), and displacement (gender /diversity mainstreaming). Squires (2005) makes clear that to produce desired results all three approaches should be included but that this should be combined with deliberative mechanisms, in a form of women's forums, which is similar to activism, to counter the technocratic approach, which is in line with South African feminists Hassim (2003), Gouws (2005) and Karlsson (2010). Squires (2005) proposes that the three approaches, activism include should coexist in mainstreaming gender and should work complementarily.

Walker (2003) Hassim (2009) and Karlsson (2010) propose the combination gender mainstreaming with activism. I am more in line with Squires's (2005) proposition, since all

the important elements suggested by the above South African authors as well as gender mainstreaming policies are organized under Squires theoretical framework: inclusion, reversal and displacement (Squires, 2005). Squires's (2005) proposition suggests that gender should be replaced with diversity mainstreaming but I suggest that instead of 'diversity', gender it should be replaced with intersectionality because the concept of diversity (even though she defines it as intersectionality) does not necessarily mean that different inequalities are intersectional (Crenshaw, 1991; Nash, 2008; Hankivsky, 2005); therefore engaging diversity would be conceptually flawed. Importantly, I fully support activism which is another aspect of Squires' displacement.

Importantly, authors have shown that GFPs in line departments are not trained, and therefore lack knowledge and capacity to mainstream gender. Moreover, these GFPs lack authority to influence decision-making and policy, which explains their ineffectiveness in their gender work.

## Chapter 4. **South African Equality and Work-life**

### **Balance Legislation**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter looks at work-life balance and South African equality legislation and workplace policies, to determine whether these accommodate or assist working parents in reconciling paid work and family responsibilities. In what follows I start by outlining the South African policy context. The chapter is organized into 3 sections. The first section analyses South African equality and work-life balance legislation. Throughout I examine the conceptualisation of equality in these policies, drawing from Squires's (2005) trilogy of 'inclusion', 'reversal' and 'displacement'. The gender equality legislation in South Africa follows a similar policy trajectory to Europe and the United States. The difference lies in its conceptualization, which seems to be partly determined by the period during which the legislation and policy was developed. In the South African context, legislation differs from elsewhere, due to the fact that by the time South Africa was democratized, all four approaches, mentioned above, were already fully developed, adopted and implemented by many European Union countries as well as the United States. Consequently, the South African legislation on Equality consists of a combination of two or more equality approaches. For the purpose of the study I have chosen four pieces of Equality legislation: the Employment Equity Act No.55 of 1998, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997, South Africa's National Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality of 2000 as well as the Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service (2006-

2015). It is important to note that the last two frameworks are referred to as gender mainstreaming policies.

## **Equality and Work-life balance Legislation**

### ***The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) of 1997***

The first policy I look at is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act which was passed in 1997 and came into effect in 1998. This is the only policy that may be considered a family (not so friendly) policy, since it legislates on maternity and family responsibility leave as well as working hours. However, it seems to offer very little support to parents as will be seen in what follows. Paradoxically, the act regulates long working hours on the basis of sameness and yet does very little to support those who have parental responsibilities.

Prior to 1994 there was no legislation protecting women from dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy, instead some employees were compelled to resign and reapply for their jobs after childbirth (Albertyn, 1998). Employees were therefore dependent on trade unions for protection in this regard. However, even where maternity agreements were made between employers and unions, women were sometimes dismissed without the knowledge of unions, which implied that unions did not formalize their agreements with employers on behalf of the employees (Albertyn, 1998). Nevertheless, the emergence of a militant trade union movement, with the threat of economic collapse, as well as the threat of economic sanctions compelled the apartheid government to introduce maternity benefits (Albertyn, 1998).

What followed was the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission, as proposed in the Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill of 1993, and the referral of complaints by this Commission to an Ombudsman and the Industrial Court which offered women greater protection. This Bill allowed women 12 weeks maternity leave. It prohibited pregnant

women from working in the period commencing four weeks before their expected date of confinement and for eight weeks after (Albertyn, 1998). However, the Act did not protect pregnant women from dismissal, neither did it require payment during maternity leave; the payment was provided through the Unemployment Insurance Act 30 of 1966.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) No75, 1997, which legislated on working hours and provided protection to pregnant women, was passed on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1998. This legislation outlawed dismissal of a woman on the basis of pregnancy. The Act was developed in compliance with the ILO Maternity Protection Convention No183 and Recommendation No191, (2000). The convention ensures protection to pregnant women against discrimination and unfair dismissal and ensures their health and well-being. It recommends a minimum of 14 weeks for pregnancy leave. The BCEA was also developed in compliance to the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention No 156 and Recommendation No165 (1981) which aims at creating equality of opportunities and treatment in employment between men and women with family responsibilities as well as those without family responsibilities. However, the convention is silent on the length of time that should be allocated to employees for parental purposes.

The BCEA encapsulates equal (or sameness) and special treatment (difference), which takes Squires's (2005) 'inclusion' and 'reversal' approaches. Equal Treatment is witnessed in the legislation on working hours, which encapsulates Squires's (2005) inclusionary approach. On the other hand, Special Treatment, which adopts a reversal approach, is seen in the legislation on Maternity Leave as will be seen below.

As Walters (1987: 14) observed, in her study of women in the civil service, women often encounter a culture which "opens itself to women and yet squeezes them out; which integrates them and marginalizes them". This holds true in the South African context as will

be seen as the chapter unfolds. The first part of the BCEA regulates working hours. It encapsulates gender equality on the basis of sameness which takes an integrationist or short agenda approach. First and foremost, the 'working-time regime' is characterized by long hours for both men and women, in that workers are expected to work up to 45 hours in any week, 9 hours a day if a worker works 5 days a week, or 8 hours for those working more than 5 days a week. Furthermore, the hours of managers are not regulated, as they are expected to work long and indefinite hours compared to other employees. This demonstrates that the Act has been framed in "male-model" terms where both men and women are expected to put in long hours of work thereby prioritizing their employment over their family responsibilities. This implies that the needs of working mothers are not considered. Women who take on such positions are obliged to adopt the masculine culture, and if they do not, as suggested by Cockburn (1991), they are at risk of being alienated by the workplace culture. To this effect, women who have childcare responsibilities are in a constant struggle to live up to the expectations associated with workers and managers, and still meet the demands of motherhood.

As well as the long hours legislated by this Act, there is very little support for those with parental responsibilities. Parents are given little time to reconcile family and work. The Act legislates on maternity on the basis of difference, which means it adopts Squires's (2008) reversal, in that it includes maternity but excludes paternity leave. Very little time is allocated to men within the 3 day Family Responsibility leave, as will be seen in what follows. The Act provides up to 4 continuous months of maternity leave which can be started any time from 4 weeks before the expected confinement date. The act requires employees to notify the employer in writing, four months before they begin their maternity leave, as well as state the date they will be resuming their work. Importantly, the act protects and guarantees pregnant

women their jobs after giving birth, which was not the case before the inception of the Government of National Unity. However, it still does not guarantee payment during maternity leave. According to the act maternity leave may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the employee has been contributing towards the Unemployment Insurance Fund, regulated by the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1966. If she has, she is able to claim maternity benefits during the period of confinement.

Unfortunately, the act excludes casual workers, such as domestic workers, part-time workers, interns and temps from maternity leave which suggests that a lot of women are left unprotected by the law.

As mentioned, the Act offers very little support on work-family reconciliation for working parents. However, South Africa is not in contravention of the ILO, since it has allocated equal time for mothers and fathers, no matter how minimal, for family responsibility. For instance, parents are only offered only 3 days Family Responsibility Leave (FRL) per annual cycle, which is supposed to assist employees to reconcile work and family responsibility. Moreover, this is taken for various purposes, such as attending to sick children or other immediate family members or in the event of a death within the family. It is important to note that it may be used by fathers when their children are born. However, if employees exhaust their Family Responsibility Leave days for one purpose, they cannot take it for another. This also suggests that if a father uses up these days for any of the purposes already mentioned, he will not be able to take it for paternity purposes if it is the same annual cycle. Parents who utilize the Family Responsibility Leave are required to provide proof of the need to take this leave.

The Act includes a short and vague statement (see below), which suggests that it allows adjustments of working hours to accommodate family or childcare responsibilities. Page 14 of chapter 1 requires:

Every employer must regulate working time of each employees with due regard to the family responsibilities of the employees (Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997: 14).

It is clear that the time given for maternity leave, by this Act, is basically to allow for mother's recovery from child-birth and not necessarily for the reconciliation of paid work and childcare responsibilities as some feminist writers suggest. Nevertheless, it may be argued that the way time is allocated between men and women reflects the prevailing South African gender-culture, where the assumption is that childcare is the mother's responsibility and therefore fathers do not need the leave in this regard. In which case, it may be argued that the South African legislation does not promote sharing of childcare responsibilities between fathers and mothers and thus does not challenge unequal gender relations. Moreover, as argued by Lombardo and Meier (2008), the provision for maternity and not for paternity leave provides evidence that the issue of childcare is framed as reconciliation of paid work and childcare by mothers, and is located in the labour market, rather than being seen in terms of unequal gender relations. These authors also suggest that men are left out of such policies because it is assumed that childcare is a woman's problem. This suggests the South African work-life balance legislation is not family-friendly. It lacks a feminist voice and has taken a very short agenda, integrationist or inclusionary approach to address inequality. This way paid work is still defined in the "traditional" or "male-model" terms, which, according to Crompton (1997: 13), "prescribes full-time and continuous work from the end of education until retirement, without any concessions to the demands of family".

### ***The Employment Equity Act (EEA) No 55 Of 1998***

The second Legislation I look at is the (EEA) which was passed in 1998 and came into effect in 1999. Due to the diverse, complex and multi-layered identities in the population of South Africa, the South African government has adopted what Squires refers to as a ‘joined up’ approach to tackling multiple inequalities (Squires, 2008). In this piece of legislation equality is framed in 3 ways and therefore encapsulates 3 equality policy approaches; gender equality is conceptualized on the basis of ‘sameness’ or equal treatment, ‘difference’ or special treatment, and also diversity. However, it does not seem to reflect recognition of intersectionality. Thus, although it considers diversity, it does not challenge the status quo. It only recognizes that different groups have experienced discrimination differently; it therefore uses the concept of reversal to address the imbalance in numbers of diverse groups in South Africa, as will be seen as the chapter unfolds.

It is important to note that South Africa has a history of multiple inequalities and discrimination, which is experienced on the basis of one or many factors as stated in the quote below. This way the EEA acknowledges diverse groups and differences in the way discrimination is experienced.

No person may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against an employee, in any employment policy or practice, on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language or birth (Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998: 12).

The first part of the EEA seeks to eliminate discrimination in the workplace. It requires designated employers to take steps to promote equal opportunity at the workplace by

eliminating unfair discrimination in employment policy or practice, through the deployment of positive action. The Act requires every 'designated employer' to implement Affirmative Action measures to ensure that its workforce consists of a diversified pool of employees which should be representative of all 'designated groups'. Designated employers are defined as those employers who employ more than 50 employees or have an annual turnover greater than US\$600.00. It is only such employers that are required to conform to the EEA which leaves out a lot of employers who may continue their discriminatory practices. On the other hand, 'designated groups' refers to blacks together with white women and the disabled who together form more than 90% of the South African population. These groups have been or are on the receiving end of discrimination on the basis of one or more of the grounds already mentioned and, therefore, require special treatment as a way of rectifying their unjust past experience. Furthermore, if designated groups consist of over 90% of the population, this leaves the non-designated group being only white 'able' men who are under 65 years of age, who constitute less than 10% of the population. This implies that essentially the majority of the population has been discriminated against.

It is important to note that there are some complexities and difference in the way various groups of people are discriminated against in South Africa. For instance, there is an intersection or overlap of factors in the way some groups experience discrimination, which suggests that they experience discrimination differently. Although the Act considers diversity in the way inequality is experienced, it does not fully capture the interrelationship between multiple vectors of discrimination. For instance, intersection seems to be recognized for black women who experience discrimination based on gender and race and are placed (almost) at the top of the priority list on the affirmative action agenda, as also seen in table 4.1 below. However, some categories, such as the disabled, are not marked as intersectional

subjects in terms their disability in relation to gender and race and there is no reference to class as one of the vectors of discrimination. In light of the above, it may be argued as Nash (2008) does, that the act to a large extent does not consider intersectionality.

To fast-track the achievement of these targets, the act allows ‘preferential treatment’, as part of affirmative action, in appointments, especially of women, to senior managerial positions. Through affirmative action, the Act aims at leveling the playing field and breaking the glass ceiling, which had been identified as a barrier preventing especially black women from accessing managerial and other strategic positions. What is also specified in the act is that necessary measures should be taken to accommodate people with disabilities, thereby removing barriers that would make it difficult for them to participate in paid work. Here we come across Squires’s (2005) notion of reversal that addresses the issue of difference, especially in the way people experience discrimination; as well as inclusion approach, as it details diverse groups’ equity targets which are set for various designated groups as outlined in table . These targets relate to population distribution, to ensure that the workforce is representative of the National Economically Active Population in terms of all designated groups.

**Table 4.1 National Equity Targets**

MALE				FEMALE				Dis abled	Total	Total Blcks	Total White
African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White		All		
38.27%	4.54%	1.35%	4.84%	38.34%	5.05%	1.45%	5.16%	2 %	<b>100%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>11%</b>

In order to achieve the equity targets, the act requires designated employers to implement the following affirmative action measures:

[...] identify and eliminate employment barriers, emanating from unfair discrimination as well as other forms of structural discrimination [...]; make reasonable accommodation for people from designated groups in order to ensure that they enjoy equal opportunities [...] (Employment Equity Act No55, 1998: 9).

For monitoring purposes the act requires employers to draw up and submit employment equity plans with time frames to indicate their approach to the implementation of these plans and submit and publish annual reports on the progress made or face a huge fine for non-compliance.

Although the EEA opened up opportunities for all previously disadvantaged groups in South Africa, black men were in a better position to take advantage of the opportunities because they had previous exposure and high participation in leadership in politics (Albertyn, 1994; Giesler, 2000; Hassim, 2003). To this effect they were the first to acquire seats in parliament and employment in high positions in the public sector.

The Employment Equity Act's major focus is on outlawing discrimination and increasing numbers of designated groups, especially (black) women in senior managerial positions. This implies that problems are framed in terms of an underrepresentation of women in the workplace, as well as a labour market and women's problem (Lombardo and Meier, 2008; Gambles, Lewis and Rapoport, 2007). Like the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the Employment Equity Act does not challenge unequal gender relations and gender divisions of labour. For Cockburn (1991) the two acts discussed above only take an 'integrationist or inclusionary and reversal which take the short-agenda route to the problem. Beveridge, Nott and Stephen (2000: 387) comment on the narrow route as follows, "the very laws that are put in place to eliminate gender inequality do not tackle the root causes". They contend that, "inequality is structural and deeply embedded in society's cultural expectations of men and

women” (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000: 387). They argue that if gender inequality is to be eliminated, changes are needed not only at policy level but also at individual, relational, household, workplace as well as at wider societal level. This addressed in the next section.

***South Africa’s National Policy Framework for Women’s Empowerment & Gender Equality (2001) and The Gender Strategic Framework (2006-2015)***

In this section I look at two national policies that are considered as gender mainstreaming policies: South Africa’s National Policy Framework for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality (2001) and the Gender Strategic Framework (2006).

The first policy framework is referred to as ‘National Gender Policy Framework’, which is the title I will use for the purpose of this study. It is a generic policy document, compiled by the Office of the Status of Women and came into effect in 2001, which outlines South Africa’s vision for gender equality and how it intends fulfilling this ideal. The second policy framework, known as the Gender Strategic Framework, was compiled by the South African National Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and issued on 24 November 2006. They were both developed in response to the Beijing Fourth World Conference for Women in 1995 as well as the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985), both of which South Africa is a signatory to, but the second one is also a response to the African Union Heads of States’ Solemn declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004. The Gender Strategic Framework contains many aspects of the National Gender Policy Framework. For this reason I discuss them together, pointing out similarities, but also the differences between them.

Gender mainstreaming in South Africa takes place within the context of diversity, considering the widely diverse groups that make up the South African population. For this

reason addressing the gender issue through gender mainstreaming has not completely divorced gender from other forms of oppression, as will be seen as the chapter unfolds.

These two gender mainstreaming policies draw on all the equality approaches - equal and special treatment together with intersectionality perspective and the activism aspect. In conformity with the approach recommended by Booth and Bennet (2002) and Squires (2005), these frameworks were introduced not to replace but to expand on the EEA and both of them include and extend some elements of it. Although their main focus is on gender equality, they look at it in relation to other strands of inequality and recognize the interface between these (Crenshaw, 1991; Squires, 2008 and Nash, 2008). Importantly it recognizes gender as an important axis that in most cases cuts across other forms of inequality, as can be seen here. The Gender Strategic Framework aims,

To use and encourage the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and reveal how policies seek to improve, impact differently on women and men, in due consideration of the fact that not all women and all men experience the same degree and kind of gender-discrimination. Other factors like race ethnicity, age, class, and disability can aggravate existing gender-based exclusion and discrimination (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service, 2006: 22).

Squires (2008), however, points to the danger of fragmentation when attempting to address multiple oppression simultaneously and the competition for financial support. She also cautions that internal inequalities (inequalities within inequalities) may be obscured. On the other hand, Woodward (2008) highlights that the use of only one equality strand, for example gender mainstreaming, in addressing diverse inequalities may erode the equality of another.

It is important to note that, as Lombardo and Meier (2008) found in the European context, gender policies, although they seem to promise to be transformatory, do “not have teeth”; they are not legally binding, they have no time-frame or specific measures for implementation, there is no monitoring of their application and no sanctioning of non-compliant actors. The only measure that is given a time frame, in the Gender Strategic Framework, is the target for women’s political and public service workforce representation, revised from 30%, as legislated by the EEA, to 50%. Although this was to be achieved by 31 March 2009, it is still far from being realized; this shows that even the integrationist aspect of a ‘soft law’ is not taken serious, since it is not legally binding.

The review of Employment Equity targets in the context of the public sector reforms resulted in the adoption by cabinet of a revised equity target of 50% representation of women at all levels of the senior management service (SMS) ... Departments and provincial administrations are encouraged to be creative and ingenious in developing strategies to meet the short-term target objective of 50% women at all levels of the SMS by 31 March 2009 (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service, 2006: 1).

As can be seen in this quote, the only measure which is given a time-scale in the policy is ‘integrationist’; it is a short-term goal of Strategic Gender policies and represents a ‘short-agenda’ approach. The measure that takes a long-agenda approach to equality in both policies is not given any time scale. It can therefore be argued that in effect those parts of the policies that have ‘no teeth’ are the ones that take the long agenda or agenda-setting approach.

These frameworks do not only build on but also go beyond inclusion and reversal approaches to include a ‘displacement’ approach. Thus, although they draw from both equal and special

treatment discourses, they also introduce the gender and intersectionality perspective. Moreover, the National Gender Machinery brings in the element of activism, as will be seen under national machinery below.

The quote below illustrates how gender equality is framed in the two policies. First it shows that they both take into cognizance unequal gender relations not only in the public but also within the private realm, including socio-cultural institutions. In this sense they contain a strong feminist voice, thus taking the transformatory displacement approach. For instance, the policy framework defines gender equality as follows:

[...] a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full potential; are able to contribute equally to national, political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results [...] entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities [...] takes into account women's existing subordinate positions within social relations and aims at the restructuring of society so as to eradicate male domination [...] equality should be therefore understood to include both "formal" and "substantive" equality; not merely equality to men (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: xviii).

In a similar vein, the Gender Strategic framework talks about,

profound transformation of the structures and systems, which lie at the root of subordination and gender inequality (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service, 2006: 16).

The definition above encapsulates not only ‘formal’ but also ‘substantive’ equalities, which move beyond formal equality to address or transform unequal gender relations. This way the frameworks seek to address the root of the problem. For instance, the frameworks recognize that it would take more than the equality of opportunities and positive action approaches to address gender inequality in South Africa.

Linked to the above, both frameworks recognize the need for a paradigm shift not only in the workplace, but within all other societal structures, including the family, as well as state institutions, if gender inequalities are to be dealt with effectively. However, they also recognize the challenge involved in doing so. For these reasons, the achievement of gender equality could be a gradual and long-term process which would require a buy-in from all stakeholders.

[...] parliament need to educate themselves and each other about the causes and manifestations of, and the solutions to, gender inequality and patriarchy [...] a shift thus from inequality to equality requires the transformation of governments and civil society [...] bureaucrats need to understand this in implementing policies, programmes and laws [...] Decision-makers need to develop new ways of thinking about the world [...] The state requires a new approach to the formulation and implementation of policy [...] (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality of 2001: 25).

Both Frameworks have transformative potential as well as feminist ideals which are also seen in the diagnosis and the prognosis of the problem. For instance, the desire to address unequal gender relations is seen in the framing of the policy objectives:

One of the key objectives in this process is to transform gender relations. The challenge is to shape the broad transformation project in a way which acknowledges the centrality and compatibility of the transformation of gender relations to the broader institutional process. (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality of 2001: 25).

The rest of the objectives in the three quotes below, engage a gender perspective, including the employment of gender mainstreaming as a way of addressing gender inequality, not only at the workplace, but also at societal level.

Establish policies, programmes, structures and mechanisms to empower women and to transform gender relations in all aspects of work, at all levels of government as well as within broader society;

To ensure that gender considerations are effectively integrated into all aspects of government policies;

Advocate for the promotion of new attitudes, values and behaviour and a culture of respect for all human beings (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 25).

All the quotes show that the policy frameworks seek to address the root of the problem, that is, unequal gender relations that are deeply entrenched and hidden in wider societal cultural norms and values, within which the family and workplace are embedded rather than just in the labour market (as emphasized in the quote below). This is indicative of the fact that these frameworks take transformatory displacement approach to gender equality, in that they consider addressing gender relations and changing attitudes, cultural values and behaviour. For instance it recognizes that

[...] gender inequality is systemic and entrenched in the structures, norms and values and perspectives of the state and civil society [...] it is pervasive and also often hidden (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 25).

To achieve gender equality, the frameworks provide goals to be considered, especially by the public sector. As discussed below these goals are organized into short-term and long-term goals; however, the Strategic Framework includes medium-term goals.

### **Short-term Goals**

In both frameworks, the short-term goals take the form of Squires's (2005) notion of reversal, which entails positive action to facilitate inclusion as a way of increasing women's representation at all levels of Senior Management, through affirmative action. The rationale for increasing women's representation in managerial positions is so that they can participate in decision-making.

The second framework acknowledges important gains in relation to increased numbers of women in higher positions as a result of the EEA. As discussed earlier, the Gender Strategic Framework contains a revised target for women's representation, pushing the equity target from, 30%, as set by the EEA, to 50/50 representation of women in Senior Management, in the public sector by 31 March 2009. By 2006 the initial target had been reached. However, representation still stands at just over 30%, as specified by the EEA. This highlights the large proportion of women who are still destitute while working in low paid, traditional female occupations, such as domestic work and farm work, for a very low wage, and who suffer multiple forms of discrimination and exploitation at the hands of their employers (see chapter 7). The Gender Strategic framework calls for this to be addressed. However, as can be seen

in the quote above, in both these frameworks, the emphasis is not only on increasing numbers but also enabling women to assume leadership and decision-making positions.

The National Gender Policy Framework also outlines short-term indicators to assess progress towards gender transformation and policy implementation. Included in these indicators are:

Setting up effective structures and mechanisms of institutionalizing women's empowerment and gender equality; structures established at national, provincial and local levels for advancing the nation policy objectives as well as the level of financial and human resources allocated to these structures will be the major indicators of government's commitment to national transformation with respect to gender equality; The changes to be measured will range from issues of individual capacity building and Human Resource Management and Development to institutional mechanisms for implementing programmes related to gender equality(South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 50).

The framework outlines a detailed list of indicators to measure progress. One key short-term indicator is:

The extent to which gender responsive programmes have been established to enhance the roles of both male and female employees as parents and professionals, e.g, day care centers in the work-place (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 50).

Other noteworthy indicators are:

the level of human and financial resources allocated to advance women's empowerment and gender equality; gender mainstreaming budget allocations and expenditures; Gender Focal Point's (GFP) ability to respond to the needs of men and

women [...]; (GFP's) development of policies and programmes that address gender issues; (GFP's) training of staff in gender awareness (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 50-51).

### **Long-term goal/s**

Both frameworks take a transformatory, long agenda approach and employ a gender mainstreaming strategy, to achieve long-term goals. The main long-term goal is the achievement of gender equality. However, neither of these frameworks has teeth, especially for the longer agenda of addressing of gender equality, as alluded to earlier in this section.

Long-term success encompasses the outcomes of both the short and long agenda. Although both frameworks consider equal representation, in the long run they aim to transform gender relations and the change would then be measured by, among other indicators, participation of women in decision-making structures; changes in the customary, cultural and religious practices which subordinate women; the recognition of women's responsibilities and rights in the family by ensuring that women and men have equal rights in the division of maintenance and arrangements with regards to children (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 52).

### **Medium Term Goal**

Another difference between the two frameworks is that the Gender Strategic Framework, unlike the Gender Policy Framework, includes medium term goals, which focus on gender capacity building and gender awareness education. This implies positive action, such as skills and leadership training for women, as well as understanding gender mainstreaming; it also includes gender awareness raising and sensitization as a means of effecting paradigm change.

Another important principle underpinning the framework is appropriate skills training, but also training for public officials, including policy makers, strategic and operational managers, to improve knowledge and attitudes in gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, gender responsive research, gender responsive budgeting and the production and the use of gender disaggregated data, in addition to leadership training for women which has already been mentioned under decision-making above (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service, 2006: 11).

Accordingly, the framework states that the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI), together with the Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA) and the Office of the Status of Women (OSW), have embarked on:

the implementation of the roll-out of a gender mainstreaming training programme for Public Sector employees that includes Executive, Senior and middle managers [...]to capacitate the Public Servants in Departments to mainstream gender considerations into service delivery, internal functions, strategies, programme development; increase capacity of Departments to conduct their own internal gender training programmes; and to enhance capacity of the South African Management Development Institute to provide gender mainstreaming training in South Africa (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service, 2006: 23).

### *National Gender Machinery*

As already noted, the National Gender Policy Framework envisages addressing the root problem through Squires's (2005) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement. To this effect, the National Gender Machinery (NGM) has been developed to advance the government's vision of gender equality. The NGM is defined as:

[...] a set of coordinated structures within and outside government which aim to achieve equality for women in all spheres of life: political, civil, social, economic and cultural (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 26).

Through the NGM the government envisages transforming the societal and state structures and institutions that perpetuate gender inequalities. The National Gender Policy Framework recommends the establishment of the NGM which should be comprised of an Executive [the Office of the Status of Women (OSW) and Gender Focal Points (GFPs), Statutory [the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE)] and parliamentary bodies (Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Improvement of the Quality of Life and Status of Women) as well as civil society Organizations (NGOs; religious bodies, traditional leaders, South African Local Government Association). This Framework also outlines duties and the location of various structures of the National Gender Machinery. Accordingly, most of these structures have been established and among others, is the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Improvement of the Quality of Life and Status of Women; its role is to ensure that gender needs and interests are included in the development of policies. Second, is the Office of the Status of Women (OSW) which is located at national as well as at Provincial level; some of its main responsibilities are to initiate, co-ordinate and lead the process of gender mainstreaming and to co-ordinate some gender training for GFPs. Third, are the GFPs which are located at national and provincial level to operationalize the implementation of gender mainstreaming in line ministries. This study mainly focused at this structure, since it is placed in government Departments and Parastatals. It is important to note that the National Gender Policy recommends that this structure be located in the office of the Director General

- a position that would afford them authority to have influence on programmes and other government officials, as can be seen in the quote below.

The placement of GFPs within this office would therefore afford the GFPs easy access to all programmes and programme officials with the Department thereby creating an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 29).

Some of the important functions of the GFPs are: to ensure gender issues are routinely considered in Departmental strategic planning exercises; to ensure that Departments reflect gender considerations in their business plans and routinely report on them; to review all policies, projects and programmes for their gender implications; to co-ordinate gender training of all staff within Departments so as to ensure that gender is integrated into all aspects of their work; to monitor and evaluate Departmental projects and programmes to assess whether they are consistent with national gender policy cultural (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality 2001: 29).

It is also important to highlight the policy's intention to engage civil society in mainstreaming gender, which constitutes Squire's 'deliberative mechanisms'. This way, the national gender policy recognizes that the achievement of gender equality should be a collective effort involving partnership between both the state and the civil society (Hassim, 2003; Squires, 2005; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010).

It is the experience of many countries that national machinery alone cannot shift public policy agendas for women without the participation of organizations of civil society. Strong women's organizations are therefore an important part of effective national machinery. This implies that the institutions of the national machinery must

have structures and mechanisms to facilitate close and effective relationships with organizations in the civil society (South Africa National Policy Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 32)

Thus far the state has failed to engage civil society. For this reason feminist authors decry the fact that gender mainstreaming in South Africa has taken an inclusionary, reversal which forms part of the technocratic approach, which to date, has not yielded substantial results (Hassim, 2003; Gouws, 2005; Karlsson, 2010). They therefore advocate for gender mainstreaming to be combined with activism, as National Gender Policy had envisaged. Squires's (2005) theoretical framework, inclusion, reversal, displacement and deliberative mechanisms, includes most of these South African feminist writers' concerns. I am also in agreement with this move, arguing further that gender should be seen in the context of intersectionality, instead of the diversity, as proposed by Squires (2005). It is also important that this policy be allocated adequate resources; trained human and financial resources for its implementation, for it to yield the desired results.

The National Gender Framework also proposes approaches or mechanisms to monitoring and evaluation of progress towards gender equality and the development of short-term and long-term national, regional as well as international indicators in order to keep track of the progress. The Framework suggests that the assessment of these short-term outcomes will focus on:

the effectiveness of the structures which have been put in place to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the national policy for gender equality; gender sensitivity of the policies, procedures, practices and structures of government as well as private and non-governmental institutions (National Policy Framework on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 49).

Both Gender Policy and the Strategic Gender Framework promises to be transformative. Moreover, the framing of the diagnosis and prognosis seem to address not only numbers and pregnancy but also the root of the problem, that is, the structures underpinning unequal gender relations. To this effect, unlike in the BCEA and the EEA, the approach in these Frameworks has gone beyond the inclusion and reversal, to address gender inequality. This is because its key objective is the transformation of gender relations in the process of the transformation of the public sector, while it also expands on numerical targets.

Having looked at the equality and work-life balance legislation, I move on to look at organizational policies on gender equality and family, to determine the extent to which organizations have responded to and implemented national policies and legislation.

### **Local Organizational Response**

In this section, I look at organizational policies relating to equality and family which were developed in response to the equality legislation. Basically the only policies in place in the organizations where I carried out my research are those which are legally required and which take a ‘short agenda’ or integrationist approach to addressing gender inequality at the workplace. I have identified and analyzed four such policies, two from each organization. From the Parastatal I analyze Leave Policy and the Employment Equity Strategy and from the Department, a section in the Determination on Leave of Absence in the Public Service policy document which contains Parental Leave and the Employment Equity Plan. I start with the Employment Equity Policies of both organizations to allow comparison between the two and then go to what may be considered to be family friendly policies. This section highlights the disjuncture between policy and practice (see also Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010).

## ***Workplace Equality Policies***

### *The Parastatal's Employment Equity Transformation Strategy*

The Parastatal had an equity plan, the Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, which was developed to implement the directives of Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998 which require organizations to increase numbers of women in senior management positions. The Employment Equity Transformation Strategy was compiled by the Employee Wellness Unit, which is located in the office of transformation and was granted full approval in April 2008 by the Parastatal under study. It does not only focus on gender equality, but it takes a 'generic equalities approach' to tackle diverse inequalities. Just as the EEA, it limits itself to notions of inclusion and reversal. In addition it considers mainstreaming diversity, without fully recognizing intersectionality as will be seen in what follows.

Firstly, as shown in the quote below, the Equity Employment Transformation Strategy reflects the EEA. It is committed to establishing a workforce that is representative of the Economically Active population of the province. This implies that the Strategy has taken the issue of diversity, into consideration. However, at this point there is little evidence to show that it recognizes intersectionality. The strategy illustrates that it will employ the notion of reversal to facilitate gender representation. It is working towards,

[...] establishing a workforce that is representative of the National Economically Active Population/ Regionally Economically Active Population in terms of, amongst others: race, gender and disability (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 13).

...the Parastatal<sup>2</sup> is committed to prohibit and eliminate unfair discrimination in all the employment policies and practices, and to implement measures in order to ensure fair representation and equal employment opportunities for all (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 9).

Secondly, through its Employment Equity Strategy, again reflecting Cockburn's (1991) short agenda or Jahan's (1995) integrationist approach, the Parastatal is committed to promote equal employment opportunities for all employees to address exclusion. To do this it intends:

identifying and eliminating barriers to equality in all workplace policies and practices within the Parastatal, through practicing fair discrimination where necessary; creating an organizational culture which is free from unfair discrimination/bias, and promotes unity in diversity; and promoting sensitivity around the special needs of designated groups (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 13).

Again, like the EEA, the policy employs equal and special treatment approaches, which also means it uses Squires's (2005) notions of inclusion and reversal, to tackle gender imbalance; this is shown in the first paragraph of the opening policy statement. It employs positive action, which includes preferential treatment, to address the under-representation of designated groups and especially those groups who suffer multiple discriminations. Moreover, in the process it again acknowledges diversity. It also includes regular reviewal of these policies to capture new developments. In addition it envisages taking measures that would promote retention.

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<sup>2</sup> I used 'Parastatal' instead of the real name of the organization that is used in the quote, for the purpose of anonymity.

- It recognizes that specific measures are required to promote representivity in the employment of designated groups, specifically women at senior/management level, and people with disabilities across all occupational levels and categories, in order to achieve this, the employment, development and retention of employees from designated groups must be prioritized;
- Consistent with principles of employment equity, the Parastatal is committed to reviewing, on an ongoing basis, all its policies and related procedures to ensure alignment to this strategy. This will be done to identify practices, whether formal or informal, which have either a favorable or detrimental effect on the hiring, retention, development and promotion of members of the designated groups;
- Within the framework of employment equity, the Parastatal strives to respect employees' dignity, to maintain fair labour practices, to communicate openly and honestly, to respect employees' right to freedom of association, and to provide a safe and stable work environment. Diversity Management will be a fundamental principle underlying all HCM practices (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 10).

The Parastatal outlines how it intends to identify and eliminate barriers, as required by section 19 of Chapter 3 of the Employment Equity Act. Here the Act requires designated employers to draw an annual equity plan outlining the measures to be taken. In compliance with the Equity Act the Parastatal has developed the Employment Equity Strategy as its Employment Equity Plan. To this effect the Equity Strategy aims to undertake initiatives to:

(conduct) regular surveys (Organizational Culture and Diversity); revise all policies and practices; develop new policies and practices; institute disciplinary action against

any person who perpetuates acts of unfair discrimination and harassment of other employees; (have an) ongoing review of infrastructure and facilities to accommodate people with disabilities and implementing exit interviews aimed to obtain information about an existing employee's experience during employment. Exiting interviews that will allow departing employees to comment on any discriminatory practices in the workplace will be conducted (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 17).

The EEA further requires employers to conduct an analysis of their workforce, which is essentially an assessment of the extent to which designated groups are underrepresented, as well as set short-term and longer-term numerical goals to ensure that reasonable progress is made in addressing any under-representation. This shows a typical integrationist approach to advancing inclusion. The Parastatal has responded to the requirement as follows:

[...] A proactive determination of employment needs will be done, with special attention being paid to under-representation of occupational categories and/or levels and recruitment strategies that will attract and retain suitable staff through career-pathing and succession planning [...] The Employment Equity Transformation Plan will include detailed numerical targets to be achieved by August 2009 (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 13).

The following statistics show the distribution of employees at managerial level and is what the Parastatals have produced as part of their strategy to assess progress, (as outlined in the Parastatal's organizational employee profile as at 30/06/2008):

**Table 4.2 Parastatal's management employee distribution**

<i>Mgt Category</i>	<i>Blacks( Africans)</i>			<i>White</i>		<i>Totals</i>		<i>Grand Total</i>
	M	D/abled	F	M	F	M	F	
Regional Executive Manager	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (100%)	<b>1 (100%)</b>
General Managers	1	0	1	0	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	<b>2 (100%)</b>
Senior Managers	9 (69%)	1(8%) Male	4(31%)	0	0	9 (69%)	4 (31%)	<b>13 (100%)</b>
Middle Manager	39 (66%)	0	18 (31%)	2 (3%)	0	41 (69%)	18 (31%)	<b>59 (100%)</b>
Junior Managers	43 (69%)	0	20 (31%)	0	0	44 (69%)	20 (31%)	<b>64 100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>92(66%)</b>	<b>1 (1%)</b>	<b>44(32%)</b>	<b>2 (1%)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95 (68%)</b>	<b>44 (32%)</b>	<b>139 (100%)</b>

The Parastatal has set itself a very high target, to be achieved by August 2009 in compliance with the Gender Strategy Framework. However, this framework is not referred to in the document. The overall targets as stated in the Employment Equity Strategy replicates targets stated in the EEA which is 89% black people and 11% whites (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 14).

As can be seen in the table above, the Parastatal has exceeded its target in terms of racial distribution of employees. For instance, African employees' numbers have risen to 99%, as shown in the table above, which is 10% more than the target figure of the organizational employee profile. Second, in terms of gender, the Parastatal had already reached the initial target of women's representation, as required by the EEA, and is therefore now beginning to chase after the revised 50%, even though the Strategic Gender framework, in which this target is set, is not mentioned in its Equity Strategy. However, again these are all African

women. The Department does not include any other groups of women such as Indian, coloured and white. In addition to the table, the Parastatal has committed itself to employing 2% of its employees from the disabled group, and thus far has reached 1%. It aims to achieve: at each level:

black people 89%, women 50% and people with disabilities 2%; (compiling) an entity vacancy list, where each post will be allocated an equity target in terms of race, gender and disability and this is aimed at closing the representivity gap at each level [...] (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 14).

The Parastatal's equity strategy is very clear and detailed about its implementation of equal treatment as well positive action. However, there is no Gender Policy or any action plan developed to guide the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Parastatal which could comply with the two Gender Frameworks. Gender mainstreaming is only vaguely mentioned, in one sentence, as can be seen below:

Gender mainstreaming (women-empowerment) programme will be introduced to strengthen affirmative action measures (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 24).

The statement above clearly demonstrates how gender mainstreaming is completely misconstrued, misconceived and misunderstood. This is in line with the studies of gender mainstreaming in South Africa discussed earlier (Hassim, 2003; Walker, 2003, Karlsson, 2010). The Equity Strategy shows how the Parastatal will report progress through a monitoring strategy on its Employment Transformation Equity Plan as required by the EEA.

The Guiding Coalition and the Executive Managers including CEO will receive regular reports on the implementation of the Employment Equity Transformation Plan, and the

plan will be reviewed on an annual basis (Employment Equity Transformation Strategy, 2008: 9).

Having analyzed the gender equality policy, it is clear that the Parastatal only draws from the EEA. Therefore like the EEA, the strategy adopts Squires's (2005), inclusion and reversal and in part displacement, that is equal and special treatment approaches to gender equality coupled with diversity. It is therefore not surprising that its major focus is on increasing the numbers of employees from designated groups in senior managerial positions, as well as removing barriers to equality, and not on the transformation of gender relations. The approach considers equal opportunities, through Equal and Special Treatment, as well as diversity, but the diagnosis and the prognosis of the problem/s in this policy is not at all from a gender perspective. The problem is framed as a woman's problem and not in relation to men. This means that the approach may be referred to as 'broadening without deepening' on the basis that it does not go deeper, to address the root of the problem (Lombardo and Meier, 2008).

*The Government Department: Employment Equity Plan 2008/2009*

The government Department's Employment Equity Plan (EEP) is also mainly informed by the Employment Equity Act (EEA) but contains a small proportion of the Gender Strategy Framework. For instance, it mainly embodies equal treatment, positive action and diversity like the EEA. On the other hand, like the Parastatal, it also contains the updated target equity figure to further increase gender representation as required by the Gender Strategy Framework. This notwithstanding, the Equity Plan leaves out gender mainstreaming. The Government Department has already exceeded the 30% target for women's representation at managerial level, which currently stands at 36%, and is now chasing after the reviewed target as stated in the Gender Strategic Framework, which is 50% (see table 4.3).

