Attitudes to motherhood and working mothers in South Africa: Insights from quantitative attitudinal data

By

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Abstract

Motherhood ideologies are rooted in cultural and historical contexts, and encapsulate attitudes towards the roles and expectations of mothers. In South Africa, with many languages and deep racial and socio-economic divisions, it is likely that these attitudes are informed by a number of motherhood ideologies. This study explores the extent to which 'intensive' mothering ideology – intrinsic to the nuclear family ideal and predominant in Western literature – informs attitudes to mothering practice in South Africa. Within intensive mothering ideology the 'good' mother is positioned as exclusively responsible for the emotional and physical nurture of her child; and the centrality of the child supersedes her needs. This creates an inherent conflict for mothers who interpret their mothering role through this schema and undertake paid work, thus seemingly compromising on fulfilling their caring duty. However, research suggests that the ambivalence experienced by many Western women regarding engaging in paid work, may not have the same salience in societies whose cultural conception of motherhood embraces collective mothering, where responsibility for childcare is shared among family and community members. This is a hallmark often of extended, as opposed to nuclear, families. Thus it might be expected, in South Africa, that where African society has traditionally been characterised by extended family formation, intensive mothering ideology would not hold the same sway among Africans as qualitative South African research suggests it does for the White, middle-class. Furthermore, it might be expected that this would be balanced, among Africans, by extant support for collective mothering. In this analysis of quantitative attitudinal data, agreement with the statements 'A child under five years suffers if his/her mother works' and, 'All in all, family life suffers when the woman works', are used as indicators of intensive mothering ideology. The choice of a grant, paid to a friend or relative to care for the preschool child of a working single mother, as the best care option, is used as an indicator of support for collective mothering ideology. The findings of this study suggest that in South Africa, there is a higher prevalence of intensive mothering ideology among White women, and to a lesser extent men, than among Africans. The low level of support for a grant, paid to family members or friends for the care of a working single-mother's pre-school child, suggests that a disjuncture might exist between the preference among Africans for collective mothering, and its assumed prevalence.

Contents

Declaration — Plagiarism i

Acknowledgements ii

Abstract iii

List of Tables viii

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

1.1 Detailing the South African context 2

1.2 Conceptualising motherhood 5

1.3 Rationale for this study 6

1.4 Outline of the dissertation 6

Chapter 2: Literature Review 7

2.1 Introduction 7

2.2 A synopsis of motherhood research: where from and where to? 9

2.3 The ideology of intensive mothering 10

2.3.1 How ideology works 10

2.3.2 The dominance of intensive mothering ideology in motherhood research 12

2.3.3 Defining intensive mothering ideology within the nuclear family 13

2.3.4 Acknowledging the need to shift the focus 14

2.4 Defining motherhood 16

2.4.1 Variability of mothering 18

2.5 The basis for alternative mothering ideologies 19
2.5.1 A case study from the US 19
2.5.2 A focus on mothering ideology in Africa 21
2.5.3 Motherhood as cultural construct 22
2.5.4 Collective mothering ideology 23
2.5.5 Mobilising extended family networks to facilitate economic participation 25
2.5.6 Collective mothering: the preferred choice? 26
2.6 Findings from South African qualitative research 28
2.6.1 Mothering narratives of middle-class South African mothers 28
2.6.2 Intensive mothering ideology among working-class South African mothers 29
2.6.3 Contesting mothering ideologies: a South African case study 29
2.7 Recognising the need for a broad-based, quantitative study 35
2.8 Conclusion 36
Chapter 3: Methodology and Data 39
3.1 Introduction 39
3.1.1 Describing the attitudinal data 39
3.1.2 Representivity of the SASAS data 40
3.2 Research questions 41
3.3 Methodological challenges 42
3.3.1 Qualitative and quantitative approaches 42

3.3.2 Challenges posed by survey instruments 44
3.4 Conclusion 47
Chapter 4: Descriptive Statistics 49
4.1 Introduction 49
4.2 Variables used 50
4.3 Question set 52
4.4 Support for women working 53
4.5 Testing support for intensive mothering ideology 56
4.6 Differences between Africans and Whites 57
4.7 Differences among Africans 58
4.7.1 Comparing attitudes of rural and urban Africans 59
4.7.2 Differences among Africans, by gender 61
4.7.3 Differences among poor and non-poor Africans, by gender 63
4.7.4 Differences amongst African women by parental status 65
4.8 Controlling for poverty effects: attitudes of non-poor women, by race 68
4.9 Support for collective mothering 70
4.10 Conclusion 73
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion 76
5.1 How prevalent is intensive mothering ideology? 76
5.2 Alternative ideologies: exploring the support for collective mothering 80

5.3 Conclusion 81

Bibliography 84

Appendix 1 92

List of Tables

Table 1. Comparison between SASAS 2007 (October) and LFS 17, September 2007 41

Table 2. Attitudes to impact of women's work on children and family 55

Table 3. Attitudes to motherhood, work and family 58

Table 4. Attitudes to motherhood and family among Africans, by location 60

Table 5. Attitudes to motherhood and family among Africans, by gender 62

Table 6. Attitudes to motherhood and family, Africans, by gender: poor and non-poor........ 65

Table 7. Attitudes by parental status amongst African women to motherhood, family and working 67

Table 8. Attitudes by race of non-poor women to motherhood, family and working 70

Table 9. Support for grant paid to friend/relative to provide childcare 73

Chapter 1: Introduction

This study explores the mothering ideologies that inform the way South Africans conceptualise mothering. In particular, I investigate the prevalence of ‘intensive’ mothering ideology, and support for ‘collective’ mothering. The use of the term ‘intensive’ mothering was popularized by Hays (1996) and has subsequently been widely adopted in the study of mothering to mean the deliberate commitment and prioritization, by the biological mother, of addressing the child’s perceived emotional and material needs, ahead of her own. My use of the term ‘collective’ mothering is informed in this study by the standard English usage definition, “done by, or characteristic of individuals acting in cooperation” (Collins 2000).

The study involves the descriptive analysis of quantitative attitudinal data collected by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in the 2007 South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS). I use these data to answer three questions:

- First, do South African adults perceive mothers working as impacting negatively on families?
- Second, what are South African adults’ perceptions of the effect of a mother working, on a child under five years old?
- Third, do South African adults indicate preference for a grant to cover the cost of care provided by crèches/nurseries, or friends and relatives, for the pre-school children of working single mothers?

Literature on intensive mothering ideology predominates in Western motherhood literature, and research indicates that intensive mothering is prevalent among mainly White, middle-class Western mothers (Hallstein 2006, 106). Within intensive mothering ideology the (biological) mother is positioned as exclusively responsible for the emotional and physical nurture of her child; and the centrality of the child supersedes the mother’s needs. This creates an inherent conflict for mothers who interpret their mothering role through this schema and undertake paid work outside of the home. Research suggests, however, that this ambivalence may not have the same salience in societies whose cultural conception of motherhood embraces collective mothering, where responsibility for childcare is shared among extended family and community members (Magwaza 2003; Oyewumi 2003;

Sudarkasa 2004). This is very much a characteristic of extended, as opposed to nuclear, families. Thus it might be expected that, in South Africa where African society has traditionally been characterised by extended family formation, intensive mothering ideology would not hold the same sway as it does generally in the Western world.

Positive responses to the statements, ‘a child under five years suffers if his/her mother works’ and, ‘all in all, the family suffers when the woman works’, would be consistent with intensive mothering ideology, whereas support for a grant paid to friends and relatives to provide care for a working single-mother’s preschool child may suggest support for collective mothering. In the context of the survey and the discussion in this study, ‘work’ is used to describe paid work undertaken by women outside of the home.

1.1 Detailing the South African context

Insights into social phenomena and practices, such as mothering which is the subject of this study, require a thorough knowledge of their social contexts, and how history has moulded those contexts. South Africa’s social phenomena are no exception, and they have an exceptional history. South Africa’s ‘legacy of apartheid’ needs little introduction. Apartheid systems that were institutionalized for close on a half century have – two decades after apartheid in its official capacity ended – proven entrenched, and difficult to displace. They are manifest in people’s socio-economic circumstances, and the ways they live their lives.

South African society is characterized by inequality, poverty and high unemployment. Social investments in the population by the apartheid Nationalist Government (1948-1990) were determined according to race classification. While this prejudicial system was discontinued in 1990, the residual effect, along racial lines, is still apparent in all socio-economic spheres in South Africa and its population ‘groups’. Gaining insight into these contexts requires continued consideration of South Africans by race. The use of race group labelling in this study does not indicate support for labelling practices generally, but has been used to assist in identifying ongoing effects of racialism. ‘African’, in this study, refers to people who were classified variously as ‘Native’, ‘Bantu’, ‘Black’, ‘African’ and ‘Non-White’, by the apartheid-era government, and who are regarded as descendants of the original inhabitants of South Africa. ‘White’, in this study, refers to people who are descendants of Europeans, and who were racially classified as ‘Whites’ under apartheid. ‘Coloured’ refers to people born of,

or descended from, racially mixed parents. 'Indian' refers to descendents of immigrants from Indian or Middle-Eastern countries.

South Africa's unequal wealth distribution profiles it as the most unequal country in the world. The country's racial heritage is inscribed in profound differences in living standards between the race groups. Of all urban African households in 2006[1], 22% had a middle-class standard of living (SOL), compared with 85% of White households (Lehohla 2009, 1). At this time, when approximately 43% of African households were rural, there were almost no middle-class African households in rural areas. Rural poverty has its roots in coercive labour practices that motivated the institution of 'hut tax' in 1913, when South Africa was a British colony. This tax was levied on rural (African) households at a time when rural South African societies had not yet adopted a cash economy. The intention was to force men into urban areas to provide the labour that was needed for South Africa's early industrialisation (Makiwane *et al* 2012). It was directed, in particular, at ensuring an ongoing supply of manual labour for the mining industry, following the discovery of gold and diamonds in the late 1800s. This marked the beginning of a circular migratory system in South Africa, which prevails today (Posel and Casale 2006), and has had disruptive and destructive impacts on the traditional family, especially the extended family, and the institution of marriage (Kalule-Sabiti *et al* 2007, 89; Hosegood, McGrath and Moultrie 2009).

With the absence of working-age African men in rural areas (Wright *et al* 2013), women's roles in their families were redefined and expanded to enable the continued functioning of households. Income for rural households was received as remittances, but these were seldom adequate for household needs (Richter *et al* 2012). Migrant men often created new families in the urban areas where they lived and worked (Hosegood, McGrath and Moultrie 2009), which further dissipated the buying power of their already meagre income. In a context of extreme poverty, working-age women began migrating to urban areas in search of employment that would supplement the household income. Constraints on available accommodation for women often compelled them to leave their children in the care of other women in their rural households (Wright *et al* 2013). Over time, children and elderly people were overrepresented in rural areas (Makiwane *et al* 2012).

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[1] The statistics for 2006 have been provided as this study analyses data that was gathered in 2007.

Increasing participation of African women in paid work, accompanied by increased migration of working-age women from rural to urban areas in search of employment gained impetus during the 1980s when restrictions on the movement of Africans into cities were disbanded. This coincided with declining marriage (Hunter 2010, Posel and Rudwick 2013) and fertility rates (Camlin, Garenne and Moultrie 2004), and increasing male unemployment (Madhavan *et al* 2012; Wright *et al* 2013). Research into marriage barriers amongst Africans indicates that, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, in the current climate of high unemployment and poverty, payments of *ilobola* have become more difficult to afford (Posel and Rudwick 2014). '*Ilobola'* refers to the bride wealth paid by a prospective groom, possibly with the assistance of his family, to the family of the woman he wishes to marry. Low support for cohabitation generally, and more particularly if there is no intention to marry formally (Posel and Rudwick 2013), means that one of the consequences of the failure to enter into a marriage is that adults are remaining single for many more years than was the case previously. Research has found that while marriage unions continue to have value in African society (Posel and Rudwick 2013), children, too, are highly valued (Preston-Whyte and Zondi 1989). With diminishing marriage prospects, and a trend of delayed marriage (Hosegood, McGrath and Moultrie 2009) women have continued to enter motherhood outside of marriage. Motherhood and marriage are events that increasingly occur along separate life trajectories (Preston-Whyte and Zondi 1989), and single parenthood is the norm for many African women (Hosegood *et al* 2009), including those who prefer to stay single, rather than marry (Preston-Whyte and Zondi 1989).

The poverty that was the early catalyst for African women's migration has persisted, not only along racially unequal lines, but by gender also (Rogan 2011). African women and children in South Africa experience the highest rates of poverty among all South Africans (Posel and Rogan 2009). Many African women find employment as domestic workers, an occupation that has been devalued and racialised as it has been gendered (Bak 2008). Such working conditions for women who work in isolation, and are not guaranteed a minimum wage, reproduce vulnerability and poverty in women (Wright *et al* 2013), and their children (Ntshongwana 2010). Furthermore, where women raise their children as single parents, financial inputs from the fathers of their children are often absent, so that women bear a disproportionate financial and caring burden for the support of children (Rogan 2011). There is a far higher likelihood that these children will suffer poverty than children whose fathers are present in their households (Posel and Casale 2006; Posel and Rogan 2009; Rogan 2011).

While the prevalence of poverty among African women is particularly high, in White South African society it is minimal (Lehohla 2009). Having access to low-paid domestic labour has ensured middle-class families a privileged lifestyle (Bak 2008), with more leisure time than would otherwise have been possible. Many White South African women, being free of the pressure to work for survival, have had the option of pursuing activities for themselves and their children that are more focused on self-actualisation, including careers for women. However, more recently, in addition to pursuing careers for self-fulfilment, the rising cost of living has put pressure on White South African women to engage in paid employment in order to maintain a middle-class lifestyle. White women's ready access to affordable (African) domestic labour has played its role in both enabling their participation in formal employment, as well as perpetuating African women's poverty. Vast contextual differences clearly colour the mothering experiences of middle-class women and women in poverty. In South Africa these present largely as racial differences. However, motherhood and the way it is conceptualized also has much to do with cultural context, and the role of language in transmitting cultural practices and ideas.

1.2 Conceptualising motherhood

Ideas on how to mother and, more than that, what constitutes a good mother, are ideas that all mothers have been exposed to and influenced by (Kruger 2006). Thoughts on mothering activities and standards are not, however, the sole preserve of mothers. Almost everyone, if pressed for an opinion, would have one, because everyone has been mothered, and everyone has seen mothering in action. Yet, even though there might be noteworthy differences in the way mothering is done, opinion seldom moves beyond the set of standards that form the mothering benchmark within a particular society's worldview. It is rare that this worldview itself is subjected to scrutiny by the average person whose life is guided by it. Hare-Mustin suggests that knowledge is socially constructed and may be thought of as "multiple, fragmentary, context-dependant and local" (1994, 20). This accounts for the seeming 'rightness' of worldviews, which although diverse across time and place, seem self-evident to their participants and co-creators. This study emphasises the links between ways of conceiving motherhood and diverse social contexts in South Africa.

1.3 Rationale for this study

South African research into mothering is relatively under-subscribed, by comparison with that undertaken in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). There is not an abundance of studies aimed at understanding mothering in this country, and of the studies that have been done, the focus has often tended to explore what are considered socially problematic aspects of mothering (Kruger 2006), for example the prevalence of teenage mothers, or single mothers. This preoccupation with pathologising 'aberrant' forms of motherhood obscures the rich context in which 'ordinary' mothering, if there is such a thing, occurs. One of the aims of this research is to contribute to the knowledge on mothering in South Africa, in two ways. The first is to try and identify the dominant mothering ideologies which inform South African perspectives on appropriate mothering practices. The second is to complement (using quantitative methodology) the findings of qualitative South African mothering research by testing whether or not intensive mothering is prevalent in a larger, more representative, sample of South African adults than qualitative research methodology normally allows for.

1.4 Outline of the dissertation

An explanation of the structure of the remainder of the dissertation follows. In Chapter Two, I present a review of literature that explores how mothering is conceptualised, including perspectives from the two worldviews mentioned, and an in-depth focus on a recent mothering case study. The methodology for this study is covered in Chapter Three, and the descriptive statistics presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five includes a discussion of the relationships between social contexts in South Africa and mothering ideology, limitations of this study, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The ideology of the nuclear family, with its attendant 'intensive mothering' ideology, has been extensively documented in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). This has created the impression over the last century of a dominant family form. The nuclear family has been widely used as a yardstick for evaluating families and their functioning (Bozalek, 2006), and informing social policy designed to cater to their needs. However, dominant ideologies implying universal homogeneity are clearly not apposite for all peoples everywhere, which suggests that coexisting ideologies are frequently either unrecognised or unacknowledged. Although Johnston and Swanson (2003,21) recognise that "at the turn of the twenty first century, a number of motherhood ideologies compete for ascendancy", these are most often discussed in the relational space they occupy alongside intensive mothering ideology, which is thus the most frequently encountered ideology in motherhood texts.

The extent to which intensive mothering ideology prevails in South Africa is unclear. This study seeks to assess its prevalence in South African attitudes and record evidence of attitudes that are not congruent with intensive mothering ideology, which would suggest coexisting ideologies. It focuses chiefly on attitudes to what is considered appropriate mothering practice; in particular, whether or not women – more especially mothers – should engage in paid work outside of the home. The perception of how this negatively impacts the family constitutes the central, albeit highly contested, issue of intensive mothering ideology.

In this chapter I begin by summarising Arendell's (2000) findings regarding the nature of past research into motherhood, and opportunities for relevant future research that provide the direction for this study. I follow this with a brief explanation of the political nature of ideology and hegemony, with reference chiefly to Hall (1982) and Gramsci (in Bennett *et al* 1981). The intention of this overview is to provide some insight into how ideologies are sustained, which is relevant for understanding the widely-reported dominance of intensive mothering ideology. I then provide a definition, drawing on Hays (1996), and historical

context for intensive mothering ideology. This is followed by an acknowledgement of the call to 'shift the centre', namely, create a research focus on the voicing of alternative motherhood ideologies through a focus on underlying phenomena, such as historical and cultural contexts. As an understanding of variation in mothering ideologies requires an understanding of how motherhood itself is conceptualised, I explore Walker's (1995) definition of the multi-dimensional nature of motherhood, drawing attention to the variability, over time and place, and by social group, of the conception of motherhood. I then detail the findings of Segura's (1994) research into mothering ideologies among Spanish speaking women in the US. Segura links the time spent in the US by women of Mexican heritage – reflecting their exposure to intensive mothering ideology – with the degree of carer-provider conflict they experience. She identifies also that access to extended family networks reduces mothers' ambivalence about their work commitments.

Shifting the focus from the US to Africa, I turn to the significance of extended family networks in the African context, beginning with a focus on Sudarkasa's (2004) anthropological research into family structure and its implications for conceptualising motherhood. I then explore research that describes motherhood as conceived of as a collective responsibility, evident primarily in African societies with extended family formation. This collective mothering supports a mothering role that integrates caring and working, thus seemingly reducing the potential for mothers' experience of the carer-provider conflict that characterises intensive mothering ideology. I conclude this section by highlighting the role of extended family networks in facilitating working-age women's economic participation, before discussing the findings of some qualitative studies conducted in South Africa since 2000.

