

**FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S PARENTING PRACTICES: A STUDY OF
THREE DIFFERENT FAMILY STRUCTURES IN SELEBI PHIKWE, BOTSWANA.**

BY

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A research dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the degree of

PhD (SOCIAL WORK)

In the

FACULTY OF APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES

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DECLARATION-PLAGIARISM

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I extend my sincere appreciation to all women who participated in the research study for sacrificing their time to share their parenting experiences with me.

I thank all my family members and relatives who supported me during the course of my studies.

I remain grateful to all my colleagues at the University of Botswana and the University of KwaZulu-Natal PhD Cohort for their support.

I shall forever remember my supervisor, Prof Vishanthie Sewpaul who gave me constructive feedback and rekindled my hope to continue with my studies. Professor Sewpaul I appreciate your patience and the immense time you invested to help me achieve my dream.

There is a Setswana saying that, “Mojamorago ke Kgosi” which literally means that whoever is dished last or given a chance to speak last is the king. I express my deepest appreciation to my spouse Emmanuel for offering me immense support through the progression of my studies. My academic journey could have been more challenging and painful without your encouragement. You deserve a gold medal!

To my sons Elroy Motheo and Eliab Mopati, I shall remain hopeful that the sacrifice I made to pursue further studies was worth it and that it will benefit you and other African children in the future.

Thank you God, I could not have made it this far without you. (World Bank, 2015a)

DEDICATION

The thesis is dedicated to my children, husband, mother, brother and all the parents who are committed to parenting children regardless of their positions in society.

ACRONYMS

ACRWC: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

AIDS: Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

BCL: Botswana Colliery Limited

BAIS: Botswana AIDS Impact Survey

BIDPA: Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis

CP: Corporal Punishment

DCF: Dual Career Families

FHF: Female Headed Families

FWUPE: Families where Women were Unemployed and their Partners were Employed

GIEACPC: Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment of Children

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IASSW: International Association of Schools of Social Work

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

PBC: Parent Behavior Checklist

PMTCT: Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission

PTA: Parents- Teachers Association

SES: Socio-economic status

SPEDU: Selebi Phikwe Economic Diversification Unit.

TV: Television

UN: United Nations

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

VDC: Village Development Committees

ABSTRACT

The majority of women in Botswana continue to be primary parenting players despite research findings that, compared with men, women in the country are more impoverished, are prone to abuse, and that their rate of participation in decision making processes is limited. Taking into account the foregoing, and without disregard for the importance of men in parenting, this research examined factors that influenced women's parenting practices within female headed families (FHF), dual career families (DCF) and families where the women were unemployed and their partners or spouses were employed (FWUPE). The study was informed by the qualitative-phenomenological paradigm, underscored by critical theory, with an emphasis on intersectionality as the conceptual framework. Snowball and purposive sampling strategies were used to access 24 participants, eight from each of the family structures. In depth face-to-face interviews, genograms and eco-maps were used to explore, understand and describe women's parenting practices as well as the factors that expedited or hindered positive parenting practices. I identify my own subject location as a researcher, educator and mother within the political and cultural context of Botswana, my taken-for-granted assumptions about parenting, and the reflexive strategies that I used to guard against my biases and to challenge my assumptions an approach that underlines the salience of critical theory. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study indicated that rather than family structure per se, it was structural factors like education and socio-economic status that intersected to influence some parenting practices. The women's narratives reflected that dominant cultural constructions of motherhood and fatherhood, and legislation entrenches the more peripheral role of men in childrearing. Given the premium placed on parental authority and power over children, and that the law and culture in Botswana coalesce to support corporal punishment (CP), it was not surprising that authoritarianism characterized most parenting practices, and that CP was widely used. Based on the study findings, recommendations are made in relation to social work education and training, practice, policy and research, with an emphasis on contesting discriminatory cultural practices and legislation so as to enhance family functioning, promote de-gendered positive parenting practices and gender equality, and to ensure the best interests of children.

Key words: parenting practices, family structures, socio-structural factors, critical theory, human rights, dominant constructions, reflexivity, family policy

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

This thesis consists of nine chapters, divided into five sections. The first section is comprised of Chapter one, which introduces the study. It provides the background of the study, the research problem, the research questions, the theoretical framework that underpins the study, the significance of the study, and the research study setting. Definitions of key terms are also provided in this Chapter.