**Table 4.3 Government Department Employee Distribution at Management Level**

<b>Managerial Level</b>	<b>Total Number of Posts Filled</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
<b>Senior Managers</b>	35 (100%)	22 (63%)	13 (37%)
<b>Managers</b>	86(100%)	60 (70%)	26 (30%)
<b>Deputy Managers</b>	136 (100%)	83 (61%)	53 (39%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>257 (100%)</b>	<b>165 (64%)</b>	<b>92 (36%)</b>

It is important to point out that the plan only gives the figures disaggregated by gender and not by race, unlike the Parastatal. The plan also recognizes the need for the transformation of the workplace. However, it refers to general organizational transformation of workplace culture and practices, which remains at a superficial and general level. It does not talk about specific changes and does not provide guidelines as to how these should be done. Nonetheless, the government Department, in its EEP, shows its commitment to addressing gender representation through Affirmative Action. Moreover, unlike the Parastatal, it takes this further by providing for capacity building for affirmative action candidates. Furthermore, it considers diversity in its approach, thus adopting small aspects of displacement (Squires, 2005). However, this seems not to have been translated into practice. For instance, the government Department aims to:

Review existing employment practices and selection criteria to ensure fundamental equality of opportunity for employees from designated groups; creation of new organizational culture in promotion of diversity and dedicated to the values of democracy; removal of illegitimate distinctions in conditions of service and employment orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or

language, and the introduction, where necessary, of desirable or legitimate affirmative action measures; rectification of existing numerical imbalances; promotion of transparent and participative decision-making to foster relationships of trust, cooperation and confidence among management, employees, their various stakeholders; creation of new educational, training and development opportunities, redeployment of existing opportunities, promotion of career advancement, broaden fundamental equality of opportunity and equitable advancement within the Department; rectification of the composition of the Department so that it can reflect our rainbow nation and be able to effectively serve the previously disadvantaged groups (Employment Equity Plan 2008/2009: 16).

It also plans to rectify the composition and numerical imbalances in its short-term objectives, between 2008 and 2009 as required by the Employment Equity Plan as well as the Gender Strategic Framework (Employment Equity Plan 2008/2009: 3).

Adopting the integrationist or inclusion approach, the government Department states that most vacant posts will be allocated to black female employees, in order to achieve gender equal representation, although there would still be a shortfall:

All vacant posts for manager in the Department should be filled by females, although there will be a shortfall of three females. The Department will have at least 95% compliance of the 50/50 target for the levels of managers (Employment Equity Plan 2008/2009: 22).

It is clear that policies in both organizations have implemented the 'hard law', the EEA, and ignored 'soft laws', that is the gender mainstreaming policies. To this effect both policies have employed inclusion and reversal, that is, Positive Action Affirmative Action to

eliminate barriers and address inequality within the Department in compliance with the EEA. In addition both organizations consider mainstreaming diversity in order to ensure that they meet their obligation to ensure a diversified pool of employees from designated groups at all levels of employment, as required by the EEA. Once again the problems are framed in terms of sameness and difference, therefore either organization reads deeply into gender issues or considers the problem in relation to unequal gender relations; they therefore do not address the root of the problem.

### ***Work-Life Balance Policies***

I now turn my attention to analyzing family related policies. I study the two organizations' policies together since they contain almost the same provisions for parents.

#### *Government Department and Parastatal's Parental leave*

The only policy document that contains family provisions in the South African Public Service, which is utilized by government Departments, is the "Determination on Leave of Absence in the Public Service" (2008) compiled by the office of the minister for public service and administration. On the other hand, the Parastatal has developed its own leave policy namely, the 'Corporate Service Leave', in terms which are similar to the Determination on Leave of Absence. Both policy documents were developed in compliance with the BCEA and contain provisions for maternity, family responsibility, and adoption leave. These are the only arrangements made by the South African public sector to accommodate working parents. Both documents contain provisions on Maternity Leave and Parental Leave which are applicable to all those that are employed either full-time, part-time or on an occasional basis. These policies apply Squires's (2005) concept of reversal, as they

provide special treatment for working mothers on the basis of their difference in terms of pregnancy.

### *Maternity Leave*

The Government Department's 'Determination on Leave of Absence document' and as the Parastatal's 'Corporate Service Leave Policy' contain the minimum provisions on maternity leave, almost exactly as set out by the BCEA (see above); both allow the time stipulated in the BCEA. It is important to note the emphasis on the medical practitioner as "employees are prohibited from resuming employment 6 weeks after birth unless certified fit to do so" (Determination on Leave of Absence in the Public Service, 2008, 24) which indicates that the commencement of this leave and the resumption of duties after childbirth are informed by medical experts' recommendation. This suggests that maternity leave in South Africa was developed to allow the mothers to recover from childbirth and nothing more.

Both organizations allow for the extension of maternity leave, through unpaid leave or taking time from annual or sick leave. However, there is a time difference in the length of unpaid leave between the organizations - the number of days allowed for the extension of leave by the government Department is twice (180 days) the number of days (90) for maternity extension allowed by the Parastatal. Family Responsibility as well as adoption leave are the same in both Departments.

In addition both organizations allow the amount of time stated in the legislation for adoption when an employee adopts a child that is younger than two years. Furthermore, the employee may be granted unpaid leave or may take time from annual leave (Determination on Leave of Absence in the Public Service, 2008, 24). Like in the BCEA neither organization has paternity leave.

### *Family Responsibility Leave*

The 'Determination on Leave for Absence' and 'Corporate Service Leave Policy' documents also provide for Family Responsibility Leave (FRL). These documents provide for FRL at almost the minimum standards set by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act except that it provides 5 days, while only three days are available for paternity leave purposes. This implies, if the 3 days are taken up for the purpose of paternity (after the child is born), fathers will only have two days left for compassionate leave or in the case where the child gets sick, or if someone dies in the family.

Family policies in both organizations, are simply complying with the legal requirements. They are therefore doing the minimum and are not about reconciling work-life balance.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to determine the extent to which policies have been developed to accommodate working parents at the workplace. The literature points to the fact that mothers still carry the burden of childcare even with their increased work responsibility and contribution within the household. Here I have explored the extent to which policies address this unequal division of labour, how policy problems are framed; whether they address the root causes of gender inequality in South Africa. I have examined family policies, which are those aimed at assisting working parents reconcile family and work, and gender equality legislation and workplace policies, paying attention to the approach/es the government and the workplace have adopted to address gender inequality.

The only legislation that can be considered a family responsibility policy is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), a hard law which takes a minimalist approach of inclusion and reversal, since it addresses working hours for a 'generic employee' and

pregnancy. I have also analyzed gender equality policies which are legislated as both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ laws. The EEA is the hard law which has addressed issues of racial and gender representation in the public domain, but also takes into consideration the issue of diversity. This adopts of measures of inclusion and reversal, (Squires, 2005). Recently, in early and mid-2000, national policies on gender mainstreaming were legislated as ‘soft laws’; this can be understood in terms of Squires’s (2005) transformative notion of displacement. This completed Squires’s trilogy, having started with reversal, moving to inclusion and, finally, displacement which encompasses the transformative aspect.

In response, the two organizations’ policies, like the legislation, encapsulate reversal and inclusion. However, the national, ‘soft’ policies were introduced at a later stage, and seem not to be taken into consideration. The BCEA as well in both organizations parental leave policies, childcare is framed as a mother’s problem of the inability to reconcile paid work and childcare. Similarly in the EEA, gender inequality is framed as women’s problem of underrepresentation. In both pieces of legislation these problems are seen as women’s problems located and in the labour market instead of a problem which rooted in the wider societal and state structures and institutions. On the other hand, the national gender mainstreaming policies, which seem to address the root of the problem, are set aside and ignored. To this effect, there is no evidence of gender mainstreaming and transformation at the workplace. For instance, the workplace is still masculine-oriented in that it has adopted a ‘long work-hour-regime’ which does not accommodate those with caring responsibilities and none of the organizations provide institutional support for working parents. For instance, provisions with regards to family policies do the bare minimum: maternity provisions are only sufficient to allow the mother to recover from child-birth; fathers are not given paternity leave but instead have to take time out of the very parental leave days that are already

minimal. This has significant implications in how women experience and resolve the conflict between the demands of work and family-friendly.

‘Soft laws’; the National Gender Policies encompasses the complete Squires (2005) typology of ‘inclusion, reversal and displacement’. Displacement aspect encompasses a transformative element in that it seeks to embark on a paradigm change that may lead towards equal gender relations by paying attention to various structures, institutions and systems of oppression thus addressing the root-cause/s of inequalities. Moreover, displacement recognizes intersectionality, (even though Squires uses the term diversity) not only gender. Importantly, Squires (2005) talks about adding activism to diversity mainstreaming as also suggested by South African feminists, (Gouws, 2005; Hassim, 2009), to effect change and facilitate progress in enforcing the law (Squires, 2005). The two National Gender Policies legislated as ‘soft’ laws contain all these ingredients for a transformative approach. However, as expected of ‘soft’ laws, they are not implemented in the two government Departments. Moreover the implementation of gender mainstreaming is complicated for various reasons. It is usually under-resourced, allocated limited budget and under-staffed while it also lacks capacity for its implementation. Furthermore, literature shows that gender mainstreaming is hardly known or understood by some of the very structures that are put in place to implement it; therefore its conceptualization is flawed and this leads to a myriad of problems regarding its implementation. Gender mainstreaming is also usually met with resistance not only in the communities but also within government Departments, by some of the very people who are supposed to incorporate it in their core business. All these factors are enough to stall or abort the whole process of gender mainstreaming.

## **Chapter 5. Perceptions of Workplace Gender Equality and Family Friendly policies**

In the last chapter, I analyzed gender equality and employment legislation as well as workplace policies. As mentioned no additional policies had been developed to address family concerns and gender inequality in the two organizations, other than those which were legally required. I now turn my focus to look at how these policies are perceived within the two organizations under study. The findings presented in this chapter, are from interviews with managers (mothers and fathers), the Gender Focal officers as well as the Human Resource Personnel and describe their perceptions of workplace gender equality and family related policies. I explore whether there is support available for working parents, the effectiveness of these policies and whether they address the needs of working parents. I present the findings of both organizations, drawing out the similarities and well as differences in responses.

### **Managers' Perceptions of Gender Equality and Family Related Policies**

#### ***Work Hours***

Formal interventions have been put in place to outlaw discrimination and to address childcare concerns in response to international organizations and initiatives, such as the ILO, the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action. However, the long working hour regime and the minimal workplace support to assist those with childcare responsibilities suggests that the workplace has, to a large extent, maintained a male-model work culture, which is not family friendly. In this section, I seek to determine from the managers (who are themselves parents),

whether existing policies accommodates working parents. In order to do this I start by investigating their work-hours, comparing their responses with the legislation to determine if these hours of work accommodate those with childcare responsibilities. As seen in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) (chapter 3), the legislation uses the 'generic' employee approach and employees, including mothers and fathers, are treated on the basis of sameness with regard to official hours of work in both organizations.

The organizations seem to have retained a long 'work-hour-regime' which places high demands even on those who have no childcare responsibilities. Participants reported that they work for a minimum of 9 hours per day, from 7h30 to 16h30, the maximum stipulated in the legislation. However, most participants, worked far beyond these hours. Most of them (in both the Parastatal and the Government Department), whether male or female, reported that their work involves a lot of travelling in- and outside the province: doing site visits and attending conferences, workshops and meetings as will be seen in what follows.

For instance, from time to time participants do 'site visits', which they define as visits to districts which are under the jurisdiction of the Province to ensure that their directorates' projects and programs are implemented at district level. The duration of these visits range from one to three days. On the days when managers make these visits they often arrive home late at night or even spend days on these sites, depending on the purpose and nature of the visit. For instance, if it is for training workshops the managers stay for days. Many of them report that they only work in their offices on Mondays and Fridays, Mondays preparing for their work at district level and Fridays writing weekly reports and attending meetings, as can be seen in the quote below.

For instance, on Mondays I usually sit in the office, plan and draw a timetable for the week and write reports which I could not write the previous Friday; Tuesdays,

Wednesdays and Thursdays I go for site visits, Friday is supposed to be the day to write a weekly report about what I have been doing during the weekdays, but if it happens that on Friday I am still doing site-visits or attending a meeting, I write the report on Monday. (June: F, 40, Parastatal).

In addition to the above, it appears there is also a peak period during each month and quarter, where most employees usually work until late. This usually happens before submission of monthly and/or quarterly reports and/or when they have to catch up with administrative work, especially when they have been away from the office, attending workshops or conferences.

90% of my work requires that I go out to attend some workshops or work until late or spend days, wherever, either on the sites in other provinces. I also usually work until late when writing reports and or catching up with some administrative work (Fulu: F, 41, Department).

Over and above long hours spent on work, report writing and site visits, participants - mothers and fathers – also reported attending various local, provincial and/or national as well as international meetings, workshops and conferences. Table 5.1 sheds light on the frequency of travel especially of senior managers, in both organizations. This is in line with van Donk and Maceba (1999) and Geisler's (2000) studies on women parliamentarians. They found that meetings did not “take into account the multiple responsibilities of women”, particularly mothers (van Donk and Maceba, 1999: 22).

**Table 5.1 Attendance of Meetings and Conferences**

	<b>Number of trips per calendar month</b>	<b>Purpose of the trip</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Local/Provincial	3 times per week	Site visits	3 days per week
National	1 or 2 times per month	Workshops	3 days in succession
International	1 per annum	Conference	5 days

Table 5.1 suggests that the workplace demands a very high commitment to the organization, in terms of work-hours, especially from managers. This also suggests that the workplace is inconsiderate to employees who are parents and provides evidence that the workplace is structured as if participants have no family responsibilities and is defined on the ‘male-model’ terms. Aryee (2005) suggests that long working hours can be seen as ‘antecedents’ which may in turn lead to role overload and then to work-to –family- conflict.

### ***Knowledge and Perceptions of Family-Friendly Policies***

Family-friendly Policies refer to terms and conditions which are designed to enable employees to combine family responsibilities and employment and can be categorized into: leave arrangements, e.g. maternity, parental, and bereavement or compassionate leave; flexible working arrangements, e.g. part-time, staggered hours, job-sharing, annualized hours and home-working; workplace facilities, e.g. crèches, nurseries, subsidized child-care, counseling/ stress management provision (Lewis, 1997: 13). However, as seen in the last chapter, South Africa seems to offer a narrow range of options with very limited entitlements (maternity and family responsibility leave).

Participants were asked if they knew of any policies in their organizations which they considered to be family-friendly. The idea here was to determine what sort of policies they thought were family friendly and whether they were effective in addressing the needs of those with childcare responsibilities. The table 5.2 shows various options that indicate the way in which participants understand a family-friendly policy.

**Table 5.2 Work-life balance Policies Mentioned**

<b>Work-Life Balance Policies</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
Maternity and Family Responsibility Leave	1	6	7
Maternity, Family Responsibility, Paternity Leave		2	2
Family Responsibility, Maternity and Adoption Leave		1	1
Family Responsibility Leave only	4	2	6
Maternity, Family Responsibility, Employment Assistance Programme	1		1
Employee Assistance Programme	1		1
Maternity, Family Responsibility, Sick Leave		1	1
Maternity, Family Responsibility, Sick, Special Leave		1	1
Employee Assistance Programme, Compassionate, Family Responsibility Leave		1	1
Maternity, Vacation, Family Responsibility Leave		1	1
Maternity, Family Responsibility Leaves, Flexi-hours	1		1
Maternity Leave and Medical Aid	1		1
<b>The total number of those who knew about Family Policies</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>
I do not know of any family friendly policies	7	6	11
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>

Table 5.2 demonstrates that knowledge of family-friendly policies varies. Some are aware of policies, while others mentioned all sorts of legislation and types of leave offered by the South African state and workplace, some of which do not assist working parents to reconcile their work and family responsibilities. However, a significant number (11) did not know of

any such policies at their place of work. As seen in Table 5.2 lot of respondents mentioned a combination of two or three that they considered to be family-friendly leave options. Women mentioned a much wider range of policies they considered to be family friendly than men. As can be seen in the table, 8 men compared to 15 women included both maternity and family responsibility leave in their responses. Only one female participant rightfully added adoption leave and explained that it is the same as maternity leave when an employee adopts a baby below the age of 2. Most of the male participants considered only family responsibility leave to be a family friendly policy. However, 2 male participants from the Parastatal mentioned flexi-hours and 1 mentioned medical aid. Flexi-hours appear very briefly (in very ambiguous terms) in the legislation as shown in chapter 3, but not in the organizations' leave policies.

This notwithstanding, many of the male participants did not know what I meant by family-friendly policies. This was also the case for several women but among those female participants who gave the 'I do not know' response were those who reported that

“what we have is not at all family-friendly” (Faith: F, 40, Department).

In contrast, men who reported not to know of any family-friendly policies, simply did not know what I meant by family friendly policies.

In addition I gave participants a list of family friendly policies as outlined in table 5.3 and asked them to tick whatever was available at their place of work.

**Table 5.3 Parastatal’s Responses on Work-life balance Policies**

	Yes		No		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Part-time work			16	21	37
Flexible hours	2	0	14	21	37
Working from home			16	21	37
Time off for sick children	16	21			37
Time-off for children for other reasons			16	21	37
Is there any childcare provision:			16	21	37
a. at work					
b. in a form of vouchers					

All participants indicated that none were available except 3-5 days off, per annual cycle as specified in the legislation. Two male participants from the Parastatal indicated that flexible hours are available in their organization. However, this is only vaguely indicated in the BCEA and is not reflected in the Parastatal’s leave document. Most participants mentioned that they depend on their 20 days annual vacation leave, for child-care related reasons, that is, if they have exhausted their Family Responsibility Leave days. As can be seen, both organizations offer very little support to assist those with childcare responsibilities even when they work for very long hours. Aryee (2005) has identified the lack of institutional support alongside long work hours as another antecedent to work-family-conflict.

In what follows I discuss perceptions of managers of policies or other work-place support for mothers and fathers. I first discuss the views of managers who are parents, followed by Human Resource Personnel and finally the Gender Focal Points.

In what follows I seek to determine perceptions of managers of the effectiveness of family as well as gender equality policies. To do this I asked participants if Family Policies are helpful

in assisting working parents to balance work and family responsibility. Their responses are summarized in the table below.

**Table 5.4 Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Work-life balance Policies**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes – effective	9	2	<b>11</b>
No – Not effective	3	18	<b>20</b>
Not Fully, Not Enough	1	1	<b>2</b>
Not sure/ I do not know	3	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>37</b>

Table 5.4 demonstrates the gendered differences in the perceptions of managers concerning the effectiveness of family policies in assisting working parents. For instance, most men appear to have ‘traditional’ views on work-life balance policies. Thus, they concede that current policies assist employed parents to balance their work and family responsibilities and do not see the need to improve them. This implies that they do not consider the introduction of paternity leave and/or an increase in the 3 to 5 days Family Responsibility Leave, as necessary. This is mainly attributed to gender normative expectations, that women are primary carers and fathers are providers, even though mothers and fathers in practice share the role of provider, as elaborated in the next chapter. Kandiyoti (1988) found that most African families still perceive men as providers, even though this is shared between the mother and the father. However there is also the likelihood that this perception may persist because men are comfortable with current arrangements, where it is wives who ensure that the house is clean and the husbands and children are well taken care of. The way things are currently is “of far reaching advantage to men as a sex” (Cockburn, 1991:77), and it is for this reason that men defend the status quo.

It is only a minority of men (4) who were seriously concerned about the inadequacy of Family Responsibility Leave and its inability to assist, especially men, to reconcile work and family responsibilities. Two of these men (1 from each organization) contribute towards childcare, although their contribution is less than women's. These participants expressed dissatisfaction, especially over the length of time (3-5 days) allocated for Family Responsibility Leave. One of the four men is one of the only two white men who participated in the study, he participated extensively in childcare, whenever he was available at home, but the problem is that he works long hours and is unable to participate as much as he wants to in childcare and domestic chores. Here we see one area in which concerns about family responsibility leave are gendered. The major concern for the two men is that family responsibility leave does not take into consideration children's school activities; they wanted to be able attend sports and other school activities, such as school registration as can be seen in the quote below.

I should be given more time not only for paternity leave and when children are sick but also to attend sports and other activities when my children are participating, not only the five days we are given for everything and where a doctor's certificate is or proof is required. We should be given adequate days per annum that will cover all what I have already mentioned plus time to register our children as well as to attend activities in which they are involved in at school. Right now, the 3-5 days and my workload does not allow me to do that (Don: M, 40, Department).

Among the men who see family responsibility leave as inadequate are those who live away from home, like Thami, quoted below, who like others in his situation reported finding it difficult to reconcile family and paid-work responsibilities. Most of these men stated the need for flexible hours as well as a nursery or after-school care at the workplace, given the

fact that parents find themselves in a dilemma, when children are released from school before they knock off from work.

In contrast to men, most female participants expressed heightened dissatisfaction with the family policies currently in place. Generally mothers raised many issues in common but there were some specific ones. Moreover, they also raised different issues from their male counterparts, which show that the way parents experience parenthood is gendered. Their responses illustrate that women are the ones who struggle to navigate through family and work tensions and responsibilities. They refer to their organizations as not family-friendly. Some even argue that what they currently have at the workplace is irrelevant. Women from the Department appeared to be more vocal and gave more substantive and critical of their existing parental leave entitlements compared to the women in the Parastatal. Most of the responses that follow are from the women from the Department.

No. To me family responsibility leave is irrelevant. **Interviewer:** *In what way is it irrelevant?* **Interviewee:** Honestly, I find it of no use at all for parents. They do not address the needs of parents in any way. We are given only 5 days as Family Responsibility Leave (FRL) per annum and it is used for many purposes, for instance as compassionate leave, paternity or time off when children or other family members are sick, really and truly how is it expected to be effective? (Faith: F, 50, Department).

Women and a few men said that they needed a workplace which was sensitive to their needs as parents. They came up with a wide range of suggestions to be added to existing arrangements. There appeared to be 2 main suggestions that featured among the combinations of suggestions brought forth by female participants, these were, childcare facilities and flexible hours. For instance, a total of 13 mothers included flexible hours

among their suggestions, while 12 of them included childcare facilities. Eight of the mothers suggested a combination of flexible hours and childcare facilities, but 3 added part-time work, while another 3 added the ability to work from home.

It is also important to note that a significant number of female and a few male participants suggested arrangements that would facilitate the involvement of men not only in child-care, but also in domestic chores. This is due to the fact that women are the ones who experience the pressure emanating from difficulties in reconciling work and family responsibilities, while men are free from such pressure, as shown in chapter 7; mothers feel the need for fathers to assist them in domestic tasks to ease the pressure they experience. For this reason most mothers suggested family friendly policies which are also gender sensitive and which would facilitate the involvement of men in childcare and household chores.

To achieve a balance as parents, we need flexible hours, enough paternity leave and childcare facilities at both fathers' and mothers' places of work to promote men's involvement and participation in childcare and house-chores (Zizi: F, 40, Department).

Importantly, women are strongly of the opinion that if their suggestions are taken into consideration, it would result in a win-win situation both for working parents and the workplace as it would not only assist mothers to balance their work and family roles, but would also enhance workplace productivity.

Other women recognize that because of the resilience of the African culture involving men in domestic and care work would not be an easy task. Because of this women should in the meantime be given more institutional support to alleviate the pressure on them, as stated in the quote below.

We need adequate policies that can support working mothers, including childcare facilities, as I have already mentioned, this will ease the pressure on mothers. Men still have a lot to learn about the role they have to play given the cultural dynamics. It would be easier to teach children but not a husband. Women are still overburdened with all these roles and it creates a problem health-wise, especially long-term problems, because we do all things ourselves (Portia, Female, 28, Department).

Some responses provide classic examples of the extent to which the workplace neglects mothers with young children. There seems to be lack support for women when they have to travel to conferences which take place outside the province; this is fully discussed in chapter 7. Several mothers strongly argued for childcare facilities to accommodate mothers with babies, so that they would be able to participate in workshops, conferences and other workplace activities that would enhance their career-development.

Childcare facilities and support, like extra accommodation for mothers with young babies are needed, for instance accommodation for helpers. Right now when women are going to conferences and workshops children and helpers are not accommodated. Twice I have had to pay from my own pocket for my helper's accommodation, which was unfair on me. There is a need for this to be considered, so that women are not left out in these activities because they are important for self-development (June: Female, 40, Parastatal).

The suggestions raised especially by mothers imply that the two organizations are not at all family-friendly and that mothers experience a myriad of problems as they navigate paid work and family, as fully discussed in chapter 7. Although mothers' concerns are basically similar in the two organizations, mothers from the Department were more progressive, vocal and elaborate in the presentation of their views than those in the Parastatal. First the working

hours are very long and therefore do not accommodate those with childcare responsibilities. To this effect most mothers and a few men, from both organizations decry the lack of workplace support for working mothers. This implies that what is currently in place is not sufficient to assist parents, especially mothers, to reconcile their dual-role and the organizations are not family-friendly. As women are the ones who experience difficulties because of the lack of workplace support, they came up with a wide range of ideas on what could be done to assist. The introduction of childcare facilities and flexible work-schedule were highlighted as major measures that would assist in facilitating their paid work and childcare responsibilities. It is also important to note that a significant number (13) of women suggest involvement of men in childcare and therefore the need for men to be given time off for this. Interestingly, they seem to be of the opinion that if parents' needs could be addressed, it would lead to a win-win situation for both the work-place as well as working mothers, in that it would increase productivity at the workplace. To a significant extent these responses show some progressiveness among women managers to this question, especially those from the Department.

On the other hand, although most men think that what is currently in place is sufficient, a few, some of whom live far away from home, do not. This may be attributed to the fact that, since most men do not have to juggle work and family responsibilities, they are not aware that those who do might need some support. Mothers' responses highlight the existence of workplace antecedents, such as role conflict, role overload, long working hours, schedule inflexibility and lack of childcare facilities, most of which are included in Aryee's work-family-interference model.

***Perceptions and Attitudes of Managers towards Gender Equality and Related Policies***

Many authors, like Cockburn (1991), concede that family (friendly) policies have been introduced as gender equality initiatives, while others argue that they have nothing to do with gender equality. In this section I aim to establish managers’ feelings on whether they think family policies contribute to gender equality at the workplace. To determine their perceptions I started by asking them if they thought there were any (other) gender equality policies in place in their organizations. Their responses are categorized in the table below:

**Table 5.5 Knowledge and Awareness on Organisational Policies**

Legislation and/or Policies	Number of participants		
	Male	Female	Total
Employment Equity Act (EEA)	11 (70%)	10(48%)	21(54%)
HR-Recruitment Policy		3(14%)	3(8%)
EEA & HR-Recruitment Policy	2(12%)		2(5%)
EEA, Empowerment Programmes for women, Bursaries	1(6%)		1(3%)
Labour Relations Act (LRA), BCA, EEA		1(5%)	1(3%)
Batho-Pele Policy		1(5%)	1(3%)
I do not know	2(12%)	6(28%)	8(22%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16(100%)</b>	<b>21(100%)</b>	<b>37(100%)</b>

With regard to policies that address gender equality, it is important to note that many of the employees in both organizations did not distinguish between legislation at national level and organisational policies. When asked if they knew of any policies in their organization which addressed gender equality, most managers mentioned the legislation, the EEA, BCEA/or LRA (see Table 5.5) and several mentioned one or more pieces of legislation in combination with organizational policies. Surprisingly one of the participants even mentioned the Batho-Pele (which means, putting clients first), and is the public sector’s service delivery policy, which ostensibly has nothing to do with workplace equality policies; a few participants mentioned the organization’s HR-Recruitment Policy. This suggests a lack of awareness of

organizational Employment Equity plans and the strategies employed by their organizations to promote Gender Equality. However, perhaps it may be argued that a strategy and plan are not policies. In addition, as indicated in the table above, a significant number of participants were not aware of any gender equality policies in their organizations.

In order to establish participants' perceptions of family-friendly policies and their relation to gender equality, I asked: *Do you think such policies can contribute towards achievement of gender equality?* Once more, there is a gender difference across organizations on responses to this question. For instance, 75% of male participants gave an affirmative response, while a few believed that they could although to a limited extent. On the other hand, 25% of the male participants said that family-friendly policies did not contribute to gender equality and all of them felt that gender equality could not be achieved through family-friendly policies, because, to a large extent, men are excluded from such policies or time given to men is just too little to contribute towards gender equality. For them, for these policies to contribute to gender equality they would have to be available on the basis of sameness, that is equal maternity and paternity leave. In this small group, it is men from the government Department who were more progressive in their responses than those from the Parastatal, as can be seen in the quote below.

Don: No. We need paternity leave as well as and more days in Family Responsibility Leave to enable us to get more involved in childcare (Don, M, 40, Department).

Contrary to most men's responses, most women (76% compared to 25% of men) challenged the current order of things. They felt that current family policies will not possibly contribute to gender equality. Like the 25% of men, mentioned above, gender equality to them is about sameness, hence for family policies to contribute to equality they would have to provide equal maternity, paternity and family responsibility leave for men and women and many feel

that flexible hours and childcare facilities would also have to be available. In this way they expressed more progressive views compared to men.

In addition to the perceptions of managers, I also sought to determine the perceptions of the GFPs from each organization since, according to the National Gender Policy Framework (2001), this structure forms part of the Gender Machinery and has been established to drive gender equality programmes at the level of the workplace. Before I discuss perceptions I first establish the role of a Gender Focal Point in the organizations.

### **The Roles and Perceptions of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) of Work-life balance and Gender Equality Policies**

This section starts by looking into the roles of the GFPs within the two Organizations in order to determine their influence on policy development as well as implementation; I pay special attention to policies related to family and gender equality.

#### ***Roles of GFPs in the Organizations***

In this section, I start by determining the position and the location and thereafter the roles of the GFPs within the organizations from the perspective of the GFPs themselves. Essentially I seek to establish whether GFPs' positions, location and roles accord with the recommendations outlined in the National Gender Policy Framework of 2001.

The study included 3 GFPs, a male and female from the government Department who I will refer to as GFP1 and GFP2 respectively, and one female GFP from the Parastatal, who I will refer to as GFP3. The South African National Gender Policy Framework outlines the roles of different structures in the national gender machinery, including GFPs and also recommends the location and positions of GFPs, as has been discussed in chapter 3. However, there is

much evidence which suggests that the provisions of the National Gender Framework have been attenuated by the very government that has developed it. First, as Walker (2003) and Karlsson (2010) also found, government Departments seem to have ignored the recommendations of the National Gender Framework, that the GFPs should be located in the Director General's office and given a Senior Managerial post. Instead in both organizations the GFP is located under the Human Resource and Administrative directorates. In both organizations GFPs are placed in the office of transformation and gender work forms a small part of the Special Programmes; this has also been observed by Walker (2003) and Karlsson (2010). However, the location of these offices is slightly different within the two organizations. The Parastatal's office of transformation is placed within the Human Resource directorate, under the headship of a Human Resource senior manager. In contrast, the Department's office of transformation is a directorate on its own but works closely with the HR Department. In both organizations, the GFPs are employed at lower level positions, compared to what is recommended in the Gender Policy Framework, as Deputy Directors and Equal Employment Opportunity officers; this is in line with the findings of Karlsson (2010); Walker (2003) and Hassim (2003). The Department's GFP (male) is accountable to the senior manager of the office of transformation and his deputy is a female junior manager, who works as an Equal Opportunity officer. In contrast, the Parastatal's GFP is female and works with two junior managers (a male and a female), one is responsible for special employee wellness and another is mainly responsible for other special programmes. The Parastatal's GFP reports to the senior manager in the HR section.

According to the GFPs in both government Department and Parastatal, their responsibilities are wide ranging and go beyond gender and related issues. As already said, in both organizations the GFPs implement the 'National Special Programmes' which include

multiple responsibilities, such as gender equality, rights of women and children, and people with disabilities; this was also found by Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010.

I have two core responsibilities: Monitoring Employment Equity in the Department and Parastatals. Secondly, I am responsible for the implementation of the ‘Special Programme’: women, children, youth, elderly, disabled at the level of the province and implementation of the national ‘Special Programme’; I am also responsible for issues of gender mainstreaming within all directorates and within Parastatals, I monitor progress thereof; My work cuts across all directorates of this Department ... and five Parastatals[...] (GFP1, M, Department)

In addition to ‘Special Programmes’, the Parastatal’s GFP work also includes carrying out Employee Wellness/Assistance Programme and the Performance Management Development System. The GFP work outlined above does not accord with provisions in the National Gender Policy Framework.

According to the National Gender Framework the roles of the GFPs are as follows: to ensure that each Department and their Parastatal

implement the national gender policy; to ensure that gender issues are routinely considered in Departmental strategic planning exercises; to ensure that Departments reflect gender considerations in their business plans and routinely report on them; to review Departmental policy and planning in line with the National Gender Policy Framework; to review all policies, projects and programmes for their gender implications; to ensure that Departments provide and use gender disaggregated data in their work; to establish mechanisms to link and liaise with civil society; to coordinate gender training and education of all staff within Departments so as to ensure that

gender is integrated into all aspects of their work; and to monitor and evaluate Departmental projects and programmes to assess whether they are consistent with national gender policy (South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2001: 29).

However, in practice the GFPs do not to carry out these duties, as also noted by Walker (2003), Hassim (2003); Karlsson (2010). Most of what the GFPs described to be their gender work encompasses:

With regards to women empowerment: we do a gender analysis to check the existing number or percentage of male and female staff members and their distribution at various levels of employment. We are involved in short-listing suitable candidates for interviews. We are included in the interview panels to ensure fairness during the interview and to ensure that women and the disabled considered for appointments. Job representation is our number 1 deliverable. We also ensure that women participate in skills training or conferences on leadership. We also ensure that all directorates mainstream gender in their programmes, projects and policies. We make sure that women are part of all programmes. All directorates have report on progress in this regard. On people living with disabilities, we make sure that disability is mainstreamed by all directorates, and directorates have to report progress in this regard (GFP2: F, Department).

Another responsibility according to the Department's GFPs, as shown in the quote above, is gender mainstreaming as well as monitoring the progress thereof within the Department, whereas the Parastatal's GFP does not mention gender mainstreaming as part of her responsibilities. As they elaborated how they mainstream gender in the Department, it became apparent that the, GFPs' idea of gender mainstreaming is increasing the numbers of

women in high positions within organizations; she mentions that this is their “number one deliverable”. This clearly shows that the adopted approach to equality is Squires (2005) ‘inclusion’ and ‘reversal’.

GFPs also show that mainstreaming gender also means adding the gender aspect on to an already completed policy/project/programme;

[...] policies are developed by the Department and later come to GFPs for inputs, to ensure that gender is added on [...] (GFP2, F, Department).

[...] all policies developed within the Department need to pass through GFPs for them to check if they are gender sensitive [...] (GFP1: M, Department).

This suggests that the GFPs are excluded from all other stages of policy development and only brought in when policies are already fully developed; their involvement in organizational policy development is therefore minimal. This furthermore implies that, either the GFP or the policy makers in the Department, or both, do not really understand what exactly gender mainstreaming means or entails *or* that gender issues are still marginalized by organizations.

The data shows more GFPs’ involvement in the drafting of plans and strategies developed mainly for the implementation of ‘hard laws’ which pertain to ‘special programmes’, as discussed in chapter 3. To this effect, the focus is on implementing the inclusionary and reversal aspects of gender mainstreaming within organizations. For instance, the government Department’s GFPs report that they recently developed the disability strategy and earlier the Department’s equity plan as required by the EEA and not the gender policy, in the same vein the Parastatal’s GFP has been involved in the drafting of its Equity Strategy, as can be seen below.

On gender we use the Department of Public Service Administration Gender Strategic Framework as well as the Employment Equity Act to develop our own procedure manual on the implementation strategy, that is, on how disability and gender will be mainstreamed as well as on how women will be empowered within the Department [...]. We do not contribute much on policy but we are guided by the Act and the above mentioned policy and strategic framework developed by the DPSA. However, we make inputs on the implementation strategy ... I do not really contribute, but ensure directorates comply with the equity plan (GFP 2, F, Department).

The GFPs involvement in policies does not at all resonate with what is outlined in the National Gender Policy Framework. First of all, the framework, wherein GFP roles are outlined, is not mentioned in either the Department's Equity Plan or the Parastatal's strategy, nor is it mentioned by the GFPs themselves as they describe their duties, responsibilities and involvement in policies. Both organizations seem to implement mainly the EEA and only a fraction of the Gender Strategic Framework - the updated target on gender representation - leaving out the other provisions within this document. The Parastatal's GFP had earlier mentioned that they are currently aiming for 50/50 gender representation and (below) she mentions a figure of 2% disabled; these are revised equity targets contained in the Strategic Framework for Gender Equality (2006-2015) but this was not mentioned by her. I later asked her about it, and she seemed to be unaware of it. Secondly, the Parastatal's GFP does not seem to be supported by the Parastatal. From her response it seems that at times the Parastatal, especially her senior to whom she is accountable and who is the Head of Human Resources, sidelines her inputs or advice. He seems to be of the opinion that the current equity targets are unrealistic which puts the organization's commitment to gender equality into question. In addition, the Parastatal's GFP mentioned that they only make inputs to the

development of her organization's Equity Strategy as guided by the EEA. In the Parastatal, the GFP was concerned about gender representation especially in high positions. Apparently women, in her organization, are concentrated in lower positions in the employment hierarchy as can be seen in her response below.

We have advised on the reviewal of employees; employees need to be reviewed at quarterly basis; we also gave advise on employment equity plan; we were concerned about the percentage of women in the organization; a lot of women are concentrated at lower level of the employment ladder; we also gave advise on disability the target which according to the Employment Equity Plan should be 2%; the Human Resources claims that disabled people are not applying when jobs are advertised; the issue is, the institution is not ready to accommodate disabled people [...]. Inputs that we made for the Employment Equity Strategy were said to be challenging and are far-fetched (GFP3: F, Parastatal).

Thus far I have shown that the Organizations only implement what is legally required of them, with one exception - the new updated target figure (50%) for gender and 2% for disability representation at senior management level was stipulated in one of the frameworks that is legislated as a 'soft law'. This shows that both organizations have taken the inclusionary and reversal approach to equality. It is important to note that not only have they ignored the National Gender Framework and the Strategic Gender Frameworks, but GFPs were almost completely oblivious of the contents of these frameworks, as will be seen in the next sections. It was surprising that the GFPs do not seem to be aware of the contents of the very framework that is responsible for their establishment and which also outlines their functions and responsibilities. For instance, both organizations completely deviated from what is stipulated in the National Gender Framework. As I have shown, the roles of the

GFPs are completely different in practice; this indicates a disjuncture between policy and practice as Walker (2003), Hassim (2003) and Karlsson (2010) also found. Only one of the roles stated in the National Framework was mentioned, but not practiced, by one of the GFPs.

In the next section I discuss the GFPs’ perceptions of gender equality and family policies.

***GFPs’ Perceptions of Gender Equality and Work-life balance Policies***

This section seeks to determine GFPs’ perceptions of family policies. As with managers, I asked GFPs to put a cross next to the work-life balance policy of their organization, as in table 5.6, to determine what Family Policies their organisations had, before moving on to a discussion of how they viewed them.

**Table 5.6 Organizational Work-life balance Policies as Perceived by GFPs**

Work-life balance Policies	Parastatal		Government Department	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Part-time work		X		X
Flexible hours		X		X
Working from home		X		X
Time off for sick children	X		X	
Time-off for children for other reasons		X		X
Child-care facilities		X	Both GFPs indicated that this is in the pipeline	

All GFPs and HR personnel had the same responses, as indicated in table 5.6; they echo those of the managers except that the GFPs in the Department indicated that child-care facilities are in the pipeline. Both GFPs from the government Department mentioned a “Gender Strategy Policy”, which is apparently still being developed and, according to them, includes all family concerns including childcare and after-care facilities. I also asked GFPs what Family Policies their organizations currently have; GFP1 added maternity leave but surprisingly he indicated

that he was not sure if paternity leave was offered by his organization. GFP2 mentioned Family Responsibility Leave and “Employee Wellness Programme”, which, according to her, includes the “Employee Assistance Programme” (EAP) which deals with individual counselling on personal and family problems, time and stress management.

The Transformation office offers “Employee Wellness programme” which is the government initiative, it includes, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - counselling of employees on personal as well as their family problems, as well as stress and time management. A ‘Gender Strategy Policy’ is currently being developed and includes a nursery and aftercare for the employees’ children; it is still currently under discussion. The Human Resource offers Family Responsibility Leave as required by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (GFP2: F, Department).