The purpose of these qualitative studies is, by and large, to make explicit individual South African mothering narratives. These, through the mothers' identification of their perceived exclusive responsibility for the unrivalled care of their children, reveal the predominance of intensive mothering ideology in many of their lives. Positioning mothers primarily as carers constrains their potential to legitimately create alternative roles (that may be construed as oppositional or undermining of this care-giving role) for themselves in society. Needing, or choosing to engage in paid work outside of the home, in societies where intensive mothering ideology is the norm, is therefore often a source of conflict for these mothers, as care-giving and working roles are regarded as inherently conflicted. The focus on Moore's (2013)

research findings gives insight into changing concepts of motherhood in South Africa across three generations of mothers from one family. Her description of the youngest mother's resolution of work and care tensions, of particular interest for this study, reveals evolving ideologies, and the emergence of what Christopher (2012) terms 'extensive' mothering ideology. Although rooted in intensive mothering ideology, it demonstrates a shift in mothers' perceptions of own needs as equally important as, rather than superseded by, those of the child.

Once I have detailed the research direction of this study; the nature of ideology; and concepts and experiences of mothering in the US and Africa, I conclude with a summary of the chapter's main points.

2.2 A synopsis of motherhood research: where from and where to?

In her study, 'Conceiving and Investigating Motherhood: The Decade's Scholarship', Arendell (2000) describes two main approaches to research on motherhood. She characterizes one as being "interpretive, critical, hermeneutic, qualitative, and feminist [which], although they vary some from each other, share a focus on both the construction of shared meanings and the historical, cultural, and situational contexts out of which people act" (Arendell 2000, 1193). An aspect Arendell includes in this approach is the deconstruction of dominant ideologies; the other approach she describes as extensive and mainstream, adhering to the positivist social science tradition using statistical methodologies to explore variable relationships and causation patterns (2000, 1193).

Arendell (2000) identifies the urgent need for scholars to align more closely the research output from these interpretive and positivist traditions. This is echoed by Moore (2013, 160) who identifies the importance of this in the South African context. Further, Arendell (2000, 1202) encourages integrating the findings of each of these streams of enquiry to facilitate a holistic view of mothering, from which further theoretical development and empirical research can take place.

The four areas she identifies as relevant for future mothering study are: "identities and meanings of mothering; relationships, with both children and others; experiences and activities of mothering; and the social locations and structural contexts from within which

women mother" (2000, 1202). Inspiration for this study is found in the last of these, around which Arendell raises the following questions:

- How do women actively resist the dominant ideologies of mothering and family?
- How does region influence mothers' activities? For instance, what does it mean to raise children in rural areas, urban areas, or as immigrants?
- How do women collaborate with others in mothering activities? (2000, 1202)

These considerations are more than apt considering the peculiar social locations and structural contexts (such as confinement to racially-delineated homelands) historically wrought over many years by South Africa's state-perpetuated racial policies,.

In this study I take cognizance of Arendell's insight into the need for paying greater attention to the perceptions of 'minority women', understanding this term to mean women who are marginalised, or are regarded as 'other', rather than a demographic minority. My intention in this study is to complement South African qualitative research findings on the prevalence of intensive mothering ideology by reporting on quantitative attitudinal data that facilitates an exploration of this subject.

2.3 The ideology of intensive mothering

2.3.1 How ideology works

While Sonderling (2008) describes the concept of ideology as 'elusive' and difficult to define, he explains that among the approaches to understanding ideology are a neutral and a critical approach. A neutral conception does not recognise ideology as imbued with power. Sonderling refers to a neutral theory of ideology as a set of ideas that provides every group in society "a selective interpretation of reality [which] serves as an action-oriented framework for the group to operate effectively in the world" (2008, 308-309). Drawing on Freeden (2003), Sonderling explains that ideologies act as templates through which we are able to make sense of the social world – guiding the way we think about and act in that world. However, each ideology offers a competing interpretation of the world (Sonderling 2008, 309).

A critical approach to ideologies seeks to explore how ideologies are used. For example, they have been described as "patterns of beliefs, ideas, opinions, and values that are *used to create*

meaning" (Johnston and Swanson, 2006, 509, emphasis mine); or, according to Chiapello and Fairclough are " … oriented to explaining a given political order, legitimizing existing hierarchies and power relations and preserving group identities" (2002, 187). This critical understanding differs from the neutral in that it recognises the role of ideology in sustaining a power dynamic. Furthermore the 'preservation' of group identity, while seeming to serve a protective function, may simultaneously act as a constraint, both to individuals within groups who wish to contest their group identity, and to groups who wish to reposition themselves in the social hierarchy.

Hall (1982, 69-70) disputes the neutrality of ideology, defining as its power the ability to signify events in a particular way. According to Hall (1982, 67), meaning "is produced through the medium of language and symbolism"; furthermore, he explains that because different kinds of meaning can be ascribed to the same events, one meaning gains predominance by devaluing alternative constructions of meaning. Hall (1982, 81) states that while it is easy enough to challenge a dominant meaning, "changing the terms of an argument is exceedingly difficult, since the dominant definition of the problem acquires, by repetition, and by the weight and credibility of those who propose or subscribe it, the warrant of 'common sense'". He highlights the difficulty of competing for the right to access the means of signification, through which the right to "establish the primary framework or terms of an argument" is gained. In addition, he recognises that "part of the struggle is over the way the problem is formulated: the terms of the debate, and the 'logic' it entails" (1982, 81).

Although Hall does not refer directly to Gramsci's explanation of common sense where he uses the term (as quoted above), elsewhere in his article he provides this quote from Gramsci's prison notebooks:

> Common sense is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life… Common sense creates the folklore of the future, that is as a relatively rigid phase of popular knowledge at a given place and time. (Gramsci in Hall, 1982, 73)

This common sense knowledge, which over time gains unquestioned credibility and poses as truth, is constituted as discourse that is both descriptive and representative of it. Following Hall, through our use of ideological discourse, unaware though we may be of its politically-

invested nature, we participate in sustaining the dominance of particular ideologies. By drawing on that discourse, we are complicit in the ongoing process of manufacturing meanings as they are framed within that particular discourse. In this way discourse 'speaks itself' through us (Hall 1982, 88). More simply put, Dos Santos (2012, 66) uses a social constructionist's perspective to remind us that "the character and even existence of this 'something' is neither natural nor inevitable, but has been shaped by history and social events, and could have been shaped differently".

Hall, moving from ideology (as the making of meaning) to hegemony (the privileging of selected meaning), highlights Gramsci's seminal thinking on power as both coercive and consensual. He acclaims, as Gramsci's most 'distinguished' contribution to the conception of leadership, the insight that "hegemony is understood as accomplished, not without…legal and legitimate compulsion, but principally by means of winning the active consent of those classes and groups who were subordinated within it" (1982, 85). The following passage by Gramsci illustrates the (unwitting) complicity, even of subordinated groups, in upholding dominant ideologies:

> … the same group has, for reasons of submission and intellectual subordination, adopted a conception which is not its own but is borrowed from another group; and it affirms this conception verbally and believes itself to be following it, because this is the conception which it follows in 'normal times' – that is when its conduct is not independent and autonomous, but submissive and subordinate. (Gramsci, SPN p.327, in Bennett *et al*, 1981)

2.3.2 The dominance of intensive mothering ideology in motherhood research

The hegemony of intensive motherhood ideology is documented by a number of researchers, notwithstanding several competing contemporary ideologies of 'the good mother' in Western cultures (Arendell 1999; Van Doorene 2009, 94). This is confirmed by Western-based researchers Johnston and Swanson, who report on the "pervasiveness of the intensive mothering ideology in our culture" (2006, 510), and Murray and Finn (in Dos Santos 2012, 46) who identify that "the predominant discourse of the idealised 'good' mother has come to thoroughly saturate women's perceptions and doings of motherhood". Australian-based research also confirms the persistent influence of "the dominant discourses of mothering, which, despite evidence of their diminishing traction in the lives of women who mother, continue to resonate and shape public debate" (Maher and Saugeres 2007, 19). However,

Hallstein (2006, 106) notes that "other maternal scholars (Collins, 1991; Edwards, 2004; O'Reilly, 2004; James, 1993; Thomas, 2004) argue that intensive mothering is Eurocentric and privileges White, upper middle-class women".

2.3.3 Defining intensive mothering ideology within the nuclear family

A central tenet of the contemporary nuclear family norm is the arrangement of the family (comprising a heterosexual married couple) in relation to its (biological) child, with the emphasis on accommodating and catering for the child's needs. According to Bozalek (1997) this 'familist' view was popularised by Winnicott (1964), whose notion of 'good enough mothering' supported the idea of the child's emotional wellbeing as dependent on continuous care from the biological mother. Bozalek defines familist ideology as an ideology that is "created by dominant group beliefs which idealise and globalise the traditional nuclear western family" in which there is "a male breadwinner husband [who provides for the family]; a female caregiver wife who may work, but only to supplement the male's wages, and whose primary responsibilities are still housework and caring for those in the household", and a couple of biological children (Bozalek 1997, 13). Familist ideology gained further momentum through what Hays (1996) famously termed 'intensive mothering'. This presupposes the child's centrality in the family unit, where the child's needs are elevated above those of the mother's. It further presupposes that a mother's first priority is providing or masterminding the practical and emotional caring work for her child. This gendered arrangement of child care goes hand-in-hand with the capitalist notion of a world divided into dichotomised spheres of activity: the 'public sphere' of production and 'private sphere' of reproduction, in which men (active in the public sphere) are family providers, and women (domiciled in the private sphere) work at nurturing, and providing caring labour – not only to children but also to men.

Hays defines intensive mothering as "child-centred, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, financially expensive ideology in which mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture and development of the sacred child and in which children's needs take precedence over the individual needs of the mother" (1996, 46). This definition sums up the criteria that US and UK based literature indicate are widely considered to constitute the 'good mother' in the Western world, influencing not only the mothering standards which are self-imposed by mothers themselves, but also by 'psy' experts (Bozalek, 2006), the popular media and policy makers.

While Russell (2002) cautions against linking the emergence of the nuclear family with industrialization, citing historical records dating as far back as the 13th century which evidence the salience of the nuclear family structure, the incipient ideology of intensive mothering – intrinsic to the gendered nuclear family form – gained its sweeping momentum from the onset of the capitalist industrial revolution of the 18th century (Hays 1996).

With the development of a burgeoning urban workforce, the organization of families around home-based cottage industries was reconfigured along gendered lines. While men actively pursued wage labour in the 'public sphere' and provided financially for the household, women, where possible, remained at home and undertook the work of reproduction – bearing and raising children – in what became increasingly regarded as the 'private sphere' of the home. Acceptance of these constructed 'spheres', with accompanying gendered role expectations, became entrenched at this time as an essential trait of the nuclear family.

Religion was selectively mobilized to give support to this evolving family dynamic (Arendell 1999), and over time the 'sanctity' of the provider/nurturer nuclear family roles carried a moral weight and authority that relegated alternative structuring of family roles as deviant. Thus, the idealized 'nuclear' family values that expanded to incorporate intensive mothering as its backbone, came to be internalized and widely upheld as the Western norm for over a century.

2.3.4 Acknowledging the need to shift the focus

The abundance of literature on intensive mothering ideology indicates that (particularly in the US) it is much thought about, debated, disputed, but not yet debunked. The comment "[e]ven though all women *are disciplined* by the ideology of intensive mothering … " (Hallstein 2006, 106, emphasis mine) positions this as an ideology with far-reaching power and influence. Hallstein qualifies this by noting the evidence, which she attributes to 'Black feminist scholars', of "empowered mothering practices that are non-normative within the intensive mothering ideology", including 'othermothering' and 'community mothering'[2] engaged by African-American mothers. However, she concludes this line of thinking by stating that "both are considered 'dysfunctional' and 'deviant' practices because they

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[2] Hallstein (2006) offers the following definitions: " 'othermothering' – the practice of accepting responsibility for a child that is not one's own, in an arrangement that may or may not be formal; 'community mothering' – the practice of supporting and sustaining the larger community".

challenge the key tenets of intensive mothering that support biological or bloodmothers caring for their own children within the confines of a nuclear family" (Hallstein 2006, 4).

In calling for a research focus on differences in the way motherhood is culturally constructed, Arendell (2000, 1202) urges that "[c]lass, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and immigrant experience must be at the forefront of our considerations". These all serve as mechanisms of 'othering', being used to relegate women to hierarchical positions of subordination, effectively sustaining the primacy of (White) middle-class (male) thinking. Arendell reminds us that "the experiences and perceptions of minority women as legitimate and valuable in their own right and not as measures by which heterosexual, middle-class mothering is reified – have been given too little attention" (ibid., 1202). Arendell's observation here, and Hallstein's immediately prior, is a pointer to the way in which the alternative mothering discourses engaged by 'minority' women are used, in their difference, to affirm the 'correctness', thereby sustaining dominance, of Western intensive mothering ideology. It illustrates Hall's explanation of one meaning, ascribed to the same event – in this case mothering – gaining predominance by devaluing alternative constructions.

African-American feminist scholar, Collins (1994), gives impetus to the call to problematise the universalising of intensive mothering ideology. She states that "we must distinguish between what has been said about subordinated groups in the dominant discourse, and what such groups might say about themselves if given the opportunity" (Collins 1994, 48). This shift in focus could potentially offer the opportunity for a fresh engagement with alternative discourses, in their own right, that would obviate their stigmatisation because of their difference from dominant discourse. Implicit in this would be the necessity, following Hall's (1982) argument, of renegotiating the primary framework, or terms of reference, through which motherhood is conceptualised.

The publication twenty years ago of 'Mothering: Ideology, Experience and Agency' (Glenn, Chang and Forcey 1994), of which Part 1 (of four) is entitled 'Challenging Universalism: Diversity in motherhood', reflects the beginning of an era in motherhood/mothering studies which seeks to give voice to mothering ideologies arising out of a variety of contexts. One of the aims of the conference that inspired and contributed to the book was to focus on "the existence of historical, cultural, class and ethnic variation in mothering" (Glenn, Chang and Forcey 1994, ix).

This approach of avoiding universalising homogenisation by focusing on subordinated groups, which in themselves require categorisation, is not entirely problem free. The methodological challenges it poses will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

2.4 Defining motherhood

A consideration of mothers and their engagement in paid work requires further exploration of the conceptualization and context of motherhood and mothering. Throughout history these have been inextricably linked, and they profoundly influence perceptions of what constitutes 'a good mother'. In her article, 'Conceptualising Motherhood in Twentieth Century South Africa', Walker (1995) stresses the importance of defining motherhood at the outset, and suggests that authors' common failure to do so is due to the following:

> … a powerful but unexamined assumption at work, that motherhood is so familiar an institution and experience that it does not need rigorous definition. This is itself revealing about the enormously powerful normative authority of the term – and the implicit universalism towards which our common-sense understandings and experiences of motherhood so readily propel us … (1995, 424)

Of relevance to Walker's insight is Gramsci's definition of common sense[3], as well as Hall's (1982) recognition of common sense as something whose seemingly enduring quality belies its dynamic nature. It therefore becomes instrumental in sustaining the dominance of particular ideologies.

In defining motherhood, Walker (1995) details three inter-related dimensions. They are: 'the practice of motherhood, which incorporates all mothering work; the discourse of motherhood, embracing the norms, values and ideas about 'the Good Mother' that operate in any one society or sub-group; and motherhood as a social identity' (1995, 424). Walker's exposition of the linkages between these three dimensions reveals a complex system whose parts exert influence not only on one another, but also outwardly in that they both determine, and are determined by, their context. Walker follows her definition with the caveat that "[t]hese three dimensions of motherhood are, of course, located in particular (historical) social formations,

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[3] Common sense is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself… Common sense creates the folklore of the future, that is as a relatively rigid phase of popular knowledge at a given place and time. (Gramsci in Hall, 1982, 73)

with particular family systems and productive systems, which also impact on their content, power and meaning" (1995, 424).

A criticism of Walker's is that in most of the South African research on motherhood, its analysis is limited by its focus on the discourse of motherhood, to the exclusion of mothering practice and social identity, in the mistaken assumption that this is the equivalent of an analysis of motherhood.

Walker's explanation of the discourse of motherhood is that it "embraces not only ideas about 'the Good Mother', but is also bound up with ideas about womanhood and female gender identity as well as childhood and the nature/needs of children. It informs and orders the practice, but is not, analytically, the same as the practice…" (1995, 425). In Walker's view undue emphasis is given to the discourse of motherhood, in the form of dominant ideologies. She identifies that considerations of motherhood often fail to incorporate individualised, personal mothering narratives, which offer insight into unique mothering experience. Paying insufficient attention to the multiple and complex meaning mothers themselves attach to their experience, and how these might shape their identities and political behaviour (Walker, 1995) runs the risk of essentialising motherhood to the detriment of how it might otherwise be imagined. Nonetheless, while discourse can never encapsulate motherhood in its entirety, its preponderance in motherhood literature does underscore its powerful normative influence.

Mothering practice – the work of mothering – Walker (1995, 425-6) describes as comprising a number of activities, essentially 'childbirth, physical care, emotional caring of, and about, the child, and socialization which may be understood as "the transmission of the particular society's or sub-group's values, including those to do with gender and kinship relations". She notes that depending on the social group or subgroup, a 'mother' may be required to do all or only some of these activities, with other members of the group responsible for others, for example, the physical care (1995, 425). Macleod (2006, 128) supports this observation with the statement, "[g]reat variability exists across and within historical periods and societies in terms of child-rearing practices and the relationship between mother and child as well as between both of them and significant others". This variability in the South African context will be explored later in this chapter, paying particular attention to the culture of collective mothering.

Social identity is described by Walker as "[involving] women's own construction of an identity as mothers – informed by the discourse of motherhood, mediated by the practice of mothering, but not a simple derivative of either" (1995, 426). Walker draws on Giddens'(1991) conceptualization of the formation of social identity as having conscious and unconscious dimensions, the conscious presenting the opportunity for the invention/development of an own narrative, reliant on the exercise of self-reflexivity. This idea of women constructing their own identity calls into play individual agency, and suggests that if individuals are social actors themselves, implicit in this is the recognition that women are more than "passive recipients of 'ideology' or 'discourse' or driven solely by unconscious motivations and desires" (Walker 1995, 428). In recognition of this, a more recent trend in qualitative South African motherhood research employs narrative methodology that emphasises the mother as subject, see for example Dale 2012, de Villiers 2011, Kruger 2003, Frizelle and Kell 2010, Jeannes and Shefer 2004. This aims to facilitate the expression of women's own voices in the recounting and exploration of experiences of motherhood.