CHAPTER ONE

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

As in other Sub Saharan countries, women in Botswana are at the core of parenting when compared to their male counterparts. According to Robinson (2014, p. 5), as a result of societal positioning of men as bread winners and women as caregivers, there is a dominant belief that being the “superb” mother is a symbol of womanhood (superb being put in inverted commas to represent an idealistic way of interpreting parenting practices). Women who do not meet such representations are often pathologised as incompetent parents. Parenting practices constitute observable, change and goal oriented behaviors that have a direct link to or effect on children’s behavioral outcomes as well as their lives (Brenner & Fox, 1999) and they are influenced by various structural factors such as gendered cultural practices, family structure, economic challenges, and different forms of discrimination at family and societal levels. Ntini and Sewpaul (2017) argue that superficial analysis should be challenged as it fails to acknowledge the influences of dominant societal discourses, for example patriarchy on socio-structural systems such as the family, and the intersecting nature of discourse and practice. Various texts (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming; Ruiz-Casares & Heymann, 2009; Weis & Toolis, 2010) conceded the impact of socio-structural factors on parenting practices. Dominant structural factors and societal discourses can either facilitate or hinder adoption of positive parenting practices.

This study was informed by critical/structural social work theory and the lens of intersectionality to examine factors influencing women’s parenting practices in female headed families (FHF), dual career families (DCF), as well as families where women were jobless and their live-in partners or spouses were employed (FWUPE). For ease of access to a historical overview of the women’s parenting practices the study selected women who had at least one adolescent child at the time of the interviews. According to Akinsola and Popovich (2002) a household refers to a single dwelling occupied by a single person or more people that may be genetically or socially related, and a family structure as characterized by gender, age, marital status, and head of household status to name a few. The terms household and family tend to be conflated, but they are different. A family is seen to be “an

intergenerational social group organised and governed by social norms regarding descent and affinity, reproduction and the nurturing socialisation of the young” (Amoateng & Richter, 2007, p. 13), includes foster and adopted children, and might not share the same physical space, while a household might be made up of unrelated people living together. Families where both parents are employed are commonly called dual career families (Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 2002). For the purpose of the study, employment refers to engagement in any income generating activities for most times of the day. I refer to families where both the woman and her partner lived together and were away from home most of the day for the purpose of income generation as dual career families (DCF) regardless of the types of activities they undertook. The second structure (FHF) included families where women were employed and heading their families.

Mookodi (2000) described female headship in Botswana families as multifaceted due to decision making practices regulated by structural factors and personal agency. Structural factors that often characterize the head of the family include, but are not limited to economic status, educational qualification, age, and cultural beliefs. In my study, I define female headed families as families with a single female adult or a family with both male and female adults, but characterized by a female adult who contributed more financial resources, used a lump sum of her personal income to provide most of the basic needs in the family and made most of the parenting decisions for the greater time of children’s needs, growth and development. Therefore, in my study, all the families that met all the characteristics aforementioned were defined as female headed families regardless of the marital status of the women. This was done despite the presence of men in some families, as long as women assumed headship and major responsibilities. The third category (FWUPE) included women selected from families where the father or male partner was employed and the women were unemployed. The unemployed were those who were not engaged in any major income generating activities, stayed at home most of the day, and largely relied on their partners for family revenue. The impact of family structures on parenting practices is propounded in Chapter four.

Structural social work theory and Intersectionality were both appropriate to use for the investigation of women’s parenting practices situated in different family structures because they are rooted in critical theory. The justification for the choice of theories is provided in Chapter three. Someone could ask “How can one remove men out of the equation despite the intention to promote social justice in parenting?” While warning about not essentialising the experiences of particular groups of women, African black women are more prone to

oppression and discrimination, and as a result they are more likely to be impoverished, less educated and live in poor and unsafe neighborhoods (Sewpaul, 2013). It is within this context that women are expected to parent children and engage in parenting practices that conform to both cultural and legal expectations. Sewpaul (2013) further notes that given the extent to which gender-role stereotypes are “inscribed in our blood”, both women and men are complicit in their reproduction, and that sometimes women are the ones who reinforce gender discrimination and the subordination of women in society. The focus on women in this study does not dismiss the value of men or fathers in parenting. Since the main intention of the study was to identify parenting practices in Botswana, and based on the literature that underscored women as the main child caregivers (Defo & Dimbuene, 2012; Maharaj & Sewpaul, 2016), especially during early childhood, I found it prudent to focus on women, who were more accessible (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996) especially given the short time line I had to complete the research study. I discuss the methodology of the study in detail in Chapter six.