In their accounts the GFPs seemed to lack gender awareness, with the Department’s GFPs seeming even more ‘traditional’ in their perceptions of gender equality and work-life balance policies than the Parastatal’s GFP. It is evident that GFPs are not aware that their role is to advance the goals of the Framework. The Parastatal GFP was not aware of the existence of the gender frameworks which seek to change mindsets and structures that perpetuate inequality and gender relations through the GFPs. Moreover, the Department’s GFPs seemed not to want to destabilize the current order of things and the idea of men being given more time to participate in childcare was swiftly dismissed by these two GFPs. As a way of understanding the GFPs’ stance on current gender relations, I asked them a question on whether they perceived Family Policies to be as important to men as for women and whether men should be given time off for childcare. There seemed to be a difference between the Parastatal’s and the Department’s GFPs, with the Department’s GFPs expressing more ‘traditional’ views than the Parastatal’s GFP who, in turn, was not aware of the National

Gender Policy Framework. Their responses imply that men should not be given any time off because of African cultural tradition which implied that gender relations should be left as they are. Their opposition to the idea of men being given time off for childcare purposes suggests that they still see childcare as solely a mother's responsibility. This is contrary to what is suggested by the National Gender Frameworks. This way the GFPs seem to be oblivious of the contents of the National Gender Frameworks, because these frameworks contain a feminist voice that strongly challenges the status quo. This is attributed to the GFPs' lack of gender training, and therefore lack of understanding of the gender concepts and capacity to mainstream gender (Walker, 2003). GFP2 in the Department, who seemed to be the most conservative of them all, based her argument for men not to be given leave on African culture and also held essentialist views about gender roles. In the quote below she suggests that men's biological make-up, which is also a determinant of being emotional, together with African culture, act as a deterrent towards men's involvement in childcare. She sees emotions and the lack thereof as gendered and inherent.

I don't think the men need more than five days because of their gender. They are not emotional people. They are not capable of taking care of children. Because of our culture men have never been able to handle child care [...]. I think the policy the way it is, it is good they are not involved with children, and do not take care of children when they are sick (GFP2: F, Department).

GFP2 does not seem to envisage a change in gender roles and men's (future) involvement in childcare, which is exactly what the frameworks seeks to achieve. Her argument implies that it takes a woman, since to her it is women who are emotional, to take care of children. This way she naturalizes childcare as a role that is inherently mothers', as also suggested by

Eisenstein (1981). For these reasons, she is adamant that men should not be given more time off for the purpose of childcare.

On the other hand, GFP3 seems to be the most perceptive of the three, she articulates more progressive views, implying that men are not involved in childcare not because they are incapable, but because they do not wish to be. Secondly, unlike GFP2, her response also suggests that men's roles can and should start changing. However, she agrees with GFP2 that men should not be given more time for childcare under current circumstances, but unlike GFP2 she bases this on the fact that men will misuse the time given to them. However, she later suggests that men need to be gender sensitized before they are given time off.

[...] they do not help out in childcare, and they will misuse it, even though I know that they need to start assisting... they need to be educated and then the time allocation lengthened (GFP3: F, Parastatal).

GFP1 bases his reasoning on the social construction of roles as he points to African cultural expectations and beliefs, about childcare being a woman's role; based on these, he is of the opinion that men should not be given time off. This way he is going against the framework, whose goals he is supposed to advance.

I'm not sure.... you see... men still believe that issues of childcare are still regarded as women's responsibility (GFP1: M, Department).

GFPs 1 and 2 seem satisfied with the institutional support given to working parents and they are of the view that Family Policies meet parents' needs. However, this raises a question about whose views they are articulating. Their views certainly do not resonate with those of most mothers in the Department, who bear the burden of family responsibilities, but do resonate with those of most fathers, who have no childcare responsibility. This implies that

the GFPs are not familiar with the needs of mothers and neither are they familiar with the contents of National Gender Policy Frameworks. Moreover, this may also be attributed to the fact that they themselves do not have childcare responsibilities (GFP 1 is a father who is separated from his children and their mother and GFP2 has no children). For GFP1, since no complaints had been received from employees, as seen in the quote below, he takes it to mean they are satisfied about what is currently offered by the Department.

I do not know, I have, up to so far, not received any complaints about challenges faced by working mothers and fathers (GFP1, M, Department).

The Parastatal's GFP3 seems to be the only one who articulates the needs of most of the managers who are mothers in both organizations and, to a large extent, like many of the managers, she challenges the status quo. For instance, while the Department's GFPs thought the 4 months Maternity and 3-5 days Family Responsibility Leave was enough, most mothers disagreed with this. The Parastatal's GFP, who herself is a mother, challenged this and thus articulated most mothers' needs. She is the only one among the three GFPs who thinks that the Family Responsibility Leave needs to be extended, and that mothers also need flexible hours as well as childcare facilities to allow them to reconcile their dual-role. This was also emphasized by mothers, as we have already seen.

They are not enough... Family Responsibility Leave is not enough needs to be extended, we also need flexible hours, as well as childcare facilities... five days enough for men since most men in South Africa do not want to be involved in childcare (GFP 3: F, Parastatal).

I also solicited GFPs' perceptions of whether they thought working parents are able to balance their paid work and family responsibilities. All GFPs shared the view that men do

not have any difficulties with regard to balancing paid work and family responsibilities since they are not involved in family responsibilities, i.e. childcare. On the other hand, they differed with regard to whether mothers are able to balance their work and family lives. The Department's GFPs expressed 'traditional' views as they implied that women were able to balance paid work and family responsibilities; their views differed from those of mothers and GFP3. On the other hand GFP3 claimed that women are struggling to juggle the two roles and pointed to the negative consequences this has on a woman and children. She indicates that the workplace drains all the women's energy and by the time they get back home they are too tired to perform their childcare and family duties; this is in line with Aryee (2005). As a result, she argues, the family, especially children, suffer in the process. However, whilst GFP3 is of the opinion that women are experiencing difficulties in balancing the two roles she, like the other GFPs, does not see the possibility of men assisting their wives at this point, unless they are gender sensitized. The Parastatal's GFP seems to be more perceptive than the Department's GFPs such that, even though she is not up to date with national policies, she is aware of shortcomings of family policies within the Parastatal.

I also explored the GFPs' understanding of the relation between work-life balance and Gender Equality policies. There was a difference of opinion among them on whether these policies are related. First, GFP1 perceives work-life balance as part of Gender Equality policies on the basis that they all have

[...] the same objective to create an enabling environment for women to participate on an equal footing with men at the work-place (GFP1: M, Department).

On the other hand, GFP2 and GFP3 do not perceive family policies as gender equality policies, but for different reasons. GFP2 is of the opinion that work-life balance policies

are meant to assist women to balance their work and family responsibilities, and Gender Equality policies are designed to empower women and increase their representation at the workplace (GFP2: F, Department).

Here it is important to note that GFP2's idea of women's empowerment and gender transformation is to add gender and increase women's representation in high positions.

On the other hand, GFP3, like most female managers, believes that if family policies were to be regarded as gender equality policies, they would have to be reviewed: mothers and fathers would have to be given equal leave time in terms of maternity and paternity leave and Family Responsibility Leave would have to be extended and equal time allocated to both parents. She earlier added that if men were to be given more time off for childcare it would only work if they were gender sensitized. She seems pessimistic about the achievement of gender equality under the current circumstances.

Furthermore, I was also interested in GFPs' opinions on whether work-life balance and Gender Equality Policies were transformative; this question elicited conflicting views. GFP1 and GFP2 argued that generally the policies are transformative, however, GFP1 argued that some aspects of certain policies are not and GFP3 argued that these policies are hardly adequate to have an impact on gender relations. First, we come across a paradox, as we compare GFP2's earlier response to the response below. Her earlier response implied that men cannot change, and that because of their emotional impoverishment cannot possibly look after children. However, here she is of the opinion that existing policies are transformative, in the sense that she sees a positive change on the part of men. She acknowledges the positive influence of policy on men's participation in the process of childbirth.

The policy (BCEA) as it is currently is transformative, since childbirth was initially a woman's issue, men were not supposed to come anywhere near women when they were giving birth...now they are given time off to be with their wives when they give birth in the hospital (GFP2: F, Department).

Secondly, GFP2 confuses Affirmative Action with gender mainstreaming and seems convinced that affirmative action is transformative. For her, as mentioned earlier in this section, gender mainstreaming means just 'adding on' the gender aspect to already completed policies and this might be how she conceives mainstreaming gender in the quote below. In addition, in her opinion transformative also means the prevalence of women in decision-making positions.

I think affirmative action is transformative, the government had mandated the Department to mainstream gender into its policies, hence the Department offers women induction and skills training, and is currently appointing more women in decision-making positions, it is striving to create a balance between men and women in high positions. On women's day we were encouraging and motivating women in leadership positions to work and not be discouraged by men who are not cooperative (GFP2: F, Department).

GFP2s' idea of transformative change is in fact inclusionary and takes Cockburn's (1991) 'short agenda' route to equality. Hassim (2003) has countered that the presence of women in high positions translates to transformative change especially in terms of gender relations, which is, in part, articulated by GFP1 and 3, as will be seen below.

On the other hand, GFP1 expressed mixed feelings on this question. Earlier in this section he had expressed that all these policies' objectives are to level the playing field and to create an

enabling environment for men and women at the workplace but then, although he acknowledges a positive change on the part of men, he says that some aspects of the policies have not delivered the desired outcomes.

GFP1: There's a positive change on the part of men. Men are becoming gender sensitive; men's mindsets are changing (GFP1, M, Department).

However, he also sees problems:

Yes, it works well. However, there are challenges where women are affirmed. When Affirmative Action is not coupled with capacity building, it's like women are put on those high positions to fail (GFP1, M, Department).

For the first time, as can be seen here, GFP1 appears to challenge the order of things, in defense of women as candidates of Affirmative Action but he has reservations about affirmative action as transformative. To this effect he points out some short-comings with regards to its implementation which seemingly translate into other challenges for women who are the main beneficiaries of Affirmative Action. Unlike GFP2, he feels that women are put in high positions to fail as he argues that affirmative action has not been coupled with capacity building. By this, he suggests that women are put in high positions without the required skills and not given the necessary training required for those positions and that this has translated into the ineffectiveness of women working in these positions. This is similar to van Donk and Maceba's (1999: 20) findings which point to the frustrations of women parliamentarians who were also put in parliamentary positions without necessary training. Like the participant above, they decry that women parliamentarians were put in positions where they were bound to fail. This also resonates with Walters' (1987) assertion that the workplace tends to open up for women but also marginalizes them.

On the other hand, GFP3 consistently challenges the status quo, by pointing out that more has to be done by the organization for policies to be considered transformative. She denounces the claims of family policies being transformative on the basis that little time is allocated to men for family responsibility which therefore means that these policies cannot be regarded as transformative. However, as she also points out, even if men were to be allocated more time, this would not automatically translate into transformative change, unless men were to undergo gender sensitization.

No. Not at all, firstly, the time given to men for the family are too little, it cannot lead to gender equality and therefore can never be transformative. But even if they were given more days they would not use it for the intended purpose... (GFP3, F, Parastatal).

All of the GFPs highlight men's resistance to working under the leadership of women and showed concern about men's uncooperative behaviour towards female seniors. The issue of men's uncooperative and hostile behavior emerged at different stages in the interview. Below the GFP3 describes men's resentment.

[...] men still want you to recognize them, or they even try to pull women down and they try to prove that women are not supposed to in leadership positions. Some men are very angry towards the issue of Employment Equity (GFP3, F, Parastatal).

Secondly, some women are still reluctant to apply for senior positions; they still feel that senior positions are for men. Lastly, some men do not want to be supervised by women bosses (GFP1: M, Department)

It appears as though, instead of these equality policies bringing about transformation, they induce resistance and hostility from some male participants. This highlights the fact that men

have no interest in “dismantling patriarchy from which they so obviously benefit” (Oyegun, 1998) which illuminates the fact that gender equality may not be easily achieved. To this effect GFP3 pointed to the need for gender sensitization as a way of changing the mindset of men but it can be argued that not only men but also women need sensitization. For instance, as can be seen in the case of the Department’s GFPs themselves, both the male as well as the female GFPs need gender sensitization. As mentioned earlier, Cockburn (1991: 65) uses the concept of ‘male cultural resistance’ to explain the anger and hostility of men towards the idea of gender equality. She sees this as men’s tactics to assist “retention of male control”. This is also in tune with Booth and Bennet’s (2002) contention that positive action induces feelings of resentment and alienation and places women in opposition to men – as funding and opportunities are directed to women. The GFP’s response shows that men use all sorts of tactics to make women feel out of place, especially as they ascend the career ladder, as Cockburn (1991) also observed.

In summing this up, GFPs are expected to be some sort of an expert in the field of gender. However, surprisingly, they seem to lack gender awareness, even though they are supposed to be the ones who create gender awareness within their organizations. Another important responsibility of a GFP is giving advice to managers and to ensure that gender concerns are included in programmes, projects, practices, and the strategic planning of the organizations. However, instead of promoting gender equality, to a large extent the Department’s GFPs seemed not to be willing to challenge the status quo, it was only the Parastatal’s GFP who did. To this effect non-participation of men in childcare is left unchallenged. For instance, most of them are opposed to men being given parental leave and/or an extension on Family Responsibility Leave days on the basis that they would not use it for the intended purpose. Here we see traditional and modern views being divided along organizational lines. Firstly,

the Department's GFPs attribute the non- involvement of men in childcare to African culture that excludes them from child birth and child-caring, while the Parastatal's attribute this to unwillingness on the part of men. Department's GFPs do not envisage creating awareness or sensitization of men to promote their participation in childcare, while the Parastatal's GFP does. This is supposed to be one of their responsibilities as the National Gender Framework suggests. Against this backdrop work-life balance, as GFPs suggest, is a non-issue for fathers. The modern traditional division is also seen in the perceptions of GFPs to work-life Balance; while the Department's GFPs were of the opinion that the organization "had done enough" to facilitate work-life balance for women, the Parastatal's GFP thought mothers needed much more time added especially to the Family Responsibility Leave to assist them to reconcile their dual-role and to decrease work-family-conflict. We also see a division on whether GFPs think work-life balance policies are also Gender Equality policies. Here the Department's GFPs are of the view that work-life balance *are* Gender Equality Policies, whereas the Parastatal's GFP like some of the managers, thinks that to be able to say work-life balance Policies are Gender Equality policies, they should be giving both sexes equal time off and the Family Responsibility Leave time should be extended and allocated equally to both mothers and fathers to facilitate the reconciliation of paid work and family responsibilities

### **Perceptions of Human Resource Personnel on Gender Equality and Work-life balance Policies**

As well as the GFPs, the study also included three Human Resource Personnel: a male (Human Resource Practitioner) and female (leave manager) from the Department as well as a female (Human Resource Practitioner) from the Parastatal. The HR-personnel like the GFPs

differed across organizations in their attitudes and views on parental roles and responsibilities. The Department's HR-personnel, like its GFPs, articulate more 'traditional views, while the Darastatal's HR-practitioner gave more modern views which matched those of the Parastatal's GFP.

First, just like the managers and GFPs, when the Human Resource personnel were asked to outline those organizational policies which they considered to be family friendly, they mentioned the legislation. It was only the leave manager who mentioned a generic leave document which had been developed by the Department of Public Administration (DPSA), and was designed especially for Departments and Parastatals; this contains various types of leave, including maternity and Family Responsibility leave which is almost the same as stipulated in the legislation.

Various responses - political, ideological and bureaucratic - were given to the question of what prompted their organizations to develop such policies. For instance, the HR-Practitioner in the Department stated that work-life balance policies were developed to address the racial as well as gender inequalities which prevailed during the apartheid regime. Yet the leave officer said that they had been established for benchmarking purposes. The Parastatal's HR-Practitioner stated that policies are developed and introduced by the DPSA, at national level, and that Departments as well as Parastatals are required to use these as guidelines to develop their own policies.

There seemed to be some uncertainty on the question of how often organizations reviewed their work-life balance and Gender Equality policies: the Department's leave officer gave an estimate of two years, while the HR-practitioner mentioned a year. In contrast, the Parastatal's HR-Practitioner said that they are guided by the DPSA, which implies that when the DPSA introduces or amends policies at national level, the Departments and Parastatals

review theirs in line with the new developments in the national policies. When the HR participants from the Department were asked when last their organization had reviewed maternity and paternity leave, they gave different dates with a difference of a year in-between. The leave manager stated that these policies were last reviewed in the year 2000, while the HR-Practitioner indicated that they were reviewed in 2001. The Parastatal policies, according to its HR-Practitioner, were last reviewed in 2003.

They all mentioned that the duration for maternity leave was 3 months before it was reviewed and was subsequently increased to 4 months. All HR participants reported that there was no Family Responsibility Leave (FRL) before 2001, but only maternity leave. They reported that FRL was introduced in 2001 after the maternity leave review. The Parastatal's HR-Practitioner added that they were both reviewed again in 2003 and FRL was extended from 3 to 5 days, while maternity was extended from 3 to 4 months. The HR participants gave different views on what they thought were the reasons for the increase in maternity leave. The Department's leave-manager and the Parastatal's HR-practitioner shared the view that the lengthening of maternity leave was to allow women adequate time for recovery after childbirth and for breastfeeding without interruption, as well as making necessary preparations for childcare before going back to work. The leave manager also attributed the lengthening of maternity leave to women's continual requests for more time off for various childcare purposes. The Department's HR-Practitioner also pointed out that when policies are reviewed at national level, provinces have to follow suit.

All of the HR-personnel report that the take up for maternity leave is 100%. However, there seems to be a slight difference in the HR-personnel responses with regard to men's take-up of the FRL. The leave manager indicated that the take-up of FRL amongst fathers was 97%,

while the Parastatal's HR-Practitioner said that it is only those who she refers to as "modern-fathers" who take these days for paternity leave purposes.

In their responses, the Department's HR personnel, like their GFP colleagues, seemed to be reluctant to challenge the status quo; the traditional modern views were along organizational lines. They believed the government had done enough to accommodate working parents and were adamant that child care is mothers' and not fathers' responsibility. They were therefore opposed to men's paternity leave and the extension of the FRL and explain this opposition in terms of African culture. And like the Department's GFP, they do not envision change in gender roles.

In contrast, the Parastatal's HR-Practitioner, just like her GFP colleague, seems more progressive than the Department's HR personnel. She supports the idea that women are the ones who currently need more time off but she differs from others about excluding men from work-life balance Policies. She thinks that men should also be given a chance to be at home with their wives when children are born and for childcare purposes. She is of the opinion that some fathers are now breaking away from "traditional" to "modern" fatherhood and want to bond with their children and, because of this, time given to men needs to be extended. In contrast her GFP colleague thought that fathers need to be gender sensitized before being given time off. This confluence of views might be because they were both working in the HR section in the Parastatal.

### **Perceptions of the Effect of Work-life balance and Gender Equality Policies on Gender Relations**

I sought also to establish the perceptions of the HR personnel on the effects of work-life balance and Gender Equality Policies on gender relations. To this effect I asked the HR

personnel whether they thought Work-life balance and gender equality policies were transformative and I found that again their views were divergent. For instance, the leave manager gave a liberal view but her response touched only on job security, elimination of discrimination and the increasing number of women in high positions. This way the Department's HR-personnel's, like its GFP, perceive equality along the lines of 'reversal' and 'inclusion'. Again it is the Parastatal's HR-Practitioner who seems to go deeper in her responses as she points out that the gap between maternity and paternity leave in FRL is too wide to begin to have an effect on gender relations, implying that fathers' marginal participation in childcare means we are far from realizing Gender Equality.

On the other hand, like all the GFPs, the Department's HR –Practitioner raises the issue of men's resistance to female authority. He is of the opinion that such policies have evoked some undesirable feelings of hostility and anxiety towards women by some men. These men according to the HR-Practitioner have become uncooperative towards female bosses. Here, he brings forth the point that it is older men who behave this way.

HR participants were asked if they think family friendly policies are also gender equality policies. Here, we see divergent interpretations of gender equality in relation to work-life balance policies: the leave manager rightly points out that these policies provide women with job security that they previously did not have, and because of this they are also gender equality policies.

I would like to believe they are, in a way, because this allows especially women some time off to give birth but their places would still be guaranteed for them to come back after birth, to continue with their work, unlike in the past (Leave Manager: F Department).

The second interpretation is provided by the HR-Practitioner in the Department: he seems to think that Family Policies are also gender equality policies since they are given to everybody in the organization. From his previous responses he seems to think the time difference between maternity and FRL is not a matter of concern as everybody gets what they need.

Yes, because they accommodate everybody (HRP: M, Department).

We get yet another interpretation from the HR-Practitioner in the Parastatal, who like her GFP, maintains her stance that the paternity days in the FRL are too few to promote gender equality.

No. I still maintain that the days that are given to men are too little to promote Gender Equality (HR-Practitioner: M, Department).

The divergent responses given highlight his narrow understanding of the concept of gender equality.

HR participants were asked if their organizations had other gender equality policies. Like many of the managers, they pointed to the national legislation framework on gender equality. All of them mentioned the Employment Equity Act. The two HR participants from the Department added the White Paper on Transformation. The leave manager also mentioned the Skills Development Act, the Public Regulations Act as well as the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

Participants were asked about who develops these policies. The Parastatal HR-Practitioner gave a clear and insightful account of the whole process of Policy development as follows:

HRP-GP: The Departments and Parastatals are directed and guided by the government with regards to policies. The directive comes from the DPSA and it goes to the premier's office in each province. Every government Department is represented by a

senior manager in that meeting, and then it goes to the HR, and then it is taken back to the senior manager, he amends and brings it back amended and it is taken to the HOD and back to the executive committee which is chosen by the Department.

A follow-up question was asked about what guidelines or legislation they followed when developing the work-life balance and Gender Equality Policies. They mentioned: The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA); the Public Service Regulations Act; Employment Equity Act; White Paper on Transformation; Skills Development Act; Public Service Act; the Public Service Regulation and the Labour Relations Act.

As with the GFPs, we see the responses of HR personnel differ between organizations though the GFPs' and HR-personnels' views are similar within organizations. The Parastatals GFP's and the HR participant's responses, despite seemingly less developed policies, demonstrated that they were more progressive as compared to the Department's GFPs and HR participants, whose responses were 'traditional'. This is seen in the fact that the Parastatal's GFP and HR representative appeared to challenge the status quo, such as work-place policies and gender relations, while the Department's GFPs and HR personnel seemed satisfied with the status quo. For instance, the Parastatal's GFP and HR-practitioners challenged fathers' marginal participation in childcare and work-life balance policies which seem to exclude fathers and thus reinforce and perpetuate unequal gender relations. On the other hand, unlike the Parastatal's GFP and HR participants, the GFPs and the HR participants in the Department tend, in many ways, to accept the status quo in the work-place and the wider African gender cultural prescriptions on the other. Their comments show that they do not envision change in gender roles.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have explored the views of managers, Gender Focal Points and Human Resource personnel on family as well as gender equality policies. This chapter confirms the previous chapter's findings that the workplace has retained the male-model culture even with the presence of GFPs in the organizations. This is seen, first in the findings on the regulation of work-hours as articulated by the managers, which seem not to consider employees' family responsibilities, especially childcare. Secondly, this is also seen in the work-life balance policies, where mothers are not given adequate time to enable them to reconcile work and family responsibilities. Mothers are only given leave time for the purpose of recovering from childbirth, but very little time to assist them to reconcile childcare and paid work responsibilities; on the other hand, men are almost excluded from the work-life balance policies and only given very little leave to reconcile family and paid work. The data also provides evidence that the presence of women in high positions as well as GFPs in the organizations has not translated into substantial transformation. This is mainly attributed to the GFPs' weak institutional location, where they lack authority to influence decision making and policy development. Another factor that disturbs the effectiveness of the GFP work is the allocation of multiple roles and responsibilities to them, which renders their job description ambiguous. However, over and above these factors, this study demonstrates that the GFPs themselves lack gender awareness and training; this contrasts with their portrayal in the Gender Framework as experts in gender and related issues.

From the above analysis, I have pulled out commonalities as well as differences within as well as between the two organizations. The perceptions brought forth were complex and contradictory. For instance, there are conflicting views within and between various groups of participants included in this study, on whether the workplace accommodates those with

family responsibilities and whether work-life balance and Gender Equality policies are transformative.

First, these contradictory views emerge between mothers and fathers' responses; where most mothers appear to challenge the status quo whereas fathers do not. Here fathers appeared to be satisfied, while on the other hand, mothers as those responsible for childcare, were far from being satisfied with how the workplace accommodates them. To this effect, mothers brought to the fore a myriad of ideas on how they could be assisted in reconciling work and family. Moreover, women managers from the Department, unlike their HR-personnel and GFPs, were more vocal and projected, more comprehensive and modern ideas compared to those from their Parastatal and fathers. They critiqued the status quo and were more modern in their portrayal of their experiences and making sense of them as well as in suggesting strategies that could be employed to alleviate the pressure brought about by their conflicting roles. The point of contention of especially mothers from the Department is the fact that what is currently in place, in their terms, is "not relevant", "not gender sensitive" or "not family-friendly" and therefore will not be able to assist them in their work-family dilemma. To this effect most mothers from the Parastatal and Department suggested flexible hours, childcare facilities and part-time work options, in order to assist working parents in reconciling work and family responsibilities. Many of the mothers from the Department added the extension of Family Responsibility Leave as well as the introduction of paternity leave to promote the involvement of fathers in childcare, thus suggesting the idea of shared parenting. In this way female managers' ideas seemed to challenge current gender relations.

Secondly, conflicting views also emerge between managers who are mothers and GFPs from the Department. It was surprising that the GFPs from the Department seemed to adopt 'traditional' views compared to their women managers as well as the Parastatal's GFP. The

Department's GFP's responses seemed not to challenge the current order of things but to support the gender roles prescribed by African gender-culture. This is completely opposed to the contents of National Gender Frameworks. Surprisingly, the Parastal's GFP, even without the knowledge of the existence of the Gender Frameworks, appeared to be more progressive than the two Departmental GFPs. The Department's GFPs' ideas seemed to be in opposition to shared parenting, in that they seem to be opposed to paternity leave and the extension of Family Responsibility Leave, especially the time allocated to fathers, and they perceived childcare as a mother's role. These GFPs perceived the work-life balance policies currently in place as adequate for those with family responsibilities, despite the managers' heightened difficulties and work-family-conflict triggered by demanding paid work, on the one hand, and family responsibilities, on the other, in addition the lack of institutional and spousal support. In this way the Department's GFPs' responses were not commensurate with their managers' concerns. In contrast, the GFP from the Parastatal had progressive views and strongly challenged the status quo and fathers' marginal participation in childcare. She insisted that fathers needed to be gender sensitized and thereafter given time off work to participate in childcare in order to alleviate women's work-family-conflict. This may be attributed to the fact that she was herself a mother and identified with the mothers' struggles to reconcile the two domains. The perceptions and attitudes of the Department's GFPs suggest that they had not gone through gender awareness training, or read through the National Gender Policy Framework, wherein their roles are prescribed, and as a result are unsure of their roles and responsibilities. Hence, the Department's GFPs were not advancing the goals of the National Gender Framework. The Parastal's GFP, like Department's GFPs, had not received this training either and was also unfamiliar with gender concepts as well as the gender mainstreaming policies. Just like GFPs, Human Resource-Personnel's perceptions seemed to

differ across Departments, in that the Department's HR-personnel's ideas were 'traditional' and to a large extent commensurate with their GFPs' colleagues' responses but not commensurate with the women managers' views. For instance, HR personnel in the Department were opposed to the introduction of paternity leave on the basis that childcare is not a father's responsibility, questioning the rationale behind giving men leave in the light of maternal responsibility. On other hand, the HR-Practitioner from the Parastatal, like her GFP colleague, is modern in her views and challenges the status quo; she is of the opinion that men also need institutional support and encouragement in terms of parenting. This is in line with recent studies (Hosking, 2006; Peacock and Botha, 2006). As Hosking (2006) suggests, fathers are still a neglected group in terms of support in achieving a-Life-Balance and yet there is a certain degree of involvement in childcare among the younger generations of fathers. In the same vein, the Parastatal's GFP is of the opinion that mothers should be given more workplace support to enable them to reconcile their work and family roles.

## Chapter 6. Normative Expectations of Parental Roles and Domestic Divisions of Labour

### Introduction

It is generally consented that the South African societal structures as well as its institutions have undergone transformation. The assumption has been that change follows a linear form as purported by modernization theorists. However, many International (Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Inglehart and Norris, 2003), including South African authors (Amoateng et al, 2007, Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Bray, 2010) have refuted the assertion that traditional are converging towards modern values, norms and belief systems as a result of socio-economic development. In a similar vein, Inglehart and Norris (2003) have found that traditional and modern gender role expectations run parallel rather than of converging. They demonstrate that instead of converging these coexist (Inglehart and Baker, 2000). In the same vein South African authors refute the theory of convergence from traditional complex or extended towards modern nuclear family, on the basis of coexistence of a diversity of households in South Africa, among others, the extended (multi-generational) and single rather than only nuclear families (Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007; Amoateng et al, 2007; Bray, 2010). To this effect, South African sociologists problematize the ‘convergence’ theory on the basis that it legitimizes nuclear, heterosexual, middle-class family, thus rendering most African families as illegitimate. Similarly, the prevalence of traditional views on gender role expectations may have been rendered a problematic.

This chapter focuses on participants’ normative expectations of motherhood and fatherhood; parental practices and the division of labour within households; and role change and gender-

role attitudes. To determine normative expectations I establish mothers' and fathers' views on good mothering and fathering. I thereafter move on to examine parenting practice and the domestic division of labour within households. Furthermore, I seek to investigate whether there is some congruity between normative expectations and parenting practices. In the same vein, I also seek to assess whether gender-roles are changing within households. Lastly, I examine gender-role attitudes. Through Hochschild's (1990) and Gershuny et al's (1994) concepts of 'stalled revolution' and 'lagged adaptation', I explore possible explanations for the lack of congruity between normative expectations, parenting practices and gender-role attitudes. I begin by examining normative expectations surrounding parenthood.

### **Social Construction of Motherhood and Fatherhood**

Parenthood is considered as "an essential element of both male and female gender and of personhood in the deepest sense" especially within African cultural systems (Clark, 1999: 717). This section explores the participants' ideas of a 'good mother' and a 'good father' in order to uncover the normative expectations surrounding motherhood and fatherhood; these were highly gendered as will be seen in what follows. It is important to note that this question was asked part way through the interviews. To this effect only 13 out of 20 participants (8 out of 11 mothers and 5 out of the 9 fathers) from the Department while all participants in the Parastatal answered this question.

#### ***A "Good Mother"***

When analyzing my data I came to the realization that defining a good mother in the South African context is discursive, contradictory and confusing while the definition of a good father is quite explicit and straight-forward. Moreover responses can be divided into 'traditional' and 'modern' or 'egalitarian' or a traditional and modern mix (double discourse).

Most of the participants had a list of capabilities and qualities that qualify a mother as ‘good’. It is confusing as to what constitutes ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ mothering. Moreover, the literature has expounded on the fact that even though both fathers and mothers, in reality, have been and are co-providers; in some cases a mother or father is a provider within the household, the society to date conforms to stereotypes of fathers as providers within families (Kandiyoti, 1988; Campbell, 1990; Walker, 1995; Magwaza, 2003; Frahm-Arp, 2010). To this effect, the ‘provider’ is regarded as the traditional role of a father, on the other hand, the primary care-giver a mother’s role, even where a mother is employed and contributes substantially towards family income. When analyzing the responses, several themes which constituted a ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ mix emerged, which I have organized into what is considered to be ‘traditional’ roles: where mothers were seen as primary care-givers, emotional providers, teachers, role-models, mentors co/providers, conciliators, peace-keepers and mediators. Moreover, I show that, as in Inglehart and Baker (2000) and Inglehart and Norris (2003), traditional and modern values, belief systems and gender role expectations coexist rather than converge and as Hotchfeld (2008) puts it, are often presented as a ‘double discourse’.

Firstly, for most participants the idea of a ‘good mother’ draws mainly from the traditional role of a mother: a primary care-giver role (see also Walker, 1995; Magwaza, 2003; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004; Hotchfeld, 2008). However, for many of these were said alongside modern views, as will be seen in many of the responses below. A mother as the primary care-giver has the ability to multi-task and is primarily concerned about the well-being not only of her children but of the entire family; she is expected to be industrious and to be able to manage many different tasks within the household - provide a clean, healthy and comfortable environment alongside nurturing and caring for the children and other family

members; she puts the needs of her family above her own and is available and accessible to all family members as and when needed. This is shown not only in the quotes below but in most other quotations on good mothers in this section. Moreover, the traditional aspect came mainly from the responses of especially participants from the Parastatal: 12 (7 out of 10 mothers and 5 out of 7 fathers) out of 17 participants from this organization gave almost or purely traditional responses as can be seen in the quotes below. A good mother is:

One who takes care of the kids and understand her children and attends to the needs of the family, who loves her family and spends more time at home (Jane, F, 31, Married, Parastatal).

It is important to note that alongside the traditional role the mother is also attributed the responsibility of paying for children's education, as can be seen in the quote below, which may be considered to be modern. However, this is considered to be a normative expectation among the Asante group in Ghana and (Clark, 1999), mothering practice in Nigeria (Kandiyoti, 1988).

One who takes care of the household, children, the health, nutrition and pays for children's education, love, should be approachable (Muntu, F, 35, Married, Parastatal).

Secondly, tied to the primary caregiver role is the provision of emotional support attributed to mothers, which is found in most female and male participants' responses from both organizations. It should be noted that there was no age difference in the responses presented.

A person who takes care of the family, who is supportive emotionally and physically, (June, F, 40, Married, Parastatal).

Although some of the responses, as the one above, were shared by mothers from both organizations, responses from the Department appear to have more depth. A good mother,

[...] should provide emotional support especially during tough times, for instance, when their children are harassed by peers. She should be able to listen to them, as well as check their behaviour and deal with it accordingly (Portia: F, 28, Married, Department).

This is in line with Campbell's (1990: 6) findings, that "mothers form an emotional nexus of the family [...] they advise, console, and comfort family members".

Linked to mothers as providers of emotional support, many female interviewees, especially those from the Parastatal, perceive a good mother as one who is able to establish a special and close emotional relationship with her children, who is approachable, has patience, always available to listen, communicate with and give advice to her children.

One who is approachable and accessible; one the children can talk to, even when they have messed up, who listens (Sharon: F, 39, Married, Parastatal).

In contrast to Parastatal mothers, responses from mothers from the Department were richer in content, complex and lengthy to a point where they were broken down and put under various themes, as Portia's quote above. Most (5) of these mothers' responses draw from both 'traditional' and 'modern' views. Modern views: for fathers include participating in household chores and childcare; for mothers it is considered to be providers, paying for education and so on and those outlined in below.

Thirdly, mothers themselves perceive good mothering as including role modelling, teaching, mentoring, advising and ensuring the cognitive development of children. Mothers from the government Department provided more progressive responses than both mothers from the

Parastatal and men from both organizations. But for most these were still, though in varying degrees, alongside traditional roles. For instance, below they provide an insightful and very rich description of what they consider to be the normative expectations surrounding ‘good mothers’, other than just ‘primary care-givers’. In their responses they seem to take pride in mother’s empowering roles as transmitters of ‘good values’, as teachers, advisers, role models and mentors. Connie below is the only participant in the Department who is almost purely traditional. However, the ‘role model’ aspect gives some slight modern flavour to her response, which is common in this study.

A mother should educate children about the values of the society as well as be a good role-model to the child as well as take care of the children (Connie: F, 40, Married, Department).

Similar, but deeper, responses are seen from other mothers in the Department, such as Faith.

[...] I know I am a role model to him and through him I am a role model to some of his class mates... I know that he talks to his friends about me all the time. I have received messages coming from some girls in his school expressing how I inspire them [...] (Faith, F, 50, Divorced, Department).

Tied to the roles above, female participants (from both organizations) also consider good mothers to be teachers. Again mothers from the Department provide more progressive responses and there is no age difference in their responses. For instance, they are of the opinion that good mothers should be instrumental in children’s cognitive development and progress.

One who plays a guardian role and who gives direction on child development, for instance, provides life-orientation and sexual orientation to the child. At school they

are just guided. A parent should be able to do more than that. A mother should also assist children with their home-work and assignments. A mother should provide cognitive development and make sure it is in par with the child's age-group. She should be a friend to the child and provide them with the correct information; correct wrong perceptions that are provided by peers [...] (Portia: F, 28, Married, Department).

As can be seen above, mothers are expected to teach and provide their children with in-depth information about life, including sex issues. For parents to be able to talk about such issues with their children, it can be argued that they must have developed a special relationship (as mentioned above) with them. Mothers from the Department: Faith, Portia, Tiki and Rose make important points. Faith acknowledges the difficulty for parents in discussing issues of sex with children in the African context. However, all four women share the view that 'good mothers' should be able to transcend this difficulty and discuss such issues with their children, rather than for the children to get distorted information from their peers.

[... ] Children need proper guidance from us. It becomes a problem for children to pick up wrong information from the streets, from their peers, and this could mislead them. Good mothers should be able to talk to their children about issues that could build them up for life, even issues that we, Africans, consider it difficult to discuss sex issues with our children. Well, you know how it is like with us Africans (Faith: F, 50, Divorced, Department).

Furthermore, Departmental mothers are of the opinion that a good mother does more than just socialize with her children, she should also provide mentorship. According to some of the participants, during her interaction with her children (as can be seen in the quotes above and below) a good mother should be able to provide her children with correct, relevant as well as

age appropriate information, and also correct the perceptions established from incorrect or inaccurate information acquired from their peers. Some women asserted that good mothers are those who provide their children with information that will make a positive impact in their lives.

A good mother is one who listens and gives advice to her children; who attend to her children's needs; who is able to talk to her children about anything that affects their lives... *Interviewer:* examples? *Interviewee:* Everything, from sex and just general issues, current issues just so that they are aware of things that are happening around them and who also maintains a certain level of respect for her children (Tiki, 28, F, Single, Department).

However, the last two quotes seem to present unrealistic expectations on the part of mothers, especially by mothers themselves, given the fact that managers spend long hours at the workplace and engage in a lot of work-related travelling, as seen in the previous chapter. However, as presented in the two quotes above, Faith seems to manage to provide mentorship sessions whenever she finds time with her son, although she also decries difficulties in reconciling paid-work and childcare (see chapter 8). She and her son are a family of only two, which makes it easier for her as she can just focus on him. However, this may be a challenge for those who have bigger families, with both older and younger children. Nonetheless, these expectations of good mothers assume that women are full-time mothers and are always available to perform all these roles within the family. This picture of a 'good mother' depicts O' Reilly's (2004) 'intensive mothering' as described in the American context, which appears to be unrealistic among African mothers, not only in the South African context but also in most other parts of Africa (Clark, 1999; Oyewumi, 2001).

Fourthly, some participants, again from the Department, as also seen in Faith above, decry the high expectations placed on mothers, which come from notions of an ‘ideal worker’ and ‘ideal mother’ which conflict and are therefore difficult to live up to, as can be seen in Zizi’s response below. This combined role is projected as highly demanding, challenging and tiresome, as also found by Pillay (2007). She complains that mothers are expected to excel in both roles and, as she indicates, they are expected to be able to “strike a balance” between paid and domestic work and child-care.

A good mother is one who is ‘supposed’ to be able to satisfy needs of her family at the same time balance her employment and house work, do house-chores, care for the sick members of the family, provide food, manage the multi-tasks at home, care for infants – attend to them at night and still wake up and go to work. In most cases these conflict with each other [...] (Zizi, F, 40, Married, Department).

As much as the expectations presented in the above quote seem idealistic, they seem more or less the version of mothering practice that prevails in African families, as also shown by the literature: local, national and regional time-use studies (Campbell, 1990; Clark, 1999; Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006).

The Department single women’s version of a ‘good mother’ is inclusive of roles that are used to define ‘good mothers’ and ‘good fathers’. As can be seen below, a single parent account of the understanding of a good mother seems complicated and is given a discursive (which consisted of a wide variety of themes) description.

A good mother is one who cares ...mothers work hard for their children, so they can have a comfortable life and a safe home. For us it involves working late at night and lots of travelling...because we love our children and we want to give them the best

out of life...we have to do it...we never rest. I want to see my children grow up to become successful human beings that I can be proud of one day, like all mothers,... this all needs money ... education is very expensive... food is expensive... but my children's education is my priority [...] (Gloria: F, 33, Single, Department) (similar responses are also provided by Rose, F, 37, Single, Department).

As can be seen, the mother is attributed a role of 'protector' and 'provider' alongside 'primary caregiver'. To this effect, Gloria, Rose, Faith and Fulu show that women are swamped with responsibilities pertaining to both paid work and family, while fathers are free from, especially family responsibilities. These mothers lament that, as a result of this, mothers suffer role-strain and for this reason need fathers to participate in childcare and other family responsibilities. Some of the male and female participants also attribute to 'a good mother' not only the educator role but also the role of paying for her children's education. This is in line with what Clark (1999) found among Asante mothers in Uganda. This is entangled with the primary caregiver role as presented in the quotes above and below.

[...] and pays for children's education, love, should be approachable (Muntu, F, 35, Parastatal).

A smaller but significant number (5) of participants, which includes (3) married mothers from the Parastatal and 2 fathers (1 from the Parastatal and another from the Department), draw purely on 'egalitarianism' to define 'parenting'; parenting is perceived as a joint venture or shared between a mother and a father.

A good mother and father: Ones who at all times take care of the family (Kayghlie: F 29, Married, Parastatal).