2.4.1 Variability of mothering

Macleod (2006) draws attention to the recognition in feminist literature that "mothering is not a stable, inviolable self-evident activity, but is rather a practice that is informed by and reflects the socio-political pre-occupations of a particular time and place" (2006, 128). This emphasizes two characteristics of mothering; its fundamental changeability, and its responsiveness to its environment. Thus, the practice of mothering in a particular time and place cannot be generalized as axiomatic beyond that time and place.

For those living in that time and place, it would seem that the practice of mothering is vulnerable to being circumscribed by dominant discourses that carry moral weight and influence. Kruger (2006, 182) states that "all women who mother… have been exposed to powerful ideologies of motherhood that impact on their experiences of motherhood, mothering and mothers. It is in the context of these motherhood ideologies that women become mothers…". However, mothers' ability and willingness, or reluctance, to comply with the precepts of a dominant discourse will be differentially determined by their social identity which is shaped by their socio-economic status, race, cultural and gendered belief systems. This suggests that, even in a particular time and place, there will be mothering practices that are anomalous with the dominant mothering discourse. A dominant discourse, essentialising an idealized concept of what mothering could and should be, subordinates such

alternative narratives. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the relational positioning of these alternative narratives – often as deviant discourses – constrains their legitimacy alongside idealised mothering concepts.

The literature I have engaged up until now deals with the working of ideology, and the recognition that the way in which motherhood is reported indicates the hegemony of intensive mothering ideology. At this point I focus on Segura's US research findings that indicate cultural communities within which intensive mothering ideology is not the normative mothering framework.

2.5 The basis for alternative mothering ideologies

2.5.1 A case study from the US

Segura (1994, 261) refers, on one hand, to the "profuse literature on the 'ambivalence' and 'guilt' employed mothers often feel when they work outside the home", commenting that some analysts attribute this ambivalence to employed mothers' discomfort at "deviating from a socially-constructed 'idealized mother', who stays home to care for her family" (ibid., 261). On the other hand, though, she supports the idea that "the notion of a private-public dichotomy largely rests on the experiences of white, leisured women and lacks immediate relevance to less privileged women (for instance, immigrant women, women of color)…" (Segura 1994, 261).

Using qualitative methodology in her US-based research, Segura teases out the relationship between "ideological constructions of motherhood and employment" for Mexican born (Mexicanas), and US born women with Mexican heritage (Chicanas), living in the US (1994, 261). She explores whether or not the Western ideological construction of motherhood is reflected in these women's attitudes to engaging in paid work outside of the home. In addition to discounting the pertinence of the concept of intensive mothering – prevalent in the US in media, schoolbooks and public policy – for Mexican women, Segura describes Mexican women as, " historically, [having been] important economic actors both inside and outside the home" (1994, 261).

Segura notes that "the view that the relationship between motherhood and employment varies by class, race, and/or culture raises several important questions" (1994, 261). To obtain clarity on this, her research focuses on three aspects:

- first, whether or not the ideology of motherhood and the 'ambivalence' of employed mothers depicted within American sociology and feminist scholarship pertain to women of Mexican descent in the US;
- second, the nature of the relation between the ideological construction of motherhood and employment among these women; and
- third, whether or not motherhood is mutually exclusive from employment among Mexican-heritage women from different social locations.

Segura's research reveals that migrant Mexican women in the US, who do not internalize or identify with the tenets of intensive mothering ideology, feel less ambivalence than Chicana mothers who experience greater conflict around full-time employment, even when they work. She points out that Mexicana mothers' perception of their mothering role extends to include provision for their families, and for them engaging in paid labour outside of the home does not present the same conflict. In Segura's view, Mexicanas "do not dichotomize social life into public and private spheres, but appear to view employment as one workable domain of motherhood" (ibid., 262). There is, however, a caveat. While no more than a mere mention, Segura does note that *most of the Mexicanas had extensive family networks*, and those who did not experienced ambivalence – not at working outside of the home, but at finding suitable care for their children, and 'guilt' at not being able to find 'good affordable' child care (1994, 267). It seems that these family networks provide the necessary caring work, and so facilitate a relatively easy transition for women from home to the workplace. However, the absence of this 'extensive family network' flags the gendered nature of the burden on women to manage care for children – that even in instances where working, *per se*, is not considered an inappropriate mothering activity, stress presents itself in the need for working mothers to source alternative care for their children.

While this research is set in the US and Segura's research focuses on women who ostensibly share Mexican roots and culture, the motivation for Segura's research has relevance along two axes for understanding the context of South African mothering ideology also. First, African concepts of mothering ideology arise out of societies characterised, at some point in their history, by extended family formation. Second, with South Africa's history of colonization and apartheid, there are distinct parallels with Segura's research subjects' situation as minority women with migrant experience, and African women in South Africa.

2.5.2 A focus on mothering ideology in Africa

Sudarkasa (2004), in her comparative study of mothering ideology in African extended and Western nuclear families, identifies the chief difference in the two strands of ideology as the 'constraints' and 'elasticities' integral to the type of family formation – nuclear or extended – in which the mothering ideology is embedded. Sudarkasa states early on in her study that "*motherhood is first and foremost defined, affected and impacted by the type of family structure or kinship grouping in which it is lodged*", and that "the images, behaviour and values associated with motherhood… reflect the constraints and elasticities that derive from the family structures themselves" (2004, 2). However, she makes the observation also that "when those family structures have been transported to other cultural contexts, transformations in motherhood and other familial roles and relationships have occurred or will occur" (2004, 2). This will be revisited in a close reading, later on in this chapter, of Moore's (2013) research on 'Transmission and Change in South African Motherhood'.

Sudarkasa's definition of 'extended family' refers to "that large family grouping built around the descent group known as a lineage, and also divisible into smaller conjugal families built around monogamous and/or polygamous marriages" (2004, 3). Sudarkasa describes a 'nuclear family' as one built around the conjugal or marital relationship between "a husband and wife whose relationship is based on marriage, and children, whose relationships to each of their parents, as well as to each other, are based on 'blood ties'" (Sudarkasa 2004, 2). The chief difference between the two is that a lineage kinship is based solely on 'blood ties', where "each person in such groups is related to everyone else, and to a common ancestor, by 'blood ties' alone" (ibid., 2), and in a nuclear family the conjugal relationship between the husband and wife is in essence the nucleus of the family.

Of particular relevance to this study are the different conceptions of childcare as envisaged in nuclear and extended family structures and ideologies, and the 'constraints' and 'elasticities' inherent in each, and how these impact attitudes to mothers undertaking paid work. In marking their difference, Sudarkasa (2004, 2) extrapolates as follows: "[t]hus, for example, the nuclear family with its relative isolation, its relative insulation, and its inward-looking philosophy that stresses the "husbanding" of resources unto itself, imposes different constraints on women in their roles as wives, mothers, and daughters, than does the extended family, with its expansive, inclusive network that values the sharing of resources beyond the conjugal family unit". Going beyond Sudarkasa's work in mapping out the importance, for

motherhood, of lineage and kinship structures in African society, Kuper (1975) documents differences in kinship systems within African society, focussing on the Sotho-Tswana and Nguni language groups in particular. While these different systems guide the members' understanding of preferred and prohibited choice of spouses in each of these language groups, they would give rise, also, to differences in how extended family networks are constituted. It is possible that this, in turn, may influence how collective mothering is envisaged and facilitated, which emphasises the need to be aware of homogenising tendencies, and the importance of being sensitive to heterogeneity.

2.5.3 Motherhood as cultural construct

Arnfred explains that throughout the 2003 'Images of motherhood' conference, a collaboration between African (including South African) and Scandinavian academics, participants emphasized that:

> 'motherhood' was a cultural construction… [which] in the West was generally experienced and codified in relation to the patriarchal structures of nuclear family ideals, whereas in Africa social experiences and subjective identities tended to conceptualise 'motherhood' with reference both to extended family structures and to broader communal and national collectivities. (Arnfred 2003, 3)

Interwoven in the conceptualization of motherhood is conceptualizing the care of children, which has very practical implications for mothering practices, in particular that of child care. Evidence of how the aspect of motherhood concerning child care is conceptualized may be indicated by the degree to which the care and socialization of children is shared between adults and older children.

Sudarkasa (2004) emphasizes the 'significant' difference, in extended families and nuclear families, of mothers' roles in the socialization of their children, commenting that "[o]nly societies with extended family structures, and supporting ideologies and values, could have produced the proverb that 'it takes a village to raise a child'" (2004, 6). She explains that in (African) extended families the care and upbringing of children is never left exclusively to their parents – extended family members (women in particular) being regarded as resources for each other in the rearing of their children. This she contrasts with nuclear family ideology: "even though parents may delegate some of the responsibility for looking after their children, they never really see themselves as delegating or even sharing their authority over

those children" (Sudarkasa 2004, 6-7). While Sudarkasa identifies this as being representative of the nuclear family ideology it is, of course, one of the defining characteristics of intensive mothering ideology.

2.5.4 Collective mothering ideology

Some research describing African mothering norms reflects that the work of mothering and childcare is shared largely amongst women (not necessarily related to the child) who voluntarily participate in the 'mothering' work of raising children, and who are regarded (as mother figures) in similar high esteem as is the biological mother (Ampofu 2004; Magwaza 2003; Oyewumi 2003; Sudarkasa 2004). Ampofu writes:

> Mothering in most African societies involves a collective responsibility held by a network of women, but also including some men, in a given community. For the African woman, the experience of being mothered as a child by a whole community and taking responsibility of younger siblings and fictive kin at an early age creates an ethic of caring and advocacy for a collective good…My own maternal grandmother and my mother-in-law, for example, nurtured, trained and socialized scores of children and the concept of being a mother is opened to include biological and legal mothers as well as nurturers and care givers. (2004, 6)

This sense of collective, communal responsibility and accountability for the care of children in African society is reflected in the statement by the then Deputy President, Jacob Zuma, at the launch of the Orphans of AIDS Trust in 2002 (prior to taking office in the presidency) that: "the bedrock on which our communities have been built over decades is the principle of 'every child is my child'" (in Dos Santos 2012, 54). Commenting on the practice of Yoruba traders in Ghana of caring for their siblings' children, Sudarkasa (2004, 7) identifies that the principles of "joint responsibility and reciprocity within the [extended] family, meant that those children were indeed 'like their own'".

Providing multi-cultural perspectives into mothering ideology, South African researcher Magwaza (2003) discusses her personal experience of collective mothering whilst living in an 'African'[4] area, and her sense of loss when she moved into a formerly 'white' area where this mothering support network was not available to her. She notes that she still misses

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[4] Magwaza is referring to areas which during apartheid, under South Africa's Nationalist government, were legally demarcated for designated race groups, with the intention of keeping them separate.

“living in a Black residential area – where mothering is the collective responsibility of the women in the neighbourhood” (Magwaza 2003, 2). She contrasts the greater support enjoyed by African mothers, who consider mothering duty a communal practice, with her perception of the reality in White families, where her finding is that “child rearing and contact is a private affair. There is less support from the extended family members…” (2003, 11). Magwaza notes her surprise at discovering, following her move, that there were indeed alternative mothering ideologies, so seemingly natural – and therefore unquestioned – was the mothering ideology she had been raised in.

Magwaza anticipates that changes in mothering patterns are likely to become evident following the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, when previously legislated confinement of racial groups to demarcated residential areas was abolished. She identifies the (separate) apartheid-era residential living patterns as responsible for a lack of diffusion of mothering ideology across racial lines.

Magwaza’s impression of White mothers’ isolation in their mothering efforts is reported, with added nuance, by Ampofu (2003) whose interview transcripts of immigrant White, European mothers who have married African Ghanaian husbands and are raising children in Ghana, contain the following excerpt:

> …this burden, invariably, is carried by the mother, “on the parents ideologically but it’s still on the mother. But if you are here you can also share” and she re-states the options that Ghanaian society provides to share these roles with other women, while in Germany, her native home, women are judged negatively if they assign nurturing and childrearing roles to others. “You can’t leave your child –
> Akosua [interviewer]: Because there is no one to do so or because people judge you?
> Birgit [interviewee]: Both. There is no way to do it. I don’t see it. Maybe if you are very seriously sick and you have to go for treatment and you really can’t look after the child. But if not – once you have a child you have to look after it. And the burden is also higher-
> Akosua: The financial burden?
> Birgit: No – it’s also a pressure.
> Akosua: Is it because there are more expectations of what a parent will do, should do?
> Birgit: Yes, you have to do much more. (Ampofu 2004, 7)

2.5.5 Mobilising extended family networks to facilitate economic participation

Segura's observation of Mexican women as 'important economic actors' is reiterated in Sudarkasa's explanation of the African concept of motherhood as something that extends beyond ensuring nurturing care for children to the economic provision for those children. Expanding on her discussion on how mothers' and fathers' income is mobilized differentially at various stages of children's lives to address the needs pertaining to those stages, Sudarkasa (2004) draws a distinction between how the economic role of mothers is conceptualized in African and Western traditions. She suggests that "whereas traditionally, motherhood encouraged women to become more economically independent in African conjugal and extended families, motherhood may encourage some women to become more economically dependent in Western nuclear family settings" (2004, 9-10).

This West African tradition of shared economic support for children, for which fathers are not exclusively responsible, is noted also by Collins (1997, 328). Tracing the mothering ideology of African-American mothers through their heritage as slaves to their West African roots, Collins states that for African women, "emotional care for children and providing for their physical survival were interwoven as interdependent, complementary dimensions of motherhood" (1997, 328). This is supported by Dow (2011), who notes a divergence of beliefs and experiences of African-American middle and upper-middle class mothers and those of White mothers. She reports that embedded in the mothering ideology of African-American mothers, which she terms 'integrated motherhood', is the view that "working is intrinsically linked to what it means to be a mother in the African-American community" (Dow 2011, i). Christopher (2012, 77) similarly refers to the 'integrative' views of motherhood and paid work often held by women of colour[5], who, historically, have had to support their families through paid work.

In Collins' view (1994, 51), the *raison d'etre* for the enduring extended family network is its functioning as a 'flexible institution' that mitigates against the effects of work demands in situations of economic pressure. She comments that extended family structure, in particular the functioning of grandmothers as primary caretakers of their daughters' in law and daughters' children, assists to "resolve the tension between maternal separation due to

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[5] The use of the word 'color'(colour) by US authors in this context refers to women in the US who are racially othered, namely, all those who are not White; included in this term are African-American, Native-American, Hispanic, and Asian-American women.

employment and the needs of dependent children" (Collins 1994, 51). Moore (2013, 154) identifies the emergence in African communities of 'different' residential arrangements, involving the extended family, to resolve the tension arising out of maternal separation and the need to engage paid work. Noting the mitigating effects accompanying grandmothers assuming the primary caring role of their grandchildren, often in rural areas, Moore states that "[o]rganised, resilient, women-centred networks became central to how women managed mothering activities" (2013, 154). Posel, Fairburn and Lund (2006) highlight the importance of extended family members who are available to care for children as an enabling factor in working-age women's migration in search of employment. Highlighting this need, Walker (1995) provides a stark description of changed circumstances of mothering that mothers may face, particularly in migratory situations. This emphasises the crucial nature of the reliance on accessing support networks of care, particularly for single mothers:

> … one need only contrast the experience of feeding, educating and nurturing children in an agriculturally-based, subsistence economy, within a patriarchal homestead located in a well-defined network of kinship relations and community linkages, with that of undertaking the same broad set of responsibilities in an urban slumyard in the 1930s or 1940s, as the unemployed or self-employed wife or abandoned wife or partner of a migrant worker. (Walker 1995, 40)

This excerpt highlights the potential impact of eroded, or evolving family structures and compromised care networks on mothers' ability to work, and care for their children. Although Walker here refers to a period some eighty years ago, contemporary urban-informal areas present the same mothering challenges, to growing numbers of women migrants. Increasing numbers of single mothers may derive a diminished benefit from traditional extended family support structures, as these are mobilised usually through marriage.

2.5.6 Collective mothering: the preferred choice?

While the usefulness of, and dependence on, extended family structures for childcare is widely recognised, some research suggests that this form of childcare is not necessarily preferred. De Villiers (2011, 7) cautions that there is a widely-held assumption in South Africa "that childcare provided by extended family members is a widespread phenomenon in South Africa among black South Africans. This assumption has not been substantiated by documentation, nor has the impact thereof on mothers, grandmothers and children been researched". She believes that this assumption may mask a need for childcare that is far

greater than what can or is being supplied by extended family members, with the effect that the provision of formalized quality care is not adequate for the level of need. Further to identifying that extended family networks may be overstretched in attempting to address the needs for childcare, de Villiers outlines collective mothering as a default care option that is used because alternative formal childcare is seldom accessible, convenient or affordable.

De Villiers (2011) identifies the use of child care provided by extended family members as more prevalent in situations where fewer resources are available. Her research indicates that while extended family care, particularly intergenerational care supplied by grandmothers, was considered by her research participants as appropriate for infants, they envisaged a different sort of care than could be offered in a domestic setting by family members, as being more appropriate for preschool children. This suggests that while mothers may consider collective mothering useful, and age-appropriate for certain life phases, *where they have choice*, mothers recognise greater value in alternative care options.

De Villiers is of the opinion that the detrimental effects of informal care are neither known nor being addressed, and that the assumption around the extent of childcare provision by extended families needs to be properly researched, as does the assumption that this is mothers' generally preferred option of childcare (2011, 7). While Collins (1994) identifies the positive role that extended mothering can provide, de Villiers describes multigenerational childcare involving grandmothers as potentially stressful and harmful to the mental health of both mother and grandmother, particularly when the complexity of mother-daughter relationships are taken into account (2011, 7). Nonetheless, she recognises the value of extended care for the mothers in her study, stating that "[t]he use of grandmother-provided childcare constituted a compromise as it afforded mothers with an affordable, flexible, convenient and safe alternative which replicated the intensive mothering provided within the ideal of the nuclear family" (2011, 298).

Another aspect of collective mothering, parents' needs for carers for their children aside, is the preference of other women (and occasionally men) for assuming this additional caring work. There is a large body of research into the work of caregiving (Ogden, Esim and Grown 2006). In the context of the world's highest levels of HIV/AIDS occurring in South Africa, studies have focused on the caring work that has been undertaken by extended family and community members to address societal needs arising from the morbidity and mortality that

accompany HIV/AIDS (Hosegood *et al* 2007). It is not the intention in this study to elaborate further on this aspect of collective mothering, other than to make the point that as caring work in South Africa is highly gendered, women (often elderly) are disproportionately burdened by this work (Schatz and Ogunmefun 2007). While some research findings emphasise the positive experience for care givers of providing care and support, particularly for orphans (see for example, Meyiwa 2011), the general finding seems to be that extended care networks have been exhausted by this additional work. In situations of poverty, as in South Africa with its high levels of poverty, people's choices are constrained. It is possible that the prevalence (or assumed prevalence) of collective mothering, is not necessarily correlated with its desirability.

2.6 Findings from South African qualitative research

2.6.1 Mothering narratives of middle-class South African mothers

The majority of qualitative research aimed at exploring individual South African women's narratives of mothering (see Frizelle and Hayes, 1999; Frizelle and Kell, 2010; Jeannes and Scheffer, 2004; Kruger, 2003; Van Doorene, 2009), focuses on middle-class White, Indian and Coloured women who frame their motherhood experience in relation to intensive mothering ideology. Researchers consistently found that their research participants' critical assessment and evaluation of their own mothering in relation to intensive mothering norms occurs in spite of the women identifying a disjuncture with their own contexts, and that required to successfully fulfil the intensive-mothering mandate. Van Doorene comments:

> Even though the participants rejected or reframed aspects of the intensive mothering ideology, *the internalised stronghold of this ideology* was evident in the evaluative stance that women occupied in relation to their mothering and the frequent expressions of guilt at perceived aspects of their maternal inadequacy. (2009, 94, my emphasis)

Ironically, intensive mothering ideology produces intra-personal conflict even for the White middle-class mothers on whom 'good mothering' is modelled, and yet seems inescapable, as illustrated by Frizell and Kell (2010, 42): "While these mothers are actively involved in negotiating these mothering discourses, they are never able to entirely escape them … and continue to self-scrutinise and regulate their behaviour against the normative image of the good mother". This is evidence, again, that because the construction of these ideologies is

rarely explicit, and they are unconsciously imbibed as much as they may be consciously embraced or rejected, they provide a usually unquestioned, most often invisible, framework of reference for our thinking. Our use of these ideological schemas to describe our experiences and our understandings of others' experiences, demonstrate what Johnston and Swanson (2006, 509), drawing on Althusser (1984), describe as ideologies both 'in us' and 'to us'.

2.6.2 Intensive mothering ideology among working-class South African mothers

This section focuses on recent research by de Villiers (2011), which is not confined to middle-class mothers. Data gathering for de Villiers' research into the implications of inter-generational caregiving entailed two successive in-depth interviews with eight low-income, Afrikaans speaking, Coloured women. Her findings indicate that the dominant ideology of intensive mothering is very strong for these mothers too, who view the nuclear family as ideal, in spite of each of them having been raised in extended (and not nuclear) families. De Villiers identifies that their perception of the "ideal context for provision of childcare" was having a father provider, and mothers who mother intensively (2011, 297). She cites contextual, relational and personal constraints as impeding their ability to realise their childcare ideals (de Villiers 2011, ii), and notes that "[p]overty, in particular, had a profound impact on mothers' ability to provide childcare in accordance with their constructions of ideal childcare" (2011, 297). In mitigation of this, de Villiers notes that "[t]he use of grandmother-provided childcare constituted a compromise as it afforded mothers with an affordable, flexible, convenient and safe alternative which replicated the intensive mothering provided within the ideal of the nuclear family" (2011, 298). However, she cautions that while there are advantages to this use of extended family care networks, one being that they enable these mothers to vicariously accomplish intensive mothering, intergenerational care-giving generally cannot be assumed to be problem free. De Villiers suggests while these relationships may serve a supportive function, due to the complexity of mother-daughter relationships they may in and of themselves be a source of stress, with the potential to exacerbate existing levels of psychological stress (de Villiers 2011, 7).

2.6.3 Contesting mothering ideologies: a South African case study

This section of the chapter focuses on Moore's (2013) historical research, into the transmission and change in South African motherhood that has direct relevance for this

research. Moore's intention to provide knowledge that can be applied appropriately by readers in other contexts (2013, 160) is acknowledged with appreciation. I use what she has shared in her research specifically to identify the prevalence, and indications of contestation, of intensive and collective mothering ideologies in her research participants' stories. Moore's study of three related African women – a great grandmother, grandmother and mother – and their collective carework, provides information on contemporary attitudes (across three generations) to motherhood. I pay particular attention to Moore's observations on how each of the women talks about 'caring and providing', (extracts of which are re-reported here) as it relates to their mothering roles. While these observations may be unavoidably imbued with Moore's own normative values, which do not necessarily echo those of her research subjects, they nonetheless provide an invaluable resource.

Moore (2013, 162) reports "all three mothers raised their children as single parents, with little or no help from the fathers of the children". The sites of carework are a communal home/household in the city of Cape Town, and a rural home in the Eastern Cape. Moore characterises Great Grandmother Nomsa as someone who consistently saw her identity, as a mother, as that of "a consistent provider, a provider of a space – a warm secure family home – for other family members" (2013, 167). Nomsa had sent her young children to the Eastern Cape to be looked after by her mother (due to the legal constraints facing her in establishing an independent home in Cape Town during the apartheid era) while she provided an income. This arrangement was not uncommon in South Africa, given difficult living conditions and job insecurity in urban areas. Moore (2013, 165) observes: "Nomsa's memories of mothering were suffused with the anxiety of balancing caring with working". Mobilising the collective mothering network available to her, by enlisting her mother's help as a caregiver, may have enabled Nomsa to resolve this conflict. After about 15 years, Nomsa's children returned to live with her in Cape Town. Moore (2013, 165) tells us that she continued to provide for them, and care for them *and their children* – this 'mothering' of grandchildren being "referred to as 'her duty'".

Moore (2013, 167) describes Grandmother Xoliswa (Nomsa's daughter), who draws on her own experience of being mothered, as "[seeing] supporting other family members … as a natural part of women's work". Moore (2013, 165) notes elsewhere, that Xoliswa modelled her mothering on her mother's example as an expansive provider which she remembered as being "essential to individual and community survival". This echoes Sudarkasa's observation

(discussed earlier in this chapter) of the communal importance of mothering in African culture.

Xoliswa, from Moore's account, "had learned to see her [paid] work … as an essential part of supporting a family" (ibid., 167). Moore comments that Xoliswa did not reflect on how her experience and observations of being mothered – by a single parent who was a sole provider – impacted on her decision making. Here again is evidence of how a (constructed) ideology, of motherhood, is unconsciously accepted and directs mothering without being made explicit. Xoliswa does not send her children away to be cared for while she works, but lives in a household with her mother who assists with caring for her children. Once Xoliswa's children are grown up, and she has returned to the Eastern Cape to get married, she returns often to assist her mother (Nomsa) and daughter (Ndecka) who remain in the Cape Town home. Other extended family members residing in the house at this time are Xoliswa's sister, with her two young adult children (a son and daughter); Xoliswa's son (Ndecka's brother); and Xoliswa's deceased brother's three young adult children, one woman and two men. Other than identifying them, Moore does not provide information on their potential participation in collective childcare.

When Xoliswa's daughter Ndecka has a child, she volunteers to care for the child in the Eastern Cape and Moore states that, for Ndecka, this is "the best way to reconcile work and family life … [She sees] an infant being raised by someone other than its biological mother as compatible with cultural definitions of good motherhood" (ibid., 166). Ndecka has precluded the child's father's participation in the decision-making process regarding the child's long-term care, as she will not accord him decision-making power while he does not fully involve himself in the child's life. Moore's representation of this work-caring arrangement provides useful material with which to gain insight into the negotiation of mothering ideology by Ndecka. For the purpose of this explorative exercise, the following synopsis of conceptions of care-work obligations according to Hays' intensive mothering ideology, and an alternative way of conceptualising these, which Christopher (2012) terms 'extensive mothering' ideology, is useful.

Hays (1996), and numerous subsequent studies, found that mothers who worked outside of the home invariably rationalised their work according to the benefits it generated for their children. Upholding the child's needs as more important than their own (while they worked)

contributed to resolving their tension (created by intensive mothering ideology) between caring and working outside of the home. Christopher (2012, 88) has since found that more recent cohorts of mothers rely predominantly on what she terms ‘extensive mothering’, which has two notable characteristics. The first, which retains congruency with intensive mothering ideology, is that while retaining authority and ultimate responsibility for their children, mothers delegate tasks of day-to-day caring to other caregivers who remain accountable to them. The second is that they justify their paid work first in terms of their own needs, with benefits to their children as secondary. This represents a departure from intensive mothering ideology in which the child’s perceived needs are prioritised above the mother’s.

Two aspects regarding the suitability of Ndecka’s arrangement with her mother, that Moore notes, have particular significance for understanding Ndecka’s manoeuvring between the mothering ideologies discussed in this study. The first details the conflict Ndecka experiences once she is no longer in control of the daily details of her child’s life; the second is how Ndecka frames her commitment to her work and further study.

According to Moore, although Ndecka actively arranges with Xoliswa that she, her mother, should take primary responsibility for her child, the situation is problematic in that it is simultaneously a source of frustration for Ndecka. To quote Moore (2013, 164), “[b]eing the biological mother but not physically in control of the child was a source of frustration which caused regular arguments”.

Sudarkasa (2004) and Oyewumi (2003) identify that transferable (as opposed to exclusive) responsibility for and authority over a child is characteristic of the African concept of collective mothering. This relieves the (biological) mother – emotionally and physically – of the onus of tending daily to needs arising from her child’s physical environment. By contrast, the perceived need for the biological mother to maintain authority over her child, and control over her child’s environment, is a distinguishing feature of intensive mothering ideology.

Moore tells us that Ndecka buys airtime to facilitate daily cell phone contact with her mother and her child, and obtain information from her mother on how he is, how he had eaten/slept, and so on. Ndecka’s expectation seems to be that she will be able to manage the care of her child, according to her preferences, via this medium. This is reflective of the intensive mothering desire to retain authority while delegating tasks of day-to-day caring to other caregivers, in this instance Xoliswa. However, Xoliswa’s apparent ‘non-compliance’

suggests that her conception of taking care of the child is more in line with the more traditional concept of collective mothering which entails a transfer of authority. This inter-generational conflict resonates also with de Villiers' sense that mother/daughter relationships are complex, and potentially problematic.

Technology, such as the mobile phone, and its recently much-expanded accessibility, can also be seen here to be impacting on how mothering is exercised, particularly where distance separates mothers from their children – it seems to offer the opportunity for hands-on distance mothering that was not previously possible. Its use as a quasi-surveillance tool has shifted the boundaries of care monitoring and accountability. As well as enabling an immediacy of contact, it also lessens the 'abandonment' aspect of maternal separation. However, despite the sense of closeness that speaking to the distant person creates, the reality is that even with this technology, the relationship is mediated, and this remains an artificial closeness. While technology for Ndecka creates expectations of how distance parenting may be done, it is for her a source of both satisfaction and frustration.

Although Ndecka supports the decision for her mother to care for her child, she has difficulty relinquishing control. She is not able to detach emotionally. Her frustration arising out of the care arrangement suggests that, while on one level she accepts the cultural 'correctness' of collective mothering, adopting this schema presents her with intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict. This illustrates the moral authority of Ndecka's cultural definition of good motherhood, according to the precepts of collective mothering ideology. While part of her ideological 'sense-making' process, informing her of what she 'ought' to do, collective mothering ideology also presents her with an incongruity that she has difficulty reconciling with. This echoes the dissonance felt by the Chicana mothers in Segura's study (discussed earlier) who, despite their Mexican heritage of collective mothering using extended family, have also been extensively exposed to intensive mothering ideology. Ndecka[6], too, will have been exposed throughout her life spent in Cape Town, to intensive mothering ideology, even while she is consciously aware of modelling her approach to mothering on her mother's example.

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[6] Moore notes that her interview with Ndecka was conducted in Cape Town using English as the medium of communication.

The second aspect that affords an opportunity to identify mothering ideology at work is in how Ndecka frames her commitment to her work and further study. Ndecka identifies that her ex-partner's refusal to share the caring workload means that she would be the sole caregiver, which is likely to compromise her success in furthering her studies. Moore (2013, 168) explains that Ndecka is committed to fulfilling her personal ambition of continuing to work and returning to college. She states that in order to "reconcile her identities as a mother and as an employee, Ndecka took up her mother's offer to care for the child – she was not forced by financial need".

At first it seems as if Ndecka's justification for working while her mother cares for her child is framed in accordance with intensive mothering ideology – although it causes her pain, it is justified because her child benefits financially. Moore (2013, 164) notes: "each statement of regret [at not having her child with her every day] was followed by a reference to how she supports the child financially". However, Moore's (ibid., 168) explanation of how Ndecka has made this arrangement in order to realise her personal aspirations, resonates more strongly with Christopher's (2012) conception of extensive mothering: "[f]or Ndecka, mothering meant being responsible for her child, but not at the expense of her sense of self". It becomes clear that she has not relegated her needs to being secondary to those of her child's. Christopher (2012, 91) states that "[u]nder extensive mothering, mothers' justifications for employment extend beyond their roles as mothers and providers". This exemplifies the reframing of dominant mothering ideology so as to better accommodate and acknowledge women's needs, independently of their mothering status.

This reframing is something that Christopher (2012) identifies as a mother's way of making sense of work-care obligations, which is gathering momentum. The way she foregrounds her findings, as compared with Hattery (2001), indicates how reference to difference may either legitimize or decentre dominant ideology: "Unlike Hattery (2001) who identified only three 'non-conformist' mothers, I found that the majority of employed mothers in this sample rejected core tenets of 'intensive mothering'" (2012, 91). On one hand, Hattery argues her findings from within the paradigm of intensive mothering ideology, labelling difference as non-conformist – thus denying the validity of this contestation – and instead reinforcing and sustaining the social acceptance of intensive mothering ideology. On the other hand, Christopher accords power to an alternative mothering ideology by making explicit its rejection of the norm.

This final focus on qualitative mothering research in South Africa has focussed on Moore's (2013) account of transmission and change in South African motherhood, paying particular attention to the way in which Ndecka simultaneously engages and contests aspects of mothering ideologies. To conclude, this is evident in her reframing her study and work ambitions as more important to her than accommodating intensive mothering ideology's prescript that mothers' needs should be subjugated to those of their children; in subverting the traditional collective mothering ideology (through the use of mobile phone technology) where authority over her child may have devolved to her mother; in excluding the child's father from the decision making around their child's care arrangements, and so refusing him his participation while he refused to counter dominant family ideology and redefine his fathering role as more than a provider.

2.7 Recognising the need for a broad-based, quantitative study

In the above-mentioned 21st century South African literature, the prevalence of the intensive-mothering norm in the lives of individual South African mothers has been identified in the reporting of the findings. This qualitative research, generally using narrative analysis, has avoided universalising motherhood and has sought instead to provide rich reports of the complexity and uniqueness of individual mothering experiences. However, it is clear that a common thread regarding the dominance of intensive mothering ideology runs through many of these narratives.

Whether or not this finding would have salience across a larger sample, in particular for the African, working class majority of the South African population, whose mothers embrace African as well as Western (and other) ideologies, and possibly combine elements of each, requires closer examination. There is little South African literature reflecting on the relevance of intensive mothering ideology for those who share neither the cultural heritage, nor the economic and racial privileges of White South Africans. In South Africa, the extent of the reach of intensive mothering ideology across diverse race and cultural groups, and across the class divide, does not appear to have been established. It cannot be assumed that African women generally, many of whom are not raised in nuclear families, have been similarly subsumed by what has been described as a largely White, middle class Western ideology.

The perceived 'indispensability' of an exclusively responsible mother is a unique feature of intensive mothering ideology. This burden profoundly affects the ease or 'dis-ease' with

which mothers, who interpret their mothering role through this schema, participate in paid work outside of the home. To understand the drivers of attitudes in South Africa to mothering and women's paid work more fully we are compelled, following Collins (1994) and Arendell (2000), to explore how class, race and/or culture, and place influence attitudes towards mothering.

Magwaza (2003) and Sudarkasa (2004) reiterate the need for research that aims to identify and understand difference as a manifestation of underlying phenomena that support a variety of mothering ideologies. Sudarkasa has the following to say of her own detailed anthropological study:

> This … conceptual essay … would have been strengthened by quantifiable data in support of the generalizations made about motherhood in nuclear and extended families, as well by references to, and examples of, variations in patterns of motherhood within, as well as between, the types of family structure described. Such data were not available in the descriptive anthropological case studies on which most of my observations are based. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this essay will provide a significant starting point for future comparative research on motherhood. (2004, 4)

It is clearly important to explore attitudes of a larger sample of South Africans toward mothering, to contribute to the discussion as to whether or not the findings of qualitative studies undertaken thus far have resonance with a more representative South African population.

2.8 Conclusion

I began this chapter with a synopsis of motherhood research as described by Arendell (2000), noting her recognition of the need to close the gap between interpretive and positivist approaches. Accordingly, this quantitative study aims to expand on the findings of South African qualitative studies by exploring the prevalence of intensive mothering ideology across a larger sample.

Using the deconstruction of ideology as a starting point, with reference chiefly to Hall (1982) and Gramsci (1989), I described how ideology and hegemony are constructed in such a way as to be self-perpetuating. I defined intensive mothering as guided by an ideology that upholds the primacy of the child (within the nuclear family), reliant on the unwavering

devotion of the mother to address her/his emotional and physical needs. Following a discussion on the need to create space for the expression of alternative ideologies, by shifting the focus from intensive mothering ideology, I explored the changing ways that motherhood is defined, and how the meanings attached to motherhood transform themselves over time and place.

I discussed Segura's (1994) research findings which reveal that migrant Mexicana mothers do not share the same ambivalence regarding doing paid work as do Chicana mothers, who have been exposed to intensive mothering ideology since their birth in the US. Further, that Mexicana mothers generally have access to extended family networks, and perceive provider work as integral to mothering – the provider-carer conflict that characterises intensive mothering ideology does not appear to be a feature where collective mothering is regarded as 'good' mothering. This was followed by a focus on African collective mothering concepts, as described primarily by Magwaza (2003), Sudarkasa (2004) and Oyewumi (2003).

Magwaza attributes the lack of transference of cultural ideas (regarding motherhood) between race groups to the insular nature of racially segregated residential areas in South Africa prior to 1990. Sudarkasa holds that the carer-provider conflict characteristic of intensive mothering is not a feature of African society, because of its traditional extended family structure which, Sudarkasa finds, comprises an elasticity of role sharing that frees mothers from the exclusive care responsibility for their children. This has relevance for the mobilising of extended family networks to facilitate the participation of working-age women in paid work. Sudarkasa notes that, by contrast, the insular nature of nuclear families constrains mothers as there is no intrinsic caring support network to relieve their care burden, and free them to participate more fully beyond the boundaries of the family.

This was followed by a brief discussion of the findings of much of the recent qualitative research into motherhood in South Africa, that intensive mothering ideology upholds a persuasive and compelling model of the 'good mother' for the middle-class South African women who participated in the research, as well as working class participants in de Villiers (2011) research. It was found to cause, among all the participants, feelings of inadequacy and a sense of failure to live up to mothering expectations. I continued with a discussion on how the youngest of the three mothers, detailed in Moore's (2013) case study, actively contested the pressures and expectations of intensive and collective mothering ideologies in her life.