It is also very interesting to hear what fathers have to say with regards to good mothers. Compared to mothers, fathers had much less to say on the question. The definitions were much briefer, but discursive. First, several fathers articulate idealistic, traditional and highly moral views of good mothers, as shown in the quote below. However, as can be seen alongside a traditional view he adds ‘leadership’ aspect to a good mother.

one who is caring, and who is able to lead; who can do all the tasks in a way that is exemplary, works hard to ensure unity within the family (Ken: M, 45, Parastatal).

However, in their responses fathers mentioned a few interesting expectations (which are different from mothers’) in addition to the primary caregiver role that most of them attribute to mothers. They seem to have an expectation that a good mother should have mediation skills to manage conflict situations within the family. This way they consider good mothers as being able to play a cohesive and conciliatory role, as seen in the quotes above and below. This way mothers are expected to have a calming effect on members of the family, especially when tempers are rising. Moreover, such views came from fathers from the Parastatal.

A good mother: I see a mother as a peace keeper and mediator [...] (Moss, M, 30, Married, Parastatal).

This resonates with Campbell’s (1990: 6) findings, where she points out that “mothers mediate between family members in the day-to-day business of living”.

In most accounts, the primary care-giving role still dominates normative expectations of motherhood. Some of the respondents still attribute to a good mother a strictly primary care-giving role, while for several others, especially single-parents, combine the primary-giver and provider role in one.

Having analyzed normative expectations of mothers, I turn to expectations of fathers.

## *A “Good Father”*

Unlike talk about what makes a ‘good mother’, participants’ views of what makes a ‘good father’ are much briefer and less detailed. As in their description of good mothers, there are similarities and differences between women’s and men’s responses. On one hand, a father seems to be bestowed with power, authority and respect. He is attributed absolute leadership roles by many male from both organizations and female participants from the Parastatal and a few from the Department. In their terms he is one who “heads”, “leads”, “provides”, “constructs laws”, “protects” and “makes decisions” within the family. Similar to definitions of ‘good mothers’ there is no age difference in fathers’ definitions; neither is there any difference along organizational lines. However, few definitions appear to be traditional, as can be seen below.

According to our culture a man should head the home [...] (Robbie, M, 42, Married, Department).

[...] a father should provide for his family. Our culture is clear on what men and women should do. Men have always known that they have a specific role to play in the societies and within their families, and that is to be leaders in their communities and to provide for their families, not to clean the house and look after children, that is not a man’s job (Dan, M, 43, Married, Department).

[...] I see the father as a law maker; the mother implements decisions that are taken by the man; a wife is there to support [...] (Moss, M, 30, Married, Parastatal).

Most male and a significant number of female participants attribute authority roles to good fathers. For instance, Ken accords men a leadership role in the quote below.

A good father is one who is a good leader; he should also make sure that the family comes first in whatever he is doing; he has to take full responsibility for the family and is accountable (Ken: Male, 45, Married, Parastatal).

The provider role still appears to be a core signifier of good fathers. A good father is perceived to be the bearer of the provider role as well as the head of the family despite the increasing contribution of women in the household income. As Kandiyoti (1988) and Frahm-Arp (2010) explain, in most parts of Africa a father is seen as the provider and a mother a primary care-giver even though both men and women, in practice, share the provider role and even where the mother is in fact the one who provides. This may imply that even though some of the female participants provide or co- provide, they are still not considered providers and heads of families (either by themselves or men).

For me a good father is one who effectively heads the family. As the head he has to provide time, shelter, food and education for children, and should be respected for that. In this country that is how it is, it is part of the culture here (Connie, Female, 40, Department).

As Kandiyoti, (1988), Campbell, (1991) and Fram-Arp (2010) propound that: women conform to gender stereotypes of men's provider role and women's primary care-giving role even though it is not a lived reality. Frahm-Arp (2010) perceives this as the oppressive hegemonic patriarchal ideology on gender roles.

The protector role, like the provider role, also seems to be another important signifier of a good father. Some female participants are of the opinion that a good father is also expected to protect his family from any harm. Portia states that a good father is one who protects his

children. This implies that although a mother is most often the one who is there to care for the children at home, she does not necessarily play a protective role.

A father needs to be involved in the child's development, a good father is one who is reassuring and who protects his children, who provides support to his children and his wife [...] (Portia, F, 28, Married, Department).

However, it should be noted in that participants' responses vacillate between traditional and modern views. It is important to also note that many of those women who firmly believe in men as providers and heads of households also believe that men should make time for their families.

One who takes care, who spends time with his family, especially children, who talks and listens to his children (Aggie, F, 40, Married, Parastatal).

This is also seen in Connie's and Portia's responses earlier in this section. Although Connie is a staunch supporter of custom and tradition, she believes that men should make time for their families.

The authority role is also seen in Moss's response (in the beginning of this section), where he perceives a good father to be one who decides on and constructs rules and regulations to be followed by members of the family. Furthermore, Tumi sees a father as a problem-solver within the family.

One who takes care of the family, taking care of their needs and a problem solver (Tumi, M, 40, Married, Department).

In what follows, we also find very interesting contradictions between male and female participants' responses with regards to decision-making within families. Here decision-making appears to be contested. Although there was no direct question on decision-making,

it emerged as participants were defining a good mother and father. While some women seem to be of the opinion that decision-making is the father's role, others are not. However, there appears to be a paradox in some men's and women's responses, accounts are contradictory and in some cases interviewees contradict themselves. A few male responses appear to leave no room for a woman to be part of decision-making process; according to them a good father is the sole decision-maker and his decisions should be implemented by their wives or partners.

[...]the mother implements decisions that are taken by the man; a wife is there to support (Moss, Male, 30, Married, Parastatal).

In contrast, while some women accept men's position as heads of households they believe in joint decision-making. However, the man's position as the head may mean the father has the final say in decision-making and this is likely to compromise or undermine the value of a woman's contribution in the decision-making.

I still believe men should be heads of households, but there should be joint decision-making and mutual respect between men and women (Zizi, Female, 40, Married, Department).

As with views on a good mother, there is a significant group of mothers consisting mainly of single mothers, who express egalitarian views and are of the opinion that mothers and fathers should not only be co-decision-makers, but there should also be mutual respect between parents, since a family is borne out of two people.

A family is built by two people, therefore we should have mutual respect for each other, and perhaps do things together...no one should feel he or she is being undermined (Tiki, Female, 28, Single, Department).

Most female participants, in addition to their ‘traditional’ definition of a good father and in a similar way to their definitions of a good mother, include ‘modern’ expectations when it comes to good fathering. They perceive ‘a good father’ as one who is loving, caring, approachable and spends time with family, in addition to the being the head of the family.

A good father: one who can spend more time at home taking care of the family; who knows and attends to the needs of the family; who is loving (Jane: Female, 31, Married, Parastatal).

Some of the female participants articulate egalitarian views as they define good fathers in terms of ‘involved fathering’ (Dowd, 2000). Several female participants said that ‘a good father’ should also provide assistance with household chores. This, it may be argued, is because, as Table 6.1. in the next section shows, women are over-burdened with domestic as well as paid work. Therefore it is not surprising that female participants bring up such an issue as a way to show the need for husbands and fathers to assist within households.

Both good mothers and fathers should be equally involved in day-to-day lives of their children [...] both spend time with their children [...] mothers are experiencing problems in covering all the household tasks on their own, I think it is time for men to come to their rescue (Erin: F, 34).

It is also important to note gender differences in how conflict or problems should be handled by good mothers and fathers. What appears to be a conciliatory role is attributed to a good mother by male participants; they mention mothers as peace-keepers, mediators and forgers of unity within households, compared to the plain problem-solving role they attribute to fathers.

The data reveal mixed and contradictory perceptions of good mothering, fathering and parenting. In the mixture of expectations, the primary care-giver role remains prominent for good mothering, alongside her role as also a paid worker, which, in actual fact forms part of mothering practice, as the literature suggests (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991; Clark, 1999; Oyewumi 2001; Magwaza, 2003; Mamabolo, 2009). On the other hand, the father-role as a protector and provider also appears to be salient, but it is mostly accompanied by modern views, such as the need for fathers to make time for the family and to assist with childcare and household chores. This concern is raised especially by women.

Men should also come on board and be fully involved with taking care of children, since women already do all or most of what men are supposed to be doing, and this brings a lot of strain on women. Women are doing everything by themselves, whereas it was both a man and woman who brought these children to the world. It is really not fair for us to be running after them to maintain their children. A good father should be fully involved in domestic work and care as well (Rose, F, 37, Single, Department).

One possible explanation to the traditional and modern mix in expectations, as provided by Inglehart and Norris (2000) is that in developing countries, including South Africa, traditional and modern views on gender-roles run parallel instead of converging, to retain the cultural heritage. Moreover, the conservative gender-role expectations appear to be stronger. Surprisingly, there seemed to be no relationship between the expectations provided by older and the younger participants to the modern and traditional views, which is different to what was found in Western countries (Charles, 2003; Inglehart and Baker, 2000). Charles (2003) had found that the younger generation had held more modern views compared to older people. However, my data has shown a modern/traditional difference in responses based on

marital status: where single mothers appeared to subscribe to more modern views than those who are married even though married women had a modern/traditional mix in their responses. Incidentally, most of the single women were from the Department. This resonates with the fact that, there were also differences along organizational lines: mothers from the Department seemed to be progressive than mothers from the Parastatal. These show some overlaps between and within different groups. For instance, while both mothers in the Parastatal and the Department provide responses of mothers as socializers and teachers, Department mothers' responses had more depth and were progressive. For instance, Departmental mothers seemed enthusiastic about their empowering role as teachers, advisers, role models, confidantes and mentors. They also see themselves as also key to their children's success. While fathers in the Parastatal provided interesting views in this regard: mothers as playing conciliatory and unifying role. On the other hand, although fathers were attributed the provider, protector, leadership role, these were said alongside the views that fathers should assist mothers with household chores within the household.

Having looked into normative expectations of parenting roles and their gendering, I now analyze the actualities of parenting. I explore how the parenting role is divided between mothers, fathers and other members of the household, in order to determine whether actual parenting practices and the division of labour match normative expectations.

### **Parental Practices and Gender Divisions of Labour within Households**

Although a significant number of women hold a mix of modern and traditional, and some egalitarian expectations about parental roles, which suggests the coexistence of traditional and modern gender-role expectations, there has been very little or no change in terms of domestic roles which remain 'traditional'. Upon comparing the findings of White's (1991)

study with those of Chobokoane and Budlender (2002/4), Charmes (2006), Richter, 2006) and my own, I found that, although there has been more involvement of women in managerial positions, there still very little change in domestic divisions of labour, especially men's roles. This implies that women's movement into managerial positions has not been reciprocated by an increased involvement of men at household level.

To explore parental practices and domestic divisions of labour, I used interviews, tables (see page 289) and observations. Upon analysis of the interviews and tables, what emerged clearly was the fact that parenting and the division of labour within the household, as in White's (1991) and Campbell's (1990), as well as in Chobokoane and Budlender (2002/4), Charmes (2006), Richter (2006) studies, are still highly gendered and unequal. Domestic and childcare roles are to a very large extent a mother's role even though women are also full-time workers. Hence, instead of men getting involved in childcare and housework, as some sociologists and feminists have expected (Warde and Hetherington, 1993; Wall and Arnold, 2007; Williams, 2008), women's increased involvement in paid work has meant that women mobilize their support networks to assist them in coping with the competing demands of childcare family responsibility and paid work (Campbell, 1990; Magwaza, 2003) (this is fully discussed in the next chapter). However, this has not meant that working mothers are totally excluded from their roles as mothers and carers. In order to explore these issues I discuss two broad categories of unpaid work: house-chores and childcare. The aim here is to determine how unpaid work is divided between household members and also to compare the normative expectations associated with gender roles with reported practice.

### *House-Chores and Childcare*

Normative expectations, as discussed in the previous section, indicate that house-chores and childcare are associated with the role of a mother. This is also the main finding in both National Time-Use and Regional Time-use Studies (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Richter, 2006; Charmes, 2006). It is therefore not surprising to see the pattern depicted in table 6.1 in terms of distribution of domestic work. Moreover it is important to note that 13 out of the 37 (see table 7.1) households do not have hired help. As can be seen, the vast majority of household chores and family responsibilities, including child-care, are clearly still left in the hands of women. Table 6.1 was used both to supplement the narratives and as a check-list to make sure that all aspects of the division of labour were covered in the interview.

To a large extent the responses shown in the table are consistent with the narratives but less so with my observations. At this point it is important to reiterate that, in addition to interviews, I used observation to explore the domestic division of labour. However, I only observed one of my interviewees and in her case, the interview, the responses recorded on her check list and the observations were consistent.

With the narratives that emerged from the interviews, I established how domestic labour was divided between mothers and fathers by asking participants how they spent their typical weekday and weekends. This included going through the activities of both men and women from the moment they woke up, what they do throughout the day at work, when they come back home, up to the point where they go to bed.

From their responses, it is evident that most mothers participate in housework when they are at home whether they have domestic help or not. Most mothers do the morning chores before

they leave for work and the evening chores when they return. Weekday chores, for mothers, are therefore divided between morning and evening. In their narrative, most women report waking up very early in the morning between 4h30 and 6h00, in order to make time for early morning chores, which include preparing breakfast for their families, preparing children for school, preparing clothes for husbands, themselves and children, preparing children's lunch-boxes and tidying up before leaving their homes for work, as shown in Zizi's quote below.

I wake up at 4h30 and take a bath, prepare breakfast for my husband and thereafter take him to the station. When I come back I wash the dishes and tidy up the kitchen and prepare myself for work. At 5h45 I leave for work (Zizi: F, 40, Married, Department).

I wake up between 5h45 and 6h00, between 6h00 and 6h40 I prepare my children for school and go and drop them off at school around 6h50, and come back to quickly prepare myself and dash off to work (Gloria: F, 33, Single, Department).

These accounts are supported in the table below which is constructed from the chart completed by participants and which was part of the interview schedule. It confirms that a high number of women prepare breakfast, as well as preparing the children for school. This finding is also in line with the National Time-Use and Regional Time-use Studies (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006).

**Table 6.1 Domestic Division of Labour**

Who does the following:	Wife/ Partner	HusbandPartner	Husband Wife D/worker	Dom/ worker	Wife D/Worker Other	Other	Total
Prepares : Breakfast Supper –main meal	23	3	8	1	1	1	37
	28	0	3	4	1	1	37
Prepares children for school	14	1	3	4	1	14 Them- selves	37
Takes/fetches children :To school & from school Nursery	6	1	6	0	0	21 Public transport	34
Cleans the house	9	1	2	15	10		37
Laundry & Ironing	9	0	3	15	7	3 (mother & other)	37
Cleans up after supper	19	0	6	8	1	3	37
Bathes children in the evenings	1	1	2	4	1	14	37
Helps children with their School-work	14	3	8	1	1	4 7 = N/A	37
Gardening	4	12	3	3	1	11 Gardner 3 N/A	37
Household repairs?	4	16	4	0	13		37

The table above clearly shows that most mothers do much of the household chores while fathers do the least domestic work. According to the table the domestic workers seem to do the most labour intensive chores, such as cleaning, laundry and ironing. Children were put under other category, and the table shows that 22 households have children who are in their teens and young adults (some of whom have since left the households). I analyze the table together with interviews and observations so as to check the consistency in responses, as already explained earlier in this section. Moreover, it is important to note the coexistence of single, nuclear, and extended families in participants' households (as also found by Bray 2003; Amoateng, 2007; Kaluli-Sabiti, 2007). For instance 8 of the participants are single-mothers, 8 live with one or more members of their extended family: three of these families

have organized their sisters to stay with them to assist them with childcare and household chores (as will be seen in the next chapter 8); 2 live with their grandchildren; 1 with her mother and 2 sister's children; 1 with husband's nephew and wife (the wife later left the household), 1 with 2 deceased sister's children. We see the coexistence of divergent households in families under observations; 2 of the 3 households are extended (one is a multigenerational – sisters to both the wife and husband and the wife's father as well as their 4 children and the other is two related families – husband's nephew and his wife as well as their 4 children) families and one is a nuclear family:

Observations showed slightly different patterns in household practices compared to interviews and the table as well as there being variations between the 3 households which may be attributed to the diversity in family structures. While according to both the interviews and table 6.1, mothers or wives prepare breakfast for their husbands, the observations showed none of the mothers preparing breakfast for their husbands or children. In households 1 and 3 the father's breakfast was prepared by the domestic worker and the wife's sister respectively, as the wives left earlier than the husbands, whilst in household 2 the father prepared his own breakfast. When examining the figures in table 6.1 on the work done by domestic workers and comparing them with my observations, I suspect that the work done by domestic workers is under-accounted by women interviewees; observations from only 3 households, however, make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

The interviews also show that when women come back from work, they do the evening chores either on their own (where there is no domestic worker or in the case of the live-out domestic worker) or together with domestic workers, in the case where domestic workers live in their employer's households, as Portia indicates; this is mainly preparing supper and childcare tasks (see below).

When I arrive at home I start by checking the children's bags to see if they need to take something to school. If it is something I do not have in the house, I go and buy it in the shops. I also do some homework with them. I then play with the two little ones who remain at home with the nanny. The nanny then prepares food for the children, while I cook for my husband, the nanny and myself. I feed the younger ones around 18h30 and the adults have their supper between 19h30 and 20h00. The nanny gives them all a bath at 20h00, while I do the dishes. I thereafter tuck them in bed, read them a bedtime story first [...] I now and then wake up in the middle of the night to pull the blankets over them, since the youngest kicks the blankets off, or help them to go to the toilet so that they don't wet the bed (Portia: F, 28, Married, Department).

After the evening meal, there is one last chore for the night, washing up. Table 6.1 shows that it is mostly mothers and other female family members who clear up after the evening meal and, to a much lesser extent, domestic workers. Observations to a large extent confirm what is in the table and interviews, with regards to washing up. Washing up after the evening meal in all the households I observed was shared between female members of the family, including domestic workers, mothers, and teenage daughters, except in household 3 where it is the little boys who wash-up on week-days.

On the other hand, the narrations, table 6.1 and the observations consistently show that very few men prepare breakfast and/or the evening meal or do any sort of house-work. In most cases, both meals are prepared for them by their wives, except for those men who work away from home and live by themselves during week-days. Interestingly, on observation, not even mothers participated in cooking, especially during weekdays. During weekends it was only in household 2 that the mother prepared lunch and supper.

Not all households have hired help. In such homes the bulk of the housework, including cleaning the house and laundry, is done on Saturdays by women, usually with very little or no help from their partners/ husbands.

I wake up at 7h00 and prepare my husband's breakfast. He works on Saturdays. Thereafter I clean the house, do some laundry and ironing and go shopping with my child, and thereafter we go to the cinema, and have lunch out, then come back home around 14h00, rest a little then teach and play, sometimes watch movies on television and go for a walk with my daughter. Later prepare and have supper anytime from 18h30 and go to bed around 23h00. Once a month we either go to a holiday resort for a weekend, or visit my husband's family (Connie: F, 40, Married, Department).

Mothers in most households use weekends to do household shopping. In their narrations on how they spend their weekends, most of them, like Connie, show that they also use Saturday to take their children for an outing, while also doing some shopping.

Sundays, it would seem, are generally for cleaning, church and relaxation. This is in line with Walker's (1995) study. Most of the mothers still wake up early during weekends to clean, tidy up and cook lunch, prepare children and themselves and then go to church. Some go as a family, but some take their children along and leave their husbands at home.

I wake up around 5h30 or 6h00; I take a bath; cook lunch while I also prepare breakfast and we go to church at 9h30 and come back around 13h00; on our way back we buy newspapers. When we reach home we have lunch; wash the dishes and thereafter read the Sunday newspapers the whole afternoon. In the evening I prepare a snack; watch news and go to sleep around 21h00 (Faith, F, 50, Divorced, Department).

A few female participants go to church in the afternoon. Even so, just like those who attend morning sessions, they equally wake up early to clean and cook and have lunch then go to church.

I wake up around 5h00, clean the house, prepare lunch, while having breakfast; we have our lunch around 13h00 and go to church at 13h45 up to 17h00; we come back at 17h30, have supper, watch television and sleep (Rose: F, 31, Single, Department).

With regards to the father's household participation, it is interesting to note that this study shows similar patterns to some early 1980s and early 1990s United Kingdom studies (Warde and Hetherington, 1993), American and European studies (LaRossa, 1988; Hochschild, 1990; Gershuny et al, 1994), as well as South African time-use and small scale studies (White, 1991; Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4 and Charmes, 2006; Moorosi, 2007; Cilliers, 2008). All these studies illustrate men's preference for participating in outdoor chores rather than indoors. Outdoor chores are far less arduous and do not require to be done as frequently as the routine daily tasks that are done by women, which are labour intensive and time-consuming. As indicated in table 6.1., the only chore that some men did during weekdays was dropping the children off at school on their way to work. During weekends, they seem to participate mainly in out-door chores, such as gardening and washing cars, before going out to socialize. White's (1991) South African study yielded similar findings in the early 1990s which, over and above their interest in outdoor chores, demonstrates that men enjoy a lot of leisure time; while their wives hurry home to prepare the evening meals, men tend to spend time with friends or go home and relax. This study endorses the National and Regional Time-use studies (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4; Charmes, 2006) as well as Moorosi (2007) which demonstrate that there has been very little change in gender roles and parenting

from two decades ago (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991). Portia's response below, like many others attests to this.

When my husband comes back from work, he watches television, reads a newspaper, brings work home and works on the laptop. He sometimes plays with the children (Portia, F, 28, Married, Department).

As other studies have shown (Warde and Hetherington, 1993; White, 1994; Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002/4) gardening is one of the very few tasks men do in the household. However, while some fathers did the gardening themselves, a significant number hire a gardener to do the gardening for them, thereby leaving them with almost nothing to do within households. This was confirmed in two households under observation where fathers hired gardeners. In all three observed households fathers did not participate in any of the household chores or childcare. In household 1 there was no hired gardener and therefore proper gardening was seldom done. Nonetheless, it was the domestic worker (almost every morning) and seldom the wife who cleaned the yard. What is also evident from the interviews and Table 6.1, is that men cleaned cars during weekends, especially on Sunday mornings, and then spent the rest of the day reading newspapers and/or visiting friends. In most households it is mostly fathers who do household repairs, but in most cases they hire help when required (Table 6.1). During my observation, I only witnessed one occasion when hired help was required and that was in household 1.

During observations men were virtually absent at the time when household chores are done even during weekends. During weekdays they would make a brief appearance especially in the evenings before meal-time and would read newspapers and watch television, have supper and thereafter go to bed. During weekends they would show up for breakfast and thereafter

leave the house for the rest of the morning, and reappear around lunch-time, with newspapers and again disappear for most of the afternoon and reappear around supper time.`

This also means that fathers are never present to do childcare. This is also seen in the National Time-Use Survey which demonstrates that women spend an average of 87 minutes a day compared to men who spend only 7 minutes per day performing child-care tasks for children under 7 years of age (Chobokane and Budlender, 2002/4). There is, however, more participation of men alongside women in the transportation of children to school. This was also found by Richter (2006). However, many of the children use arranged or public transport to go to school. Observations confirmed this, in that in household 1, the father took the youngest child to school and, although the older children generally used arranged transport, there were a few occasions when the father had to take one or two of them to school. In household 2, although it was generally the father's duty to take the children to school, the mother also did it when the father had to travel. In household 3 the children used arranged transport.

Secondly, although it is mostly women who assisted their children with their homework, table 6.1. shows that a significant number of fathers also assist in this regard. With observations, the situation is different and varying - in household 1 girls were working mostly independently, but they also assisted each other, while in household 2 the mother and household 3 the domestic worker assisted the three young boys.

It is therefore important to highlight that while women appear to have their hands full all the time, during week-days and weekends men appear to have a lot of leisure time as also was the case in White's (1991) study in the early 1990s, both the regional and national Time Use Studies (2002/4 and 2006), respectively, as well as Moorosi's (2007) study. This is evident from their accounts of how they spend the weekdays as well as weekends. Unlike mothers

who usually rush home after work to attend to their children and family needs, men are not usually in a hurry to get home when they knock off earlier. Like Teddy, they use this time to socialize.

When I knock off earlier I try resting and visiting friends, or go home and spend time with my family (Teddy: M, 32, Parastatal).

Nonetheless, on the days when they get home early, while their wives are doing some house chores, most of these men use this time to rest, watch television or read newspapers. Unlike in White's (1991) study, where most men met up with their friends in the local shebeens (bars) for a drink after work, few men in this study visit their friends with most going home to relax.

It is also important to note that South Africa has a very high rate of HIV/AIDS and the deaths related to this pandemic were very high during the period of fieldwork. Several male and female interviewees reported attending funerals frequently, especially on Saturdays. However men added social and/or family meetings as can be seen in Tim and Benji's quotes below. Most men reported waking up and doing gardening and/or attending funerals. When they are through with their early Saturday morning chores they are free to spend time with friends or attend sports, while as mentioned earlier in this section, mothers do shopping and take children for an outing.

I wake up at 8h00; take a bath, have my breakfast; most Saturdays I attend funerals, if not, family gatherings; once in a while attend a soccer match (Tim: M, 48).

I take a shower and go and join my friends. Do some barbeque anytime from 12h00 onward, later watch soccer, cricket, rugby, tennis or boxing depending on what is on television at the time, while having drinks with friends. I go home late to have supper

and sleep, between 21h00 and 22h00 and we sleep between 23h00 and 24h00 (Benji: M, 44, Department).

Similarly, on Sundays, while wives clean, cook and prepare for church, for most male participants Sundays are generally days where they relax and read Sunday newspapers. Most of them also spend part of the morning washing their cars.

Sundays, I wake up anytime from 10h00; I go and buy newspapers and spend the morning reading newspapers (Phil, M, 34, Parastatal).

On summing this up, it seems that, unlike normative expectations which appear to be undergoing a slight change; in the sense that traditional and modern views coexist, the division of domestic labour shows little change. Household chores are still regarded as a feminine role by both men and women. It is clear that, even though women's status and position has improved in the workplace through affirmative action, household management, including house-chores, childcare and other family responsibilities, lie squarely on the shoulders of women. On the other hand, this study provides evidence that men's domestic roles remain almost unchanged, even though women's position has changed and they are now engaged in senior and demanding jobs in the workplace. As explained earlier although many most women have expressed a myriad of difficulties in reconciling family and paid work, they seem not to explicitly to challenge the status quo on the basis that that they gain protection of fathers (Kandiyoti, 1988). That men's role at household level is unchanging is seen if we look back at the studies conducted in the early 1990s (Campbell, 1990 and White, 1991). Their findings were replicated in National and Regional Time Use studies more than a decade later (Chobokoane and Budlender, 2002//4; Charmes, 2006). Men's unchanging domestic roles have been identified as 'antecedents' to work-family-conflict, which is currently being experienced by mothers because of a lack of support from fathers (Aryee,

2005); this might be one of the reasons mothers seek help from other mother figures outside the household. Hochschild (1990) has used the theory of ‘stalled revolution’ to explain the lack of congruity between gender normative expectations and practice. In this case, I suggest that there is a ‘stalled revolution’ with regards to the lack of congruity between changes in parenting practices and normative expectations. Secondly, as seen in the preceding chapters, there has been change at workplace level in contrast to the lack of change at household level; this implies yet another ‘stalled revolution’ between the workplace and the household.

Having explored gender roles and how domestic labour is distributed between parents and other household members, I proceed to investigate perceptions of gender roles and whether they are changing, in order to try and make sense of current gender roles.

### **Perceptions of Gender Roles**

There was a general consensus amongst my research participants that gender roles are changing. Most contended that change is occurring only at the level of workplace, which implies that this change has not translated to changes at household level. The gender-role change was attributed mostly to the state and workplace influence and commitment to the transformation of the public sector through policies and legislation. Analysis of the participants’ accounts of gender-role change revealed a wide range of views, which either ranged from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’ or juxtaposed the two and are organized according to themes. Surprisingly, unlike the definitions of ‘good mothers and fathers’, differences in perceptions on gender-roles were not so many between the organizations. Although many of the views are shared between the two organizations; there are very few that are peculiar to the Department, as will be seen in what follows. The first three themes show progressive views associated with the creation of educational and employment or career opportunities for

women. First, as indicated in the quote below, change is attributed to women's increased entry into senior or managerial positions, which were previously male-dominated. This is perceived as a major indicator of workplace gender role-change.

At home roles are not changing. But at work roles are definitely changing, for instance, in the past men were dominating the leadership positions – they were in the driving seats – but currently women are being employed on top positions in large numbers. The current plan is to have 50% of the positions at all levels filled by women. So a lot is happening at the work-place (Benji: M, 44, Department).

Secondly, workplace gender-role change is also attributed to the improvement in women's education and the employment equity policies. Several participants, men and women from both organizations, as shown in the two quotes below, pointed out that increasing numbers of women are encouraged to get educated and are therefore becoming more and more career-oriented than in the past.

Yes, in SA even the employment policies are assisting women to assume positions of authority and the mentality of career women (Tom: M, 52, Parastatal).

Interestingly, particularly mothers from the Department, like Gloria, Zizi, Suzy and Fulu, as can be seen in Gloria's quote below, attribute their academic success mainly to their own mothers, who served as positive role-models and motivators for them. However, the same quote indicates that roles are not changing at home. This is also seen in other quotes later in this section.

Women are now encouraged to go to school. My mother did the same with me. She encouraged me to get a profession before getting married. She was a teacher and later a head-teacher. She was doing a lot more for the family than my father. She provided

for the family, she was never dependent on my father, she used to initiate big projects - like building or extending the house, she would buy food and everything. There was nothing she could not do. What I am seeing is that the more women have children, the more they are motivated to work for their children (Gloria: F, 33, Department).

This view contrasts with Richter (2006) who associates children's good academic performance with the presence of fathers in households. She asserts that in female-headed households mothers are less authoritative and therefore unable to instill discipline on their children. Thus they are unable to lead children to high academic achievement. To this effect she is of the opinion that two-parented heterosexual households are better-off than female-headed, single-parent households.

The third theme is the association of women in higher positions at work with women's independence from their husbands. Several male and female participants, from both organizations, are of the opinion that women's advancement at the workplace has led to them acquiring independence from their husbands. However, it is also worth noting that several mothers highlighted the dilemmas that come with women's newly acquired economic independence; this is exemplified in Zizi's quote below. Mothers are torn between wanting to be home looking after their children and feeling that they should be working to provide for their children because men do not prioritize their families (this is discussed at length in Chapter 7). This is also acknowledged by Richter (2006) who affirms that fathers' higher earning does not mean men contribute more financially than mothers.

We are currently seeing faces of women in the cabinet/parliament; women are also being empowered at the work-place, they are given high positions, women are no longer completely dependent on their husbands. However, the independence comes with sacrifice because women want to be there for their children, they want to be

responsible parents but they also want to be empowered so that they can provide for their children because they feel men are not providing enough. One salary is no longer enough to provide for a family, which means women must go out and work. However, men do not contribute towards household chores. Women still do all household chores (Zizi: F, 40, Department).

This notwithstanding, most of the women I spoke to, from both organizations, were happy to be involved in both childcare and paid work, although they find it difficult to cope with the lack of fathers' and workplace support, as also found by Pillay (2007). They find paid work to be intellectually stimulating while childcare is emotionally stimulating; I discuss this further in the next chapter.

Fourth, is a theme on the infiltration of male dominated professions by women. While some men disapproved of women's improved status, this disapproval sits alongside some women's progressive and enthusiastic views. Interestingly, few male (one from the parastatal and two from the department) and one female participant (from the department), expressed 'traditional views on women's improved positions in the workplace. First, the gain for one female participant was considered emasculating for men. For instance, the female and male participants argued that these newly acquired roles for women are associated with men's loss of power and status as providers and possibly as heads of households. For instance, Moss in the quotation below associates women's workplace empowerment with divorce and the increase female-headed households. He perceives women's influx into male-dominated professions as a threat to male control over women, which in his view leads to broken families. This triggers a sense that for some men, women's empowerment and the improvement in their positions at work is an unwelcome move, since it may mean the demise of men's power and control over women.

Roles are definitely changing. You look at the divorce rate, the number of homes headed by women, you look at the current situation of affirmative action, these days women are empowered – we have women pilots, train-drivers and women in mining. They are ground-breakers, they earn more money, they can afford a child-minder. Our country's policies as well; men are definitely losing power and control over their women as well as the bargaining power (Moss: M, 30, Parastatal).

Incidentally, in this research there is some evidence of family breakdown linked to women's work. One of the female participants found herself in a position where she had to choose between her work and her husband. Her husband could not put up with being left alone to look after the children when his wife had to go on work-related trips, while on the other hand, he himself could travel as and when he wanted, as will be seen in the next chapter. This is commensurate with Geisler (2000) who argued that the husbands of women MPs in his study could not cope with their wives' sudden high public status and this led to high rates of divorce for these women. Interestingly, the break-down of marriages is seemingly viewed as a social problem by male participants; in contrast, a female participant is of the view that women are successfully heading their families in the absence of men. They perform both the father's and mother's roles simultaneously and successfully as seen below.

[...] Secondly, we have a lot of women heading families successfully so, I am one of them, and the number of single-parent households is forever increasing, there are many children who come from single parent households and broken families who are living a meaningful life (Faith, F, 50, Department).

The point above, as we saw earlier, is contested by Richter (2006), who is of the opinion that fathers are an important ingredient of a good family because they are able to command and acquire respect from children and thus can facilitate their higher academic achievements.

The only female participant to disapprove of women's improved status expresses a very strongly traditional view in defense of the status quo. She argues that the emasculation of men has brought about problems of domestic violence, as if domestic violence had not been prevalent prior to democracy. She thus advocates the upholding of the 'African tradition', which entails respect for male authority and control, as seen in the quote below.

Roles have changed. Men have lost their provider role, and this has created problems. What I see happening is, men are getting confused and really frustrated by this, and they resort to violence. Coming to think of it, this in part explains the increasing rate of domestic violence – what we are lately reading about in newspapers and seeing on news on the telly, like men shooting and killing their wives, children, and sometimes the extended family members who may be present in the scene, and then themselves, as well as the ever increasing number of divorces. Quite honestly speaking I sympathize with men. For me the gender equality issue totally contradicts the African culture. How can we really expect an African man to work under a female manager, when the African culture says a man should head and lead the family, for me it is totally out of order [(Connie: F, 40, Department); this mother is a Bulgarian married to a African man].

In contrast, many of the female participants, especially from the Department, came up with progressive views about the opening up of opportunities for women. As mentioned in chapter 3, the Department chosen in this study is one that has prior 1994 been dominated by men. To this effect, in what follows are views of a male and female employee from the Department. For instance, Suzy, in the quote below, sees the influx of women into male dominated profession as an accomplishment and a breakthrough on the part of women. In her

response, like many other female participants, she is enthusiastic about the opportunities that are opening up for women to compete on an equal footing with men in the workplace.

For instance, in our line of work only men worked ‘with wild animals’<sup>3</sup>. Things have now changed, we now have also women ‘doing this’ who like men carry and use rifles efficiently. I was involved in the training of women ‘in this regard’ I was also trained. For me this proves that whatever men can do, I can also do as a woman. Women are now given an opportunity to compete and work with men as equals. Women now use tents and are trained to handle wild animals. Currently both men and women are sent to handle cases wherein wild animals, for instance lions, are eating live-stock (Suzy: F, 35, Department).

On the other hand, a male participant’s account, while welcoming the improvement in women’s positions, still defends the traditional male-model workplace culture. This is seen, for example, in the association of hunting with men and masculinity. This participant is of the opinion that certain types of professions are exclusively for men and that the inclusion of women is degrading to them. He perceives this as putting women in a compromising position. He is of the opinion that women are not fit or capable of handling wild animals and that they do not have the proper physique or are not fit enough to do so.

Gender roles are changing from one generation to another. Women are becoming more independent and it is also necessary, these days for families to have two salaries. However, the notion gender equality sometimes puts women in a compromising position. Women are now appointed in positions that were previously strictly regarded as men’s. For instance, our Section has appointed women as ... I do not

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<sup>3</sup> The words in quotes above, are a substitution of the ‘real words’ provided by participants for the purpose of anonymity.

think these positions are suitable for women, in fact it compromises women's dignity. You should see them running after or away from the wild animals. I think such positions should still be kept strictly for men. Women do not have the capacity and physique to handle such situations (Peter: M, 40, Department).

The sixth important theme is women's increased contribution to the household, which underlined women's co-provider role. Most participants, male and female, acknowledge that women are now providing for families, implying that previously they were not. In the South African context, women have from time immemorial been involved in the informal economy (Aryee, 2005) and paid work, for instance, as domestic workers (Cock, 1989) and agricultural workers alongside their husbands.

Women are now providing for families, husbands included, while men still have difficulties towards household chores, even when their wives are providing for them (Dan: M, 43, Department).

Some women's accounts, from both organizations, provide evidence that they contribute more than men towards household expenses. They are of the opinion that, even in some two-parent families, women may contribute more than men financially because they prioritize the needs of their families above their own. This can be linked to Richter's (2006) assertion that even though most men earn more than women, it does not guarantee that men contribute more in families (see also Dwyer and Bruce, 1988).

[...] in homes that have both parents, women are contributing a lot, some more than their husbands even where husbands earn more than them. Women prioritize family needs above their own, they want what is best for their children (Faith: F, 50, Department).

This view is supported by June who explains how mothers end up contributing more than their husbands. This matches with one of the qualities of a “good mother” as one who is “selfless” as mentioned above.

[...] women contributes more financially within households, to satisfy everybody’s needs within the household; they buy food and other household necessities whereas men are not questioned even when they do not contribute towards such needs. You know with food, one has to replenish all the time and to buy items like bread, milk on daily basis, and others which run out in the middle of the month. A father would contribute once in a month and expect everything to last that long. As a mother you find that every weekend and during the week you have to buy continuously. Everybody in the house comes to you as a mother to report that things are finished, they never go to fathers because they are never there anyway [...] (June: F, 40, Parastatal).

The seventh theme reflects men’s unchanging domestic roles. Since women provide for their families, they felt that this should be reciprocated by men’s involvement in domestic chores. This seems to be an outcry by women, as indicated in the first section as well as in the next chapter, where they argue that they need men’s support, since they find it difficult to reconcile their demanding dual-role.

Women are equally providing for their families. There is a need for men to provide assistance at home as well. Women have more physically demanding jobs, but they still have to come home, and work unassisted by their husbands (Portia: F, 28, Department).

A few men from both organizations agree with the idea that men should help in the household but observe that this can be problematic for African men.

Women are now providing for families, husbands included, while men still have difficulties towards household chores, even when their wives are providing for them (Dan: M, 43, Department).

To be realistic I am not sure how that can happen (gender equality can be achieved within families). However, I am one of the very few men who are able to do everything for themselves, but most men are not prepared to share domestic chores with their wives. I do everything when I am in my flat, but when I go home I expect my wife to do things for me, that is how life is (Thami: M, 49, Department).

Linked to this, some men have explained men's lack of domestic participation in terms of cultural prescriptions.

There is general acknowledgement of change in women's workplace roles as opposed to the lack of change in men's participation at household level. This section has clearly demonstrated the pervasiveness of women's changed workplace roles in contrast to men's unchanging roles at the level of the household. The ideas of 'stalled revolution' (Hochschild, 1990; Gershuny, 1994) are useful in explaining the friction caused by the incongruence between women's fast-changing workplace status as opportunities become available and as they move into higher positions at the work-place and the slow pace of or lack of change in gender roles at household level.

Hochschild (1990) argues that 'traditional' gender roles are unable to keep up with the fast-changing gender roles brought about by changes at policy level, particularly in the workplace. Data has also revealed some inability to cope with the rapid change by some participants,

who then lamented men's loss of power and control over women, which is claimed, have led to the breakdown of families. Moreover, within the Department, one of the issues raised is related to the fast-changing workplace; the women's influx into the male dominated work which were interpreted differently by the male and female participants. A woman viewed this in the positive light; as the women break-through into the male domain while the man argued for the retention of male-dominated Departments as he decried the unsuitability of such work for women. However, both Hochschild (1990) and Gershuny (1994) describe 'lagged adaptation' at the level of the household, implying that change at the level of the household is gradual and therefore incongruent with the work-place, where the pace of change is accelerated by the introduction of equality legislation and work-place policies. Hochschild (1990) also alludes to the unevenness of such change between households. With regards to the South African context, I argue that there is a 'stalled revolution' rather than 'lagged adaptation' with regard to the household and workplace change.

### **Gender-Role Attitudes**

To gain a deeper understanding of men's unchanging roles, I turn my attention to gender-role attitudes. To explore these, I derived a measurement tool from the British Sex-Role-Attitudes survey; this included six statements in form of a chart, five of these were borrowed from the gender-role national annual survey (Bell & Bryson, 2005). Participants were asked to indicate whether they strongly agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; or strongly disagree, with the statements outlined in table 6.2.

If we understand gender culture as encompassing normative expectations, practices and gender-role attitudes, the gender culture of South Africa appears to be extremely complex and difficult to convey in simple terms. Normative expectations, practices, and gender-role attitudes do not seem to be congruent for my research participants. This is illustrated in the

Gender-Role Attitude table 6.2., which, when compared with my findings on domestic divisions of labour, shows ‘congruity’ between gender-roles attitude and parental practices. Furthermore, there seems to be significant agreement on the financial contributions of men and women at household level (as can be seen in Table 6.2), but less agreement in terms of gender-role equality at household level. If this is the case, it is important to ask why equality is accepted attitudinally but not put into practice.

The table below seeks to determine participants’ attitudes on gender equality mainly in terms of provision within the domestic domain. However, it does not include attitudes towards the domestic division of labour.

Table 6.2 Gender-Role Attitudes

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Tot
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
A husband’s job is to earn money; a wife’s job is to look after home and family.	1	0	0	1	1	1	4	0	12	17	37
	6%	0	0	5%	6%	5%	25%	0	75%	81%	
	1 (3%)		1 (3%)		2 (5%)		4 (11%)		29 (78%)		
Both husband and wife should contribute towards household income.	11	18	1	1	3	1	1	1	0	0	37
	67%	86%	6%	5%	19%	5%	6%	5%	0	0	
	29 (78%)		2 (5%)		4 (11%)		2 (5%)		0		
What women really want is home and children.	0	3	0	1	1	2	5	2	11	14	37
	0	19%	0	5%	6%	10%	31%	10%	69%	67%	
	3 (8%)		1(3%)		3 (8%)		7 (19%)		25 (68)		
A woman and her family will all be happier if she goes out to work.	10	11	3	6	1	2	1	0	1	2	37
	63%	52%	19%	29%	6%	10%	6%	0	6%	10%	
	21 (57%)		9 (24%)		3 (8%)		1 (3%)		3 (8%)		
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.	6	10	3	7	2	1	1	2	4	1	37
	36%	48%	18%	35%	12%	5%	6%	12%	24%	5%	
	16 (43%)		10 (27%)		3 (8%)		3 (8%)		5 (14%)		

As can be seen in table 6.2, most participants strongly disagree with the first and strongly agree with the second statement. The responses to the first two statements show us that the responsibility of providing for the family is seen to lie with both the mother and father and suggests a normative expectation of gender equality in the domestic sphere, at least in relation to financial provision. Similarly, although not as strong as the first and the second statements, participants disagree with the third and agree with the fourth statement. These attitudes confirm that there is an expectation that the provider role should be shared between men and women. These responses, however, seem not to be congruent with the expectations of what makes a good mother and father, as discussed in the first section of this chapter. Most respondents still attribute the primary care-giver role to mothers while attributing the provider role to fathers. The responses on parenting though seem more congruent with the actual domestic division of labour (see table 6.1). There is, therefore, a lack of congruence between gender-role attitudes, on the one hand, and expectations of parenting and actual household divisions of labour, on the other. The former tend towards a ‘modern’ notion of gender equality while the latter are more ‘traditional’. This denotes the coexistence of traditional and modern, rather than a simple convergence of traditional into modern gender-role attitudes and expectations. In the next section I explore the contrast between views on gender equality at work and at home which throws more light on the idea of a ‘stalled revolution’.

I explored participant’s views of gender equality at home, compared to the work-place by asking the following question: “*Do you think it is important to achieve gender equality at work and at home?*”? Responses to this question, as we might expect, show contradictory views with regard to gender equality at home in contrast to a consensus on gender equality at work. Most participants gave an affirmative answer to the importance of gender equality at

the workplace. However, when it came to gender equality at home, responses were diverse, especially among women; women's responses ranged from a yes, through uncertain, to a no, while men simply gave a yes or no response to the question. Although most affirmed their support for the idea of gender equality within households, a significant number seemed to oppose it and, surprisingly, it was more women (5) than men (3) who did so. However, upon further analysis, it was not that women did not support gender equality, but that they saw it as close to impossible to achieve under the current circumstances in South Africa. They held very pessimistic views about the possibility of achieving equality at the level of households and raised the issue of patriarchal African culture as standing in the way of gender equality in the home. A few brought up ideas of biological determinism in addition to African culture to justify their pessimistic view of the possibility of achieving gender equality. They believe some tasks or roles are strictly women's while others are strictly men's and for these reasons, gender equality can never be achieved at household level. As mentioned in the first section Connie is a European married to an African man and is the only one among women from the Department who holds almost pure traditional views.

*Interviewee:* I do not believe in gender equality in the households, at least not in South African households. The African culture does not allow this. There are tasks and roles that should not be done by men, that I feel are strictly women's roles.

*Interviewer:* What tasks are those? *Interviewee:* like cleaning the house, laundry, and bathing and feeding the child, these are women responsibilities (Connie, F, 40, Department).

The numbers of the few female participants who gave 'traditional' views, on this theme, in both departments are almost equal. Suzy and Mavis seem to be protective of men. Noteworthy here is the age of the participants. One would expect these views to be more

progressive, coming from young women. Suzy is of the opinion that men should not be put under pressure to do the chores which are supposed to be done by women.

I still feel that some tasks within the home should be done by women. There are tasks which I still feel it would be unfair for us to demand or pressure men to do certain tasks within households (Suzy: F, 28, Department).

*Interviewee:* although I believe that we should both be involved in the house but I still think that there are tasks which are specifically for women/mothers as well as those which are specifically for men. *Interviewer:* Which are those? *Interviewee:* Doing laundry, cleaning the house, washing dishes, changing and washing children's and changing their nappies (Mavis: F, 29, Parastatal).

These participants appeared to be against any form of interference with culturally prescribed gender roles; they take the view that the current division of labour within households should be left as it is.

Moreover, there is no age difference in the responses of mothers from the Department, as also seen in previous sections. Those mothers (from the Department) who neither agree nor disagree with the question of gender equality at home seem to be pessimistic about the possibility of men changing. Some attribute the impossibility of achieving gender equality to the patriarchal African gender culture, while others point to the 'traditional' attitudes of the current generation of men. However, they are of the view that the younger generation seems to have less traditional attitudes which indicates the possibility of change in the future. Indeed, as recent literature provides evidence that suggests changing gender roles among the younger generation of boys; involvement of boys in domestic chores (Rama and Richter, 2007; Swartz and Bhana; 2009; Bray, 2010)

Faith and Gloria, together with Portia and Nandi (all from the Department), seem not to underestimate what it would take to achieve gender equality within African households in South Africa. They all acknowledge achieving gender equality within these households as “a big challenge”. Faith cautions that this matter should be handled with great sensitivity, as it touches on the issue of the fragile male ego and implies that there may be a backlash - male resistance - as can be seen in the quote below:

At home it is a bit tricky. One has to be matured and open minded, in order to understand the need for equality at home. A couple needs to understand that they are in it together, and have to be equally willing to participate. This touches on the very sensitive issue – the male ego. Unfortunately, our men have a very fragile ego, which could be easily damaged. Therefore we have to be careful in dealing with this. If this [gender equality] is to be achieved, then there would be a need for sufficient support in this regard. It is a big challenge, since it is touching on changing a mindset (Faith: F, 50, Department).

While Portia thinks it would be impossible to change the mind-set of the current generation of men, she is hopeful that this could be achieved through the re-socialization of boy-children as can be seen below:

Men still have a lot to learn about the role they have to play given the cultural dynamics. It would be easier to teach children but not a husband [...] (Portia, F, 28, Department).

These views bring to our attention the deep-rootedness of the African culture in gender-roles. Against this backdrop, although many of the participants feel that there should be gender

equality at household level, there is lots of skepticism about the possibility of achieving gender equality.

Most male participants seem to support the idea of gender equality within households, but only in theory. The responses to the above question show that 8 participants agreed strongly, while 3 participants somewhat agreed that there should be gender equality within households. However, these attitudes are neither reflected in the domestic division of labour (table 6.1.) nor in participants' narratives, both of which demonstrate a highly skewed domestic division of roles. Some male participants oppose the idea of gender equality and most of these highlight African culture as the major obstacle towards gender equality. Most of this group saw '*lobola*' (bride-price), which is a high sum of money paid by the man to the bride's family to show his intent to marry their daughter, as a major obstacle to gender equality within households. However, this group is divided on the issue of whether this customary practice should continue believing that gender equality will not be achieved unless the bride-price issue is addressed. Tumi calls for the eradication of this customary practice on the basis that it perpetuates domestic violence and has lost its meaning.

At home: it [gender equality] is also important but it also depends on the type of people that would constitute that home and our background as Africans, however this is changing a little. However, the situation of men being forced to pay a bride price has to come to an end, since it is not contributing positively to our current situation. For me it is one major cause of this domestic violence we are currently witnessing. And besides, it no longer has meaning (Tumi: M, 30, Parastatal).

Ray and Robbie, in contrast, seem to promote the idea that cultural practices should be upheld.

There are certain things that should be done specifically by women, same with men; there are cultural expectations to be upheld; not forgetting the issue of '*magadi*' (bride-price) which is still widely practised. So far I have never heard of any men or woman getting married without having to pay '*magadi*'. It still plays an important part in our culture. So for as long as men have to pay '*magadi*' in order to marry, gender equality will not be possible (Ray: M, 35, Department).

According to our culture a man should head the home. Our culture does not recognize gender equality. There are things that are expected from men and not from women and vice versa. *Interviewer*: example? *Robbie*: Many of them, for instance it is okay for a woman to cry, but not for a man and an important one men pay '*magadi*' to marry a woman. So you see there can never be equality in households (*Robbie*: M, 42, Department).

African cultural practices, therefore, stand in the way of gender equality in the domestic sphere. Women never mentioned this cultural practice as a threat to gender equality. This may be attributed to the fact that men are the ones who bear the brunt of having to part with exorbitant amounts of money to get wives.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, the picture I have presented here is contradictory: normative expectations, parental practices and gender roles, gender-role attitudes were incongruent. This suggests that a 'stalled revolution' and a disjuncture between workplace expectations and practices regarding gender equality and domestic expectations and practices. However, gender-role attitudes seem to be more congruent to parental practices, in the sense that, unlike the expectations, these attitudes strongly reflect the provider role as shared between mothers and

fathers, as is the practice. The question may then arise as to why expectations differ from gender-role attitudes; in the sense that normative expectations are devoid of the providing role on the part of mothers when both parents share this role. Could it be perhaps because of the Western influence? Literature has shown that the provider role is attributed to fathers even though fathers and mothers share this role (Kandiyoti, 1988; Cock, 1989; Walker, 1995; Clark, 1999 and Frahm-Arp, 2010).

Firstly, the data showed a juxtaposition of 'traditional' and 'modern' views embedded in normative expectations; parents seemed to be drawing from mainly traditional but also egalitarian notions of parenting, as also found by Hotchfeld (2008). For instance, alongside the primary care-giver-role were modern views; although in different ways, mothers were portrayed as more than just primary caregivers but as playing a pivotal role in family life, by both fathers and mothers. She is viewed as playing an empowering role; an educator, mentor, adviser; alongside an emotional provider role; a comforter, consoler and so on. In the same vein, fathers, alongside the emotional providing role, attribute to a mother a conciliatory role; the peacekeeper, mediator, unifier. On the other hand, fathers are still attributed providers, heads of families, leaders and protectors, by most fathers; however, most mothers alongside the fathers 'traditional' role they also defined them as ideally being active in childcare and assisting in households; few mothers and fathers even described parenting in egalitarian terms.

Secondly, there seems to be a disjuncture between normative expectations and parental practices due to a lack of congruence in the pace of change between the two. While normative expectations seemed to show some change (a coexistence of traditional and modern) in comparison with earlier research, there was no evidence of any change in parenting practices within households. The domestic division of labour remains gendered

and unequal. Fathers' roles seem to have remained stable, which suggests a 'stalled revolution' of gender roles and domestic divisions of labour (Hochschild, 1990).

Thirdly, there is also a lack of congruence in terms of change between the workplace and household level. Workplace practices are based on ideas of equality, but are incongruent parenting practices which thus far show no change. Chapter 3 and 4 show how the workplace has changed through providing opportunities for women to reach senior positions. To this effect participants seemed to be receptive to gender equality at the level of the work-place but less receptive with regards to the household level. This has translated into difficulties in work-family reconciliation for mothers; mothers suffer role strain because of the lack of support on the part of fathers in childcare and household chores. This lack of support by men has been identified as one of the antecedents, at a household level, militating against women's successful reconciliation of paid work and family responsibilities, mainly childcare (Aryee, 2005). Next I discuss the mothering practice, as a shared and collective effort, especially within African families.

## Chapter 7. **Domestic Work and Mothering Practices: A Collective Effort in a Network of Care**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I turn my attention to look at the mothering practice and domestic work, as a shared and collective practice among women in the kinship system and hired work. This also happens to be a way, for mothers, of coping with their demanding dual- roles: paid work and family responsibilities. As mentioned earlier, the improved economic situation of African families has led to an unprecedented number of African middle-class families in South Africa. This in turn has led to the relocation of these families from black working-class residential areas to the more affluent previously white middle and upper-class residential areas, referred to as suburbs, which are closer to town, where adult members of families currently work (Magwaza, 2003). The relocation has meant the separation of many families from kin and other social support networks (Magwaza, 2003). This was partly the case for many participants in this study, who had relocated from black townships to previously white owned middle- and upper-class residential areas near the city. Due to the geographic mobility of families, it was pre-empted that African families would converge with whites' towards a nuclear family. However, this study affirms Amoateng et al (2007) and Bray's (2010) assertions, which refute the 'convergence theory' on the basis that nuclear families co-exist with other forms of families: multi-generational extended, female single-parented, as also shown in this study.

Despite all the changes in the work-place, which have meant that women work longer hours engage in work-related travelling, women still carry disproportionate family responsibility,

such as childcare and household chores, alongside paid work, as seen in the preceding chapter. From the data, I have identified two coping strategies employed by mothers to reconcile the two equally demanding roles: mobilization and reliance on domestic workers and extended family support. In this chapter I demonstrate that the practice of mothering is not necessarily limited to the mother, but takes place within a network of care: familial, paid domestic worker or both. The role of the mother is to strengthen or set up this support system and make it available to herself and her family especially children. This chapter explores the support network which mothers have established as a way to assist them to cope with the demands of child-care and paid work. I will focus on how both paid domestic work and extended family networks provide support as well as the dynamics surrounding this relationship.

My interview and observation data demonstrate that the practice of mothering is not limited to the mother as an individual but is a collective activity where the mother and other female members within the extended family, such as grandmothers, aunts, siblings as well as outside the family, such as domestic workers, collaborate to provide care for the children as well as household chores (Campbell, 1990; Walker, 1995; Magwaza, 2003). The data reveals that the support network plays an integral part in mothering and therefore its significance in this regard should not be underestimated. The distinct feature of the actors within this network is that they are all female; fathers, grandfathers, and uncles are seldom mentioned. In this way the dominant ideology on good mothering as an individual act seems not to be reflective of African family practices in South Africa. This chapter reiterates the disjuncture in the way mothering is defined and perceived against the way it is practiced, as found in the preceding chapter. It problematizes and calls for the deconstruction of the current hegemonic social construction of motherhood.

## **The Households**

The households under observations are a perfect reflection of Bray's (2010) theory on the 'convergence' of diversified household structures of South African Households, as discussed later in this section. In order to paint a clear picture and to show the magnitude of the labour involved in household chores, I start by giving some description of the households under observation, thereafter I proceed to work done by domestic workers and female family members in households. In order to preserve confidentiality, I give the mothers pseudonyms. The mother from the first household was also my interviewee and already has a pseudonym – June; the mother of household 2 will be Lindi and the mother from household 3 will be Brenda.

All the houses under observation were previously owned by (white) Afrikaaners. They are all detached, two of which are in the provincial capital, where most of the participants' houses are located, while the other, household 3, is about 15km from the city.

Households 1 and 2 are enclosed by a perimeter wall, which are almost of the same size and have a similar structure. The yards of all households are quite spacious. Household 1 is only paved on the driveway. The largest portion of the yard is unpaved and has about three large old trees as well as shrubs along the wall of the house, which contribute a lot towards the dirt that requires everyday sweeping. This space is big enough to accommodate another three bed-room house. The difference between household 1 and 2 is that most of the space in the yard of household 2 is filled and most of the yard is paved and has a lawn. A significant portion of the space in the backyard is filled by a paved car port which can accommodate 2 cars, the paved drive-way forms part of the front-yard and the rest of the front portion is a lawn, with a swimming-pool, a trampoline and play house for the children and a 'lapa' (place

to prepare barbecues). Similarly the backyard has a lawn and is paved towards the entrance. The father hires a gardener who comes once a week. This lessens work for the domestic worker compared to household 1.

Household 3 is different from the other households in terms of its location and structure; it also seems more complex. It is situated in an isolated area about 15km from town and seems to be a farm, with various old buildings within it. The first building in sight, as one enters the yard, is a huge and high structure which is partitioned into 2 offices for the husband's business, a library, a seminar-room, and a storage room, as well as a bigger space which is used as a garage and can accommodate about four cars. Unlike the others, this house had no perimeter wall and no visible lines of demarcation to show its boundaries. As we came out of the bigger building in the same yard, we came across two more buildings, the main house as well as a smaller one next to it. However, as we approached the main house there was an old wire fence of about one and half metres high which divides the bigger structured building from the household. I could not make out what the purpose of the fence was, and on the other side of the fence was a huge old chained dog. In the South African context, dogs are bred to protect the members of the household against intruders rather than for companionship. They are therefore kept strictly outdoors in most households. During the day they are usually chained up and then let loose in the night. As protectors the dogs are trained and expected to be vicious and aggressive to scare the intruders away.

### **The Role of the Network Support**

The move from working-class to middle-class residential areas has had implications for parenting practice, especially among African families in South Africa. This chapter highlights a shift in parenting strategies brought about by, especially, the workplace transformation.

Prior to democracy, Black African families were embedded in social-networks (Campbell, 1990) and employed mothers received a lot of support, in terms of childcare, from their extended family. During this time, paid domestic work was, predominantly, a preserve of white families, and a few black middle-class families (Cock, 1989; King, 2007). With the shift brought about by democracy there has been an increase in the employment of domestic workers as an alternative coping strategy among many African families. The role of domestic workers who are all female in this study as well as female members of the extended family is basically to assist women managers to reconcile their dual-role as workers and parents. In this way, it can be argued that domestic workers and female extended family members are to a large extent mobilized to substitute for employed mothers in their primary care giving role, when they are at work and unavailable to play that role. This support network seems to play a significant role in terms of childcare and providing a clean environment for the family. In what follows I explore the roles played by the network which includes both domestic workers and extended family network-support, or both.

### **Paid Domestic Work**

The data highlights that the commitment of women to paid work, particularly in positions of responsibility, has had an impact on their availability for child-care and domestic work. Given the equally demanding nature of paid work on the one hand and domestic chores and childcare on the other, most middle-class families, as Walker (1995) and King (2007) also assert, have had to outsource domestic work and childcare, as one of the coping strategies to enable the reconciliation of paid work and family roles. This has led to an unprecedented increase in paid domestic workers in middle-class, African households, which is occasioned by absence of the kinship system around the family.

The hiring of the domestic worker is done by the mothers themselves, and the logic to this is that since domestic work and childcare are regarded as a mother's responsibility, it is considered as their duty to arrange for a substitute to do what is regarded as their work. Similarly, the interview data shows that it is women who take responsibility for not only organizing domestic work and childcare but also of paying domestic workers from their own budget (Walker, 1995). Table 7.1 below highlights that in most households, women managers have hired domestic workers to assist them with their domestic responsibilities, some on a full-time basis and others on a part-time basis. The data also shows that most of the households which are without domestic workers are those where extended family support is available.

**Table 7.1 Paid and Unpaid Domestic Work**

<b>Domestic Work Type</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>
Full-Time: Live-in	14
Full-time: Live-out	7
Part-Time: Live out	3
Non-Paid Domestic work	13

There is no correlation between the type of paid domestic work and the number and/or ages of children, or between the status of paid domestic work and the household structure/form. Next I discuss the working hours of domestic workers in order to determine the extent to which they assist within households.

***Work hours of domestic workers***

As explained by participants, domestic workers are either hired on a part-time or full-time basis. Those hired on full-time basis are either 'live-in' or 'live-out' domestic workers. Most full-time 'live-out' domestic workers are those who live near their place of work and are in a position to travel to work every morning. They start work around 7h00 and knock off around

17h00 from Monday to Friday. I define part-time domestic workers as those who work around 8 hours a day for an average of three days in a week. They report that they start working around 7h00 and leave upon completion of their duties around 15h00. In such cases domestic workers are seemingly hired just to do the tasks that are usually time consuming and labour intensive, as shown in table 6.1., and can be done effectively during the day, such as cleaning, laundry and ironing, since these are in most households done manually. Some in addition to the above do childcare work. Below one of my participants explained that she has hired a helper who works only two days a week from 7h30 to 14h30 to do the laundry and ironing. She does the cleaning herself during weekends.

I pay her myself, but not for childcare, I pay the helper for doing our laundry and ironing, because they take too much of my time, so that I have enough time to clean the house during the weekends. She comes two times in a week. Starts at 7h30 and knock off at 16h30 (Zuki: F, 32, Parastatal).

Hiring a live-in domestic worker, as King (2007:44) observes, seems like purchasing her 'personhood' as well as her labour which implies that she has to put her personal and family life aside and be in domestic servitude to her employer. For instance, most domestic workers who are hired full-time are also live-in domestic workers; this entails residing in her employers' household and going home once a week or month. Live-in domestic workers take two forms, those who leave every Friday and come back to work on Monday morning and those who leave the last Friday of each month after receiving their monthly wages, returning on Sunday evening. This means they only have one weekend off a month and much of it is taken up by travelling because of the lengthy distance between their homes and their place of work.

While observing I had informal discussions with domestic workers in all 3 households and I established that those who leave for their homes at the end of the month are those who work more than 50km, from their homes in rural areas, and find it expensive to travel to their homes on weekly basis. This was the case with the domestic workers in households 1 and 2, who lived around 90 and 70km away respectively. They both reported that they travel home on the last Friday afternoon of the month and come back to work on Sunday for three reasons: the lengthy distance, unreliable public transport, which would delay and make them late for work, as well as the fact that they could not afford the daily transport fare. What also emerged from this is that those who travel home on a monthly basis effectively have only one full day off a month because they spend a long time waiting for transport as well as on the road travelling to and from their homes. Those who lived within a reasonable distance that is less than 50km, travel to their homes on weekly basis.

However, domestic workers' inability to go home regularly has been interpreted as their being available to work long hours (Anderson, 2002; King, 2007). This seems to suit employers very well because many of them indicated that they prefer to have live-in domestic workers because of their own work-place demands. This is seen in the interview and observations data, where participants from time to time are required to attend late work related meetings, site visits, workshops, conferences in and out of the province or out of the country. In such cases, they spend considerable time away from home - days, a week or more - depending on the nature or purpose and distance and/or the location of the event (as discussed in the chapter on policies). In some cases they attend meetings during weekends, as also observed in household 1 and 3. In household 1, during the first week of my stay, the mother had to go to a whole day meeting on a Saturday from 10h00 to 16h30. On the fourth weekend she again had to travel to Pretoria, which is about 310km from when she stays and

works, just after lunch on Sunday for a 3 day workshop, leaving her children in the care of her domestic worker and her teenage daughters. Similarly, on the Friday night when household 3 mother and I met for her to lead me to her household, she had just returned from a three days meeting. She reported having left home on a Tuesday morning, leaving the children under the care of her own and her husband's sisters. The following day, Saturday, which is the only weekend I spent with them, she had to attend an international conference which was held locally.

Domestic workers appear not to have official hours, as shown in June's quote below. This suggests that they work long and indefinite hours.

***Interviewer:** What are the official hours of the domestic worker? **June:** since she stays with me and goes home on a Friday, at the end of each month ... there are no fixed hours. During week-ends, myself as well as my older daughters, help out with some of the domestic chores (F, 40).*

Over and above the labour intensive work they do during the day, domestic workers shared late household chores with other female household members and did not have a clear-cut time of stopping. Furthermore, it seemed their retirement, at the end of the day, depended on the amount of work they had done during the day. I noticed that they retired slightly earlier than usual, between 20h00 and 20h30, on the days when they did laundry or ironing, in addition to their daily routines. Their usual time of retiring was between 21h00 and 22h00.

Although the availability of domestic workers may be considered advantageous for the employer, on the flip side, it can be argued that it is disadvantageous for the domestic worker herself and her family, especially the children. This was the case for the domestic worker in household 2, whose 2 daughters aged 21 and 9 are virtually left on their own, since she is a

single parent. She reported that her mother goes to check on the children about once a week. However, she also reports that the younger child does her own laundry, prepares her own food and does homework on her own. This suggests that these children were left without adequate care whilst their mothers are providing support to other mothers' children.

From our informal conversation I also determined that all domestic workers took only a two-week annual leave around Christmas time. Furthermore in household 3 the domestic worker takes two weeks off during school winter vacations.

The domestic workers' situation demonstrates the exploitative nature of domestic work, where women seem to work for most of their waking hours and only rest when they go to bed. This is in line with Cock's (1989) and King's (2007) studies and is mainly experienced by live-in domestic workers. The nature of this work is undesirable, and furthermore, domestic workers are given very little time off. This demonstrates a complete deprivation of family and social life for the domestic workers. The lack of time off also means that domestic workers have no lives of their own, no time to establish and maintain intimate relationships and friends, as is the case with other people.

Having painted a picture of the contexts within which my observations took place, as well as having discussed the work hours of domestic workers, I turn my focus to the work that occupies domestic workers for such lengthy hours, starting from when they wake up to when they retire for the night.

### ***Household Chores***

Below I describe how chores were carried out in the three households. The chores are organized into 3 main categories: cleaning, laundry and ironing, and child-care.

## **Cleaning**

Domestic work in this context remains exploitative since it involves long hours of intensive labour and very little or no time off work, as was the case during the apartheid period. The amount of work within the household seemed to be subject to various factors, such as, the household or family structure and the number of people, especially children, within the household. It is clear that, the higher the number of family members within the household, the more work involved and the greater the work-pressure on the domestic worker, especially when no female family members are available to assist with the chores. None of the male members in these families assisted with household chores.

The tasks are either done sequentially or simultaneously with many being done simultaneously to save time. The simultaneous option seemed to be utilized especially when there are competing tasks to be finished within a limited time, for instance, when there are other tasks such as child care or on days when the domestic workers do laundry, in addition to their daily work routine. This was seen in household 1 when the child had not gone to the nursery, where child-care, like preparing food and feeding as well as bathing the child, was done alongside household chores. In the same household this was also seen when one of the female members of the household, who had always assisted the domestic worker, suddenly left the household. This led to the domestic worker having to adjust her work pattern. She had to introduce a simultaneous, multi-tasking pattern of cleaning as a strategy to cope with the new reality of having no cleaning assistance. She had to increase her work pace, in order to complete her work on time.

Cleaning was one of the most labour intensive and time-consuming activities. The intensity of household labour was exacerbated by a lack of modern household cleaning technology, as was the case in the early 1990s (Campbell, 1990; White, 1991) which Aryee (2005) identified

as one of the household antecedents that acts as stressors especially for those mothers who had no hired domestic workers. There was a lot to do each day for the domestic workers. Domestic work was routinized and all domestic workers seemed to follow a similar pattern of cleaning and dividing the work systematically. All houses had particularly large-sized yards, and the houses themselves were huge. In households 1 and 2 the yards were swept from Monday to Friday mornings before the cleaning of the house which is done on a daily basis. This is usually broken into smaller tasks for each room: wiping stains from the walls, windowsills, and tidying and cleaning floors was done in all the rooms; the cleaning of the dining room involves dusting and polishing of the furniture - the dining-table and chairs; cleaning the lounge required straightening the sofa cushions and cleaning the coffee table; similarly the TV room also required straightening of the sofa cushions, dusting and polishing of the TV unit and the coffee table; the kitchen involves wiping the cupboards and the sink, and washing dishes during the day; the bedrooms involved making beds and dusting pedestals and dressing tables.

The greater the number of household members, the more the chores and the more intense the work, especially when the domestic worker carried the burden of all the housework. Below, the study shows the diversity of household structures that co-exist in South Africa, as argued by Amoateng (2007), Kalule-Sabiti et al (2007) and Bray et al (2010) Household 1 provides an example of such a household. It is an extended family comprised of the mother and the father with four children and the husband's nephew and his fiancée. The husband and wife together with the nephew were employed, and the nephew's fiancée was unemployed. During the first two weeks I was there, the domestic worker and the nephew's wife shared the domestic chores and they seemed to be managing very well until the nephew's wife left the household. The first few weeks after her departure, the work load seemed enormous for the

domestic worker and difficult to manage, since she was left without assistance and she appeared to crumble under the work pressure. As a result, she struggled to complete her daily chores in good time. This created some tension between herself and her employer, who started complaining because of late completion of some of the tasks, particularly the cleaning. In most cases the domestic worker had to stop cleaning and cook lunch/dinner and then continue with cleaning after cooking. As time went on the domestic worker got used to the new situation and gradually picked up the pace, but this meant changing her work routine. She woke up a little bit earlier, did some of the tasks simultaneously instead of sequentially and worked at a faster pace.

In contrast, household 2 was smaller. It consisted of a nuclear-family comprised of the husband, wife and 2 children. Unlike household 1, the domestic worker appeared to be in control and more relaxed in her work since her work-load was smaller and therefore more manageable. It took her almost 3 hours to complete cleaning on the days when she was not doing laundry and ironing and about twice as long on days when she had to combine cleaning with the laundry and ironing. But there would still be the preparation of supper late in the afternoon, which would take over an hour depending on the meal for the night.

Household 3 had the most complicated household structure. It comprised a husband, wife, 4 children, the wife's sister, the husband's sister, the wife's father, a gardener and his assistant; the gardeners have their meals in the main house. The floors in all rooms are made of cement, and this makes cleaning more laborious than in the other two houses, where floors are fitted with ceramic tiles throughout the household. Cleaning in this household includes scrubbing the floor, putting on floor polish and shining the floor with a brush and a dry cloth. They do all this on their knees. The only advantage in this household is that in most cases the cleaning is shared between the husband's and wife's sisters. However, although the couple's

sisters shared these chores, the wife's sister does most of the chores in the main house. The wife's sister does more cleaning on the days she is not doing laundry and ironing, while the husband's sister cleans the kitchen and 3 rooms in the smaller house in which she sleeps. On Tuesdays, the wife's sister spends the whole day doing laundry and Wednesdays, ironing, while the husband's sister cleans the whole main house.

During weekends the cleaning is less intense for the domestic workers. However, they do not take time-off, but do the cleaning with the assistance of other female family members. In household 1, on Saturdays the 3 teenage daughters take turns in cleaning the household, the mother sometimes sweeps the yard, when she is around, while the domestic worker cooks lunch/dinner and does the rest of the ironing. On Sundays, the cleaning is done by two of the girls, while the domestic worker cooks lunch with or without help, before going to church. The domestic worker also joins the family as they go to church.

In household 2, during weekends, the domestic worker wakes up around 7h30, makes the beds, tidies and cleans only the rooms that are used the most, like the TV room, the toilets as well as the kitchen and thereafter finishes off the ironing, while the mother prepares breakfast. Later in the day she and her employer prepare lunch and both of them clean up after lunch. In this household, cooking arrangements are different from weekdays. On Sundays, the mother does the cooking before she goes to a 9h00 church service and the domestic worker only works in the mornings. She tidies the bedrooms and the lounge and cleans the bathrooms and the kitchen then she is off for the rest of the day. The family goes to church before 9h00 in the morning and comes back after 11h00. As soon as they come back the domestic worker is released. The mother continues where she left off with the cooking. Around 13h00 she serves lunch and cleans up. The rest of the afternoon the mother

spends time with her children and relatives. The father leaves the house after having had lunch.

With regards to meals, the preparation of, especially, breakfast differs in all households. However, none of the mothers prepare breakfast for anyone but themselves. In household 1, everybody, except the father and the last-born child, prepares breakfast for themselves before they leave for school or work. The domestic worker prepares breakfast for the father and the child. In household 2, the father and the mother prepare their own breakfast, while the domestic worker prepares the children's. In household 3, both sisters to the wife and husband share the preparation of breakfast for the children, the wife's father, the husband as well as the gardeners. In household 1, the domestic worker does the cooking 7 days a week, in household 2 the domestic worker cooks mainly on weekdays. In household 3, although the cooking responsibility is shared between the couple's sisters on weekdays, and the daughter assists during weekends, it is the wife's sister who seemed to cook the most.

In households 1 and 2, domestic workers and in household 3, the couple's sisters are exempted to clean up after supper. In household 1, the three teenage daughters take turns washing dishes after supper. In household 2, the mother and the domestic worker share the responsibility of washing up; in household 3 the 3 young boys and their teenage sister take turns to clean up after supper.

It is clear that domestic workers are overburdened with housework, especially if there are no other people to assist them within the household.

### **Laundry and Ironing**

Laundry is one of the tasks that is labour intensive and time-consuming in South Africa. There is considerable variation in the way the 3 households do their laundry. In her study

White (1991) describes it as a 'nightmare'. Just as with cleaning, the time spent doing the laundry is subject to various factors, such as, the availability as well as the efficiency of the washing machine as well as the number of people the domestic worker does the laundry for. In households 1 and 2, there are washing machines. However, the difference lay in the efficacy of the washing machine, as will be seen in the discussion that follows. Household 3 was without a washing machine.

In household 1, despite the presence of the washing machine, doing laundry is a complex, labour intensive and lengthy process. The complications are brought about by several factors, mentioned above, such as the high number of people for whom the laundry is done for, as well as the inefficiency of the washing machine. Over and above the less than half functioning washing machine, the domestic worker does the laundry of almost the entire household of 6 as well as her own. It takes her a total of 6 hours, 4 on Thursdays and 2 hours on Fridays, to complete the task. At 14h00 on Thursdays she starts doing the laundry. She uses water from the bore-hole through a hosepipe, whereby she has to repeatedly fill the washing machine and 2 bath-tubs manually for each load. One tub is filled with clean water and in the other the water is diluted with fabric softener. She divides the laundry into six or more full loads according to colour. The rinsing of the clothes is done manually twice for each load, first with plain water and then with water and fabric softener solution. These bath tubs are placed outside the house near the washing line. When she is done with the rinsing she hangs the laundry on the washing line. She changes the water with each load. Around 18h00 she finishes, cleans up the laundry room, fetches the half dry and the wet laundry from outside and puts it in the clean empty tubs in the laundry room. Friday early in the morning she hangs the washing out on the washing line. After some chores, she does the last two loads of the laundry and finishes around 14h30. From 15h00 to 20h00 she irons but does not

finish. There is too much to iron in one day, hence on Saturday she continues until late in the evening.

The domestic worker in household 2 seems to be more organized and has planned her work quite well. The fact that she works for a smaller (4 people) family than the other 2 households is an added advantage. Cleverly the domestic worker does her laundry and ironing twice in a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. This spreads her work more evenly compared to especially household 1, through the week. Hence there is no day where she seems overworked. She only spends about 45 minutes on the laundry, because the washing machine is fully functioning. All she does is wake up early in the morning and soak all the white clothes, and including children's school shirts, before putting them in the machine. Having prepared the children for school, she fills the washing machine with the already soaked white clothes, hand-washes a few delicate items and takes out the clothes from the washing machine to hang them out to dry. She does only around three full loads of laundry per day. Whilst the machine is doing the clothes' washing, she cleans the house. By the time she is finished with her chores in the house, the laundry is almost dry. Before she starts with the ironing she takes her 1 hour break and has lunch. After lunch she irons and completes it all on the same afternoon.

In household 3, the wife's sister does most of the household's laundry and it is done manually. She wakes up early in the morning and focuses on doing the laundry while the husband's sister cleans the house. She only does the laundry for the 3 boys, their father and mother, and her own father. The rest of the members of the household do their own. She does laundry every Tuesday for almost five hours, starting from 8h00 to 12h45. The whole afternoon the laundry is hung outside to dry. Late in the afternoon she brings it in the house,

folds it and puts it in the laundry basket. The following day she irons all of it while the husband's sister cleans the house.

As demonstrated above it is clear that household chores are extremely demanding physically and in terms of time. The demanding nature of these chores is further exacerbated by a lack of cleaning equipment, like the washing machine and the cleaning appliances, which could make a huge difference in the cleaning process and the life of the domestic worker. Those who seem to be managing are those who are in a position to share the chores, those who work for smaller families and those who are lucky to be placed in households with fully-functioning household cleaning appliances. In household 1, it is clearly demonstrated that lack of assistance and efficient cleaning equipment can make work an arduous exercise and a physical strain. In household 2, it is demonstrated that the smaller family, coupled with careful planning of the work and fully-functioning cleaning equipment, can make a big difference to the management of household chores by the domestic workers.

### **Child-Care**

In all households under observation, a big part of household chores is providing a clean and healthy environment for the children and other household members, which implies that childcare is in fact integrated in household chores. In none of the households are mothers involved in most child-care tasks, but it is domestic workers and, in one case, the mother's sister, who do most of the childcare work. It is important to note that it is difficult to dissociate the mother's sister from other domestic workers because she, like domestic workers, is paid to do housework and childcare, however, sisters, as will be seen later, are treated differently from domestic workers. In all 3 households, it is the domestic workers or the wife's sister who prepares the younger children for school or nursery, prepares their

lunch-boxes, breakfast, dinner after-school, and supper. In all houses the children are of school-going age and during the day they are at school leaving the domestic workers to focus on their big portion of domestic work, such as cleaning, laundry, and, for some, cooking. Some mothers only assist children with their homework. When it comes to school work, in household 1, the girls do their homework by themselves and help each other; in household 2, the mother is the one assisting the children with their school work and in household 3, the wife's sister was the one in charge. Almost all children bath themselves in the evening in the three households. In household 3, the last born child, who was 4 years old at the time, was bathed by the domestic worker. Similarly in household 3, the 3 boys were assisted by their aunt to prepare for school.

### ***Extended Family-Support***

This section focuses on the support provided by extended family to the participants as reported in the interviews. Moreover, interview data provides more evidence of the prevalence of divergent family structures in South Africa, as alluded to by Amoateng et al (2007) and Bray (2010). Just as in America (Hansen 2005), the United Kingdom (Abbot, 1971; Charles et al, 2008), in South Africa this sort of support is gendered (Phillips, 2011; Ally, 2011). Studies show that support is characterized by mutual 'reciprocity' between a mother and her extended family (Charles et al, 2008) as will be seen below.

This study demonstrates the support provided by extended-families to working mothers as a way of assisting them to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and how this help is reciprocated by those who receive such support. Examples of such familial assistance are drawn from interviews and observations. Several of the participants who do not hire domestic workers reported that they rely on female members of their families or relatives for

support with domestic work, especially childcare. The study also reveals the collaboration between female family members, within several families, in providing such support. Extended familial help is still part of the culture of many African families. However, a few of the participants rely on both extended family members and paid domestic work. There seems to be no significant difference between single and married women in terms of reliance on their close relatives. Below, I outline how participants share motherhood with other female members of their families.

Tiki's case provides an example of a unique arrangement for her to reconcile work and family, which depicts a strong sense of what Hansen (2005) calls 'dense family solidarity' where for many families, "helping defines their family culture" (Hansen, 2005:99; see also Charles et al, 2008). Tiki as a single parent has relied on her mother and sister for childcare since her child was born. This example shows us how female members of the extended family collaborate to provide child-care for their extended family. Tiki works and lives far away from her extended family as can be seen in the quote below. However, unlike in Hansen (2005), Charles et al (2008) as well as Abbot's (1990) studies, the distance from her family-network does not seem to have affected the support they provide.

Just before I gave birth I had to go home to be with my family for especially my mother's assistance during the maternity leave, when I was still recovering from child-birth. Later just before going back to work, I took my mother with me to be with us and remain with the child when I went back to work. As soon as I had weaned the child from the breast, she went back to Johannesburg taking the child with her (Tiki: F, 28, S, 1 child: 18-months, extended-help).

This study also provides evidence of the fact that the presence of children strengthens kinship ties, especially mother, daughter and sister relationships (see also Phillips, 2011) in South

Africa and Abbot (1971) and Charles et al. (2008) in Europe. There are several examples in this study. For example, Tiki's child is raised by her mother, father as well as her sister back home, in Johannesburg, +365 km from where she works, so she travels all the way to Johannesburg every weekend to see her child and family.

As it is I have to travel home for +365km every Friday to see my baby, who I miss terribly. I always look forward to Fridays (Tiki).