Her concept of motherhood appears to be guided by a blend of elements: collective mothering ideology, inculcated by the mothering example of her carers; intensive mothering ideology that is widely disseminated in urban areas; and extensive mothering ideology, as described by Christopher (2012), which is evolving out of intensive mothering. While retaining the essential intensive mothering element of birth mothers being exclusively responsible for managing their children's care, exclusive mothering differs in that mothers pursue work and career ambitions primarily to satisfy their own, rather than their children's needs.

I concluded with an explanation of the need to conduct quantitative research to complement the findings of qualitative mothering research in South Africa.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Data

3.1 Introduction

I have elected to use a quantitative approach in this study to explore the salience of intensive mothering ideology across a larger, more representative South African sample than that reflected in the qualitative South African studies conducted thus far. In this chapter I begin by describing the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2007 data I use for this study. After this I briefly define attitudes, before assessing the representivity of the SASAS attitudinal data as compared with that of the Labour Force Survey (LFS), of the same year, which surveys a far larger sample. I then outline the research questions, followed by what I anticipate the results of this study may be. I discuss the methodological challenges and limitations this line of enquiry may encounter, identifying two aspects to this research that need to be fully interrogated. They are first, the appropriateness of quantitative and qualitative approaches for researching this topic; and second, the survey instrument, discussion around which incorporates a focus on the ideological framework in which the questions are situated, and ambiguous terms. I conclude the chapter with a summary of the main points established.

3.1.1 Describing the attitudinal data

This study analyses data collected in the October 2007 SASAS by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), whose purpose it is to record, and monitor over time, values and attitudes toward moral issues confronting South African society (HSRC 2013). The survey was conducted by means of face-to-face interviews with just over 3000 randomly selected adults[7]. The survey instrument, on which responses were recorded, is a 40-page questionnaire (Questionnaire 1), translated from English into several official South African languages. This study focuses on the responses to eleven selected questions from the section in Questionnaire 1 entitled ‘Women, childcare and work’.

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[7] Adults are defined as persons aged 16 and older.

The response options for the questions, apart from two of them, are: ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘neither agree nor disagree’, ‘agree’, ‘strongly agree’, ‘do not know’. For the other two, respondents are asked to choose the most appropriate scenario from three options given.

The data used for this study reflect South African adults’ attitudes towards mothering. Attitudes may be described as a learned tendency, strongly influenced by social roles and norms, to evaluate things in a certain way. There may be a significant disjuncture between the attitudes people hold on how things should be, and their practice – how they actually do things. This dissonance can give rise to an intrapersonal tension that may result in attitudes shifting in order to align more closely with lived practice if there is a marked difference between these, and where the individuals have little control over their life circumstances. However, because attitudes are deeply rooted, and constitute part of our ideological sense-making, they tend to persist, with small incremental changes occurring over time. In view of this relative stability of attitudes over time, the SASAS 2007 data still has relevance for contemporary South African society.

3.1.2 Representivity of the SASAS data

In comparison with other nationally representative surveys conducted in South Africa, the sample of adults surveyed in the SASAS surveys is relatively small (just over 3000); however, the HSRC supplies population weights for the SASAS data in order to generate population estimates from the sample[8]. In order to assess whether or not the SASAS 2007 data are representative of the population in that year, I compared characteristics of the weighted sample of adults in the SASAS 2007 with those in the weighted sample from the September 2007 LFS. The LFS is a nationally representative household survey conducted by Statistics South Africa which surveyed a far larger population, of approximately 67 000 adult individuals (although it did not collect information on attitudes). Table 1 compares the characteristics of the weighted samples in the two surveys, by race, age and gender.

[8] Please see appendix 1 for detailed notes supplied by the HSRC on the sample selection and weighting process.

Table 1. Comparison between SASAS 2007 (October) and LFS 16, September 2007

	LFS		SASAS	
Population groups				
African	**78.22**		**76.68**	
Coloured	**9.17**		**9.37**	
Indian	**2.63**		**2.77**	
White	**9.98**		**11.18**	
Mean Age (years)	**36.98**		**37.12**	
Gender: Male adults/Female adults	**47.51**	**52.49**	**48.68**	**51.32**
Age categories				
Gender proportion by age below				
16 – 24 years	**28.69**		**27.37**	
Male/Female	**51.28**	**48.15**	**57.63**	**42.37**
25 – 35 years	**23.32**		**28.38**	
Male/Female	**49.32**	**50.68**	**46.09**	**53.91**
36 – 59 years	**34.75**		**32.18**	
Male/Female	**45.44**	**54.56**	**44.57**	**55.43**
60 + years	**13.22**		**11.94**	
Male/Female	**40.10**	**59.90**	**46.14**	**53.86**

Notes: These data are weighted. The sample is all adults, 16 years upwards.

The table shows that differences between the weighted samples are mostly small. In both surveys, more than three quarters of adults in 2007 are African, and the average age of adults is 37 years. However, men in the youngest and oldest cohorts are over-represented in the SASAS data compared to the LFS data, while women are over-represented among adults aged 25 to 59. For example, men account for 58% of adults in the 16 to 24 year cohort in the SASAS data, but only 51% in the LFS data; and they comprise 46% of the elderly (60 years and older) in the SASAS data, but only 40% in the LFS data. Gender patterns in the SASAS data therefore may not be representative of national gender patterns.

3.2 Research questions

In considering whether or not intensive mothering ideology prevails in today's South Africa, I assume that it will be reflected in attitudes towards mothers working, and the perception of the impact of this on children and other family members. Intensive mothering is characterized

by the mother's full-time commitment to her child. This is evident even when she elects to work in that she frames her child's best interests as her primary motive for working. Her anxiety about leaving her child to go to work stems from the belief that, as the (biological) mother, she is solely responsible for the physical and emotional nurture of her child. Furthermore, should she be less than fully committed to this role, her perception is that her child will suffer. As ideology operates at a societal level, these views are shared also by the rest of society in which intensive mothering ideology is the dominant discourse.

Using questions from the attitudinal survey, I explore the following three questions:

- Do South African adults perceive mothers working as impacting negatively on families?
- What are South African adults' perceptions of the effect of a mother working, on a child under five years old?
- Do South African adults indicate a preference for care provided by crèches/nurseries or friends and relatives for the pre-school children of working single mothers?

I would expect first that, given the European roots of intensive mothering and its dissonance with the ethos of (African) collective mothering ideology, intensive mothering would have a higher acceptance amongst White South Africans than African. This should be most evident in a difference in attitudes between rural Africans (for whom – of all South Africans – the extended family form, with collective mothering practices, is most likely to still exist) and White South Africans. Second, there may be differences in attitudes towards single mothers and mothers in partnerships in that their mothering roles would be differently conceived and enacted, with single mothers potentially having to fulfil both carer and provider roles. Third, I would expect that men would have more conservative attitudes to the caring role of women, as they stand to lose more if the status quo is threatened.

3.3 Methodological challenges

3.3.1 Qualitative and quantitative approaches

I identified in the previous chapter that a commitment to probing beyond dominant ideology, incorporating instead a focus on the voices of subordinated groups, presents a challenge for researchers using a quantitative approach in the social sciences in this post-structural era.

Potentially problematic is that it requires categorization of subordinated groups along pre-determined axes. The implications of this are twofold. First, while rendering heterogeneity within the selected group invisible, a homogenising of groups according to the apparent 'difference' by which they are identifiable is inevitable. Second, this difference – for example 'race', or 'Western' – may itself be regarded as constructed (Bass 2012). It is important to note also that membership of one group does not preclude membership of another, so while a person may be a mother, she may also be a paid employee or professional, each of which will differently impact her sense of self, and have its own discourse on how to 'correctly' fulfil that role.

Qualitative study, as an alternative approach, is also not without challenges. While qualitative research offers sensitivity to nuance and the individual (avoiding any tendency to generalize) that quantitative enquiry does not, such studies have limited use in, for example, informing social policy, because findings are not easily extrapolated to the national population. The nature of qualitative enquiry involves a detailed, in-depth micro view of social phenomena, which can realistically only be carried out within a small, usually relatively homogenous, sample group. This may be as small as two, as in Kruger's (2003) study, but is seldom as large as 100. The small size, together with the homogeneity of the sample, does not allow for generalisation of the findings to a much larger, heterogeneous sample.

The larger the sample, the more representative it becomes, with a stronger chance that the mean is an accurate reflection of a general position – the norm for that society. In a small sample, the influence of outliers has far more impact. However, a useful aspect of qualitative methodology is that it can identify recurring themes experienced at an individual level, suggestive of common experience, which indicates the relevance of further exploration using quantitative methodology. Pertinent to the use of a quantitative approach for this study is the regular finding, across the qualitative South African studies on motherhood, that intensive mothering ideology has a persistent presence in shaping mothers' perceptions of 'appropriate' carer-provider behaviour.

The dilemma of harnessing the positive accomplishments of both methodological approaches is exactly the challenge – the need to 'bridge the schism' – identified by Arendell (2000), and reiterated by Moore (2013). Recognising their complementary contributions to understanding social phenomena is an important step in reconciling the limitations inherent in both. For this

study, the need to create space for the expression of ideologies that pose alternatives to the dominant ideology is not diminished by methodological challenges, particularly as dominant ideology cannot – in and of itself – claim representivity or neutrality. I have chosen to use quantitative methodology because, as described by Deumert (2010, 19), it facilitates a 'broad-stroke' analysis of available statistical data which is valuable for showing the magnitude, nature and locality of the problem.

3.3.2 Challenges posed by survey instruments

Further to Devey's observation (2003, 97), that "it is beyond the scope of the survey strategy to measure every characteristic of a phenomenon", there are some issues in the SASAS 2007 data set that need special review, with regards to the usability of the data and the phenomena I wish to measure. These include a consideration of the survey instrument – its structure, interviewee and interviewer interaction, what is and is not asked, and how the questions are ideologically framed.

Concerning the survey instrument, its questions and how they are worded, the following points are relevant. Survey questionnaires typically use closed-ended questions, with predetermined response options that allow for the quantification of results, namely, how many, who, where, and what. They do not accommodate open-ended questions that explore the 'why' behind the responses. The scope of detail that a quantitative analysis reveals is thus understandably limited by the nature of the questions contained in the questionnaire. The SASAS 2007 questionnaire comprises 292 questions, arranged in sets according to their focus. Showcards are provided as an aid for interviewees to select responses, although the questionnaire instruction to the enumerator does not indicate what should be done if the respondent is not able to read, or how that would be determined. This is perhaps covered in a separate interviewer training guide.

Completion of the questionnaire would require a time commitment, from the participants, of at least two hours, which would allow for two to three questions per minute. As it is an attitudinal survey, the emphasis is on eliciting personal opinions from the interviewees who will have existing attitudes on certain of the questions, but would be required to consciously think about their views on others. Participation in this survey is therefore potentially quite exhausting, with the possibility that responses provided towards the end may not be given the

same consideration as answers given earlier. Questions used in this study, numbered between 146 and 160, occur from the midpoint of the questionnaire.

A consideration of interviewee behaviour entails identifying factors that may influence the way respondents answer the questions put to them. Apart from the effects of tiredness or waning concentration in a long interview and alternative time demands or interruptions by other household members, this includes the desire for social acceptability. While people are essentially honest, in that they generally do not aim to mislead, they may be cautious of censure, or want to please with what they feel might be the 'right' answer; this has the potential to colour their response. Respondents may be inclined to be a little less than entirely honest if they hold what may be perceived as aberrant views. Another, less overt pressure comes from the much broader ideological framework from which the questions arise, evidence of which may be found in the phrasing of questions, and terms used, which reflect the dominant ideology's norms in that society.

To illustrate the ideological framing of the questions, I focus chiefly on Question 150, although similar scrutiny could be applied to any of the questions. The question states: "All working women (skilled and unskilled) should receive paid maternity leave if they have a baby". The frame of reference for the question is that women, and biological mothers specifically, are the primary caregivers of (their own biological) children. It demonstrates the gendered perception that caring is women's work and, moreover, that women should look after their own children. While this represents the dominant ideology on mothering and childcare, the failure to ask further questions around the possibility of others – for example fathers or other family members – assuming a 'mothering' role when a child is born, does not create space for exploring alternative ideologies on what may be considered acceptable care for infants. This 'silence' serves to conceal attitudes that respondents may hold on this issue, but did not have the opportunity to express. This is partly addressed, in a rather oblique way, in Question 163, whose contribution is discussed below.

The framing of Question 150 evidences a 'benign' complicity in adopting the ideological (familist) framework that informs the official state policy regarding maternity leave. Under the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Department of Labour 2014) paid maternity leave may be accessed only by expectant, employed women who are contributing to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). Question 150 probes attitudes to the extension of

maternity benefits to employed women of all skill levels, cognizant that unskilled working women are the least likely to be formally employed and will therefore have the most limited access to maternity benefits. However, it stays within the dominant ideology's framework of reference, that is, that women are/should be the primary caregivers of children.

Constructing questions in accordance with dominant ideology is on one hand intentional, because it is an established – and therefore familiar – way of thinking about issues which respondents can readily relate to. On the other hand, it is instrumental in underpinning such thinking in that by not problematising it, or creating a positive space for the expression of subordinated voices, it affirms its unquestioned 'validity'. While there is always the opportunity for respondents to disagree with a statement, this does not equate (in the same positive sense) with acclaiming an alternative.

As a counterbalance to Question 150, Question 163 asks: "If government provided childcare support for pre-school children of working single parents which types of provision do you think would be best?" One of the response options is "A grant for a friend or relative to look after the children". While this does not overtly challenge the gendered stereotype of women as carers, by not stipulating 'female' friend or relative, thinking of a male caregiver as an option has not been precluded. However, amongst the many questions exploring attitudes to possible support for working women (in particular single mothers) and the care needs of their children, the government is framed as this source of assistance. Not one actual mention of the other parent – the father, and his potential role – is made. A recommendation of this study would be that attempts to address this silence around fathers, and their role in raising their children, be made in future surveys.

For the purposes of this research, there are also a few terms used in the SASAS questions that need to be interrogated for the sake of clarity. Question 164 asks: "Are you a single parent?" This is preceded by several questions relating to a 'single mother'. The term 'single' as it refers to 'single parent' and 'single mothers' is not defined, and respondents may interpret this either as a description of relationship status, or as a description of parenting responsibility.

Of the 646 respondents who identify themselves as single parents in the SASAS 2007, 36 indicate that they are married. Of the remaining 610 single parents who are not married, 243 were previously married, and the balance was never married. The term 'lone parent', the

equivalent in South Africa of 'single' parent, is used by Wright *et al* (2013, 5) to mean "people who both (1) either do not have a partner or spouse or who do not co-habit with their partner or spouse and (2) are the main caregiver for a child under the age of 18". For the purposes of this study, the first part of this definition will be adopted, and the second part without the age qualification, as this was not part of the wording of the question.

The category of 'parent' as used in this study also requires clarification. There are two questions in the survey that refer directly to parental status. As well as the question detailed above (Are you a single parent?), question 100 asks: "Are you the parent or caregiver of any children under the age of 18?" This does not enable the identification of respondents as parents if their offspring are 18 years or older, unless they are single parents. The consequence of this for this study is that when attitudes of parents are described, single parents' attitudes are over represented (or conversely, those of parents of children 18 years and older are under-represented), particularly in the older age categories.

In this study, the variable 'parent' comprises those respondents who answer one of the two questions on parental status in the affirmative. As this encompasses those who identify themselves as either 'parent' or 'caregiver', the 'parent' variable in this study defines a parent as one who is involved in parenting work – namely the care and support of a child – but is not necessarily the biological parent.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter discusses reasons for using a quantitative methodological approach in this study, and it describes the 2007 SASAS data that is used to explore attitudes towards mothers' caring-provider roles. Having introduced the data set, I assessed its representivity of the South African adult population by means of a comparison with the much larger LFS dataset. Overall, the SASAS 2007 data are aligned with the LFS 2007 data along broad demographic lines (race and age), although younger and older men seem to be over-represented in the SASAS data.

I then outlined my research questions, which explore attitudes to the perceived impact of mothers' work on their families and their obligations to stay at home to care for, or go out to work to provide for their children. I stated my hypothesis that the notion that families, children in particular, suffer when women work would find less support amongst Africans

because of their traditional support for collective mothering ideology; greater support amongst males due to their reluctance to sway the status quo which upholds caring as women's work; and a difference in attitudes among single mothers as opposed to those in partnerships.

Thereafter I explored the inherent difficulties of using either qualitative or quantitative research methods, noting that quantitative research is not limited by the small sample size, typical of qualitative studies, which makes generalizing information difficult. This study uses quantitative methods to explore attitudinal survey data in order to gain insight into attitudes across a larger research population than is accessible through qualitative studies.

I examined potential problems associated with the questionnaire, recognizing that its length, respondents' desire for social acceptability and the ideological framing of questions may all influence the responses given by interviewees; further, that the way questions are phrased may serve to either contest or underpin dominant ideology. I noted that the questionnaire terms 'single' and 'parent' are potentially ambiguous, and that for the purposes of this study I have defined 'single' as not cohabiting with an intimate partner, whether married or not married; and 'parent' as someone responsible for the primary caregiving of a child, thus including all persons who have identified themselves as either parents or caregivers, rather than just biological parents. The following chapter sees a presentation of the descriptive statistics, with a discussion of the specific questions in the survey that were analysed and an explanation of the variables used.

Chapter 4: Descriptive Statistics

4.1 Introduction

In this study, I use a descriptive analysis to summarise the responses and main patterns in the attitudinal data. The objectives of this chapter are to: first, explore general support for women, and more particularly mothers, working; second, explore the prevalence of intensive mothering ideology; and third, explore support for collective mothering.

The study accepts as indicators of intensive mothering ideology the perception that children suffer if their mothers work, that this work negatively impacts the mother/child relationship, and that fulltime work, by drawing a woman's focus away from the nurturing role deemed appropriate for her, causes the family (her partner and children) to suffer. Collective mothering is indicated by support for the caring work of children to be shared among community members, usually women known to the mother of the child, and regarded as 'other mothers'.

I begin by detailing the variables I use in this descriptive chapter, to facilitate the comparison of subgroups in the population, by socio-demographic characteristics. I then list the questions from which the data for this study are drawn, before interpreting the data. Together, the questions provide a broad focus on women working, and care arrangements for their children.

The first section of this chapter's analysis comprises an overview of respondents' support for women working. This is accompanied by a table with mean values. This indicates the average level of support for each of the questions. The second section explores support for intensive mothering, namely attitudes to whether or not mothers (or women) working, negatively impacts their families. Responses reflecting support for single parenting are included here, as more support for single parenting suggests reduced support for intensive mothering principles. The final section explores support for collective mothering. This focuses on the responses to the question as to what the most appropriate childcare provision, by the government, for children of working mothers might be. The level of agreement given to the proposal that the government should pay a grant to a friend or family member to cover the

cost of their looking after a working single mother's child is of primary interest, and is taken as a measure of support for collective mothering ideology. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings.