Table 6.1. on the division of domestic labour, in the preceding chapter, shows that most of the childcare work is done by Tiki's unemployed younger sister, who is herself a single parent of two children of school-going age and lives with her parents. According to the table, the younger sister does house-chores, the laundry (for all children including Tiki's child), and bathes the children (including Tiki's child) in the evening. Tiki mentioned that even when she is home her sister still does most of the house-chores and childcare.

In turn Tiki reciprocates by contributing towards the payment of the household bills, together with her father, and also providing financial assistance for her unemployed sister's children. In her narration she mentions that she pays for her sister's children's school fees, school transport expenses and assists in the buying of their school uniform and other clothes.

There are several other examples which show family solidarity, although in slightly different ways. Suzy's example is the most typical. As with Tiki, we see yet another collaboration of female members of the extended family in childcare support. Suzy has two children and her husband works away from home, coming home during weekends. However, she reports no problems as regards balancing her paid work and childcare because she also has a strong family support system, which, as in Tiki's case above, denotes a 'strong-family-solidarity'.

She reports relying a lot on her family, especially her mother and sister for childcare and house-chores.

I rely on my family, I have never had any difficulties, I gave birth to my kids when I was still very young, my mother has always been by my side since then [...] I have a very supportive family, when I experience problems my family is always willing to assist me (Suzy: F, 37, M, 2 children: 15 and 17, live-in hired help - sister)

Many of the participants mobilize unemployed female members of the extended family network to assist with childcare and house chores. As with a few others in this study, Suzy lives with her unemployed sister who does most of the house-chores and childcare. She reciprocates through providing financial support for her unemployed sister. It is important to note that most of the mothers who rely on relatives, especially their sisters, for childcare, refrained from using the concept of payment when it came to their relatives as Suzy demonstrates below.

[...] I give my sister money for assisting me with house chores and childcare as a way of assisting her financially [...] (Suzy).

However, where then do we draw a line between paying and assisting financially, since these both constitute exchange of labour for money - is it perhaps the fact that they do not want to see family help as 'commercialized'? Similarly, where do we draw the line between 'familial support' and 'domestic work'? For me it was very difficult to differentiate between the two since Suzy was giving her sister money every month as is the case with domestic workers. There are a few other such cases in the study.

The third example of network-support combines paid and unpaid support as in Gloria's case. She does a lot more travelling than other participants in the study and always collects her mother to remain with the children and domestic worker whenever she travels.

my mother usually comes to assist the domestic worker, when I am away [...] I gave birth when I was still a teenager at school, I never had problems with my first born son because my mother was always there, taking care of my child (Gloria: F, 33, S, 2 children: 17 & 15, full-time, live in hired help).

The last example of extended family support for a single person is provided by Sophie. Sophie is another single mother who receives family support especially from her mother. She stays in her mother's house and shares childcare responsibilities with her mother. Sophie leaves the house very early in the morning to work. Although her mother works, she wakes up to prepare, feed and take the child to and also fetch her from the nursery. Sophie's mothering role only begins when she comes back from work and lasts until the child's bedtime, around 18h00. Sophie reciprocates with a financial contribution within the family. Several other participants also reported that from time to time, they rely on their family for child-care as well as for other domestic responsibilities.

This demonstrates the extent to which mothers receive assistance from female family members and the significant role it plays in mothers' successful dual role. However I agree with Charles et al's (2008: 162) assertion that, if "interviewees feel they can offer something in return for support this means that they are not totally dependent". Most, if not all, interviewees who receive assistance with childcare always give something back rather than becoming dependent. This makes the relationship mutual and reciprocal.

As Aryee (2005) has also argued, the data show that domestic workers together with extended-families are a crucial resource that acts as a ‘moderator’ for mothers’ reconciliation of family responsibilities thereby reducing work-family-conflict.

What is also worth noting is the different relationships of domestic workers with members of the household, and how those of the domestic workers differed from those of the sisters who were doing domestic work. This is discussed in the next session.

### ***The Relation of Domestic workers/paid family help with Employers and Children***

This section includes some unanticipated data, which seemed too important to be ignored. It reveals considerable evidence of inequalities between members of the support network and the mother. These inequalities appear to vary between domestic workers and mothers and between the domestic worker and other female family members. The degree of inequality within these two kinds of relationships relates to various factors: the type of support whether familial or paid, and the age difference between the employer and the domestic worker. Here I compare these relationships in the households where I undertook observations. The relationship between employers and their domestic workers varied across the 3 households. The variation was influenced by various factors, especially the age difference between the domestic worker and the employer and the employer’s satisfaction with the domestic worker’s work.

There seemed to be a difference between how the mother and the domestic worker related to each other in household 1 and 2. In household 1, the domestic worker was much younger than her employer, while in household 2 the domestic worker was older. In household 1, the domestic worker was 26 and the employer 40 and in household 2 the domestic worker was 47 and the employer 39. The unequal relationship I observed may be attributed to cultural

practices and expectations of older and younger members of society. In household 1 the relationship between the employer and the domestic worker was explicitly unequal. It was similar to that of a parent/child relationship or the relationship between the old and the young, which in this context is characterized by inequality so that, just like the employer's children, the domestic worker acts on instruction. For example, the domestic worker was sent to the shops, which is typical of relations between the older and the younger in this society but this did not happen in households 2 and 3. This kind of behaviour also demonstrated a degree of authority in the way the two women relate to each other, which was also apparent in their conversations, the instructions given, as well as the tone of voice of the domestic worker and the employer.

In household 2, the relationship seemed to be a lot more formal, and based on mutual respect. However, although conversation seemed to be on a more equal basis compared to household 1, there were more instructions than discussions on certain topics such as meal preparation and what to prepare each day. Furthermore, in households 1 and 2 there was some degree of restraint on the part of domestic workers and caution during interactions with the employer.

The scenario in household 3 is completely different and more complex than the above. Relationships in this household take various and different forms; the wife's sister is the oldest (50) in the family while the husband's sister is only 24 years old. Generally the wife's sister was treated with respect by all members of the household.

First of all, the relationship between the wife and her sister in household 3 was that of a typical sisters' relationship in that it was not circumscribed by the employer/employee relationship; even though she is paid to assist within the household, she is not necessarily regarded or treated as a domestic worker but as a member of the family. The two sisters appeared to be very close and the relationship generally appeared to be almost on equal basis.

It could also be seen as older and younger sisters' relationship. This was seen on several occasions, when they were around each other, for instance, when the older sister assisted the younger one in preparing her hair as well as helping her out in identifying an appropriate outfit for different occasions; she does this every morning before her sister leaves for work and after the children have gone to school. On the other hand the younger sister also entrusts her sister to do certain chores on her behalf, when she herself is not available. On the Saturday of the international conference, she asked her older sister to do the shopping with her husband on her behalf, since she was occupied for the day. Lastly, the day after the shopping, they had a disagreement and argument about certain items which were included in the shopping, which the younger sister considered unnecessary. This was an indication that both sisters are able to speak their minds and openly express their disagreements and disapprovals to each other. On the other hand, the husband's sister treated her brother's wife with great respect, which is typical of younger /older people's relationships.

The quality of the relationships between domestic workers and the household children seemed to differ from those between female extended family members and children. Female family members seemed to be more deeply involved in child care than domestic workers. There are several examples of this. The wife's sister seemed to have literally substituted for the mother of the children. She was closest to the children, in that she spent more time with them than their parents and other family members. Unlike with members of the extended family, where the quality of relationship seemed to be good, the domestic workers and the children's relationship seemed to be shallow. For instance, domestic workers seemed not to get involved in children's school-work; the sister was the one helping out with this and was in many ways involved in their socialisation which the domestic workers did not get involved in. She has already taught them to do their first house-chore, which is, washing dishes and

polishing their school shoes. The children take turns in washing dishes during weekdays and she is always there to guide them as they do it. The aunt also seems close to the teenage daughter. This is seen when they are cooking on Fridays. As they were cooking the aunt was explaining certain important things to know about cooking to the teenager. During this time the aunt and the teenage girl discuss life issues, and the aunt tries to argue and correct certain perceptions, which involves arguing and laughing. On the other hand, domestic workers are less involved than female family members. For instance, although household 1's domestic worker is closer in terms of the age gap, there is a gap in other ways. They seem to focus more on the health and safety of the children, making sure the children are clean, have eaten and are safe. In household 2, the boy is around 12, much older than the boys in household 3, however, because he is a boy, he is not taught any of the household chores by the domestic worker - or anyone else.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that mothering in the South Africa is far from being an isolated act, but rather a collective effort between mothers and female members of the kinship system, the mother and the domestic worker, or all three. This illustrates the centrality of 'social-networks-of-care' as coping strategies for employed mothers. Although geographical mobility by families weakens family bonds due to the separation from its networks, this does not necessarily mean the demise of extended families and the rise of nuclear families. On the contrary this study confirms Amoateng (2007) and Bray (2010) that with the increase of nuclear families is also an increase of single female headed household, and the retention of extended family members as a useful resource for mothers' reconciliation of paid work and family responsibilities. The geographical relocation has meant that women rely less on their extended families; they resort to an alternative form of support in terms of childcare: paid

domestic work. However, this does not mean a simple replacement of the kin-ship support system by domestic paid work. The study shows that the two types of support systems can either be used together or each separately. Furthermore the study has shown that the support is gendered, in a sense that it is female members of the extended family that support mothers in their family responsibilities. Similarly, it is women who are employed as domestic workers. However, a significant number of women have retained their extended family support networks and others have managed to mobilize both their extended family support and domestic workers in order to reconcile their equally demanding dual-roles.

However, in their mobilizing support we come across a paradox. Women employ other women to do their mothering for them and this constitutes a class divide between the two. Most of the mothers I interviewed prefer 'full-time' 'live-in' domestic workers; this means that domestic workers are prevented from mothering their own children. My observational data shows that domestic workers are deprived of family as well as social life. There seems to be evidence that although domestic workers appear to make the necessary arrangements for their children to be cared for by other female family members, such arranged care may not be adequate or sustained. This means that children are left by themselves in certain instances. This on its own is likely to create negative consequences for the children because of the lack of guidance and emotional support from parents. Thirdly, domestic workers are deprived of social life since they are given very little or no time off. In this way, there is no room for personal relations, be it intimate relationships or ordinary friendship.

In the next chapter, I explore what happens as men and women straddle the work and family.

## Chapter 8. **Work Family Interface**

In chapters 3 and 4 we see evidence that some transformation has taken place at policy level, especially at workplace level, with an increased participation of women in high positions at the workplace. However, this has not been reciprocated by change at household level. Chapter 6 demonstrates how mothers still bear the burden of childcare, and other domestic responsibilities, while men remain free from such responsibility. The transformation in the workplace has meant that mothers who are managers, like fathers, are expected to work long hours, do site visits, attend late meetings, conferences and workshops in and out of the Province, yet there is no support system put in place to assist them, especially in reconciling their work and family responsibilities. The expectation on parents to work such long hours, on its own, is an indication of lack of a family friendly environment at the workplace. Thus, workplace transformation has translated to high workplace demands without support systems for parents, especially those with childcare responsibilities. This makes it difficult for these employees to fulfill the demanding requirements of their work as well as meeting domestic and children's needs. Also, adding to mothers' dilemma, chapter 6 shows that men's roles have not changed, especially at household level, which implies that men still do not participate in childcare and household chores. Myakayaka-Manzini (1994: 4) in her South African-based study on female Members of Parliament, came up with similar findings that "many women MPs continue to struggle to balance family life with the demands of work that still include long and late hours, travel and very few facilities". In this chapter I explore the difficulties and constraints experienced by women managers as they juggle family and paid work responsibilities. I do not differentiate between the two organizations as parents' experiences of combining paid work and parenting showed no significant variation between

them, but some would complement or expand on each other in an interesting way ( see for instance, Tiki and June responses). However, generally mothers from the Department were more vocal and provided responses which had more content. Before embarking on the difficulties, I first look at how having children impacts on women's and men's work-lives.

### **Impact of children on Work-life**

For most female managers, combining childcare, husband (for those who are married) and housework with an equally demanding paid job is indeed difficult. Many of the female participants' responses demonstrate the feelings of ambivalence brought about by the complications of having to negotiate and reconcile family and work-life. Although most of them say that having children has had a positive impact in their lives, this was alongside a myriad of difficulties encountered in combining work and motherhood and demonstrates that reconciling work and family-life is not easy. For instance, many of the participants' responses demonstrate how work interferes with as well as takes precedence over family life. Mothers seem not to have a choice in this regard, since providing for their children, just like childcare, is a cultural expectation. Importantly, most participants show that work and having children provide them with some kind of self-fulfillment. For instance, when women were asked if children have made a difference to their employment, most of them did not really answer the question directly. Their responses provided a sense of how the arrival of children had changed their lives in general. For instance, work provides mothers with intellectual stimulation as well as independence, which most seem to value. On the other hand, children provide them with emotional fulfilment, a sense of purpose and the motivation to work, since they have to work to provide for their children.

Definitely, it (having children) changed my life – I love my children, and particularly the youngest, he is everything I would like from a child and he makes me feel I have something to live for... or look forward to in life. On the other hand as I have already mentioned I also love my work. I like the challenges and the fact that I learn so much from them. I feel ... it empowers me intellectually ... and of course financially. However, there are times I feel torn in-between and most of the times it is work that wins ... because... in fact it leaves me no choice (Faith: F, 50).

Furthermore, female participants who are single parents, like Gloria, Faith and Tiki, agree that providing for their children is an important role for them. Furthermore, they also concern themselves with being positive role-models for their children. This, in part, seems to provide these women with the drive to excel in their work. In Gloria's words:

When my second born son was born, I had to limit my travelling especially for the first three years. However, having children and being a single parent motivated me to work even more, since I have to provide for my children and be a good role model for them (Gloria: F, 33).

Another example of the positive impact of children, for women and some men as well, as mentioned under male responses below, is associated with the sense of responsibility. Like Sharon, some participants reported that having children has helped them to grow to be responsible people. From Sharon's response, it is clear that being a mother pushes one to be responsible.

Yes, it pushes you to be a responsible person [...] however when we have to go outside the province I restrict myself, I feel I cannot sleep out ... I'd rather travel

early in the morning and come back late at night, and even leave before the workshop or meeting is finished (Sharon: F, 39).

However, Sharon also talks about having to drive late at night and leaving before the meetings or other work-related activities are completed, to be able to get home to be with her children and this questions her work commitment as a manager.

Most male participants reported that having children has not really made a difference to their employment. For instance many of them gave a simple “no” response to the question. This implies that having children, for most men, does not affect their work-lives, since they are not involved in childcare and other family responsibilities, as we saw in the previous chapter.

One of the men referred to the importance of support from the extended family as well as neighbours, as also indicated in the previous chapter.

Not much we still receive a lot of support from our extended family as well as neighbours (Dan, M, 43).

However, a few agreed that children had made a difference to their working lives. One of those who mentioned that children had made a difference to his work-life complained about having sleepless nights. He currently has an infant who apparently keeps both parents awake at night to a point where it affects the father’s performance the following day at work.

Yes, especially when the child is not well and cannot sleep at night, as a parent it also affects my performance at work (Ray, M, 35)

This response contrasted with women who spoke about deriving emotional fulfillment, a sense of purpose and selflessness from having children, as mentioned earlier in this section.

We also come across a few responses which seem to be, in a way, unconventional from men who reported that having children had made a difference to their work and, as with women,

that having children had made them responsible people. Most of those who responded this way are amongst the five men who live away from home and do not live with their families. They have had to relocate to be nearer their place of work and mostly travel home on Fridays.

When we had our second born child, I decided to buy a car so that I could travel home during lunch time to check on him. The last child changed my life completely. I was working far from home when he was born, but I made sure that I go home every Friday to be with him during the weekend. However, I had to be serious about my job in order to provide for them (Thami: M, 49).

Thami's response presents itself as a paradox. Like some of the fathers who work far from home, he is concerned about how his absence affects his household and himself. Although Thami talks of going home every weekend to be with his children, his main concern is providing for his children.

Another male participant is concerned about the cost associated with the children's arrival, as can be seen below.

Yes, having children comes with great responsibility because you have to pay for school fees, buy then clothes, provide for them, their pocket money etc. (Ken: M, 45).

In contrast, for a minority of male participant children provide fulfillment. Below is one of the only two white men in the study and, unlike most African men, his children's presence seems to have had a profound effect on his life. He seems to be more liberal in his thinking about childcare and domestic responsibilities.

[...] whatever I plan has to accommodate the children. However, the kind of work I do deprives me of spending time with my children. I therefore make sure I spend enough time with them during weekends (Don: M, 40).

In spite of his greater contribution at home in comparison with other fathers, like mothers, he seems to be concerned that he is not spending enough time with his children. In this way this man is the only one who reports a strong impact of children in his life, and this may be attributed to the fact that he is white and therefore has a more liberal view on parenting, as found in Pillay (2007) and Cilliers et al. (2008) than most of the black fathers in this study. However, the other white father in this study is not as liberal in his views.

### ***Difficulties Faced by Mothers Regarding Work and Family responsibilities***

Childcare responsibility without workplace and spousal support, as seen in chapters 4 and 6 respectively, proves to be arduous for most women managers and disadvantages them; they become less mobile and less involved in decision-making processes, capacity building activities and career development as will be seen as this section unfolds. The long work-hour-regime coupled with a masculine workplace culture and lack of a family-friendly work environment, as seen in chapters 3, 4 and 5, and the lack of men's participation in childcare and household chores, as seen in chapter 6, on the other, means that mothers who are managers struggle to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

In this section I look at the difficulties faced by those with childcare responsibilities, as they straddle the workplace and family realms. Inability to reconcile paid work and family responsibilities is widespread amongst those who bear such responsibilities and the experience of such challenges among parents is gendered. As discussed in Chapter 6, South African culture dictates that women shoulder the burden of childcare. This helps to explain why, in most cases, it is mothers who are inundated with difficulties and struggle to reconcile paid work and family responsibilities while men are free from such responsibilities and therefore have minimal or no problems in this regard. Mothers appear to experience multiple,

diverse and complex difficulties emanating from their conflicting multiple roles. As a result they experience a lot of work-family-conflict brought about by work-to-family interference and vice-versa; work spills into the domestic sphere, thereby affecting households' functioning, and domestic and childcare problems spill into the workplace and affect their work performance. This resonates with the findings of Cilliers et al. (2008:109) whose female participants complained about "work encroaching upon their domestic life". Women's domestic responsibilities, in this study seemed to interfere with their work life although to a lesser extent compared to work-to-family interference, as will be seen in what follows.

Most female participants reported a range of difficulties and had a lot to say on this topic compared to male participants. Although most of the women shared similar difficulties, there were differences between them. Women's experiences seem to differ on the basis of their age as well as the ages of the children. This is, however, complicated because some of the women who are over the age of 40 have children around the age of 3, while others who are under 35, have children who are sixteen years and over (see appendix 7 and 8). This makes it difficult to distinguish between women's experiences on the basis solely of age; furthermore, it is also important to note that it is not only women with young, pre-school children who experience motherhood difficulties. These differences in women's experiences are brought out in what follows.

As already noted, difficulties experienced by mothers seem to be exacerbated by a lack of institutional support for working parents. As shown in chapters 3 and 4, the employment-contract demands commitment and sacrifice and this seems to take precedence over childcare. At the same time there is a lack of institutional support for managers who are mothers. This implies that childcare is seen as a private issue to be dealt with by parents

within the private realm of the family. This section demonstrates how mothers struggle with very little institutional support, despite Gender Focal Points and family related policies, to meet both their work and their family and childcare demands. There are also a few fathers who reported difficulties although these difficulties are much less complex and fewer than the mothers' difficulties. In their responses, mothers elucidate the extent to which they sacrifice their childcare responsibilities for the gains that are brought about by employment.

Firstly, in their responses, most female participants, irrespective of their age and that of their children, seem to be torn between their work and their children. Most of them reported that they have feelings of ambivalence brought about by work and family demands. Unlike the racial difference that is apparent in the literature, where white mothers seem to experience greater feelings of guilt than African mothers, (Magwaza, 2003; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2004; Cilliers et al, 2008; McLellan and Uys, 2009), this study demonstrates that African mothers experience feelings of guilt because of the long hours spent at work and not being at home to fulfill their motherly responsibilities. In most responses to the difficulties facing working parents, there is a high degree of self-blame among female participants, and even though African mothers seem not to have much choice, they feel they are prioritizing work over their children. This is seen in the quote below.

[...] I like the challenges and the fact that I learn so much from them. I feel ... it empowers me intellectually and of course financially. However, there are times I feel torn in-between and most of the times its not work that wins ... because ... in fact it leaves me no choice [...] (Faith, F, 50).

More examples of such feelings of guilt on the part of mothers, about prioritizing work over their children, will be seen throughout this section.

Secondly, tied to the above, women feel that although their employment provides them with financial stability and independence, it also makes them feel helpless when it comes to childcare, particularly given the lack of support for working mothers at the workplace. They feel that work demands do not allow them space to attend to their childcare responsibilities. For example, Zizi's response in the quote below demonstrates the dilemma encountered by mothers as she acknowledges the high cost that comes with women's financial independence.

[...] However, the (financial) independence comes with sacrifice because women want to be there for their children, they want to be responsible parents but they also want to be empowered so that they can provide for their children because they feel men are not providing enough for the family, and one salary is never enough to provide for a family, which means that women must go out and work (Zizi: F, 40, Department).

Third, the data also explicitly show that women bear the burden of the sick in families and this seems to seriously interfere with their employment. As seen in Chapter 3 and 4, the time (3 days per annum) allowed for this purpose is very limited and is given for a range of purposes; this shows a lack of institutional support for working mothers in this regard. Although it is shown in the legislation and organizational policies that family responsibility leave is given to both fathers and mothers, it seems to be mothers who take time off to attend to sick members of the family, especially children. Fathers do not report taking this kind of leave. This can be attributed to the wider societal prescriptions and expectations of mothers as primary carers which, as seen in chapter 6, means that men do not think it is appropriate for them to take such leave. In most female participants' responses the burden of attending to the sick members of the family appears to be a major problem which frustrates them in their effort to show their commitment towards their employment. For several female participants,

illnesses of members of family, especially children, have serious repercussions for their work projects. Moreover, they find this situation emotionally and physically draining.

Those who suffer a myriad of difficulties based on illnesses of children are mainly younger mothers (below the age of 36) with small children (under age 7). For instance, many of these mothers experience more sleepless nights than older mothers due to children being sick. Moreover, children's illnesses appear to give rise to a lot of other problems. For instance, most of these mothers report arriving late at work and/or absences from work and this leads to yet another set of problems, such as work or project disruption, low concentration, poor work performance and, therefore, low productivity, as shown in the quotes below.

[...]Another great difficulty I had was when the child was not well [...] I was either called home because the baby was not feeling well or the child was sick the previous night and I could not go to work the following day because I would then have to take her to the doctor the following morning. I would then have to cancel appointments or ask somebody to stand in for me and so on [...]. The situation in South Africa as you know, there is a high rate of single parented households, by single women, where fathers are far from their children, therefore we have to get used to the situation where you struggle by yourself, as a single parent (Tiki:F, 28).

[...] it (child illness) really affects my work, I find it hard to concentrate (Zuki: F, 35).

Fourth, yet another difficulty experienced by younger mothers which relates to the lack of institutional support is workplace travelling. For instance, organizations expect employees to do work-related travelling without putting the necessary support in place for those who have young children. The travelling, in many cases, involves having to leave their homes and

children for days or week/s depending on the purpose of the travel. As a result mothers end up prioritizing work over their childcare responsibilities. Many of the mothers with younger (pre-school age) children report more difficulties than those with older children. Some of them talked about the frustrations they experienced especially during the breastfeeding period, which is usually less than 12 months. For instance, Tiki reports some acute stress which she encountered especially when she had to travel about 250km daily, 3 days in succession to and from a work-related workshop. Her colleagues had been booked into hotels, but she had not, because she was still breastfeeding. She therefore had to travel very early in the mornings to make it on time for the conference and late at night for the two nights so that she could be with her baby at night.

The main difficulty that I have experienced was when I was breast feeding...there was a time when I had to leave for a conference for three days, which was about 250km from work. It was so stressful ... I had to start travelling at 5h30 in the morning and back around 21h00/21h30 in the evenings, for three days. My mother advised me to wean the child from the breast there and then, seeing how difficult it was [...] (Tiki:F, 28).

The lack of institutional support for mothers implies that most are left with no choice but to put aside their childcare responsibilities for paid work. For instance, the lack of such support resulted in Tiki having to wean her baby unwillingly because of paid work demands, which meant that she was unavailable to breastfeed her child. This was also found by Pillay (2007) in her study of academic mothers.

On the other hand, June had to pay out of her own pocket (when her child was still very young) to take her baby with her to conferences, in order to avoid disrupting the breastfeeding process. June resolved her difficulties by taking her baby, together with her helper,

to conferences and/ workshops which took place far away from home. This is in line with Pillay (2007) findings; mothers had to pay the extra costs to travel with their babies and extra people, to take care of them.

At my place of work there is no policy that addresses the issue of nursing mothers. If you are attending a meeting/workshop or training far away from home and you have to go along with your child, you have to make arrangements without any help from your organisation. Twice, I have had to pay the hotel from my pocket and make all necessary arrangements for my helper when the child was still at the breast-feeding age (June: F, 40).

Fifth, lack of institutional support means several of the younger mothers with young children are left out of capacity building activities and decision-making processes. These mothers miss out on work-place activities such as national conferences, workshops and important meetings. This resonates with Pillay's (2007) findings; some of the academic mothers could neither attend late academic seminars nor travel. In this study participants were very concerned about this as they saw themselves as losing out on what they considered important for capacity building, self-development and involvement in decision-making meetings, because there were no childcare facilities available at the conference, meeting and/or workshop venues.

[...] I do not attend workshops and conferences which are important for self-development. I have had to sacrifice a lot on the part of self and career development because of childcare demands ... I encounter problems mainly when I have to work late or attend late meetings. It disrupts my daily routine, my children are still too young and at this stage childcare is so highly demanding (Portia: F, 28).

Sixth, mothers' unwillingness to sleep away from their homes because of childcare, as seen above, seems to expose them to the type of crimes which are associated with late night driving, and which put them at risk of car hijacking. As already shown in chapter 5, women managers, in addition to their already long, official work hours, find themselves having to drive late at night from site visits, conferences, meetings and workshops which take place far away from their homes. Male participants on the other hand, did not have to drive late at night to be with their children since, as already mentioned earlier, they do not participate much in childcare. Late night driving is not recommended in the South African context because of the high rate of car hijacking as well as violence or crimes against women, such as rape.

I am unable to sleep outside home, it is out of my own choice. I prefer to come back home and sleep with my children, so that I wake up to prepare them for school and prepare their breakfast and the lunchbox; I drive long hours, at times very late at night; we are allowed to sleep in hotels, but I'd rather drive late even when I am tired to be with the children; and still wake up and go to work the following day, initially it affected my work but now I am used to it (Jane: F, 30).

Seventh, some younger mothers reported having had to put their careers on hold because they could not cope with juggling childcare, especially when children are still young, with paid work and career advancement. Some of these mothers resumed their studies when their children were older. Currently, 9 mothers are registered to further their studies; five are mothers of children below the age of 7 and 4 have children over the age of 10. Among those with older children are those who had to postpone their studies when their children were young. The two who had to postpone their studies are those who also reported being unable to attend workshops when children were young. Portia reports that currently her studies are

suspended because of childcare and work demands. She has 4 small children between the ages of 1 and 6.

I had registered for a MA degree in economics, and I ended up deregistering because I had no time to study, mainly because of the high demands on the part of my work but mainly family responsibilities (Portia: F, 28 ).

Although some view this postponement positively, as they have acquired new and good qualities, among others, selflessness, some view it as deleterious for their career progression.

Eighth, younger mothers with small children depend on maids to look after children who are below crèche going age (3years of age) (see chapters 6 and 7) and this can sometimes interfere with their paid work. Some participants experienced problems with maids who at times would not arrive for childcare. This happens especially when children are still young. This meant that women were unable to go to work or that they arrive late.

Before my sister came to work as my maid, I used to experience problems, my maid would sometimes not pitch up and I would find myself having problems with coming to work(Aggie: F, 34).

One male participant also mentioned that his wife experienced such problems, where the maid herself was expecting her own child. He explained that his wife would then end up taking the child to the maid's home which meant that she was late for work.

It has been very tough for my wife. Our child-minder is highly expecting ... she sometimes does not show up... sometimes she is not feeling well ...sometimes my wife has to take the child to her home when she does not pitch up. This has made my wife very unpopular at work, but unfortunately she cannot leave a child unattended to (Moss: M, 30).

Ninth, some of the responses also reveal the emotional trauma associated with mother-child separation especially for mothers who have had to leave their localities in search for employment, in order to support their families. Some participants report having gone through a traumatic experience of separation from their children. This sort of difficulty was reported by a younger as well as an older mother who were both employed far away from home. This is quite common in my research context, and implies that women have to leave their young children with family or relatives. For instance, one of the mothers had to let her child live with her mother at her parents' home, which was 370km from her place of work, and was where she had lived with her extended family before getting her current employment. She did this because she was single and had to work to provide for her child and herself. She reported that she travels to her parents' home every weekend to see her child.

[...] just before going back to work, after maternity leave, I brought my mother with us in (the province where she works) to remain at home and look after the baby when I went back to work. As soon as I had weaned the child, she went back to Johannesburg taking the child with her. It was an extremely difficult time for me. The first few days, I used to cry myself to sleep but I had to get used to it, to be alone. For some time I felt so sad and so empty inside, I really missed my child [...] (Tiki: F, 28).

On the other hand, an older woman, Lulu, also experienced serious problems associated with separation from her children for employment purposes. She is a mother of four boys, whose husband suffered from a chronic illness for some time and could not work, which left her with no option but to find employment in order to provide for her family. She found a job away from home, leaving the children in the care of her husband. Although she had older sons (the youngest was 8 years old at the time), the trauma of the separation from her children

was not any less. It was her youngest child who suffered most at school; he was unable to confide in anyone in the house and preferred to wait until his mother came home during weekends (Fridays). As a result, Lulu suffered from stress which affected her workplace performance. This pressured her to buy a house in a suburb which is near her place of work, so that her family could join her. After some time her husband passed away leaving Lulu with the four children.

[...] When they were younger I had a lot of challenges, for instance, I used to leave my children at home, which is about 180km from where I work, my younger child was not coping, he would bottle up and not tell anybody if he had a problem. He would wait for me until I come back on Fridays, this really stressed me. I tried to tell him to report to the father or brothers, but he could not. I was forced to quickly buy a house and brought them over to my place of work (Lulu: F, 50).

Tenth, some older mothers talked about their inability to attend school parental meetings. The employment-contract seems to be such that, in most cases, participants are unable to abandon their work commitments to attend important events such as school meetings and this creates feelings of guilt among most mothers. For example, Faith shows in the quote below that in most cases she is unable to attend her child's school activities, since they clash with her work commitments.

[...] my work demands that I attend late meetings and travel out of the province as well as overseas, my child suffers because at times this happens at a time when my son also needs me, ... my support, in most cases I am unable to attend parents' meetings and functions at his school, and this really tears me apart, because I feel I have to work for him and give him a good life, since his father is not doing anything for him (Faith: F, 50).

This inability to attend parents' meetings may be due to the fact that while mothers struggle to prove their worth and to keep up with the demands associated with high positions at the workplace they end up losing out on children's important school activities.

Eleventh, the work pressure seems to be higher for mothers who occupy senior positions. The next two quotes below are examples of senior female managers' responses and demonstrate the extreme work demands and pressure that senior managers are exposed to. These female participants report that there are times when they go back home emotionally drained and tired, especially during peak periods when work-pressure is high, as they are chasing after deadlines or when there have been heated discussions or debates in work meetings.

[...] at times we work in an environment that is stressful, for instance, when deadlines are approaching and sometimes we argue in meetings and this spills over to my family. Although I try hard to avoid this but it is difficult (Faith: F, 50).

Fulu is one of the older mothers, a senior manager who usually has a child below preschool age. She experiences immense work pressure and frustration emanating from her inability to reconcile work and family.

I always work under pressure and it is so stressful. Sometimes there are problems which are difficult or cannot solve, they end up spilling over to your family, this really causes a lot of stress, and well we have now learnt to live with it. My son keeps me going and keeps me sane (Fulu: F, 41).

However, even those who are at junior managerial level, like Zuki, report that by the time they get home after a day's work they are too tired to attend to their children and the fatigue then leads to irritability towards their children.

Yes. Most of the time when I get home I am very tired and I have to attend to the child, spend some time with him, I sometimes become so irritable [...] (Zuki: F, 35).

Twelfth, the effects of these difficulties highlight the pronounced power relations between husbands and wives at household level. Geisler (2000: 620), in his study on South African women in parliament, found that the long hours worked by women in senior positions, and their long absences from home, were associated with high divorce rates. Similarly in this study, some men seem to have difficulty in dealing with women's absence from home, since this means that they have to get involved in childcare. One of the female participants, who is also a senior manager, reported that she had to choose between paid work and her husband. Her husband would not agree to share the childcare responsibilities with her and would not let her attend work-related meetings, conferences and workshops that involved her absence from home. This led to her marriage falling apart as she eventually found herself having to choose between her marriage and employment; she chose employment. She showed passion and dedication to her work and, together with other participants, indicated that men are not providing as they should for their families and therefore thought it not worthwhile to give up her job for him.

[...]I had constraints when I was still married to my ex-husband. When I had to work outside, leaving him with the children was a big challenge. There was a time where I had to choose between him and my work, which is why we divorced. My husband was also working for the government, he knows exactly what working for the government is like, and he knew what it entailed. He himself used to work out of the province and even out of the country a lot, but he would not allow me to go (Faith: F, 50).

This shows the authority relations within families which Faith, at least, is challenging.

Thirteenth, a few women struggle to report at work on time because of childcare responsibilities. This could be attributed to a lack of flexibility on the part of the organizations when it comes to working mothers and hours of work. As indicated in chapters 3 and 4, in addition to long hours, working hours are rigid and do not accommodate the needs of working mothers. Connie reports having difficulties in arriving at work on time because of the clash between the starting time at the child's school and her place of employment; she has encountered problems with her senior in this regard.

I have had problems at work regarding working hours, we are supposed to be at work at 7h30, but unfortunately at that time I am supposed to be handing my child over to the school which also starts at 7h30, and not before that, and then proceed to work, I can only be at work between 7h45 and 7h50 depending on the traffic. Same in the afternoon, the school finishes around 16h00 and work at 16h30. I have to be at school not later than 16h10. I have explained my position to them, but that has been made a big issue, unfortunately I cannot just leave my child before the school is opened, and I also have to fetch her on time (Connie: F,40).

Only two of the female participants, reported not having experienced problems; this was either because they had a very supportive extended family members or dependable domestic workers who worked on a full-time basis in the household.

I have a very supportive family, when I experience problems my family is always willing to assist me... I rely on my family, I have never had any difficulties, I gave birth to my kids when I was still very young, my mother and sister have always been by my side since then (Suzy: F, 35).

However, one of these women had experienced problems when her children were younger. Currently, her daughters are in their teens and together with the domestic worker assist with childcare.

Currently, I do not have problems because I have a reliable person to help me out, but when my youngest child was still little, the person I hired to help me out was not very reliable, but now since my son is older, even if a helper is not reliable, my husband and the sisters will be there to look after him (June: F, 40).

Despite all the difficulties associated with being an employed and/or professional/career woman, as well as a mother, these women do not wish to give up their employment; this is not an option, since for them being a mother involves providing for children. Thus, although they are torn between their work and their children, they also take their work very seriously and are enthusiastic about their careers. This is evident in the fact that most have good qualifications, while some are currently pursuing their studies/careers. However, it also seems that these women put themselves under pressure as they strive to prove themselves in the workplace. In answer to a question about what educational qualifications she had, Faith said:

An Honours Degree and currently registered for a Postgrade Diploma in Mining and Engineering ... I take my work very seriously because as women much more is expected from us even from top management; and to be taken seriously and to ensure that I gain respect from my subordinates they need to see that I know my work. Therefore I read a lot to enhance my knowledge and I enjoy it (Faith: F, 50).

There is only one female participant who seems ready to leave her job because of the work pressure associated with a senior position, coupled with the lack of support for working

mothers. Fulu sounds disillusioned with being a senior manager and a single mother, particularly because of the extent to which her job keeps her away from her child caring responsibilities. She does not have a maid and has two children. The oldest is 22 and has a baby girl, and the youngest is a 3 year old boy. As she narrated her typical weekday her work, especially the fieldwork and the meetings, seems to be extremely demanding and occupies most of her time. Unlike other female participants, who are also in a similar situation but do not wish to give up their employment, Fulu feels if she had a choice she would quit her job and look after her child and family.

Quite honestly speaking, if I could get a man, who has a good-paying job and is willing to provide fully for our family, I would rather be at home, taking care of my kid and family and let the man do the providing. The kind of work I am doing requires full commitment, dedication and devotion, and so is my child. It is so tiresome. Most of the time I am out in the field or/and attending endless meetings, workshops or conferences and arriving home late. Sometimes I do not come back home. You know sometimes, I just decide not to attend, and cancel, because I really feel bad when I have to leave my child for days. I feel he is so young and needs me. But I do not have a choice. I just have to go and work to provide for him since I am alone, his father does not help me with anything (Fulu: F, 41).

In contrast, most men do not experience difficulties regarding work-family balance unless they live away from their families. Most (11) male participants reported no difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities, while 5 reported experiencing problems. Four of the five who reported to find it difficult to balance the two roles were those live apart from their families. It was only one father, who is also local and who is one of the two white men in the study, who reported experiencing problems. Included in this study are 6 (out of 16)

male participants who work away from home, who are unable to travel home on a daily basis because of the distance. These participants travel to their homes on Fridays in order to be with their families during weekends. The main concern, for the four fathers who have reported to experience difficulties with distance fathering, is their inability to be with their families when they are needed to solve domestic problems. Their inability to play this particular role, as and when needed within their household, seems to be their source of frustration. They are of the opinion that solving problems from a distance – telephonically - is ineffective, hence they experience stress in this regard.

Being far from home is very challenging. For me having to travel on Fridays, I feel I am not giving the attention I should be giving to my family. I have to attend to my family problems through a telephone and it is simply not very effective. Sometimes you think of taking my family with me but city life is expensive, I come from a small town where life is still cheap (Ken: M, 45).

Because of their inability to intervene as and when needed and not being able to deal with their domestic problems hands on, these participants get stressed. One male participant reports finding it difficult to focus on his work once he is made aware of problems at home.

Once my wife phones me reporting a problem they have encountered or are encountering, it bothers me for the whole day or for days depending on whether it is sorted out or not. I try so hard not to let my family problems spill over my work, however, sometimes my work problems do spill over my family life (Thami: M, 49).

Both responses above suggest that male participants take their role as problem solvers very seriously. Their inability to be there as and when they are needed at home for the purpose of

solving family problems is their major difficulty. This in turn affects their performance at their work-place.

The experience of work-family-conflict is gendered because parenting is gendered, women are primary care givers, and because of that they experience more conflict. This chapter has shown us how difficulties are gendered based on gendered parenting. The difficulties outlined in this section have demonstrated how the workplace interferes with family and particularly childcare, on the other hand, we are also shown how childcare responsibilities interfere with workplace performance, especially for working mothers. However, what is clear is that the workplace interferes with the family to a much larger extent than the family interferes with the workplace. Also noteworthy is the fact that the interference with the workplace by childcare responsibilities is exacerbated by the very workplace culture which has proven to be family unfriendly. For instance, the lack of family-friendly policies demonstrates that parents and, especially, mothers are not accommodated at the workplace, which implies that when workplace policies were designed, working parents, particularly mothers were not taken into consideration. We see this in the long work hours, accompanied by the requirement to travel, late meetings and so on. In the next section I take a closer look at how work encroaches on the domestic sphere.

### **Blurred Work-family Boundaries**

While the state and workplace regime seem reluctant to involve themselves in employees' family and related issues, accounts from managers show that, in practice, the boundaries between work and home are blurred. This study demonstrates a considerable overlap between home and work on a daily basis. It shows how work crosses family boundaries and that this boundary is more permeable in one direction than the other.

The study provides significant evidence that men are in a better position than women to perform as “ideal workers” because, unlike mothers, they are not tied down by domestic and familial commitments. Men are able to stay at work for much longer than women to perfect their work and keep up with work expectations without having to worry about childcare and home chores. It shows that although the official time to knock off is 16h30, most of the male participants prefer to remain at work to attend to the backlog before they go home, whereas female participants usually rush home to do household chores and childcare, that is, if they are not travelling or attending meetings.

I do not usually take work home. I prefer to stay at work until late and finish my work and then go home (Dan: M, 43).

In addition, men seem to be in a better position to work late since they do not have a reason to rush home since they do not do any housework when they get home. This is shown in Benji’s response below; although he stays at work after the official hours, he also takes some work home to avoid the backlog.

But after meetings whether is already late or not I come to the office to check the in-tray and deal with urgent work or at times take some work home to avoid accumulation of work or backlog, I also encourage my managers to do likewise to avoid working under pressure. Times for knocking off are not fixed – it’s between 16h30 to 18h30 (Benji: M, 44).

The few men that collect children from school prefer to first fetch children, take them home and thereafter go back to work to decrease their backlog. They do not have cook or do other chores in the household.

I knock off around 4h30 to fetch the kids from school and take them home; at home I assist the kids with their homework [...] I come back to the office around 8h30; and I stay until around 23h00; I go to bed around 24h00 (Tom: M, 54).

In addition to the above, male participants indicate that they stay at work even longer during peak periods.

One male participant's work responsibility sometimes requires that he works in confidence, undisturbed and therefore in the absence of his colleagues. He reported that he waits for his colleagues to knock off so he remains working until he finishes the task at hand. He reported that sometimes he would finish after midnight, that is, in the early hours of the following morning.

I knock off any time from 16h30 up to 3h00. *Interviewer: Could you clarify why you knock off between 16h30 and 3h00?* Teddy: my work includes handling extremely confidential and important information, or setting up the IT system for payments of grants which requires a great deal of confidentiality. At times I am compelled to work on such for the whole night until I get it right (Teddy: M, 32).

Several of the female participants also work late more especially during peak periods as discussed below. However, most of those mothers who work late appear to have: older children, a maid, are single and/or have husbands who work away from home. It is important to note that all female participants who are senior managers, married or single, with young or older children, report working late on a more regular basis than managers in middle or junior management. This links with a finding earlier in this chapter that the higher the position, the greater the commitment, in terms of time, demanded by that position. Most of these mothers work late, especially, when it is time for the submission of monthly, quarterly and annual

reports, or when they have to attend to the backlog which accumulates when they are away from the office. But even those who work until late, have childcare duties, and rely on other members of their families as well as their maids as in Gloria's case.

The official knock-off is at 16h30, but I usually leave the office around 18h00/18h30. I sometimes stay on up to 21h30/22h00, especially, when I have not been around for a while, maybe on a conference; at home I have trained my older child to assist the younger one so that when I am not around they do not experience problems, I assist where necessary, that is when they are both stuck but I have to check if their school work is done; I thereafter prepare for the next day; I sometimes take work home and work on the lap-top before I go to sleep around 22h20; kids sleep before 21h00 (Gloria: F, 36).

However, as mentioned, mothers with younger children and husbands find it difficult to remain at work until late because of family and childcare responsibilities. They seem to prefer to carry their work home and work from there, when the children are in bed. Portia is married with four young children and she brings work home, rather than stay in the office. Knocking off after long hours of work does not mean participants are free from work, but their work follows them home.

Yes, we stay up to 18h00 or 19h00. It does not happen often for me because I have young children. I prefer to take work home, if I have backlog, so that I do some work when the kids are asleep (Portia: F, 28).

These experiences show that work penetrates the family boundary. On the other hand, as already shown in the last section, family issues especially children's illnesses spill over into

paid work but to a lesser extent. This can be attributed to heavy work demands and the lack of family-friendly environment.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter clearly illustrates gender as the major predictor of work-family-conflict (Yang, 2005). The experience of work-family-conflict is highly gendered and relates to the experience of parenting which is itself gendered. The chapter has provided evidence of how work causes bidirectional interference as also found by Yang (2005) in his Hong-Kong study as well as Aryee (2005) in his Sub-Saharan studies; work tends to interfere with family more than family interferes with work. This implies that family boundaries are more permeable than workplace boundaries. There are several reasons why the workplace is identified as interfering with family, the major one being the lack of workplace family-friendly policies. We have seen how family-unfriendly workplace cultures continue to disadvantage working mothers, thereby creating a work-family dilemma for them. The lack of family friendly policies has brought about a myriad of multi-faceted difficulties for women at the workplace. It is important to note that most men reported no difficulties in reconciling paid work and family responsibility, presumably because a male worker is known to be someone without childcare responsibilities. However, those fathers who do report problems, experience them differently from mothers. First, mothers experience a myriad of multi-faceted problems pertaining to motherhood and work-family reconciliation. These experiences did not differ in the two organizations. For women most of these problems were related to childcare and the age of their youngest child and whether or not they had good support systems pertaining to childcare. Moreover, the experiences of difficulties seemed to intensify for mothers who occupy higher positions in the employment hierarchy given the high work pressure associated with these positions. The major difficulties were experienced when children are sick, this in

turn leads to a lot of other problems at the workplace, such as, absenteeism, late coming, lack of productivity. Other difficulties experienced pertaining to their childcare responsibilities, such as extended absence from home, which in turn leads to an inability to attend to school activities and many other problems. On the other hand, the minority of fathers who experience difficulties are those who live away from home and are therefore unable to solve problems as they present themselves at home; while a local father reported not being able to attend school activities such as sports when his sons are playing in school.

Aryee (2005) suggests that what is needed to reduce work-family-conflict is a change in the organizational culture such that it is family-friendly through the introduction of family-friendly-policies, such as parental-leave and policies regulating working hours, in addition to the statutory maternity leave that is already there. Flexible work arrangements and employer supported childcare are critical resources for ameliorating the work-family-conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. He asserts that such measures may help reduce work-family-conflict by providing greater flexibility, reducing work-hours, and providing child-care assistance.

## Chapter 9. **Conclusions**

This thesis has drawn on various theories to explain the complexities of parenting practices and the difficulties experienced in terms of work-life balance in a society which is undergoing a process of transition. I begin this chapter by outlining the main contribution of my research before discussing how my findings provide answers to my research questions.

My findings demonstrate the coexistence of traditional and modern values, but further unveil contradictions between these values in relation to various aspects of parenting; these contradictions shape the way parents reconcile work and family in gendered ways. I have drawn from Inglehart and Baker (2000) and Inglehart and Norris (2003) (see chapter 1) to explain the coexistence of modern and traditional values embedded in parenting. These studies found that parenting values and gender role attitudes in many Third-World countries were moving along parallel trajectories based on traditional and modern values respectively rather than both sets of values moving from traditional to modern forms as envisaged by modernization theory. Moreover these studies found that South Africa and Nigeria were the only countries (of 65 First and Third-World countries) whose values had not begun to change (this was at the end of the 20th century, after the transition to democracy). My study shows that values, including normative expectations around parenting, have begun to encapsulate modern and traditional values, as have been found in other Third-World countries (Inglehart and Baker, 2000). Moreover, although my study shows that the change follows the pattern described above, it goes beyond the traditional-modern distinction to demonstrate a greater complexity than depicted in the studies mentioned. To this effect this study has disentangled and exposed the contradictions embedded in the change process, and how these are shaped by traditional and modern values. I illuminate the contradictions and imbalances in changes

between and within various domains (as also seen in Unterhalter and North, 2010). The changes embody traditional/modern distinctions which emerge in ways that are parallel (coexist) and contradictory (conflicting); this can be seen mainly in the differences between men's and women's views and; at times, within a single individual's response. Generally mothers, especially those from the Department, subscribe to more modern values than fathers from both the Department and the Parastatal (see chapter 1). This is seen in the way mothers talk about the issue of shared parenting and domestic roles. Moreover, mothers bring this up because they seem to be drowning in the difficulties of reconciling work and family responsibilities. In contrast fathers are predominantly traditional, especially with regards to parenting expectations and practices, but they express different and contradictory views when it comes to gender-role attitudes and perceptions of changing gender-roles: they express more realistic views about gender role attitudes than about parental expectations

The first, and major traditional/modern contradiction, is shown between the work-place and households, where the practices of the modern workplace contradict with traditional household practices. The workplace has experienced rapid change within a short space of time and has opened up employment opportunities to women, whereas in households parenting practices have remained relatively unchanged; this can be explained through Hochschild's (1990) notion of 'stalled revolution'. This means that the opening up of opportunities for women's employment has increased women's burden because they now experience equally demanding paid work and family roles. Moreover, the values within each of these domains are shaped by both traditional and modern ideas in a way that is contradictory. Within the household: the contradictions are twofold: first between gender-role attitudes and normative expectations of parenting – normative expectations of parenting appear to be more idealistic than gender-role attitudes, in the sense that motherhood

expectations are presented in highly moralistic terms. The second contradiction lies between the normative expectations of parenting and parenting practices, in the sense that, normative expectations embrace both traditional and modern values and contradict both parenting practices and the domestic division of labour which have remained traditional. This thesis has demonstrated that women experience these contradictions more sharply than men; this is seen in the multiple difficulties women voice when discussing reconciling work and family. The focus of this study is also on how mothers have been accommodated in the workplace, in the context of their increased participation in high and demanding positions and the government's espousal of equalities policies. In order to explore this I have modified Squires's (2008) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement to explain the different approaches to gender equality adopted in South African policies. I have adapted Squires's (2005) notion of diversity, which is an aspect of displacement, and replaced it with the concept of intersectionality, on the basis that this accounts better for the overlaps or intersections between and within different vectors of inequality. Currently the workplace implements the legally required minimum which encapsulates the inclusion and reversal approaches. This implies that workplace structure and equality policies are informed by masculine workplace cultures into which women are expected to fit. This is indicative of the fact that workplace equality policies are framed on the basis of sameness; which implies that women are treated the same as men. To this effect I have used 'framing analysis' to demonstrate that these policies have not addressed the real problem/s; which is unequal gender-roles and relations. This explains why the work-place has remained male oriented and family-unfriendly. The evidence lies in the lack of family friendly policies and long work-hour regimes coupled with high levels of workplace travelling. The adoption of a reversal and inclusion approach implies that the framing of the problem of gender inequality

is flawed in so far as these two approaches focus mainly on increasing of the number of women without challenging current working arrangements. In this way legislation and policies have not addressed the root of the problem, which lie in the gender-culture and take the form of gender roles and gender relations; workers are treated as though they are free from domestic work and childcare. The implication here is that even the work-place as it is currently seems to be favorable to men, while it has added more challenges for women. As a result it is women who are suggesting change. For change to be effective there is a need for the addition of 'displacement' (particularly activism) to 'inclusion' and 'reversal' in South African policies (Squires, 2008). The aspect of displacement includes addressing various vectors of inequality and paying special attention to their intersections while also engaging in activism, in this case mothers, as they are the ones who experience difficulties and are pressing for change.

Thirdly, this study draws from Bott's (1971) 'dense' and 'loose' family solidarity to explain how the networks of care, shared mothering and coping strategies work. The study confirms that African families are embedded in networks of care. However, within African families extended family support is not limited to grandmothers, but also includes maternal aunts, who in some cases are paid for their services; this sort of support is reciprocal and gendered. However, mothers shy away from referring to this as their sisters providing paid domestic labour, rather they prefer to say they are assisting their sisters financially in return for their help even though this sort of support, in most cases, follows the same pattern as the payment of domestic workers. Furthermore, in some cases mothers offer to support their sister's children, as a way of reciprocating for their sister's help. It is important to note though that sisters are not treated the same way as domestic workers; they have a different, more intimate, relationship with family members. What should also be noted is that it is mainly

maternal extended family support that is mobilized. My study has also demonstrated that the extent of extended family support is dependent upon the strength of the bond between the mother and her extended family, which is referred to as ‘family solidarity. For instance, the denser (stronger) the solidarity the more the support offered to the mother and the looser the solidarity the less support offered. Moreover, unlike Charles et al’s (2008) findings, family solidarity and network support is not necessarily weakened with geographical mobility. Mothers continue to receive support even where they work away from home.

Lastly, I have also used Aryee’s (2005) Family-Work- Interface model to explain work-family-conflict which culminates into difficulties in reconciling work and family.

In what follows I present an integrated discussion of my findings, drawing them together and discussing their implications. I start by outlining each research question and giving a summary of the main findings. I also discuss the contribution this study has made to knowledge and its policy implications as well as future research directions suggested by it.

1. What are the normative expectations and practices surrounding parenting and gender role attitudes in households, and is there any evidence of change?
2. What legislation and policy measures are put in place by the South African government and the workplace to accommodate working parents, and how effective are these in meeting women’s and men’s needs?
3. How do mothers and fathers reconcile paid work and motherhood/family responsibilities, and what difficulties do they experience?
4. What are working mothers’ coping strategies

## Summary of Research Findings

### *1. What are the normative expectations and practices surrounding parenting and gender role attitudes in households, and is there any evidence of change?*

This study explores experiences of parenthood located within African families in South Africa. Through participant observation and interviews I was able to determine parenting expectations, practices, perceptions and attitudes amongst women and men in managerial positions in two organizations; these are discussed in chapter 6. Transition in this context has proven not only to be a far from a simple linear progression, but also to be more than just a co-existence of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ values, in that, embedded within this distinction are multi-dimensional contradictions.. The first contradiction is seen between men and women’s views on normative expectations; where women articulate more modern views than men. Moreover, the managers’ portrayal of motherhood, particularly the expectations thereof, appear discursive and confusing. There was a difference in normative expectations of mothering along gender lines which has made mothering even more idealized than before. For instance, both men and women (though in different ways) portrayed mothers as pillars of strength within the family, who play not only a primary care-giving but a pivotal role in family life; this further reinforces their role and location within the home. These role expectations relate to empowering, enhancement of family unity and solidarity, and conciliation, which co-exist with the primary caregiving role. Mothers envisaged themselves as playing an empowering role; more than just socializers they portrayed themselves also as mentors, advisers, guides, role-models, cognitive developers, and counselors, in the lives of their children. On the other hand, fathers attributed to mothers a role of conciliators, mediators, peace-keepers and unifiers. Secondly, within the family, motherhood expectations also differed on the basis of marital status, where single mothers subscribed to more modern

views compared to those who were married, while not losing sight of the fact that married mothers had a mixture of modern/traditional views.

Against this backdrop it is clear that mothers epitomize power and morality within family life. However, as already noted, their power is subsumed within and poses no threat to patriarchal power (Campbell, 1990), which is rarely challenged. For instance, there is one aspect that was underplayed or downplayed by most married mothers and fathers; that is, mothers were rarely defined as providers or co-providers. However, women's providing role was affirmed under gender role attitudes (as will be seen below). Although mothers contribute almost or as much as fathers towards family income, fathers still monopolize the status of providers, and mothers seem to have chosen to play along with this. As also explained by Kandiyoti (1988) Campbell (1990) and Frahm-Arp (2010) fathers are still defined as providers in most parts of Africa, even though in many cases it is women who provide. Frahm-Arp (2010) perceives this as part of the oppressive patriarchal ideology which, she believes, is systematically interwoven with cultural practices to make these gender roles seem natural and therefore difficult for women to become aware of. For this reason many of the married mothers omit this aspect in their definition of mothering. Although mothers might not be perceived as providers, they are expected to do paid work and contribute to the household income but as primary caregivers (not providers).

Expectations on fathers embody a similar traditional and modern mix, however, the contradictions with regards to fathers are less intricate than those relating to mothers. Fathers are attributed the 'traditional' father role by many of the participants where a provider role still appears to be a core signifier of a 'good father', this is coupled with man as the head, the protector, the decision-maker, the leader of the family by most of the men but also some women. However, in some cases these appear alongside the idea that he should care, and

assist in domestic chores and childcare, be approachable, spend time with his family and, in particular, his children who are raised by mainly female participants. This is indicative of the fact that mothers need assistance from fathers, given the fact that they also co-provide but struggle with the dual-role by themselves.

However, empirical findings bear much evidence of a disjunction between the normative expectations of parenting and the practice. I have noted that the expectations on mothering continue to bear the traditional primary-giver role. The reality is that these mothers work long hours and therefore are not available to engage in what is expected of them. It is important to note that mothering practice is arranged around paid work and is predicated upon when and how the workplace releases parents so that they are available to assume their childcare responsibilities. This study shows that parenting practices and the domestic division of labour is highly gendered. The majority of household chores and childcare are still left in the hands of mothers; who because of their engagement in paid work, which is considered part of the mothering role, mobilize caring networks to substitute her primary-care role. Chapter 7 shows that mothers mobilize network-support in the form of paid domestic labour or extended family-support and domestic workers are paid by the mothers themselves, presumably because they are assisting mothers in their caring roles.

However, whether or not mothers hire domestic labour, they still participate in housework, before they leave for and after they return from paid work, alongside domestic workers and, in some cases, these chores are shared among female members of the family, including domestic workers, mothers, maternal aunts, grandmothers and teenage daughters, and sometimes sons (which is also seen in recent literature).

It might be argued that the presence of domestic workers within households is the reason for men's non-participation in house-chores and childcare. However, even in households

without domestic workers, where mothers do the bulk of the housework during weekends, fathers (husbands or partners) still do not assist. Instead men enjoy much leisure time, while mothers' hands are full. The absence of such help from husbands is an indication of the resilience of African cultural norms which have resulted in a 'stalled revolution' with regards to gender roles at household level (Hochschild, 1990). There is therefore incongruity between changing normative expectations of parenting and parenting practices, in the sense that the normative expectations have evolved to incorporate modern ideas which run parallel with traditional ideas; however this has not translated into parenting practice.

#### *Gender-role attitudes and Perceptions on Gender Equality*

The findings have also shown a contradiction between normative expectations and gender-role attitudes. Findings on gender-role attitude have strongly endorsed a woman's (co-) provider role, by affirming both parents' equal participation in employment and contribution in the household income. However, there was a contradiction between attitudes about gender equality at the workplace and within home. Almost all participants affirmed that they made an equal financial contribution to the household income; however, many rejected gender equality within households while supporting gender equality within the workplace. Findings reveal that some of the reasons given for the acceptance of gendered and unequal divisions of labour are related to African culture. A few male and female participants from the Department were realistic about idea of gender equality within the household; they do not see the possibility of gender equality while customary practices such as '*ilobolo*' are still so widely practiced and up-held. To this effect a few female participants from the Department perceive the achievement of gender equality, especially at household level, as a 'big' challenge that requires commitment to changing structural and cultural institutions, which implies that they believe that change is possible, but that it would be a struggle. Secondly,

other reasons are related to biological essentialism; the belief that some roles are tailored for women and others for men. Such change, I believe, would require collaboration between the state (through policies) and activism to accomplish.

On the other hand, the acceptance of gender equality at the workplace has been attributed to the influence of workplace gender transformation, specifically the increased numbers of women in high and managerial positions. However, the advancement of women has been interpreted as a win-lose situation by some, who perceive the gain for women as a loss for men. The advancement of women was met with mixed emotions, which reflect both traditional and modern views as well as positive and negative perceptions. For instance, a few men found women's appointment to high positions as encroaching upon male territory and therefore a source of discomfort. These men perceived this as a threat to male control and power over women; and a source of conflict within families. On the other hand, several female participants viewed women's advancement as an accomplishment and a breakthrough on the part of women.

***2. What Legislation and Policy measures are put in place by the South African Government and the workplace to accommodate working parents and how effective are these in meeting mothers' and fathers' needs?***

I addressed this question in chapter 3. To examine how gendered parenting needs are accommodated, I investigated the policy approach(es) and legislation adopted by South Africa to address gender inequality and work-life balance as well as workplace policies and assessed whether these approaches assist parents to reconcile work and family. To do this I used Squires's (2005) typology of 'inclusion, reversal, displacement (which includes diversity and activism); however I proposed that intersectionality replace diversity within this typology in order to address not only diversity but also intersections between the various

vectors of inequalities. In addition I also explored how problems of family, childcare and equality issues were framed in the labour-market legislation and workplace policies.

The literature sets out how equality approaches have evolved from equal and special treatment approaches, through gender mainstreaming to diversity and intersectionality (see chapter 3). These approaches have been used differentially to develop equality and work-life balance legislation as well as workplace policies. My review of legislation revealed that South Africa has employed inclusion and reversal but only the diversity aspect of displacement to address gender inequality and has left out activism, in its 'hard laws,' which is important in addressing deeper and more intricate structural inequalities. Although these two approaches have facilitated opportunities and increased the entry of women in high positions, which is an important step, it has also intensified the work and family pressure on mothers as bearers of childcare responsibilities. For instance, legislating on only the two mentioned notions, has meant that the work-place retains the family unfriendly masculine-model of work into which mothers are forced to fit (Cockburn, 1991); thereby also forcing mothers to prioritize work over their family and childcare responsibilities. Employees are expected to work unlimited hours, without necessary support for those with childcare responsibility (mothers). I have argued that maternity leave cannot be seen as a measure that has the purpose of reconciling work and family, since it is meant to address the issue of the period of recovering from child-birth. Against this backdrop, legislation leaves out the real problem which is deeply-rooted within cultural norms, values, belief systems about parenting practices and parental and gender roles. Moreover, the legislation and workplace policies frame the issue of inequality and work-life balance as a mother's problem for the labour market to rectify, rather than a gender-role and relational problem; which requires dealing

with the structures and institutions that perpetuate unequal gender relations in all domains related to parenting.

The legislation does not recognize that maternity and paternity leave could not only be used on the basis of difference (on the basis for the recognition of the mother's child-bearing role) but also as a way of challenging the existing unequal gender roles and relations. Against this back-drop, it is clear that for as long as the South African legislation and the organizations continue to rely on 'inclusionary' and 'reversal' approaches in addressing gender inequality, unequal gender role relations at the level of the household and society will remain.

During the early 2000s the government introduced two comprehensive pieces of legislation which encapsulates all the equality approaches: 'inclusion', 'reversal'; equal opportunities through affirmative action, displacement; gender and intersectionality mainstreaming (although it does not use the term intersectionality). South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2001) and the Gender Strategic Framework. However, these takes the form of 'soft laws' and therefore have not been implemented on the basis that it is not legally binding. These legislations embody a feminist voice and are transformatory in their approach to equality. They pay attention to the hidden and deep-seated cultural norms, values and practices embedded within gender relations, within the state (for example the workplace), and societal institutions; among others, civil society and the family which are important aspects of displacement. It aims to mainstream gender into policies, programmes, projects, structures and practices in various domains. The ultimate goal is equal participation of women in decision-making structures, changes in the cultural and religious practices which subordinate women, and recognition of women's responsibility and rights in the family.

As a way of realizing these goals, the earlier National Gender Policy Framework had envisaged engaging various state and societal structures, such as Government Departments, including the Office of the Status of Women, Gender Focal Points (GFPs) and local government; and civil society (i.e. community-based, non-governmental organizations and religious bodies); parliamentary structures; independent bodies, such as constitutional and other courts, and commissions on gender equality, human rights and so on, as recommended in the displacement approach. The literature and this study show that some of these structures have been established, especially in parliament and in national and provincial government departments. However, civil society structures have been left out. To this effect, gender mainstreaming has been left in the hands of the state which means that the approach is technocratic (Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2003; Gouws, 2005; Karlsson, 2010).

Integral to this study are GFPs because of their location in line-ministries including Departments and the Parastatals. Their major mandate, as stated in the above-mentioned framework, is to implement the National Gender Policy (which includes gender mainstreaming), in Departments and Parastatals. However, the study reveals a number of factors that militate against its successful implementation and also question the commitment of the government to gender equality (these are outlined in chapter 3 and 4). Having developed comprehensive and progressive National Gender Policies, the Government showed no commitment to their successful implementation. Both government and organizations lacked the necessary resources and capacity. Moreover, gender mainstreaming requires expertise and a team of GFPs for its implementation. Most problematic is the misconception among GFPs about gender mainstreaming (see also Walker, 2003; Karlsson, 2010). For most GFPs gender mainstreaming is interpreted as an 'add-on' and increasing the number of women in high positions (Department), while for others the concept is unknown (Parastatal).

The failure of gender mainstreaming is exacerbated by GFPs' location and position within the employment hierarchy, which means that they lacked authority to influence decision-making and policy development. Secondly, this study has illuminated the marginal participation of GFPs in policy development because policies are brought to them when they are already developed so that they can 'check if they were gender sensitive' or for gender to be 'added'. Thirdly, the diverse areas included in the GFPs' job description, renders their gender work ineffective; their multiple and wide range of duties means that gender is swallowed up within other work responsibilities and given very little attention. The above illuminates the disjuncture between policy and practice; the recommendations of the National Gender Policy framework are sidelined. This study, like many other South African feminist studies (Walker, 2003; Hassim, 2003; 2005; Karlsson, 2010) calls for the installation or re-installation of activism in gender equality policies in order to counter the technocratic approach. This is because the inclusion of gender in the constitution and subsequently in South African legislation was achieved through the fierce fight of activists and academics (see chapter 3). Besides, the National Gender Policy recognizes the importance of the inclusion of societal structures, but this has been ignored in its implementation.

The study also explored the perceptions of managers who are parents, hence the beneficiaries of work-life balance and equality policies, and Human Resource personnel and GFPs, of these policies and whether they address the gendered needs of working parents. I assumed the GFPs and HR personnel would be involved in the development and/or implementation of equality and family policies (chapter 4). My findings show the coexistence of 'traditional' and 'modern views' which presented themselves in complex contradictions and parallels along the lines of organizations, different categories and gender (see chapter 3).

The views of GFPs and their HR counterparts are divided between ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ along organizational lines. The Department’s GFPs, like their HR counterparts, demonstrated ‘traditional’ views on gender roles, more traditional than the very officials whose awareness they are supposed to raise and whose paradigm and attitudes they are supposed to change. They appeared to be supportive and protective of the current state of affairs, the current legislation and organizational work-life balance policies and the African traditional gender culture, values and beliefs; this was contrary to the Department’s officials’ perceptions, especially those managers who bear childcare responsibilities, mothers. This is also contrary to the Parastatal’s GFP and HR officers. The Department’s GFPs’ and their HR officers’ perceptions and attitudes towards gender roles demonstrated essentialist and deep-rooted cultural beliefs and values about gender which shows the challenge that lies ahead in bringing about a paradigm change. The Department’s GFPs’ ideas reinforced ‘traditional’ gender roles. Motherhood was defined through ‘biological determinism’, for instance breastfeeding, was seen as ‘natural’. The confluence of mothering and breastfeeding, as if there could be no mothering without breastfeeding has also been argued by Eisenstein (1979). Secondly, also basing their arguments on African culture, the Department’s GFPs did not envision a change in gender roles.

In contrast, the Parastatal’s GFP and HR-practitioner who themselves are mothers, reflected many of the concerns expressed by women managers, especially those from the Department (see chapter 5). This demonstrate that most of the mothers in this study, irrespective of their category (Managers, GFPs, HR-officers) and to a certain extent organization, hold ‘modern’ views and advocate for a change in gender roles towards ‘egalitarianism’; this implies that ‘traditional’ gender roles and paid work are not working for them. They also pointed to the need for fathers to go through gender sensitization before they could be allocated time off for

the purpose of childcaring. Their perceptions show that they support a transformative approach to equality as compared to the government Department's GFPs and HR participants who, like most fathers, felt the government 'has done enough' to accommodate working parents. Importantly, as those who feel the pinch, mothers came up with a wide range of ideas on what could assist working parents; among them were childcare facilities and flexible work hours. Interestingly, they are of the opinion that if their needs could be addressed, it would lead to increased productivity at the workplace. On the other hand men, do not see the need to improve current family policies to accommodate those who are faced with such a situation since they have no childcare responsibility. This is where the idea of activism fits in; it is clear that without activism mothers' and parental needs shall remain trivial.

In summing up, the study has shown that the change process differs in different contexts and that changing parenting has proven to be much more complex and contradictory than anticipated. The contradictions in the change process arise because various aspects of parenting carry differential significance and implications for mothers and fathers. The study has shown that mothers' experience of change is sharper than that of fathers.

Change in parenting can be attributed to the introduction of gender equality policies by the new democratic government which sought to transform state institutions as a way to promote justice for all. To this effect the South African government has adopted mainly the 'inclusion' and 'reversal' approaches to equality, which are embedded in 'hard laws'. The adoption of these approaches seems to have worked in eliminating barriers, creating equal opportunities, and increasing gender representation at the workplace, but has left the work-culture masculine and family unfriendly thereby intensifying paid work and family demands. Moreover, it has not addressed cultural and structural institutions that perpetuate these inequalities. This has been attributed mainly to the framing of the problems within

legislation and workplace policies, which has not addressed the root of the problem. The problem of gender inequality is framed in terms of the unequal representation of women in the workplace and work-family-reconciliation; it is therefore defined as a workplace problem and other spheres, together with the cultural structures and institutions within these spheres, have been left untouched.

In addition to the 'hard laws', 'soft laws' have been developed but have not been implemented. These address the real problems regarding inequalities, including gender. They have sought to unravel the problems. This involves digging deeper, challenging existing oppressive and discriminatory state, societal and cultural institutions and structures and looking into all domains other than just the workplace. The policy embraces all the elements of Squires's (2005) approach: inclusion, reversal and displacement. Moreover, this policy embodies the idea of activism, which embraces a partnership between various structures spread across societal and state institutions..

However, introducing new, modern norms, values, belief systems and practices in competition with the traditional ones renders the approach unlikely to be accepted, especially by those who benefit from the discriminatory and unjust system (Walby, 2005).

### ***3. How do mothers and fathers reconcile paid work and motherhood/family responsibilities and what difficulties do they experience?***

This study has shown that for effective gender transformation, change has to occur in various domains and within structures and institutions that guide and influence societal norms and expectations, values, beliefs systems as well as practices (see also Bacchi, 1999; Gambles and Rapoport, 2007; Unterhalter and North, 2010). To this effect change has to occur at societal, state, organizational, institutional, cultural, relational and individual level. However, findings show incongruence and contradictions in various areas and domains which has resulted in a

myriad of difficulties in reconciling work and family for working mothers. We have seen rapid transformation at the workplace towards gender equality brought about by the government commitment to transformation of the public sphere. I have shown that legislation and workplace policies have opened up opportunities for women through Squires's (2005) inclusion and reversal approaches, but these have been rather myopic to the 'real' problems which are embedded within cultural and structural systems of inequalities. High level of change at the workplace, and lack thereof in the private domain, implies high levels of work-family-conflict for mothers, especially managers and domestic workers.

Aryee's (2005) Work-Family-Interface model has been useful to explain the work-family-conflict experienced by working mothers as they straddle paid work and family. This model constitutes a causal chain which links stress and well-being. Using this model I was able to identify the antecedents and stressors as well as the moderators of conflict. These antecedents contribute to a bi-directional work-family-conflict brought about by work-to-family interference and vice-versa. Work spills over into the domestic sphere, thereby affecting household functioning, especially childcare and other domestic responsibilities and domestic and childcare problems spill over into the workplace and, in turn, affect women's work performance. However, the data show much more work-to-family interference and conflict than vice versa, which suggests the permeability of family boundaries is greater than work-boundaries (Yang, 2005).

Like Aryee (2005) I identified a lack of institutional support and long and inflexible hours of work, as some of the antecedents to work-family-conflict, which are located in the organizations; on the other hand, the lack of support and assistance from husband or partner and the number of children are antecedents located within households. These stressors lead

to myriad multifaceted difficulties (outlined in chapter 8) for mothers which are summarized in what follows.

Mothers' source of frustration emanates from the masculine work-culture adopted by the workplace. Many of their difficulties are brought about by lack of family-friendly work-regime, particularly the long and inflexible work hours. To this effect, mothers tend to blame themselves for problems that have been brought about by the masculine oriented nature of the work-contract which means that they are unable to abandon their work commitments for childcare responsibilities. Moreover, they also felt that although their employment provides them with financial stability and independence it also keeps them away from their childcare responsibilities. Paradoxically, the findings also show that mothers feel equally guilty and frustrated when their primary care-giving role, especially in the case of children illnesses, interferes with their paid work as it frustrates their effort to show commitment to their work: These difficulties are divided along lines of the age of the mothers but more so that of their children. It is mostly younger mothers with smaller children who experience greater difficulties associated with lack of institutional support: The lack of childcare facilities at the work-place or as women travel for work leaves some of them with no choice but to unwillingly compromise their maternal responsibilities, others felt they were losing out on capacity building activities and decision-making processes all of which they considered important for their self-development. For some, especially single mothers, the family-unfriendly workplace means separation from their children who are left in the care of their extended family. Despite all the difficulties associated with being a career woman as well as a mother, and feeling torn between their work and children, the findings show that these women do not wish to trade their dual-role for anything. A few fathers also reported experiencing difficulties; they were mostly living away from their families and, because of

this found it difficult to fulfill their problem solving and decision-making roles. In the findings I show that men's difficulties relate to their inability to fulfill their masculine authority role.

The difficulties outlined in this section are a product of the tensions associated with the incongruences and contradictions relating to change in some domains and lack thereof in other related domains as well as uneven change within the same domain. As outlined above, the male-model and family-unfriendly work-culture that prevails in organizations leads to the inability of working mothers to reconcile work and family. This demonstrate that the needs of parents, and especially mothers, are not accommodated at the workplace, which implies that when the workplace policies were designed, working parents, particularly mothers, were not taken into consideration. However it can also be argued that the framing of the problems within workplace policies was such that they do not address the root of the problem. This calls for reinstallation of activism in equality and work-life balance policies, with mothers leading the process of pushing for change, since they are the ones who have to deal with work-family-conflict (see also Hassim, 2005 and Karlsson, 2010).

With the lack of support and assistance from fathers at household level and lack of institutional support for working mothers, the question is how do working mothers reconcile their dual-role? It is clear from the study that, as arduous as this situation may be, mothers are obliged to do both paid work and care for their children. Moreover, women would rather combine the two roles than have one and not the other and cope with the resulting difficulties. In contrast, men, free from the childcare role, have minimal problems with regards to work-family reconciliation.

#### ***4. What are working mothers' coping strategies?***

Given the difficult position these women find themselves in, we see them mobilizing support from other mothers to help them manage the work-family-conflict. In chapter 6, I showed that given the work-family-conflict that many women are currently faced with, mothers mobilize a network of support to assist them to reconcile family responsibilities and paid work. The findings show that the economic and employment mobility of families has led to increased geographical mobility involving re-location from working-class to middle-class residential areas (see also Southall, 2004). This has required alterations in parenting and coping strategies since it means that mothers are removed from their social-networks. The move, by nuclear families, away from their social networks does not necessarily imply a shift from traditional to modern but the coexistence of the two (Amoateng et al, 2007; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007). Thus, before the inception of democracy mothers relied hugely on female members within their extended kinship systems for childcare. Moreover, Aryee's (2005) work-family-interface model has found this sort of support a moderator (buffer) located in a household, which ameliorates work-family-conflict within the private sphere. The findings reveal that, although there has been an increase in hired domestic labour, for many families, especially those with 'dense family solidarity', the extended family remains a crucial resource and,, while some rely on both extended family and domestic workers others rely on domestic workers only. This study adds the domestic worker to Aryee's (2005) work-family-interface model.

In summing up, the study demonstrates that contradictions and parallels within normative expectations, between normative expectations and the practice of parenting; between the two domains (family and the workplace) relating to parenting, have been translated into major difficulties for mothers in reconciling work and family. These difficulties are also attributed

to the nature of interventions and framing of the problems and solutions which have so far been directed only to the workplace; the related domains, such as the family and wider societal and cultural practices, are left out of the problem. Secondly, addressing one and leaving out other areas and domains related to parenting has created an imbalance in change that has led to heightened work-family-conflict. The lack of congruence in the changes is caused by the fact that interventions have taken a narrow approach to gender equality; the problem has been framed in terms of representation at the workplace, thus leaving other related areas and sites of oppression, such as the household untouched. Furthermore the adoption of only inclusion and reversal has meant that the workplace remains male oriented, which has made it difficult for mothers to reconcile family and work. Although parenting normative expectations are beginning to split into traditional and modern, it has not been enough to bring about a change in gender roles and relations at home. Secondly, through 'inclusion' and 'reversal' approaches, institutional support provided for those with childcare responsibilities (in this case mothers), has been too little to assist mothers to reconcile paid work and family responsibilities and this has led to work-family-conflict. The study also shows how mothers cope with their demanding roles. They collaborate with other female members of their extended family with regards to mothering; the denser the solidarity within the extended families, the greater the support provided by other members of the extended family. Moreover, there is mutual support and benefit within this sort of relationship; the mother reciprocates by providing financial and other forms of support to their extended families. Some mothers have turned to paid domestic labour but have also retained the kinship system, which is also common in this study; this also denotes some 'dense family solidarity'.

## **Contributions of the study**

The study has made a number of contributions to the South African, as well as the global debates on parenting, work-life balance and gender equality. Unlike other studies which have looked at particular aspects of parenting, this study looks into parenting in its totality, analyzing the various aspects of parenting (motherhood and fatherhood, normative expectations, practices, gender-role attitudes) and other influences on parenting (the household and domestic division of labour; the workplace and policies) . This has involved examining some of these aspects separately while identifying the intra- and inter-connections thereof, but also bringing them together and looking at them as a coherent whole (parenting). To this effect, the study not only contributes to the knowledge of parenting but also to various smaller aspects thereof as outlined in what follows.

## ***Theoretical Considerations***

Parenting in South Africa is complicated by the transition from apartheid to a democratic society and analyzing parenting in this context requires a consideration of various bodies of literature. As a result my analysis draws on several theories and concepts as outlined above.

My major contribution lies in my expansion of Inglehart and Baker's (2000) theory of modern/traditional coexistence. This study has unveiled even more complex contradictions embedded within the 'traditional' and 'modern' distinction which have emerged in different ways within different aspects and domains related to parenting. The first contradiction was between the public and private domains: the change in the workplace and the lack thereof at household level, which is explained through the concept of 'stalled revolution' (Hochschild, 1990). The second is the coexistence of traditional and modern values in the normative expectations of mothering and fathering, which were divided mainly along gender lines; in

this case mothers held more modern views than fathers. The third contradiction is between parenting expectations and practice, where expectations show a split and encapsulate both traditional and modern values; on the other hand, parenting practices remain unchanged and thus still embody traditional values. The fourth contradiction emerged along organizational lines: GFPs and their HR counterparts in the same organization shared similar values; the Parastatal's GFP and HR who are both mothers were more modern in their views which are also aligned to those mothers who are managers. This has revealed that parental and equality change in my study context is much more complex than anticipated and is a multi-dimensional and contradictory process. Moreover these contradictions pose challenges for work-family reconciliation, especially for mothers.

Secondly, the study contributes to the literature on policy approaches to gender equality in a country that is characterized by diversity and undergoing transition. It expands on the existing gender equality debates; particularly on the identification and recommendations of appropriate policy approach (es) for the South African context. Different studies have looked into various areas and policy approaches to gender equality, starting from Equal Treatment which looks at equality on the basis of sameness; Special Treatment which addresses issues of difference (Cockburn, 1991); gender mainstreaming which addresses the root of the problem (Jahan, 1995; Pollack and Hafner-Burton, 200; Booth and Bennet, 2002; Hassim, 2003; Walker, 2003; Gouws, 2005; Walby, 2005; Karlsson, 2010; Unterhalter and North, 2010); and intersectionality (Creshaw, 1991; Squires, 2005; Hankivsky, 2005; Acker, 2006; Nash; 2008). My research adds to these by building on Squires's (2005) typology of inclusion, reversal and displacement. However, I have adjusted the displacement aspect of the typology which encompasses diversity and more so activism. My contribution lies in the replacement of diversity with intersectionality, on the basis that, although diversity was used

in the same way as intersectionality in this typology, the usage thereof, on its own is conceptually flawed. Moreover intersectionality pays attention to the complexities within and between vectors (class, race and gender) of oppression, in order not to lose sight of those minorities which might be hidden within other minorities (see also chapter 3). Moreover, intersectionality best suits my context, which is characterized by diverse groups with different social and economic (among others) standings. I acknowledge that issues of inclusion and reversal have to a certain extent been addressed. However, I concur with South African feminist writers who support the installation or re-installation of activism in pursuing policy issues. Moreover, South Africa has previously successfully used activism to push for the inclusion of gender equality clauses that challenge the patriarchal, cultural and other practices that perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination against women, starting with the constitution (see also page 170-2). I have shown that the adoption of reversal in a technocratic guise is hardly adequate to bring about cultural and structural changes including gender roles and relations, other than increasing the number of women in political leadership and managerial positions. While some South African feminists argue for the combination of gender mainstreaming with activism, I argue for the combination of intersectionality with mainstreaming and activism.

Thirdly, my study has contributed to Aryee's (2005) model of Work-Family-Interface, a causal chain that links parenting stressors and wellbeing. Aryee's model outlines the work domain stressors (role conflict, role overload, hours worked in a week, schedule flexibility) which constitute a family-unfriendly environment. On the other hand family domain stressors (age and number of children, family conflict family-spouse support, absence of household electrical appliances, irregular supply of utilities, extended family obligations) culminate in work-family conflict. Next in the chain, the moderators to the work-place

antecedents are (network support; informal: supervisor and formal institutional support and network support (extended family)).

As already seen, the antecedents in the South African context in both domains are similar to Aryee's (2005) Work-Family-Interface model. On the other hand, Aryee's model mentions only the extended family as a family domain moderator. The study adds domestic workers to extended family support.