4.2 Variables used

This section details the variables used in this quantitative analysis, and the rationale for using them. The findings are described according to the following range of socio-demographic characteristics: race, gender, poverty, location, language, parental and relationship status.

Race groups used in this study are as defined in Chapter 1. Use of race group labelling in this study acknowledges that as a result of discriminatory racial practices under apartheid, socio-economic differences by race group are still apparent today. Further, it recognises the validity of Magwaza's (2003) observation that the enforced separation of South Africans by race created very real barriers to the transferral of knowledge and cultural practices between the race groups. The focus of this study is directed toward recognising the diffusion of mothering ideologies, in particular intensive mothering ideology, between cultural and race groups.

As discussed in the literature review of this study, intensive mothering is generally regarded as essentially a White middle-class phenomenon. It has a much higher prevalence in middle-class households, compared with poorer households. This suggests that support for intensive mothering is most likely to be found in urban, rather than rural areas. Considering the higher socio-economic status (SES) of Whites compared with Africans, I would expect more support for intensive mothering among Whites than Africans.

The African population is disaggregated into urban and rural dwellers to explore and compare the prevalence of attitudes typical of intensive mothering amongst urban and rural Africans. This division according to people's location also makes it possible to probe whether or not there is support for collective mothering which, according to Oyewumi (2003) and Sudarkasa (2004)[9], is facilitated by traditional African extended family structures. Extended family structure tends to be more common in rural areas than urban. The geographical divisions used are urban formal, urban informal, and rural. An informal urban area is defined as an area

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[9] Detailed in this study's literature review

which is "found within an urban area (city/town) but consists mainly of informal dwellings" (Statistics South Africa, 1998), which today are generally referred to as shacks.

To further consider the possible influence of economic status on attitudes, a poverty variable was created to describe respondents whose recent standard of living evidenced economic hardship. The criteria included respondents defining themselves as poor or very poor, and having had the experience during the month prior to the survey of inadequate food for their household. This poverty measure is used in place of stated individual and household income levels as declaring earnings is a sensitive issue, and levels of earnings are generally considered private information. For this reason, responses given to questions on income are often unreliable – being either over or under inflated – with many missing data. Where the term 'poor' is used in this study, it refers to those defined as poor using the above variable, while 'non-poor' refers to the balance of the population. Non-poor is used as an indicator of higher SES, which will include typically 'middle-class' individuals.

Ethnic groups have been approximated using home language as an indicator of ethnicity. This subdivision of race by language steers away from assumptions of racial homogeneity, acknowledging instead heterogeneous language groups and, by extension, ethnic/cultural groups that are found within racial groups. The home languages, which encompass South Africa's eleven official languages and an 'other' category, have – with the exception of 'other', which is not included in this analysis[10] – been grouped into language groups according to their origin. This takes into account that cultural values inherent in language often have their roots in a common heritage that precedes more recent language splits. In addition, where the sample size of respondents grouped by individual language is fairly small, as is the case for Ndebele speakers in this survey, more robust results can be obtained by considering the cultural group constituted by a group of languages, stemming from a common origin, rather than individual languages. The three language groups whose attitudes are considered in this study have been grouped into the following West Germanic and Southern Bantu categories:[11]

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[10] 'Other' includes 48 respondents who do not speak one of the 11 official SA languages as their home language. They constitute 1.53% of the sample.

[11] The languages (in parentheses) have been named using first the English title given to the language, and then the vernacular.

- Sotho-Tswana (Tswana/Setswana, Southern Sotho/Sesotho, Northern Sotho/Sesotho sa Leboa) – referred to in this study as Sotho;
- Nguni (Zulu/isiZulu, Xhosa/isiXhosa, Swazi/siSwati, Southern Ndebele/isiNdebele);
- West Germanic (English, Afrikaans) – in this study, this is the language group of the White population; the racegroup name 'White' will therefore be used to indicate members of the West Germanic language group.

As the sample of Venda and Tsonga speaking groups in this survey is too small to offer a reliable representation of those cultural groups, their perspectives have been omitted from the analysis that uses the language group variable.

4.3 Question set

The following questions from the SASAS 2007 are used to gain insight into the support for women working, and the prevalence of/support for intensive and collective mothering:

- Q146: A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.
- Q147: A child younger than 5 years is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
- Q148: All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.
- Q151: One parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can.
- Q152: Thinking about a single mother with a child under 5. Which one of these statements comes closest to your view? She should go out to work to support her child; she should stay at home to look after her child; she should do as she thinks best.
- Q153: Suppose this single mother did go out to work. How much do you agree or disagree that the government should provide money to help with child care?
- Q158: Unemployed single mothers seeking work should have access to free childcare facilities to aid their job search.
- Q160: It is alright for single mothers to live at their place of work even if it means they are separated from their children.
- Q161: Government should top-up the wages of single mothers in low paid work.
- Q162: Single mothers should not be expected to work unless free childcare is available.
- Q163: If government provided childcare support for pre-school children of working single parents which types of provision do you think would be best? Crèche /nursery near place of work; crèche/nursery near home; a grant for a friend or

relative to look after the children; other (specify)… (multiple responses acceptable).

The next section provides a synopsis of the responses, drawn from the weighted data, to the above questions. A more detailed breakdown is provided in the tables that follow. For the purposes of reporting the findings in this study, the response options 'agree' and 'strongly agree' were combined, as were 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree', thus producing three options – disagree, neither agree nor disagree (neutral), and agree. All percentages in the discussion section have been rounded off to the nearest whole number, and are thus close approximations of the actual percentages.

4.4 Support for women working

Mean values of responses to questions that determine generally supportive attitudes to women working are described in Table 2. Two thirds of the respondents agree that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a mother who does not work. However, responses to questions which quantify the time commitment to work, the relationship status of the mother, or specify children under a certain age, reveal inconsistencies in attitudes.

Only half of those who agree that the working mother/child relationship is not compromised also agree that having a working mother is not detrimental to children under five years old. Just under half of all respondents agree that family life does not suffer when the woman has a full-time job. This seems to suggest broad-based support for the biological mother fulfilling the role of primary caregiver, at least until a child is five years old, and a tolerance for mothers' paid work provided that it does not compete with family demands for mothers' time and attention. While half of the respondents agree that a child under five is likely to suffer as a result of his/her mother working, there is agreement among the majority of the respondents (60%) that single mothers of young children should enter the labour market rather than stay at home and look after their children, or do as they think best. This exceeds the percentage of respondents who either disagree that mothers' work impacts negatively on children under five (35%) or who are neutral about it (16%). There is, thus, a portion of respondents (around 10%) who agree that mothers, because they are single, should work, even though they agree that these mothers' children are likely to suffer. This suggests that there may be more

pressure on single women to prioritise working to support their children in spite of the perceived negative impact on young children.

The complexity of attitudes to single mothers' work/care demands is further probed by a number of survey questions. These seek to explore the extent to which respondents agree that it would be appropriate for the government to extend support to single mothers in order for them to access work. The responses generally indicate agreement by a large majority (never less than 72%) that support structures should be provided by the government to assist single mothers to realize their goals of accessing and participating in paid work. This includes the provision of free skills training and childcare while work seeking; and ongoing childcare and top-up wages for single mothers in low-paid work, once these mothers are working. However, only slightly more than a third of all respondents agree that, in the absence of free childcare being available, the expectation that single mothers should not work would be justified. This reveals a strong commitment to the idea of single mothers working, regardless of whether or not the government provides free childcare.

Notwithstanding broad-based support for mothers working, work for single mothers is not supported under all circumstances. Attitudes expressed towards single mothers living at their workplace, separately from their children, indicate that only one third of the respondents agree that this is acceptable. Apartheid legislation, until 1986, made it exceptionally difficult for African women to live in urban areas unless they were employed as live-in domestic workers. African women who migrated to towns or cities in search of employment often had no other options of employment open to them. These domestic workers were usually accommodated in a single outside room on their employer's premises. Their vulnerability and isolation was increased by the fact that their children could not accompany them, and mothers had little option but to leave their children in the long-term care of others, usually in impoverished rural areas. The low level of acceptance of this arrangement in contemporary South African society seems to be a clear rejection of something that, for Africans, would simulate apartheid-era living conditions. Furthermore, it calls into question the extant prevalence of support for collective mothering in African society.

While these findings seem to confirm the imperative for single mothers, in particular, to do paid work, supportive attitudes towards single mothers who are unemployed are also evident. For example, the majority of respondents (63%) disagree – as opposed to 22% who agree –

that unemployed single mothers should be expected to ‘stand on their own two feet’, without any help from the state. This is matched by the agreement of 78% of the respondents that the state should be more forthcoming with financial assistance, over and above the child support grant, for single mothers to meet their needs. This would seem to suggest that the pressure on single mothers to work to support their children has less to do with a punitive attitude toward single mothers, or censure, and more to do with a perceived economic need – the need to provide adequately for children.

Table 2. Attitudes to impact of women’s work on children and family

Questionnaire statements	Mean Response
A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work	3.60 (0.03)
A child younger than 5 years is likely to suffer if his/her mother works	3.22 (0.03)
All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job	3.23 (0.03)
It is alright for single mothers to live at their place of work even if it means they are separated from their children	2.67 (0.03)
Single mothers should not be expected to work unless the government provides free childcare	2.91 (0.03)
Government should top-up the wages of low-paid working single mothers	3.94 (0.03)

Source: SASAS 2007 Notes: The data have been weighted. Standard errors are in parenthesis. The sample is all adults (16 years and older).

Clearly, the care requirements of children must be met, particularly before they reach school-going age. Support for relatives or family friends providing this care is discussed in more detail later in the chapter. Having provided an overview of general attitudes towards issues of mothering and work, the next section compares attitudes of subgroups within the population to identify differences that would suggest adherence to intensive or alternative mothering ideologies.

4.5 Testing support for intensive mothering ideology

This section focuses on four statements, responses to which indicate support for intensive mothering. Three of them speak directly to the impact of women working, on their children and families. As the belief that the child and family suffer when women work is central to intensive mothering ideology, stronger agreement with these statements would suggest a stronger ideological adherence to intensive mothering. The fourth statement explores support for single parenting.

Currently, no state support is provided to single parents, or their children, because of their single status. The findings discussed above (described in Table 2) indicate that while state support for single mothers would be welcome, South Africans generally reject the statement that 'single mothers should not be expected to work unless free childcare is provided'. This seems to suggest, then, that it is regarded as appropriate that parents raising their children singly should work to support themselves and their dependent children[12], with or without state assistance. It requires that the single parent integrates both the caring and providing duties arising from the dependent child's needs. Confidence that 'one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can' implies tacit agreement that neither the child nor the parent are negatively impacted by this arrangement. Support for single parenting, therefore, suggests that there would not be simultaneous agreement that a preschool child suffers if her or his mother works. Following this logic, agreement that 'a single parent can raise a child as well as two parents can' is taken as a contra-indication of support for intensive mothering.

South Africa has a high prevalence of single parents. Approximately one third of South Africa's children live with both parents; the majority are raised in single parent families (Posel and Rogan 2009). There is ongoing research exploring why many parents are single. Findings indicate that poverty and unemployment constitute barriers to marriage amongst Africans, and moreover, that single parent status in South Africa does not necessarily imply a lack of marital aspiration (Posel and Rudwick 2013). This study, therefore, relies on positive indications of support for single parenting (derived from responses to question 151) rather than the prevalence of single parenting itself, as an indicator of reduced support for intensive mothering ideology.

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[12] A child support grant (CSG) assists children whose parents earn less than a stipulated minimum amount, regardless of their parents' relationship status. While some single mothers' children benefit from this, it targets specifically children who otherwise would be vulnerable to poverty.

4.6 Differences between Africans and Whites

Differences in attitudes between Africans and Whites are described in Table 3. An equal percentage of Africans and Whites (65%) agree that a working mother can establish as warm and secure a relationship with her child, as a mother who does not work. However, Africans are more likely to disagree with this statement, and also more likely than Whites to agree that a young child suffers if his/her mother works. More Whites are neutral about whether or not 'the family suffers when the woman works fulltime', and Africans far more likely to disagree that the family suffers. Africans are also significantly more likely than Whites to agree that a single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents can.

Responses among African and Whites therefore do not form consistent patterns. On the one hand, there does appear to be less support among Africans for intensive mothering, as evidenced by their far greater support for single parents and their disagreement that the family suffers when women work. On the other hand, a higher percentage of Africans agreed that the child suffers when the mother works. This is unexpected as this agreement could be considered an indication of support for intensive mothering, and I would have expected lower support among Africans than Whites for this statement. However, further comparisons of attitudes between subgroups of Africans, conducted in the next section, reveal a high degree of heterogeneity amongst Africans.

Table 3. Attitudes to motherhood, work and family

	Africans	Whites
1. A working mother can establish just as secure and warm a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:		
Disagree	26.28 (.01)	20.59 (.03)
Neutral	8.27 (.01)	13.45 (.02)
Agree	65.44 (.01)	65.95 (.03)
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works:		
Disagree	34.71 (.01)	36.47 (.03)
Neutral	14.62 (.01)	17.51 (.02)
Agree	50.66 (.02)	46.02 (.03)
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents:		
Disagree	25.28 (.01)	28.22 (.03)
Neutral	10.79 (.01)	18.24 (.02)
Agree	63.93 (.01)	53.54 (.03)
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:		
Disagree	50.39 (.02)	40.49 (.03)
Neutral	17.71 (.01)	26.08 (.03)
Agree	31.90 (.01)	33.43 (.03)

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

4.7 Differences among Africans

To explore heterogeneity among African women, I use the subgroups identified by the variables described earlier. The first comparison is according to location, rural and urban, with differences described in Table 4. Rural African societies are less exposed to dominant Western ideology and English language than urban societies, and I would thus expect that there would be less support in rural areas for indicators of intensive mothering ideology.

4.7.1 Comparing attitudes of rural and urban Africans

There are some notable differences in attitudes between rural and urban Africans. Rural residents are less likely to be neutral, which suggests that they hold stronger views on motherhood and family. The same percentage of rural and urban residents (65%) agrees that a working mother can establish as warm and secure a relationship with her child. Rural residents are significantly more likely to disagree that family life suffers when the woman works full time, and urban residents are more likely to agree with this statement. There is a marked difference between rural and urban attitudes towards whether or not a single parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can. Rural residents are far more likely to disagree with this, and less likely to agree. These findings suggest that rural residents view two parents as important, but are accepting and supportive of the role of women as fulltime workers. The lower rate of agreement by rural dwellers that families suffer when women work, one of the markers of intensive mothering ideology, suggests a lower prevalence of intensive mothering ideology in rural areas, although this is not supported by a clear rebuttal that young children suffer when their mothers work.

As urban areas comprise formal and informal residential nodes, urban residents were further subdivided into subgroups according to which type of area they live in. Formal areas are generally characterized by good infrastructure, permanent housing structures and comparatively better social services than informal areas. Informal areas have higher population density, higher rates of unemployment and poverty levels, and generally poor social services (Hunter and Posel 2012). In this population, poverty is experienced by 66% of the respondents in informal areas, and 38% in formal areas. When urban dwellers are thus divided, notable differences in attitudes are apparent.

There is more support for mothers working and for single parenting among formal than informal dwellers. Informal residents are more likely to disagree that a working mother can have as warm and secure relationship with her child as a non-working mother (similar percentage to rural), and less likely to agree that this is possible. A greater percentage of informal urban residents agrees that young children suffer if their mothers work, and fewer disagree. Informal urban residents represent the highest percentage of any of the groups that agrees that family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. Informal area residents are not as strong in their agreement that a single parent can bring up a child as well as two, although the disagreement level is very similar. The emergence of differences between formal

and informal urban residents suggests that attitudes may be influenced by poverty levels. To explore whether or not the higher level of poverty in informal areas may be associated with the differences in attitudes between urban formal and urban informal residents, comparisons using the poverty variable are conducted in subsequent sections.

Table 4. Attitudes to motherhood and family among Africans, by location

	Rural	Urban	Urban Formal	Urban Informal
1. A working mother can establish just as secure and warm a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:				
Disagree	**28.49 (.02)**	**24.67 (.02)**	**23.36 (.02)**	**29.17 (.03)**
Neutral	**5.66 (.01)**	**10.18 (.01)**	**10.68 (.01)**	**8.48 (.02)**
Agree	**65.85 (.02)**	**65.15 (.02)**	**65.96 (.02)**	**62.35 (.03)**
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works:				
Disagree	**37.48 (.02)**	**32.69 (.02)**	**34.15 (.02)**	**27.69 (.03)**
Neutral	**10.42 (.01)**	**17.70 (.02)**	**12.05 (.01)**	**17.31 (.03)**
Agree	**52.10 (.02)**	**49.61 (.02)**	**48.03 (.02)**	**54.99 (.03)**
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents:				
Disagree	**31.86 (.02)**	**20.48 (.02)**	**20.12 (.02)**	**21.70 (.03)**
Neutral	**9.70 (.01)**	**11.59 (.01)**	**10.88 (.01)**	**13.99 (.03)**
Agree	**58.44 (.02)**	**67.93 (.02)**	**68.99 (.02)**	**64.32 (.03)**
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:				
Disagree	**57.50 (.02)**	**45.20 (.02)**	**47.22 (.02)**	**38.33 (.03)**
Neutral	**13.64 (.01)**	**20.68 (.02)**	**20.49 (.02)**	**21.34 (.03)**
Agree	**28.86 (.02)**	**34.11 (.02)**	**32.29 (.02)**	**40.33 (.03)**

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

4.7.2 Differences among Africans, by gender

Where there is an adherence to intensive mothering ideology, it might be expected that men will be less supportive of women entering the workplace as this participation in the public sphere increases job competition. Further, diminished time devoted by women to the nurturing role in the private sphere may be considered a threat to family wellbeing. This concern may be reflected in stronger agreement by men that children and the family suffer when women work. However, where collective mothering is the norm, and expectations are that women should fully participate economically, it is more likely that men will support women working, without concerns that this might cause children and family to suffer. That said, in instances where family networks are strained or disrupted, for example, through female migration, mothers may have the added difficulty of finding someone reliable and trustworthy to take care of their children. This is more likely to negatively impact women rather than men, as they traditionally (in both intensive and collective mothering ideologies) have taken responsibility for providing or arranging appropriate child care. The accompanying stress may negatively affect women's perception of work and its impacts, particularly for under-resourced women who are less able to buy quality childcare as an alternative to voluntary communal childcare. The differences among Africans, by gender, are described in Table 5.

Overall, African women are less likely than African men to provide neutral responses to questions on motherhood and work impacts. Women are more likely to disagree that working mothers can establish as warm and stable relationships with their children as mothers who do not work, but more likely to disagree that young children suffer if their mothers work. Women are more likely than men to agree that the family suffers if the woman works full time. Slightly more women than men disagree that a single parent can bring up a child as well as two parents.

Table 5. Attitudes to motherhood and family among Africans, by gender

	Women	Men
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:		
Disagree	**28.10 (.02)**	**24.29 (.02)**
Neutral	**7.20 (.01)**	**9.46 (.01)**
Agree	**64.70 (.02)**	**66.26 (.02)**
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works:		
Disagree	**36.24 (.02)**	**33.04 (.02)**
Neutral	**14.55 (.01)**	**14.70 (.02)**
Agree	**49.20 (.02)**	**52.27 (.02)**
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents:		
Disagree	**27.03 (.02)**	**23.35 (.02)**
Neutral	**8.95 (.01)**	**12.83 (.02)**
Agree	**64.02 (.02)**	**63.82 (.02)**
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:		
Disagree	**50.09 (.02)**	**50.72 (.02)**
Neutral	**14.75 (.01)**	**20.96 (.02)**
Agree	**35.16 (.02)**	**28.33 (.02)**

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

It is possible that gender differences in attitudes may be confounded by gender differences in economic status. Women are more likely than men to be poor: 55% of those defined as poor are women, compared to the remaining 45% who are men. This uneven distribution of poverty between the genders confirms a gendered poverty bias. To explore whether or not the gender differences identified above are consistent amongst the poor, and the non poor, the gender divisions were further subdivided according to their economic status. This enables comparisons between poor men and women; non-poor men and women, as well as between poor and non-poor women, and poor and non-poor men.

4.7.3 Differences among poor and non-poor Africans, by gender

These differences are described in Table 6. There is higher disagreement by women in both groups that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother, and higher agreement that the family suffers when the woman works fulltime. In addition, there are substantial differences in attitudes towards a working mother's relationship with her child, between poor and non-poor women and men. Poorer people reflect the highest level of disagreement, approximately 12 percentage points more than the non-poor, that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a woman who does not work. The differences are particularly large among women. Poor women are far more likely than non-poor women to agree that a young child and the family more generally suffer when a mother works, and far less likely to agree that single parents can bring up their children as well as two parents can.

Amongst the non-poor, there is a marked difference between male and female attitudes regarding young children suffering when their mothers work. Far more women disagree (and men agree) that young children suffer if their mothers work. This indicates that men and women who do not identify themselves as poor have very different perceptions of the impact of a mother working on her child, with women perceiving it as less harmful to children than men. The inverse of this is true for poor women and men: more poor men disagree that young children suffer, and more poor women agree with the statement, although not by the same large margins.

To revisit expectations expressed earlier, it was anticipated that women who are poor, and thus with fewer resources to offset any possible negative impacts of work, would be more likely than men and better-off women to agree that young children suffer. It is important also, to consider the words used to express the statement, 'a child under five suffers if his/her mother works' and how they may be differentially interpreted. When put to middle-class parents the word 'suffer' does not have a physical connotation related to material deprivation – it refers to emotional pain and the threat of failure of the child to reach his/her full potential, particularly concerning intellectual /social/emotional development. However, in a context of poverty, where a mother's presence may make the difference between her child getting an adequate serving of food on a daily basis, or attending school or not, the question may be perceived in a very different way. Particularly in an urban informal environment, which in itself poses a threat to children, women (as the traditional caregivers of children) may feel

this more acutely. This question, in and of itself, is therefore potentially problematic, in that it means different things to different people, depending on their economic status.

The higher level of agreement among non-poor men compared to non-poor women that young children suffer when their mothers work, is consistent with intensive mothering ideology. This has generally been shown to be more prevalent among the middle-class where there are greater means than among the working-class poor, to devote time and resources to intensive mothering. It is interesting to note, however, that non-poor women are not similarly supportive of this intensive mothering trait, which might indicate a contestation of this dominant mothering ideology, and congruency with alternative mothering ideologies.

While non-poor women do not agree as strongly as non-poor men that young children suffer, a greater percentage of both non-poor and poor women agrees that the family suffers. Later comparisons by relationship status of parents reveal that non-single mothers agree far more with this than single mothers. Women's heightened perception that families suffer when they work full time is possibly a reflection of the difficulties working women experience in two-parent families, of meeting gendered expectations of a woman's role in the home.

Table 6. Attitudes to motherhood and family, Africans, by gender: poor and non-poor

	Women		Men	
	Poor	Non-poor	Poor	Non-poor
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:				
Disagree	33.24 (.02)	21.52 (.02)	29.52 (.03)	18.87 (.03)
Neutral	6.41 (.01)	8.21 (.02)	6.69 (.01)	12.32 (.02)
Agree	60.35 (.02)	70.27 (.03)	63.79 (.03)	68.81 (.03)
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works				
Disagree	32.38 (.02)	41.17 (.03)	36.63 (.03)	29.30 (.03)
Neutral	11.73 (.02)	18.15 (.02)	10.68 (.02)	18.87 (.03)
Agree	55.89 (.02)	40.68 (.03)	52.69 (.03)	51.83 (.04)
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents:				
Disagree	29.49 (.02)	23.91 (.02)	24.76 (.03)	21.88 (.04)
Neutral	9.86 (.01)	7.79 (.01)	14.28 (.02)	11.31 (.02)
Agree	60.66 (.02)	68.30 (.03)	60.96 (.03)	66.80 (.04)
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:				
Disagree	49.73 (.02)	50.55 (.03)	52.19 (.03)	49.20 (.04)
Neutral	13.98 (.02)	15.74 (.02)	20.07 (.03)	21.88 (.03)
Agree	36.29 (.02)	33.71 (.03)	27.75 (.03)	28.92 (.03)

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

4.7.4 Differences amongst African women by parental status

Amongst Africans, the majority of parents and caregivers (66%) are women. Of these women, approximately 48% are single parents. Of all African single parents, 81% are women, and 19% are men. As the segment of mothers is so much larger than that of fathers, and to control for any gender influence, the following comparisons are run amongst African women only. To compare attitudes by parental and relationship status amongst African

women, subgroups of nonparents, single parents and non-single parents were created. The results are described in Table 7.

Results indicate that women in partnerships are far more likely to agree that working impacts negatively on children and family. Comparisons reveal that a notably higher percentage of non-single, than single parents agrees that a young child suffers if his/her mother works, and that family life suffers when the woman works full time. This suggests that women in partnerships uphold the gendered norms and expectations that accompany intensive mothering within nuclear families. Earlier it was revealed that a higher percentage of poor than non-poor women agree that young children suffer if their mother works. That single parents here have a lower level of agreement with this statement is surprising considering that poverty has a much higher prevalence amongst single parents – 62% compared with a prevalence of poverty of 54% among non-single parents. It strongly suggests that while economic status may have some bearing on attitudes to whether or not a child suffers, partnership status is also an important factor influencing attitudes.

Single parents are far more likely to disagree that family life suffers if the woman works fulltime. While single parents are slightly more supportive, than non-single parents, of the statement that a single parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can, this difference is not significant. A slightly higher percentage of single than non-single mothers agree that working mothers can establish as warm and secure a relationship with their children as non-working mothers. This is echoed, too, in a slightly lower level of disagreement. Overall the attitudes reflected by single mothers seem to point to women who, along with single parenthood, have espoused values which express support for women fulfilling the role of provider, thus minimising any potential carer-provider conflict.

Table 7. Attitudes by parental status amongst African women to motherhood, family and working

	Single parent	Non-single parent	Non parent
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:			
Disagree	**28.00 (.03)**	**30.79 (.05)**	**25.29 (.03)**
Neutral	**7.50 (.02)**	**5.49 (.01)**	**8.67 (.02)**
Agree	**64.50 (.03)**	**63.71 (.03)**	**66.03 (.03)**
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works:			
Disagree	**34.72 (.03)**	**34.13 (.03)**	**46.83 (.03)**
Neutral	**18.36 (.03)**	**11.93 (.02)**	**12.70 (.02)**
Agree	**46.92 (.03)**	**53.94 (.03)**	**46.83 (.03)**
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents:			
Disagree	**27.63 (.03)**	**31.39 (.03)**	**21.60 (.03)**
Neutral	**8.12 (.01)**	**7.98 (.02)**	**11.01 (.02)**
Agree	**64.24 (.03)**	**60.63 (.03)**	**67.39 (.03)**
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:			
Disagree	**55.32 (.03)**	**46.52 (.03)**	**47.53 (.03)**
Neutral	**14.50 (.02)**	**13.27 (.02)**	**16.67 (.02)**
Agree	**30.18 (.03)**	**40.21 (.03)**	**35.80 (.03)**

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Of all respondents, nonparents are more likely than parents to disagree that a child suffers when the mother works, agree that a single parent is as good as two, and agree that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother. It is interesting that the women who are least pessimistic about the possible negative impacts of women's work on family life are those who are not parents. This optimism may be due in part to the high representivity of youth in nonparents (66%), as conservatism typically increases with age. It may also represent the attitudes of a new cohort who are pushing the

boundaries of alternative ideologies of mothering, while eschewing traditional mothering ideologies. Goldscheider and Kaufman (2006) have found that the experience of a non-traditional family structure in childhood – a growing experience in the adult population – reduces disapproval of unconventional family forms. Amato's (1988) research finds that respondents from 'disrupted', particularly divorced families, are less likely to agree with the statement "you need two parents to bring up a child".

4.8 Controlling for poverty effects: attitudes of non-poor women, by race

While poverty has a higher prevalence among women than men in South Africa, it is also distributed unequally along racial lines. The highest poverty levels in South Africa are experienced by Africans (54% prevalence), with a prevalence of 10% for Whites. In view of this racial disparity, it is probable that the comparisons of attitudes by race, without any filters for poverty, would very likely contain biases related to poverty. To assess more accurately how attitudes vary along cultural lines rather than by socio-economic status, this section reverts to comparing women's attitudes by race, this time excluding respondents defined as poor from the sample. A further benefit is that as the population will comprise a larger segment of middle-class respondents, it will provide an improved opportunity to assess the reach of intensive mothering ideology which has been described as an essentially middle-class phenomenon. The results are described in Table 8.

Among non-poor women, African women are slightly more likely than White women to disagree that a working mother can establish just as secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother. A far greater percentage of African women disagrees that young children suffer if their mothers work, and that family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. White women are far more likely to agree that young children suffer when their mothers work. African women are far more accepting of single parenting, although around a quarter of both African and White women disagree that a single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents can.

Among non-poor women, White women's attitudes therefore reflect a greater adherence to the main indicators of intensive mothering ideology – in essence that women's work causes suffering for children and family – than Africans. However, the high percentage (between 20 and 31%) of White women who neither agree nor disagree with all but the first question (on working mothers' relationships with children) suggests that White women's attitudes

regarding the impact of mothers working and single parenting, may be in flux, which further suggests that the dominance of intensive mothering ideology may be under contestation.

Greater support for single parenting seems to indicate less support by African women for intensive mothering. The gendered roles and unequal interpersonal power dynamic, which, in a nuclear family provide the facilitating framework for intensive mothering, are not characteristic of one-parent families. Greater disagreement among Africans, generally, that children and families suffer when women work suggests more acceptance of work as an integral part of child-raising, and not as something detrimental to child and family wellbeing.

A further exploration by language group has been done amongst African non-poor women, using the Sotho-Tswana and Nguni language groups only, as these constitute the majority languages spoken by Africans in this population. The sample size of Venda and Tsonga speaking language groups in this data set is too small to accurately represent them, and they have therefore been excluded.

Comparisons between Sotho-Tswana and Nguni language speakers reveal consistency between both groups in attitudes towards a working mother's relationship with her child, and whether or not a young child suffers when his/her mother works. However, a considerably higher percentage of Sotho-Tswana than Nguni speakers disagrees that the family suffers when the woman works full time. Comparisons earlier between single and non-single parents indicated that amongst non-poor women, more single parents disagree that the family suffers when the woman works. While Sotho-Tswana and Nguni language groups have similar rates of parents amongst women, 61% and 62% respectively; of all Sotho-Tswana women parents, 51% are single, and of all Nguni speaking women parents, 48% are single. The slightly higher rate of single parenthood amongst Sotho-Tswana speakers may contribute towards the difference in attitudes between the two groups as to whether or not the family suffers when the woman works.

Table 8. Attitudes by race of non-poor women to motherhood, family and working

	White	African	Sotho	Nguni
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her child as a non-working mother:				
Disagree	**17.64 (.03)**	**21.52 (.02)**	**22.75 (.04)**	**22.34 (.03)**
Neutral	**13.07 (.03)**	**8.21 (.02)**	**5.93 (.02)**	**7.66 (.02)**
Agree	**69.29 (.04)**	**70.27 (.03)**	**71.32 (.03)**	**70.00 (.04)**
2. A young child (<5 years) suffers if his/her mother works:				
Disagree	**29.85 (.04)**	**41.17 (.03)**	**42.15 (.04)**	**41.16 (.04)**
Neutral	**20.92 (.04)**	**18.15 (.02)**	**18.03 (.04)**	**18.61 (.03)**
Agree	**49.23 (.04)**	**40.48 (.03)**	**39.82 (.04)**	**40.23 (.04)**
3. A single parent can bring up a child just as well as two parents can:				
Disagree	**25.31 (.04)**	**23.91 (.02)**	**21.54 (.04)**	**26.94 (.04)**
Neutral	**22.02 (.03)**	**7.79 (.02)**	**12.10 (.03)**	**3.72 (.01)**
Agree	**52.67 (.04)**	**68.30 (.03)**	**66.36 (.04)**	**69.34 (.04)**
4. Family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job:				
Disagree	**33.91 (.04)**	**50.55 (.03)**	**54.33 (.04)**	**46.31 (.04)**
Neutral	**31.38 (.04)**	**15.74 (.02)**	**12.50 (.03)**	**18.54 (.03)**
Agree	**34.71 (.04)**	**33.71 (.03)**	**33.17 (.04)**	**35.15 (.04)**

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

4.9 Support for collective mothering

The focus of the last section was to compare attitudes of subgroups in the population to four statements by which support for intensive mothering ideology can be measured. This final section explores attitudes to collective mothering.

In the attitudinal survey, respondents are also asked what their preferred type of childcare for preschool children of working, single mothers would be, if the government were to provide this. Three response options are provided, and there is opportunity for respondents to suggest an alternative that they might prefer. Two of the response options concern the provision of a crèche/nursery, and the proximity of its location to work or home. The third is the offer of a grant paid to a friend or relative to look after the child.

The wording of the question may be seen below:

> Q163: If government provided childcare support for pre-school children of working single parents which types of provision do you think would be best? Crèche /nursery near place of work; crèche/nursery near home; a grant for a friend or relative to look after the children; other (specify) … (multiple responses acceptable).

The ideology of collective mothering supports the care of a biological mother's children by others in her community. Of particular interest for exploring support of collective mothering is the level of preference for the offer of a government grant to a friend or family member to provide the childcare. A notably higher rate of agreement to this option amongst Africans, compared with Whites, could indicate extant support for collective mothering in African society.

Of the three care options given, provision of child care at a crèche near home attracted the most support, with almost half of the respondents opting for this. The option of a crèche/nursery near work was preferred by 30% of respondents. The option of a grant paid to a friend or family member attracted the least overall support. Just under one fifth of respondents agreed that this would be preferred. Less than one per cent of respondents suggested alternatives to the three listed options.

To explore differences in support for collective mothering among the subgroups, cross tabulations were run using this response option and all the variables listed previously. A consistent response in support of the grant option was obtained from close to 20% of respondents across all the subgroups except for three. The exceptions were from Sotho-Tswana speakers, residents in urban informal areas and the poor, all of whom show greater support for the grant. Only the responses to the provision of the grant have been tabulated as

these speak directly to support for collective mothering, and thus have direct relevance which the other options do not. Results are described in Table 9.

In most instances, women are marginally more likely to support the grant than men. The greatest difference (three percentage points) by gender exists among the Sotho-Tswana, where women express greater support for the grant. Although there appears to be no difference in the level of support for the grant between Africans and Whites, using the language variable as an indicator of culture, there is a difference between Sotho-Tswana and Nguni speakers. Sotho-Tswana speakers are five percentage points more likely than Nguni speakers to support the payment of a grant to a family friend or relative to provide childcare.

The poor are more likely than the non-poor to choose the grant option. In this instance greater support comes from men, rather than women. This preference by the poor is reflected also in urban informal areas, where considerably more residents opt for the grant, compared with residents in urban formal areas. At 28%, this is the highest percentage of support for the grant across all the sub groups. It is likely to be both the high prevalence of poverty and the nature of living arrangements in informal areas that account for this support.

There does not appear to be strong support for paid care provided by friends or relatives. This is unexpected, particularly in a climate of high unemployment and poverty. Low support may also indicate that collective mothering is not something which can be commodified, but is rather an ethos of care shared amongst (mainly African) women for their children.

Table 9. Support for grant paid to friend/relative to provide childcare

VARIABLE	All	Men	Women
RACE			
African	20.49 (.01)	20.22 (.02)	20.74 (.01)
White	20.74 (0.03)	21.58 (.04)	19.53 (.03)
LANGUAGE			
Sotho-Tswana	23.48 (.02)	21.76 (.04)	24.88 (.03)
Nguni	18.69 (.02)	18.32 (.03)	19.00 (.02)
LOCATION			
Urban formal	19.57 (.01)	19.02 (.02)	20.08 (.02)
Urban informal	28.15 (.03)	28.25 (.05)	28.07 (.04)
Rural	18.96 (.02)	18.61 (.02)	20.69 (.01)
SOCIO-ECONOMIC			
Poor	22.52 (.01)	23.15 (.02)	22.00 (.02)
Non-poor	18.32 (.01)	17.32 (.02)	19.44 (.02)
PARENTAL STATUS			
Parent	20.38 (.02)	20.14 (.02)	20.49 (.01)
Non Parent	20.45 (.01)	20.20 (.02)	20.68 (.01)
RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT			
Single	20.45 (.02)	20.18 (.02)	20.73 (.01)
Non-single	20.61 (.01)	20.50 (.02)	20.72 (.01)

Source: SASAS 2007

Note: The data have been weighted to represent population estimates. Standard errors are in parentheses.

4.10 Conclusion

The primary aim of this chapter was to explore attitudes indicating support for intensive mothering ideology. I expected that Whites would indicate a higher level of agreement that family life, and young children in particular, suffer when their mothers work. I expected less

support for these indicators of intensive mothering ideology amongst Africans because of their perceived traditional support for collective mothering ideology. I anticipated that men would be stronger in their agreement that families suffer when women work, due to their reluctance to sway the status quo which upholds caring as women's work. My secondary aim in this chapter was to explore, as far as possible using a single indicator, support among Africans for collective mothering. This would be indicated by a higher level of support for a grant paid to a relative or friend to provide childcare. I introduced and described the variables used for this analysis, namely socio-demographic characteristics, as well as those measuring economic status. I then presented the list of general questions regarding the impact of mothers' work on family life and children, and general support for mothers working.