### ***Contribution on Fatherhood***

This study is also the first to look into fatherhood in its entirety, especially in the provincial capital of my study. Moreover, fatherhood, in my study area, is somewhat different from other parts of South Africa. I have discussed the important milestones or rites of passage in the transition to manhood or fatherhood and argued that the key influential cultural aspects of fatherhood, such as; '*ilobolo*', pubertal rites, as well as migration, are important for understanding both fatherhood and the reasons why fatherhood has turned out the way to be the way it is (uninvolved fathering or distant fathering) in my study area. Fathers have distanced themselves from any house-chores and childcare on the basis that they are feminine roles.

### ***Contributions on Motherhood***

The study also contributes to the knowledge and literature on mothering; it affirms the pivotal role of a mother in family life (Campbell, 1990; Oyewumi, 2001, Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010). Moreover, it shows the expansion of mothers' normative expectations from those outlined in existing studies, as mainly primary carers and agents of socialization (see also Magwaza, 2003; Jeannes and Sheffer, 2005), to include much more fulfilling empowering attributes

such as mentors, role-models advisers, guides, cognitive developers (as articulated by most mothers) and conciliators; peacekeepers, mediators, unifiers (articulated by several fathers).

Furthermore this study also affirms the fact that motherhood is not necessarily limited to the mother, but in most cases it is a collaborative act, either between the mother and female members of the kinship group or between mothers and domestic workers. However, this study through the concepts of 'dense' and 'loose' solidarity (Bott, 1971), has determined that such support from the extended family is dependent on quality of the relationship of the mother with her kinship group. The 'denser' the solidarity the more the quality of support the mother receives from the kinship group. However, my contribution lies in the finding that unlike the above-mentioned Western studies, (Bott, 1971; Hansen, 2005; Charles et al, 2008) the quality of support is not necessarily weakened by distance, for those with families with dense solidarity. Furthermore, again unlike the American and European studies where fathers provide financial assistance as a way of reciprocating toward kinship support, this study also shows that it is mothers themselves to finance childcare assistance through paying domestic workers, and by assisting their kinship group with financial assistance.

### **Limitations of the study**

As I have explained in chapter 2 this study does not in any way claim to be representative of parental experiences in the whole of South Africa, but brings forth knowledge that is only 'partial' and 'situational'. Therefore having confined the study in the provincial capital under my study within the government Department and Parastatal should not be viewed as a limitation. Secondly, this study has been conducted under serious time and financial constraints and this had serious implications to my field work, such as access, the size and the gender distribution of the sample. For instance I had a series of access issues to my research

sites, and this has had impact on my research findings. First, I could not gain access to the organization of my first choice and had to change to a Parastatal. However, even within the two organizations, I came across hurdles that had nearly brought my research to its knees and which made my research experience very stressful. It was my networks who kept me going all the way to the end of my fieldwork. This has affected the number, gender distribution as well as employment levels of participants. I could not have the employee distribution from in terms of gender and all levels of the employment hierarchy as I had envisaged. Secondly, I had planned to observe gender relations at the workplace which could have involved observing the work of both men and women: their degree of participation and involvement in meetings, travelling, workshops, conferences and other workplace activities.

### **Future Research**

To develop this study further would be first by expanding the sample to a national study. The study would benefit more from also looking at wider range of organizations other than just the public sector. This research has proved that there are variations in the way parenting is experienced and the way difficulties are encountered across race, class, geographical location (rural/urban). The study sampling was purposefully biased towards middle-class parents at managerial level, but it has also revealed that even those mothers who work at the lowest of employment positions, in the private sphere, as domestic workers, experience even greater amount work-family-conflict. The over-reliance on domestic workers has created a cycle of work-family-conflict, which warrants further research. Thus a comparison study that would cut across race and class to bring out these variations is much needed in the South African context.

In summing up, this study had sought to explore how parents reconcile work and family, especially after the inception of democracy, using Inglehart and Baker's (2000) theory of coexistence of 'traditional' and 'modern' values. The main contribution of this study lies in the illumination of the complexities which have emerged in the form of contradictions embedded within the traditional/modern distinction, in the way gender and parental change occurs. The study demonstrates lack of congruence in the way change occurs between domains, between various aspects of parenting, as well between mothers' and fathers' views. The main concern is the way these contradictions are experienced by mothers and fathers. First, these are experienced in a way that is gendered. For mothers who are managers these are experienced sharply, in the sense that mothers are faced with complex and multiple and multidimensional difficulties as they negotiate work and family.

Upon taking a closer look inside both domains the study unveils yet other contradictions within each domain, which further expands upon my contribution. The labour market and workplace policies have legislated on the basis of inclusion and reversal, in the sense that they have focused on increased women's representation in high positions, which has meant working long hours, but without putting necessary support for those with child-care responsibilities. This has translated to high workplace demands which have created major difficulties for mothers in reconciling work and family. As can be seen these difficulties have emanated from the nature of interventions, particularly the framing of the problems and solutions which have so far been directed only to the workplace leaving out other related domains, such as the family and wider societal and cultural practices. Most importantly, it has been noted by both local (Hassim, 2003; Gouws, 2005; Karlsson, 2010) and international feminist (Crompton, 2007; Bacchi, 1999; Squires, 2005) writers that policies alone are not

sufficient to bring about the sort of change that is required. Some studies, including this one have recommended the installation of activism to counter the technocratic approach.

As the study scrutinizes the private domain of the family, this thesis also exposes two-fold incongruences within the private domain: first normative expectations seem to have changed from traditional to embody both traditional and modern views and these are mainly divided along gender lines. This is found between various groups of participants in this study that mothers articulate more modern views than men, in the sense that women call for egalitarianism within households since they find it hard to reconcile the two domains. Second, there are also contradictions between normative expectations and parental practices. Normative expectations have changed and embody both traditional and modern views, while, as noted above, parenting practices have remained unchanged in that men still do not participate in household chores and childcare. These contradictions seem to create tensions in terms of work-family reconciliation for employed mothers. As a result women mobilize childcare support for themselves, either from the extended families or domestic workers or both, which still does not totally relieve them from childcare and family responsibilities. To this effect women continue to experience work-family-conflict.

The recommendation for the problem is for the government to change the two gender policies from 'soft laws' to hard laws. But also these need to be improved, by strengthening the displacement aspect, which encompasses activism and to mobilize the concept of intersectionality. The idea of engaging activism being combined with mainstreaming policies seems to hold much hope for South African feminists, including this study.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1. Consent Form**

**An Exploration of How Women Negotiate Motherhood and Paid Work  
A South African Study**

This is an invitation to participate in a research I am currently conducting.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study anytime you wish, for any reason. Should you decide to withdraw the information that you will have provided will be given to you or destroyed. There will be no consequence on decisions you make. Your personal details will be kept confidential. At no time will your name be used or identifying information be revealed: pseudonyms (false names) will be used to ensure anonymity.

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I have received information on this research project. I realise that everything I say will be in confidence and I am willing to participate in the interview.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 2. Interview Guide for the Human Resource Department**

- 1. Do you think of any policies as family friendly? Which ones?**
- 2. Who would you say Family Friendly Policies (FFP) apply to?**
- 3. In your opinion, to who do you think they should apply?**
- 4. What prompted your organisation to develop such policies?**
- 5. Do you inform employees on newly developed policies? If yes, how?**
- 6. How often does your organisation review policies?**
- 7. Are employees updated when policies are reviewed?**
- 8. Does your organisation have maternity leave? When was it introduced?**
- 9. What about paternity leave?**
- 10. When last did your organisation review the following policies:**

- Maternity:**
- paternity leave**

**What was the duration (length) before they were reviewed, and what is the duration now?**

**What (do you think) the reason for the lengthening was?**

- 11. What do you think about the difference between maternity and paternity leave is?**
- 12. How is the take-up of the above maternity and paternity leaves? Are there any other FFP's in your organisation?**
- 13. Do you monitor if employees are making use of these policies? If yes, how?**  
**If no, how do you know if policies are in fact being utilized?**

**14. Does your Department offer the following:**

	Men		Women	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Part-time work				
Flexible hours				
Working from home				
Time off for sick children				
Time-off for children for other reasons				
Child-care facilities?				

**15. Do the above apply to all employees (if any)? Yes.**

**16. Who do you think the FFPs benefit? .**

**Why do you think this is the case?**

**17. Would you say women and men are now able to balance their work and family responsibilities? On what do you base your answer?**

**18. In your opinion, would you say family friendly policies have had an effect on gender relations? If yes, explain/or and give examples. If no, why not?**

**19. Do you think family friendly policies are (also) gender equality policies?**

**20. Does your organization have (other) gender equality/related policies?**

**What are they? Who was involved in the development of the above policies?**

**21. When your organization develops family friendly policies does it/is it required to follow any policy guidelines/legislation?**

**If yes, what guidelines/legislation did you have to follow when you developed the following policies?**

**22. Does the organisation also develop policies just out of the employees need, ie, without any directive from the national government?**

**Appendix 3. An Interview Schedule For Employees At Managarial Level**

**Biographical Data**

**Gender :**

**Age :**

**Household Composition: people you live with, their relation to you and ages:**

**Number and ages of children:**

**Residence:**

Surburbs		Township		Other	
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**Marital Status:**

Single	Married	Cohabiting	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
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**Work Position:**

**Qualification:**

**Employment contract :**

**Spouse's/Partner occupation**

**Who contributes towards the household income?**

**Work-Family Balance**

**1. Describe the following:**

**Your typical weekday:**

**Saturday :**

**Sundays: What are your official working hours? Do you sometimes have to work outside the prescribed working hours?**

**2. Work-related trips per anum (p/a)?**

	Number of Trips p/a	Purpose of the trip	Duration
<b>Local</b>			
<b>National</b>			
<b>International</b>			

**3. Who takes care of the child/children in your absence?**

**Who arranges for child-care?**

**Who pays for childcare**

**What are the official hours of your child-minder?**

- 4. Has having (a)child/children made any difference to your employment? As a parent do you at times experience difficulties regarding work and home commitments?**

**Gender-role Attitudes**

- 5. What are your views on the following statements? Please tick on your choice**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after home and family.					
What women really want is home and children.					
Both the husband and wife should contribute towards the household income.					
Men and women should have equal rights/responsibilities at home and at work.					
A woman and her family will all be happier if she goes out to work.					
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.					

- 6. Do you think women and men's roles are changing? On what do you base your answer? If yes, what do you think about this?**

**Gender Division of Labour within Households**

7. What are your and your partner’s roles/responsibilities/tasks within your home. How do you make decisions on who does what?

Who does the following:	Wife/ Partner	Husband/ Partner	Both	Maid	Other: Specify	Who Decides on tasks below and how?	
						Wife/partner	Husband/partner
Prepares - Breakfast - Supper –main meal							
Prepares the children for school?							
Takes/fetches children : • To school • From school • To Nursery/child-minder • From the nursery/ child-minder							
Cleans the house							
Does the - laundry - Ironing							
Gardening?							
Cleans up after supper/washes dishes?							
Bathes children in the evening?							
Helps children with their homework?							
Household repairs?							

8. Who is responsible for the following expenses? How are/were decisions on who pays for what taken? We discuss and save in one account for household furniture expenses.

Household expenditure	Husband Partner	Wife/ partner	Joint	Other	How and Who decides on payment	
					Husband/partner	Wife/partner
<b>Short-Term</b>						
Food						
Children's Clothing						
<b>Bills</b> – Water &Electricity, Telephone etc.						
Children's travelling expenses						
Your travelling expenses						
Children's allowance						
Arrangements and expenditure on childcare Nursery/child-minder						
<b>Long-Term</b>						
Children's school fees						
House mortgage or bond?						
Car/s - instalment - Service and maintenance						
Holidays						
Furniture Appliances – TVs, DVDs, Radios etc Kitchen appliances						

**9. Do you have money that you spend on yourself pcm?**

**10. Family Friendly Policies**

**11. Do you know of any organizational policies that relate to reconciling childcare and employment responsibilities in your organization?**

**If yes, what are they?**

**12. Have you made use of any such policies?**

**13. If no, why not?**

**14. How would you describe:**

**“a good mother”**

**“a good father”**

**Appendix 4. Interview Guide for a Gender Focal Officer**

**Position:** Junior/Deputy Manager

**Education Level:** MA in Development Studies includes of Transformation Management as a module

**Sex:** Female

1. What does your job entail?
2. Are you involved in policy development in your organisation?
3. What advise/input were you able make, in the policies you were involved in developing? What is your role in the policy development of gender equality and other related policies? In your capacity as a GFP, as well as at the level in which you are, are you able to influence decision-making/policy?
4. What family friendly policies does your organisation have? Are family friendly policies (FFPs) equally important for men as they are for women? Why
5. Does your Department offer any of the following:

	Men		Women	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Part-time work				
Flexible hours				
Working from home				
Time off for sick children				
Time-off for children for other reasons				
Child-care facilities?				

6. Do/es they/it apply to all employees (if any)? Yes.
7. Were you involved in the developing of these policy/ies? No. If yes, were you able to make in-puts? If yes, what were they? Were they all taken into consideration? What in-put was taken, and which was left out?
8. Do the current FFPs in your organisation meet the working mother's needs?
9. If not, what do you think should be added?

- 10. Do they meet working father's needs? If not, what do you think should be added?**
- 11. Do you think women in your organisation are now able to balance work and family responsibilities? Please explain or/and give examples.  
How about men? Are they able to balance work and family responsibilities? Explain.**
- 12. In your opinion, do you think that the current family friendly policies (could) contribute to gender equality? Yes, If yes how?**
- 13. Are transformative in terms of gender relations? If yes, how? If not, why not?**
- 14. Is there any difference between FFPs and gender equality policies?**
- 15. Do you think affirmative action as adopted and implemented in South Africa, is gender transformative/neutral in terms of gender relations?**
- 16. What other policies related to gender equality does your organisation have? Were you involved in the development of any of these policies?**
- 17. Do you think gender is taken seriously by your organisation?**

## Appendix 5. Interview Field Notes: Respondent No1: Zizi

### Biographical Data

**Gender :** Female

**Age :** 40

**Household Composition :** we are a family of four, that is myself, my husband and our two children.

**Number and ages of children:** a girl aged 13 and a boy aged 21.

**What type of school do children go to?** Public school, and local university.

**Residence:** Suburb

**Marital Status:** Married

**Work Position:** Manager

**Education Level:** Honours in Economics; currently studying MBA

**Employment Contract:** Full-time (Permanent)

**Spouse or Partner's Occupation :** a teacher

**Who Contributes to Household income:** Self and husband.

### Work Family Balance

#### Describe the following:

**Your Typical week-day:** I wake up at 4:30; take a bath; prepare breakfast for my husband and thereafter take him to the bus station; when I come back I wash the dishes and tidy up the kitchen and prepare myself for work; at 5h45 I leave for work, and I arrive at work at 7:20. Days are different. Sometimes I accompany the research service provider to the field. I monitor them during their research work and write their monthly report. Between 13h00 and 14h00 I have my lunch; I knock-off at 16h30; catch a 16h40 bus home. I usually arrive at home at 18h20; rest for a few minutes; then cook supper; have supper around 20h00, do the dishes if I am not tired; either watch television or study and around 22h00 sleep if I am studying, but at 9h00 if I am not studying.

**Saturdays:** I wake up around 9h00 or 10h00; have a bath; do the laundry and ironing; clean the house; cook; go shopping and rest in the evening. On Saturday I also some-times attend funerals or wedding celebrations.

**Sundays:** I wake up around 8h00 and prepare for church. We leave for church around 8h45 and come back round 11h00 or 12h00; cook and have lunch; finish my ironing and rest.

3. **What are your official working-hours?** 8 hours
4. **Do you sometime have to work outside the prescribed working hours?** No.
5. **What are your work-related trips per anum?**

	Number of Trips	Purpose of the trip	Duration
Local	12 pcm	Induction workshops/meetings/monthly reports/planning research forums.	4/5hrs
Provincial			
National	2 p/a	Conferences	3 days/ whole week
International	None		

6. **Who takes care of the child/children in your absence?** My husband. However, earlier this year I went to a whole week conference. While in the conference, my husband phoned to say he has to attend a two days work-related meeting. It was a problem, I had to negotiate with some friends to let her stay with them until the father came back home.  
**Is it paid or unpaid care work?** Unpaid obviously.  
**Who arranges for child-care?** Myself.  
**Who pays for childcare?** N/A  
**What are the official hours of the child-minder:** N/A
7. **Has having a child/children made any difference to your employment? If yes, in what way/s?** I am always worried about my girl because she comes home from school at 14h00 and stays alone at home until we get back. I always phone her to check if she is okay at home while I am at work
8. **As a parent do you at times experience difficulties regarding work and home commitments? Yes. How do you handle it?** since my kid remains alone for a long time before I come home, I once found her sleeping, not feeling well. When I touched her forehead, she was so hot, I immediately took her to the doctor and stayed home the following day to make sure she gets better. But then when you stay home you work lags behind, well that was beyond my control, there was no other way, I had to be with her.
9. **Did you discuss what type of employment you and your partner should have, to accommodate the children? If yes, how did you arrive at this arrangement?** The tradition is one applies for a job, once you are successful you just grab it, since jobs are scarce, even your husband will become happy that you are going to assist him financially within the household.

## Gender-role Attitudes

10. What are your views on the following statements? Please tick on your choice.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after home and family.					X
What women really want is home and children.	X				
Both the husband and wife should contribute towards the household income.			X		
Men and women should have equal rights/responsibilities at home and at work.	X				
A woman and her family will all be happier if she goes out to work.					X
Having job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.	X				

11. **Do you think women and men's roles are changing? Yes. On what do you base your answer? If yes, what do you think about this?** We are currently seeing faces of women in the cabinet/parliament; women are also being empowered at the workplace, they are given high positions, women are no longer completely dependent on their husbands. However the independence comes with sacrifice because women want to be there for their children, they want to be responsible parents but they also want to be empowered so that they can provide for their children because they feel men are not providing enough. One salary is no longer enough to provide for a family, which means women must go out and work. However, men do not contribute towards household chores. Women still do all household chores.

## Gender Division of Labour within Households

12. What are your and your partner's roles/responsibilities/tasks within your home. How do you make decisions on who does what?

No negotiation or discussion on who does what, couples automatically assume responsibility on tasks within the household.

Who does the following:	Wife/ Partner	Husband Partner	Both	Maid	Other: Specify	Who Decides on tasks below and how?	
						Wife/partner	Husband/partner
Prepares - Breakfast - Supper	X X					N/A	N/A
Prepares the children for school?					Themselves		
Takes/fetches children : To school From school To Nursery/child-minder From the nursery/child-minder					Arranged Transport		
Cleans the house	X						
Does the - laundry - Ironing	X X						
Gardening?			X				
Cleans up after supper/washes dishes?	X						
Bathes children in the evening?	N/A						
Helps children with their homework?			X				
Household repairs?		X					

13. Do you think other families organize their work the similar way? Not necessarily.

If No, why not? Some households have maids, but where there is no maid households follow the same pattern as us.

**Contribution Towards Household Income**

**14.** Who is responsible for the following expenses? How are/were decisions on who pays for what taken?

Household expenditure	Husband partner	Wife/partner	Joint	Other	How and Who decides on payment	
					Husband/partner	Wife/partner
<b>Short-Term</b>						
Food	X					
Children's Clothing			X			
<b>Bills</b> – Water &Electricity, Telephone etc.	X					
Children's travelling expenses	X					
Your travelling expenses		X				
Your partner/husband/wife's travelling exp	X					
Children's allowance			X			
Arrangements and expenditure on childcare Nursery/child-minder	N/A					
<b>Long-Term</b>						
Children's school fees			X			
House mortgage or bond?		X				
Car/s - instalment - Service and maintenance	X	X				
Holidays		X				
Furniture Appliances – TVs, DVDs, Radios etc Kitchen appliances			X			

**15. How much do you spend on yourself pcm?** Not always, most of the time I take care of others' need within the household before myself. I also derive pleasure from buying household necessities, nice towels, flower pots, nice accessories and kitchen appliances. I seldom give attend to my personal wants.

**Family Friendly Policies**

**16. Do you know of any organizational policies that relate to reconciling childcare and employment responsibilities in your organization? Yes.**

**If yes, what are they?**

- Family responsibility leave
- Employment wellness program – where we receive services like counseling etc.
- **Maternity leave:** the duration is four months
- **Paternity leave:** I do not know the duration

If no, why not?

**17. Have you made use of any such policies? Yes**

If yes, which ones have you used? I have used the family responsibility leave, when my child was sick.

If no, why not?

**18. Does your Department offer the following:**

<b>Flexible Work</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Part-time work		X
Flexible hours		X
Working from home		X
Time off for sick children	X	
Time-off for children for other reasons		X
Is there any childcare provision: a. at work b. in a form of vouchers		X

**19. Do you feel that these policies are helpful in balancing work and family responsibilities? No**

**If no, what do you think should be the alternative/added?**

I to achieve a balance as parents we need – flexible hours, enough paternity leave and childcare facilities at both fathers and mothers places of work to promote men’s involvement and participation on childcare and house-chores.

**20. Do you think such policies can contribute towards achievement of gender equality?** Yes more especially if both men were to be given maternity and paternity, family responsibility leaves and child-care facilities.

**21. What other policies are put in place in your place of work to promote gender equality?** What I know is that the Department is currently using the national policy framework, the Employment Equity Act to balance men and women at management level, for instance the advertisement for a post sometimes indicates that the post is an affirmative action post.

**22. Do you think it is important to achieve gender equality at work and at home?**

At work yes, but at home although I still believe men should be heads of households, but there should be joint decision-making and mutual respect between men and women.

**23. How would you define a “good mother” and a “good father”?**

A good mother is one who is able to satisfy needs of her family at the same time balance her employment and house work, **do house-chores**, care for the sick members of the family, provide food, manage the multi-tasks at home, care for infants – attend to them at night and still wake up and go to work. Sometimes these conflict with each other.

A good father comes in when there is a need. Helps out in domestic work; helps provide a good environment for members of the family; when a wife is doing something she should do something else

### **Appendix 6. Observations Field Notes of Household 3**

**Household Composition:** Husband, wife, wife's sister, husband's sister, 4 children, a gardener, and a man from a neighbouring African state who temporarily assist in agricultural techniques.

**Ages of the children:** 14, 8, 8, 6: 1 girl – the eldest of the four followed by three boys

**Wife's/Partner's Employer:** Economic Development, Environment & Tourism

**Wife/Partner's Position:** Senior manager - Legal Services

**Husband's Employer:** Self-employed

**Husband/Partner's occupation:** Consultant – Management Development of Radio Stations

#### **Wednesday 27/08/08**

The wife's sister wakes up at 5h00 and prepares lunch-boxes for all the kids; she then prepare breakfast and thereafter wakes them up and assists them in preparing themselves for school; they thereafter have their breakfast and live for school around 5h50; she then goes back to bed; but this time wakes up around 6h30 and takes a bath.

At 7h00 the wife wakes up and takes a bath and prepares for work; has breakfast and lives with her sister to work.

On their way out they wake up husband sister; she wakes up and prepared breakfast for her brother and wife's father; and cleaned the nine-roomed house; and prepared lunch; and served lunch two husband and wife's father at 13h30; she started preparing supper up to 14h30; the children arrive at this time; she assists them with their schoolwork; thereafter they have a bath; husband's sister went to work in her brother's office up to 17h00; she came back to the house to finish up preparing the supper and dished out at 18h30. The oldest child – daughter – takes a bath and does her school work.

The husband leaves for a work-related meeting at 14h00. Wife's sister comes back around 17h00; the wife comes back at 19h00; the husband comes back around 6h20;

they are served supper; and after that watch the news on television. The oldest boy (8yrs) washes the dishes; the children go to sleep at 8h00husband and her sister goes back to the office until 23h30; by this time they are all sleep.

**Thursday: 28/08**

Wife's sister wakes up at 5h00 and prepares the lunch box for the four children; she also prepares breakfast them, prepares the children for school; and they go to school around 5h50.

She then goes back to bed.

The gardener wake up at 6h00, feed the animals; puts on the irrigation system to water the garden; cleans the yard; washes the cars; takes the break at 13h00; takes a bath later and rests.

Husband's sister wakes up at 8h00; takes a bath; comes into the main house; gave the wife's father some breakfast as well as his medication; and thereafter starts cleaning the nine roomed house, and washes the dishes; at 12h00 she goes to her brother's office, to do some work – type documents, up to around 22h30.

Wife's sister woke up at 8h00 had breakfast did some laundry up to 12h00; the children come back from school; she assists them with their school-work and then prepares food for the wife's father; thereafter she fetches the clothes from the washing line and packs it at 16h00 she starts peeling and cooks up to 18h00; she instruct the children to take a bath; the children clean and polish their shoes; they thereafter watch television; she dishes out around 19h00; and the third born washes the dishes.

All the children go to bed at 20h00. Adults remain watching the television up to 22h00.

**Friday: 29/08/08**

The children wake up at 5h00, wife's sister prepares them for school; she prepares their lunch-boxes and they go to school at 5h50. Wife's sister goes back to bed.

Husband wakes up at 6h00 and prepares himself to go to his clients. The husband runs his business from the house, he has an office in the house; he is a consultant in management developing of radio stations. He is currently providing services to Sekhukhune which  $\pm$  120km within the province.

This family lives in a farm; they do subsistence farming. The gardener wakes up has a bath around 5h48; he comes out around 6h10; he gets some cabbage leaves from the garden and feeds the hares, chickens and ducks; he then weeds and puts the irrigation system on; and cleans the yard.

Wife's sister wakes up at 7h50 and has a bath and irons the clothes up to 12h10;

Husband's sister came into the house at 8h00; started cleaning the house at 9h00 and finished at 11h00 and had a bath at 13h00; her brother arrives and she prepares him some lunch; and goes to the office and do some work up to 7h50.

The wife's starts cooking at 16h00 for supper at 7h00 dishes out; the daughter washes the dishes. We thereafter watch movies until 10h30. Everybody goes to sleep.

### **Saturday: 30/08/08**

Wife and husband wake up; the wife prepares herself to go to a conference on women in business; she leaves at 9h00. At 9h30 the husband takes a bath.

The gardener wakes up and goes home and is off for a week, month-end he usually goes home for a week. However this particular weekend he goes home for a week to attend to his domestic problems. The man who assists in agricultural techniques temporarily substitutes and assists in feeding the animals.

The daughter wakes up and washes her clothes and hangs them outside.

The children wake up to watch television. Both wife and husband's sisters wake up around 9h00. Wife's sister prepares breakfast and dishes out to the children; the grandfather comes in having had a bath already and wife's sister serves him breakfast.

At 11h40 the husband and the wife's elder sister and daughter go to town to do some groceries.

The husband's sister prepares lunch for the children and their grandfather. At 13h30 she serves lunch; and thereafter washes the dishes.

The husband and the wife's sister as well as the daughter come back around 15h30; they first take the groceries into the house; then prepare themselves lunch and have lunch around 16h00; and then relax for a little while.

Around 17h00 the daughter and wife's sister start preparing supper and at 17h55 supper is served.

The wife arrives around 19h25.

### **Sunday 31/08/08**

The gardener wakes up at 6h00; feeds the animals and puts on the irrigation system to water vegetables; waters the flowers

Daughter wakes up at 8h10 and prepares herself to go to church; she wakes up the father to take her to church leaves around 8h45;

The three boys wake up and also prepare themselves for church with their mother's help; the wife's sister and the husband's sister wake up; and also prepare to go to church; at 10h00 everybody goes to church except the wife and the husband.

Around 11h00 the husband and wife go to town to buy some meat for supper and fetch the daughter from the church in town.

Wife's sister and husband's sister and the three boys come back from the church around 13h20; they prepare quick lunch for themselves and the children. Soon thereafter the husband, wife and daughter come back from town; the daughter prepares something to eat for herself.

Having had some lunch the children play outside; the daughter does her school-work and the adults (the exception of the husband) watch television the whole afternoon; the husband disappears to his office.

Around 17h15 the wife's sister and the daughter start preparing for supper and it is served at 7h30. After supper the children go to sleep; husband's sister washes up; and most of the adults continue to watch television; husband's sister joins in after washing the dishes until 23h30.

### **Monday 01/09/09**

The sister's wife wakes up and prepares lunch boxes for the children; they have their supper and live for school at 5h50. Wife's sister then goes back to sleep.

The gardener wakes up at 6h00 and has a bath; she feeds the animals; puts on the irrigation system; at 11h30 had breakfast; waters the flowers and vegetables; at

At 7h10 the wife wakes up and takes a bath, her sister assists her with her hair while the husband takes a bath. At 9h00 they have breakfast; at 10h00 they live together to town.

The sister's wife starts by washing up; then clean the house

**Appendix 7. List of Participants from the Government Department**

<b>List of Participants from the Government Department</b>									
<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Race Afric</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>No of Child</b>	<b>Child Ages</b>	<b>Paid/unpaid childcare</b>	<b>Education Level</b>	
<b>Senior Managers</b>									
1	Tim	A	M	48	M	4	15, 12, 10 ,5	Paid-f/t	Msc Economics
2	Nandi	A	F	45	M	3	19,13,3	Paid f/t	Msc Env Science
3	Fulu	A	F	41	S	2	22 & 3	Unpaid	B Tech Nature Conservation
4	Benji	A	M	44	M	4	24, 21, 19,19	Paid-f/t	B Tech Nature Conservation
5	Dan	A	M	43	M	3	16, 13, 8	Paid-F/t	Geography Hons
6	Faith	A	F	50	D	3	29, 26,15	Paid-p/t	P/ G Diploma Mining & Enginr
<b>Middle Managers</b>									
7	Zizi	A	F	40	M	2	21 &13	Unpaid	Economics Hons
8	Chris	A	M	40	M	2	4, 20 mths	Paid-P/t	BA Hons
9	Len	A	M	42	M	3	21,13,10	Unpaid	BA Education
10	Portia	A	F	28	M	4	6, 5, 3,1	Paid-F/t	BCom Hons
11	Peter	W	M	40	M	1	5	Unpaid	Msc Zoology
12	Conie	A	F	40	M	1	6	Unpaid	Phd Molec Biology
13	Don	W	M	40	M	2	7 & 9	Paid P/t	Law Degree
14	Tiki	A	F	28	S	1	18 mnths	Unpaid	BA Hons Info & Knowledge Mgt
15	Gloria	A	F	33	S	2	17, & 6	Paid F/t	BCom Law
16	Robby	A	M	42	M	2	13 & 7	Paid P/t	Bcom
17	Thami	A	M	49	M	3	23, 16, 8	Unpaid	B Tech Org Mgt
<b>Junior Managers</b>									
18	Suzy	A	F	35	M	2	17 & 15	Paid F/t(sister)	MA Degree
19	Rose	A	F	37	S	2	11 &1	Paid p/t	BA Degree
20	Sophie	A	F	23	S	1	1	Unpaid	Dipl Comp Studs
<b>Gender Focal Points</b>									
21	GFP (Manager)				A	M	Diploma in Local Governance		
22	EE Officer (Junior Manager)				A	F	Degree Development Studies		
<b>Human Resource Personnel</b>									
23	Leave Officer				A	F	Diploma in Business Mgt		
24	HR Practitioner				A	M	Diploma in HRM		

A=African, W=White; M=Male; F=Female; M= Married, S= Single, D=Divorced

**Appendix 8. List of Participants from the Government Parastatal**

<b>List of Participants from the Government Parastatal</b>								
<b>Pseudonyms</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>No of Child</b>	<b>Ages of Children</b>	<b>Paid/unpaid help</b>	<b>Education Level</b>	
<b>Senior Managers</b>								
1	Tom	M	54	M	3	33, 14, 14	Paid- P/T	Bsc & B education
<b>Managers</b>								
2	June	F	40	M	4	18, 17, 14, 4	Paid-F/T	Msc in Women Studies
3	Teddy	M	32	M	2	2, 2 months	Paid P/T	Dipl Comp Systms & Engr
4	Ray	M	35	C	2	2, 3 wks	Paid P/T	Dipl in Teaching
5	Sharon	F	39	M	2	18, 16, 10	unpaid	P/G Diploma
6	Tumi	M	40	M	1	5	Unpaid	Degree Lib Science
7	Ken	M	45	M	4	23,18,14,1	Paid-F/T	Teaching Diploma
8	Phil	M	34	S	1	5	Unpaid	N. Dipl Public Rel
9	Jane	F	31	M	3	14, 10, 10(Twins)	Unpaid	Degr in Horticulture
<b>Junior Managers</b>								
10	Mavis	F	29	S	2	10 & 6	Paid-F/T	Secretarial Dipl
11	Erin	F	34	M	2	15& 6	Paid-F/T	BA Degree
12	Aggie	F	40	M	3	8,4 &1	Paid- F/T	BA Degree
13	Muntu	F	35	M	2	13 &6	Paid-F/T	BA Social Sciences
14	Zuki	F	32	M	1	4	Unpaid	Diploma in Mgt
15	Moss	M	30	M	2	5 &1	Paid-P/T	N Dipl HRM
16	Lulu	F	50	W	5	28, 25, 21, 19 & 15	Unpaid	N Dipl in Public Finance
17	Kaylie	F	29	M	2	5 & 1	Paid-F/T	MA in Dev Studies
<b>Human Resource Personnel</b>								
18	Personnel Practitioner			F	National Diploma in Business Management			
<b>Gender Focal Officer</b>								
19	Gender Focal Point			F	B-tech in Human Resource Development			

\* All participants are Africans; C=cohabit, W=Widowed; P/T=Part Time; F/T = Full-Time

### Appendix 9. Fieldwork Time Schedule

<b>Week1: 24/7/08</b>	<b>Field-work Activities</b>	<b>Week2: 4-10/8/08</b>	<b>Field-work Activities</b>
24/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CGE collection of docs</li> <li>• Meeting snr manager (Dept) arrangement on interviews</li> </ul>	Sun:3/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 6h00-21h30</li> </ul>
Sat: 26/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 7h00-10h00</li> <li>• Shopping Obs: 10h30-13h50</li> <li>• Obs: 15h30-21h00</li> </ul>	Mon: 4/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h00-9h30</li> <li>• Interviews with GFP officers (Dept Dir2)10h00-13h00</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 16h00-22h00</li> </ul>
Sun: 27/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 6h00-8h00</li> <li>• Church (as part of Observation): 9h00-12h30</li> <li>• Obs:13h00-9h00</li> </ul>	Tue 5/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h30- 9h30</li> <li>• Interviews : (Dept.Dir3; Main Office) 10h00-14h00</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing 15h30-23h30</li> </ul>
Mon 28/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h30 - 11h00</li> <li>• collection of docs: OSW: 11h30-12h45</li> <li>• Obs 15h20-22h00</li> </ul>	Wed 6/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h00-11h30</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept Dir3): 11h50-16h40</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 17h00-00h05</li> </ul>
Tues 29/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h30-10h00</li> <li>• Interviews 10h30-15h25</li> <li>• Intro to contact1: 15h30</li> <li>• Meeting with snr manager of GFPs</li> <li>• Obs 1 (HH1): 16h30-22h10</li> </ul>	Thu: 7/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations (HH1): 5h00-9h30</li> <li>• Meeting with HR Snr. Manager HR-personnel &amp; Collection of docs (Dept. Dir3): 10h00-11h00</li> <li>• Obs and writing: 12h30-23h15</li> </ul>
Wed 30/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5:30h00 - 11h15</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept Dir1):11h30 – 16h15</li> <li>• Obs:17h30-22h00</li> </ul>	Frid:8/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation (HH1) 5h00-11h00</li> <li>• Interviews: Interviews HR-personnel: 10h30 -15h50</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 13h45-23h00</li> </ul>
Thu 31/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1) :5h00- 10h00</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept Dir1):11h00-13h00</li> <li>• Observations (HH1): 14h00-22h00</li> </ul>	Sat 9/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation (HH1): 7h00-22h00</li> <li>• Shopping (Obs): 15h00-16h30</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 17h40-22h30</li> </ul>
Fri: 1/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs 5h00-22h00</li> <li>• Meeting with GFPs (dept): 10h00</li> </ul>	Sun 9/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1) 6h00-16h00</li> </ul>
Sat:2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1):7h00-22h30</li> <li>• Interview (my host): 15-17h00</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Obs- Observations; Dept.Dir- Departmental Directorate;			

<b>Week3: 11-17/8/08</b>	<b>Field-work Activities</b>	<b>Week 4: Cont.: 18- 24/8/08</b>	<b>Field-work Activities</b>
Mon: 11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h00-10h00</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept):</li> <li>• Observation and writing note: 16h30;23h40</li> </ul>	Tues:19/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs HH1: 5h30-11h00</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept.Dir4) 11h20-15h30</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 4h40-23h00</li> </ul>
Tues:12/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1) 5h00-9h30</li> <li>• Interviews (Dept Dir 3, 10h13h00 &amp; 14h00-16h55</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing:14h00-22h00</li> </ul>	Wed:20/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs HH1: 5h00-9h00</li> <li>• Interviews(Dept.Dir4) 10h00-15h00</li> <li>• Obs &amp; writing: 16h00-23h30</li> </ul>
Wed: 13/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation and writing (HH1): 5h00;22h00</li> </ul>	Thu: 21/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of obs in HH2:</li> <li>• Arrival at HH2: 17h00</li> </ul>
Thur: 14/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations(HH1): 5h00-9h30</li> <li>• Introduction to the Risk Manager : 10h30-11h20</li> <li>• Introduction to an informal contact (Dept.Dir4) &amp; 12h30</li> <li>• Observation 17h00-22h00</li> </ul>	Fri: 22/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation (HH2): 5h30-10h00</li> <li>• Interviews(Dept.Dir4): 11h00-14h00</li> <li>• Observations and writing: 15h00-23h30</li> </ul>
Frid:15/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation (HH1): 5h00-17h00</li> <li>• Meeting with HH2 mother: 17h30-19h50</li> <li>• Observations: and writing 20h30-23h00</li> </ul>	Sat: 23/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations (HH2) 7h00-12h00</li> <li>• Shopping: 12h30-14h45</li> <li>• Observations (HH2): 15h15-23h00</li> </ul>
Sat:16-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation( HH1)</li> </ul>	Sun:24/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations (HH2)6h30</li> <li>• IChurch:9h30- 11h00</li> <li>• Observations (HH2): 11h45-23h00</li> </ul>
Sun:17/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations (HH1):</li> </ul>	<b>Week5:</b>	<b>25-31/8</b>
<b>Week4: 18-24/8/08</b>		Mon: 25/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH2)5h30-9h30</li> <li>• Meeting with Parastatal's GFP: 10h30-12h00</li> <li>• Obs (HH2) 14h00-21h00</li> </ul>
Mon: 18/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH1): 5h30-9h30</li> <li>• Meeting with Snr Manager (Dept Dir4)10h00-12h30</li> <li>• Intro to other snr managers</li> <li>• Obs (HH1) 14h00</li> </ul>	Tues: 26/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH2) 5h30 -9h30</li> <li>• Interviews (cancelled)</li> <li>• Obs (HH2)11h00-22h00</li> </ul>

Wed: 27/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3) 5h00-22h00</li> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) (Cancelled)<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<b>Week 7: 8-14/9</b>	
Thur:28/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3) 5h00-10h30</li> <li>• Interviews (cancelled)</li> <li>• Obs: 14h00-21h00</li> </ul>	Mon: 8/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) 8h50-16h05</li> </ul>
Fri: 29/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3)500h30-9h30</li> <li>• Interviews (cancelled)</li> <li>• Obs (HH3)13h30-21h00</li> </ul>	Tues:9/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) 9h30-15h35</li> </ul>
Sat: 30/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3) 8h00-21h00</li> <li>• Writing up to 23h30</li> </ul>	Wed:10/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) 9h15-16h20</li> </ul>
Sun:31/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3): 7h00-21h00</li> <li>• Church: 9h00-12h00</li> </ul>	Thu:11/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) (Cancelled)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6 1-7/9</b>		Sat: 13/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews Household interviews 15h00-17h00</li> </ul>
Mon:1/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations (HH3): 5h00-8h30</li> <li>• Interviews (Para): 9h00-15h30</li> <li>• Obs (HH3): 16h30-22h00</li> </ul>	<b>Week 9: 15-17/9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Tues:2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obs (HH3): 5h00h11h00</li> <li>• Interviews (Para)12h00-16h00</li> <li>• Obs (HH3)17h00h22h00</li> </ul>	Mon 15/9	Household Interviews: 18h00-20h00
Wed: 3/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations: 5h00-9h30</li> <li>• Interviews (Para): 10h30-16h20</li> <li>• Obserations: 16h00-22h30</li> </ul>	Wed: 17/9	Household interviews: 18h00-20h40
Thur: 4/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal) 9h15-16h10</li> </ul>	Fri/19	Departure
Frid: 5/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Parastatal): 9h00-15h50</li> </ul>		

<sup>4</sup> Interview appointments during first three days were postponed because of their unavailability during the days set for the interviews