The results reveal that attitudes to mothers working are overwhelmingly supportive, in that there is a high level of agreement that structures should be put in place to facilitate them realizing their work aspirations. This is not, however, at the cost of their wellbeing if they do not work, as it emerged that support for non-working single mothers is also high. Notwithstanding this broad-based support, results show that concern regarding the potentially negative impact of mothers working increases when this work is full time, and further when the mother has young children, except for single mothers, on whom there is greater societal pressure to work.

Comparisons of attitudes by subgroups reveal that Whites are more strongly influenced by intensive mothering ideology than are Africans. This result was obscured in the first comparison of all Whites with all Africans, as poverty evidently influences attitudes, and the prevalence of poverty among Whites and Africans is not equal. A subsequent comparison of the attitudes of White and African non-poor women reveals that a far greater percentage of White women agrees that young children of working mothers, and family life of women who work fulltime, suffer as a result. Africans show greater support for single parenting and acceptance of women working, suggesting not only that African mothering ideology is not extensively informed by values of intensive mothering ideology, but also that alternative mothering ideologies which combine the caring and providing roles of women, thus reducing the likelihood of intrapersonal conflict, are more prevalent amongst Africans. Non-poor men of both race groups indicate stronger agreement that young children suffer when women work, which is congruent with intensive mothering ideology. However, neither White nor African males agreed more strongly than women in partnerships that family life suffers when

women work fulltime. This is perhaps because the burden of orchestrating family life and caring not only for children but also for men, in gendered family structures falls to women, and for working women there is immense pressure to fulfil both roles adequately. There was the strongest disagreement with this statement from single mothers, whose non-participation in gender-laden partnerships may shield them from this pressure.

It is difficult to test, using these data, whether or not attitudes among Africans who are less supportive of intensive mothering, are more supportive of collective mothering. Using the data available to me, I used one possible test, an indication that a grant paid to a family member or friend to provide carework would be the preferred care option. However, responses to a range of questions designed to test support for collective mothering, were they available, would be a more reliable indicator than responses to a single question. It is not possible, with the use of a single question, to explore or reveal the complexity of collective mothering. Nonetheless, the results as an initial, exploratory indicator of support for collective mothering are interesting.

There was very little to indicate from the responses to the chosen question, that collective mothering is the preferred option of care among Africans. There is no difference in support shown between Africans and Whites, and no difference in attitudes by gender. Above average support was shown for the payment of a grant, to a friend or relative, by the poor, residents of urban informal areas, and Sotho-Tswana speakers. The possible implications of this are discussed fully in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 How prevalent is intensive mothering ideology?

This study aimed to explore the prevalence, in South Africa, of intensive mothering ideology, and document evidence of alternative mothering ideologies. This was motivated by a predominance of international literature on intensive mothering ideology, and the consistent findings of qualitative South African research of a high prevalence of intensive mothering ideology in individual mothering narratives. Whether or not these findings hold true for a larger, more representative sample of South African women and men, beyond the small core of predominantly White women who had participated in this qualitative research, has not previously been explored. Does the perception that children and families suffer when mothers work – the hallmark of intensive mothering ideology – hold equally in communities where historically, child-care responsibilities have been shared between family and community members?

The study examined quantitative attitudinal data collected in the 2007 SASAS. The analysis of these data suggests that differing contexts give rise to varying levels of support for the indicators of intensive mothering ideology that were tested. Fewer than one third of White women disagree that young children suffer when their mothers work, and just on one third disagree that the family suffers when the woman works. This confirms that for the large majority of White women the carer-provider conflict is very real. Between 20 and 30% expressed that they neither agree nor disagree with these statements, and the cumulative 70% that have reservations or agree suggests that intensive mothering ideology strongly guides the mothering ethos in this subgroup.

The responses indicate that White men do not share these concerns to the same extent. This can possibly be attributed to the fact that men's parenting role has historically been defined chiefly as that of 'provider'. As a result, male identity does not rest, in the way women's does, on the ability to fulfil a 'nurturing' parent role. Expectations of womanhood are enmeshed with women's ability to parent well, in particular to fulfil the role of the good mother. The way intensive mothering ideology has constructed the good mother emphasises

her as indispensable; the success of her child (developing to her or his full potential) depends on her availability and commitment to prioritising and addressing her child's perceived needs. Taking into account White women's perceptions that women working has a negative impact on young children and family life, the large percentage who agrees that the quality of the relationship between the working mother and child is not impaired by mothers working, is unexpected. The fact that the age of the working mother's children was not specified in this question may reflect a greater tolerance for mothers working once their children are older. It may also suggest, perhaps, that reduced inputs that the child might experience in his/her mother's absence might be the cause of the suffering, and furthermore, that these cannot adequately be provided by others in her place. This coheres with the notion of the indispensable mother.

A focus on the context of this subgroup indicates that within this group the prevalence of poverty is very low. The percentage of single parents (seven percent) is also small. Together with the finding that just under half of White South African adults disagree, or are ambivalent, that a single parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can, this suggests that this subgroup still subscribes quite strongly to the nuclear family norm. Thus, considering this subgroup's continued support for the nuclear family which, to a large degree facilitates intensive mothering, its apparent commitment to intensive mothering ideology is unsurprising. While intensive mothering ideology has been described as predominantly a White, middle-class phenomenon, it is not possible in this study to test its prevalence among working class or poor White South Africans due to the low representivity of this subgroup in this data set.

Comparisons between African and White non-poor women suggest that the prevalence of intensive mothering ideology amongst these African women does not match that of White women. The high level of support for single parents, and stronger disagreement that young children and family life suffers when mothers work, suggests that these women do not experience the same degree of carer-provider conflict as do White non-poor women. This seems to affirm the view that (non-poor) African women recognise 'providing' as an appropriate and integral element of mothering. However, there are notable differences in the attitudes of non-poor and poor African women, for whom choices of appropriate child care, when faced with work obligations, are constrained.

Indications are that for poor women, and women who live in informal urban areas in particular, wellbeing for children and the family is at most serious risk when mothers work. Poor women evidence the highest level of agreement (of all the subgroups) that young children and the family suffer when mothers work. They are the most doubtful among Africans that single parents can raise a child as well as two parents can. As de Villiers (2011) suggested, poverty seems to have an undeniable impact on poor women's perception of their ability to mother effectively – as they feel would be appropriate to meet the needs of their children and families.

The marked difference in levels of agreement and disagreement between the poor and non-poor, regarding the impact of women working on their young children and families, suggests that poverty may be a confounding variable. As the aim of this study was to report on descriptive findings, and not show causality, it is beyond the scope of this study to explore this further. However, this would be an important consideration for further research wishing to better understand attitudes toward mothering, among the poor. Although agreement that young children suffer, when their mothers work, has been used in this study as an indicator of intensive mothering ideology, it would be premature and ill-advised to make assumptions about this where poverty may be a determining factor of attitudes, before such further research has been done to explore the nature of the relationship.

Although a higher percentage of poor African women, than men, agrees that young children suffer when their mothers work, the reverse is true among non-poor Africans, where a substantially larger percentage of men than women, agree with this statement. This suggests that these men would agree that it was more appropriate for mothers of young children not to leave them to engage in paid work. While this is an indicator for intensive mothering ideology, in this subgroup of non-poor Africans, men also indicate strong support for single parenthood, which contradicts support for intensive mothering. Around two thirds agree that one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents can. While this seems to be something of an anomaly, a focus on the social context may be informative.

South Africa is currently experiencing higher rates of single parenthood, and longer periods of single status among adults, than have previously been recorded. While some research indicates that women, in particular, may prefer to remain single, there is research also to suggest that marriage aspirations have not waned, and that entry into marriage is constrained by the economic climate. This highlights some of the complexities surrounding marriage and

parenthood in contemporary African society. In these circumstances, a failure to support single parenthood would in effect mean support for a childless society except in increasingly infrequent instances when marriages do take place. Complex situations, such as those where exercising choice is constrained by aspects of the macro environment, are often the site of disjunctures between ideology and practice.

Approximately 50% of African women and men, poor and non-poor, disagrees that family life suffers when the woman works, which on the whole suggests that among Africans, women's caring and providing roles are integrated with less conflict, than among White South Africans. However, there is an approximately seven percentage point difference between women and men who agree with the statement, with women more likely to agree. Among women who are parents, a far lower percentage of single (30%), as compared with non-single (40%), African women agrees that family life suffers when the woman works. Similarly, a greater percentage of non-single than single-women parents agrees that children under five suffer if their mothers work.

This suggests on one hand, that relationship status for single women parents may account for a greater divergence from the view that family life and children suffer when women work; and on the other hand, that women in partnerships may experience greater carer-provider conflict than do single women. This difference is potentially due to a number of factors. To reduce levels of dissonance between how things are, and how individuals believe things ought to be, individual attitudes may change to reflect more closely the individual's life circumstances. Thus, for single women, where integrating paid work with family life is most often a necessity, there may be greater acceptance of the appropriateness of this. Women in partnerships may have different expectations of their role in the family, and different aspirations regarding working and staying at home that may not be as realisable by single women parents. It is possible, too, that women in relationships may be under pressure to meet their partners' expectations of the woman's role in the family, representing additional, possibly onerous time demands on women that are that much more difficult for women who work outside of the home to fulfil. Overall, the much higher percentage of (all) African women who disagrees that family life suffers when the woman works suggests a far lower prevalence of intensive mothering ideology among Africans than Whites. Whether or not this may be due, in part, to collective mothering, is discussed in the next section.

5.2 Alternative ideologies: exploring the support for collective mothering

As discussed in the literature review, research indicates that supportive extended-family networks of (usually) women care-givers are an enabling feature in the lives of mothers who work. A caveat, however, is raised by de Villiers (2011, 7), who states that the assumption about the availability of this extended family network of care has not been verified, and that the desirability of collective mothering is not proven. I attempted to explore support for collective mothering, using as an indicator the response 'a grant for a friend or relative', to the query: 'If government provided childcare support for pre-school children of working single parents which types of provision do you think would be best?' It must be noted that a more conclusive, deeper understanding of the support for, and in addition prevalence of, collective mothering would require the use of more than the single indicator used in this study. Nonetheless, attitudes to this issue as revealed by the single indicator are interesting, and suggest that this subject is deserving of further research, using data that is more tailored to providing insights into collective mothering.

Respondents' choice of a friend or family member, to be paid a grant to take care of a working, single mother's preschool child was taken as the indicator of desirability of, and support for, collective mothering. While it was anticipated that Africans (because of their heritage of collective mothering ideology) would be most supportive of this, there was practically no difference between race groups. Furthermore, among Africans generally it was the least popular option of the three offered. However, between the two African language groups tested, the Sotho-Tswana language group was more supportive of this option than the Nguni language group. This heterogeneity in attitudes to collective mothering among Africans may arise from the different kinship systems informed by Nguni and Sotho-Tswana worldviews. Further research to tease out the differences between African language groups, apparent in this study, may contribute further insights into differences in levels of support for collective mothering among Africans.

The findings of this study indicate that the most preferred option of childcare (of those suggested in the survey) for a pre-school child, is a crèche or nursery near the mother's home. This does strongly suggest that in certain instances, alternatives to care by extended family and friends is considered appropriate; further, that where there is choice, collective care is not necessarily the preferred option. It is possible, considering the South African context of

unmet social needs and changing family structures, that ongoing collective mothering is an expedient economic strategy, perpetuated as much by need as tradition.

5.3 Conclusion

This study was guided by Arendell's (2000) observations of the importance of exploring the social locations and structural contexts from within which women mother. To reiterate, aspects of these that Arendell (2000, 1202) raises questions about are: the ways in which women actively resist the dominant ideologies of mothering and family; the influence of region on mother's activities, taking into account migrancy, and location in rural and urban areas; and, the ways in which women collaborate with others in mothering activities.

This study confirms that while dominant mothering ideology in South Africa has sometimes profound impacts on the way women order their lives, it is also open to contestation. This is suggested by strong support for alternative family forms, a high prevalence of attitudes that neither accept nor refute intensive mothering ideology indicators, and, with relevance for collective mothering, the choice for institutionally-provided care for preschool children, rather than care by family members or friends.

Strong support among Africans for single parenting may, not withstanding the context of marriage barriers, be interpreted as a contestation of the gendered family norms that underpin traditional mothering ideologies. For women this may be a mechanism for distancing themselves from marital expectations – including accountability to, and care of (usually) male partners – although it does not address the gendered nature of child care. This has direct implications for men also, as women's mothering ideology traditionally has been contingent on the role of the spouse, as father of the children, in the (heterosexual) family. Although not the subject of this study, it is pertinent to note here that the context of high male unemployment, combined with the rising prevalence of single women undertaking the work of caring and providing for their children, has created tension between men's current lived experience and their traditional identity as family providers[13].

Concerning the traction of intensive mothering ideology for South Africa's White middle class, its indicators appear to be more firmly supported by women than men. However, the

[13] For in-depth research on this, see Hunter (2010), Madhavan *et al* (2012), Richter *et al* (2012), and Swartz and Bhana (2009).

high incidence of attitudes that indicate neither agreement nor disagreement with the indicators, among these women, suggests that intensive mothering ideology is not uncontested, and that alternative views (unspecified in the SASAS 2007 attitudinal survey) may also have traction. Potentially included in these is extensive mothering ideology, which enables women to renegotiate their primary identities as caretakers, by acknowledging that meeting mothers' needs for self actualisation, specifically by undertaking paid work, is as important as meeting children's needs.

Among African women and men generally, there is little apparent difference in levels of support for intensive mothering indicators. The differences in findings for African, as compared with White, non-poor women suggest that intensive mothering ideology is not as prevalent among this subpopulation of African society. These women indicate stronger support for women working, suggested by their substantially stronger disagreement that children and family life suffer when women work. This, together with their greater support for single parenting would suggest less support for intensive mothering among African women. However, it is not clear whether or not this in turn implies that African women are therefore more supportive of collective mothering. The indicator used to test support for collective mothering in this study was not strongly supported. This may reflect a disparity between the prevalence of, and preference for, collective mothering, which could not be explored using the available data. It is likely that the commitment to collective mothering still has enormous value, in rural areas in particular, as these are typically South Africa's labour-sending areas. Women in informal urban areas that have a greater migrant population than formal urban areas, expressed a stronger desire for this type of collaborative support than women in other circumstances. Collective mothering – its prevalence and people's preference for it – might be more fully explored with the development of additional survey questions designed to address this.

This discussion overall speaks to the aspects of mothering that Arendell outlined as requiring additional exploration. The findings of this study and the understanding of mothering in South Africa generally would be further enhanced with additional research. This study used as its point of departure the findings of qualitative South African research, on the prevalence of what has been referred to as a largely White, middle-class mothering ideology. It sought to explore its prevalence among a broader population, in particular among Africans, who have a heritage of extended family structure. However, a larger study, including South Africa's Coloured and Indian racial groups, would be informative on the prevalence – beyond the two

groups studied here – of intensive, and other, mothering ideologies throughout South Africa. An expanded focus on how South Africans conceptualise motherhood would be enriched with the inclusion of perspectives on the role of fathers in parenting their children. Longitudinal research would assist to monitor shifts in mothering ideology in South Africa. Furthermore, simultaneous studies of state policy to identify its underpinning ideology would reveal its resonance, or dissonance, with ideological persuasions 'on the ground'. Ideology is never static and continued study should reveal contestation and changes over time, in the mothering ideology that is fundamental to the birthing and raising of children, and grooming of adults as 'good' parents.

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Appendix 1

South African Social Attitudes Survey, 2007: Sampling and Weighting

Mode of data collection : Face to face interview. Paper based instrument, completed by fieldworkers.

Sampling : The South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) is a nationally representative survey series that has been conducted on an annual basis by the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC) since 2003. The survey has been designed to yield a representative sample of adults aged 16 years and older. The sampling frame for the survey is the HSRC's second Master Sample, which was designed in 2007 and consists of 1 000 primary sampling units (PSUs). The 2001 population census enumerator areas (EAs) were used as PSUs.

These PSUs (EAs) were drawn, with probability proportional to size, from a sampling frame created by Professor David Stoker containing all 80,787 of the 2001 EAs. This sampling frame uses the estimated number of dwelling units (DUs) in an EA (PSU) as a measure of size. The sampling frame was annually updated to coincide with StatsSA's mid-year population estimates in respect of the following variables: province, gender, population group, and age group. In updating the 2007 version of this sampling frame, additional use was made of (a) the GeoTerraImage (GTI) residential structure count in all metropolitan EAs in 2004/2005 and (b) the ESKOM counts of dwelling units in all cities, towns, townships and villages.

The HSRC's second master sample excludes special institutions (such as hospitals, military camps, old age homes, school and university hostels), recreational areas, industrial areas, vacant EAs as well as the 1000 EAs included in the first HSRC's master sample (2003-2006). It therefore focuses on dwelling units or visiting points as secondary sampling units (SSUs), which have been defined as 'separate (non-vacant) residential stands, addresses, structures, flats, homesteads, etc.'.

For the 2007 SASAS round of interviewing, a sub-sample of 500 PSUs was drawn from the HSRC's 2nd Master Sample. Three explicit stratification variables were used, namely province, geographic type and majority population group. Within each stratum, the allocated number of PSUs was drawn using proportional to size probability sampling with the estimated number of dwelling units in the PSU as measure of size. In each of these drawn PSUs, 14 dwelling units were selected and systematically grouped into two sub-samples of seven, each corresponding to the two SASAS questionnaire versions.

Selection of individuals

Interviewers called at each visiting point selected from the 2nd HSRC master sample and listed all those eligible for inclusion in the sample, that is, all persons currently aged 16 or over and resident at the selected visiting point. The interviewer then selected one respondent using a random selection procedure based on a Kish grid.

Weighting : The data were weighted to take account of the fact that not all the units covered in the survey had the same probability of selection. The weighting reflected the relative selection probabilities of the individual at the three main stages of selection: PSU, DU (or visiting point) and individual.

PSUs in the Northern Cape as well as in certain other provinces were over-sampled, because of the small population size in these provinces and a desire to ensure a large enough sample of the smaller population groups. This as well as the variation in the population size of the selected PSUs imply that the selection probabilities of the individuals in the sample vary from PSU to PSU, resulting into differences in the weights to be assigned to these individuals. These calculated individual weights were finally benchmarked to be equal to Statistics South Africa's most recent mid-year estimates using as benchmark variables: province, gender, population group and 5-year age group with the view to represent the South African population 16 years and older as closely as possible.

Keyword(s) : CHILDCARE, CLIMATE CHANGES,CRIME,DEMOCRACY,ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, EDUCATION,EDUCATIONAL LEVEL,ELECTIONS,EMPLOYMENT GLOBAL WARMING, GOVERNANCE,HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS,IMMIGRANTS INCOME,INTERGROUP RELATIONS, MARITAL STATUS, MORAL VALUES OCCUPATIONS, POVERTY RACIALDISCRIMINATION,RELIGION, SERVICE DELIVERY, SOCCER WORLD CUP,TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS, VOTING