1.2 Research problem

Botswana has put in place several laws, policies and programs to combat violence, promote women’s economic independence and family welfare as well as maximize child protection. Despite major strides, the situation of women and children at family level has not adequately improved. Research reflects that Botswana women take care of children under gruesome conditions such as domestic violence, poverty, limited access to resources and high HIV prevalence, though the government and private sector have made efforts to improve their living conditions (United Nations, 2015). The family is important because it has to protect children to ensure that they are not negatively impacted by some of the social problems noted above. For example, when children are physically abused by their parents they develop the mentality that violence can be used to overcome challenges (Chaffin et al., 2004). Families also grapple with poverty because of economic inequality. Botswana is characterized by high inequality as 19.3% of the population were reported poor and among them 16% lived in absolute poverty (Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis: BIDPA, 2013). Poverty in Botswana is gendered because women are the most impoverished in the country. They have limited access to the labor market hence many of them are unemployed and often get low wage jobs (BIDPA, 2013). Such structural issues often contribute to negative parenting practices, such as poor feeding practices. Statistics showed

that 31.4% of children aged below five years in Botswana were malnourished (BIDPA, 2013). This could be related to poor feeding practices linked to inadequacy of nutritious food in families. Single parents and female headed families are more prone to abject poverty when compared to other families that often interfere with positive parenting practices (Daly et al., 2015). At national level, 55% of female headed families live in poverty whereas only 45% of male headed families experience a similar situation (Statistics Botswana, 2018). Additionally, 68% of males compared to only 56% of females participate in the labor force (World Bank, 2015). Health challenges impact women's economic lifestyles when compared to their counterparts. The national HIV prevalence rate among women is estimated at 20.8% compared with 15.6% for men (Republic of Botswana, 2013). This often impacts parents' ability to care for children as they have to cope with their poor economic status and their HIV status.

The vulnerability of women to poverty does not act in isolation to influence their parenting practices. Patriarchal society is arranged in such a way that women are marginalized in all domains of society, including the law. As a result of legal measures that are infused with biased cultural norms, women often carry the burden of caregiving roles (see Chapter five). Cultural norms dictate women's and men's roles in society, and consequently societal approval of women's parenting practices. Cultural norms regulate parenting of children, and play a critical role in gendered parenting practices (Liang, Fuller, & Singer, 2000). Lack of support by fathers exacerbates the hardships that women experience. Furthermore, most women in the country are granted custody of children (especially the younger ones) when their parents' divorce or separate (Machisa & Van Drop, 2012). Such practices reinforce societal assumptions that women care for children better than men, and that they can successfully raise children without their fathers' support. Gendered perceptions escalate the burden of parenting on women, despite the difficult circumstances under which they have to parent. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (African Union, 1999) emphasize that both parents are equally responsible for the care of their children. Decelerated implementation of the National Family Policy in Botswana seemed to worsen the functioning of families and subsequently negative parenting practices. The political, cultural, social and economic contexts in which parenting takes place impact parenting practices, thus the need to espouse the influence of dominant societal discourses and structural systems on family functioning and parenting practices (Maharaj & Sewpaul,

2016; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Osthus & Sewpaul, 2014; Robinson, 2014; Weis & Toolis, 2010).

There is limited literature and empirical research that adequately discuss parenting practices and the context in which parents make decisions, specifically the impact of structural factors on their choices of used and preferred parenting practices in Botswana. In addition, there is a need for research on families to inform policy and social services in developing countries like Botswana (United Nations, 2015). The government of Botswana engaged a consultancy company, called Tri-African Advisory Services that carried out a situational analysis of the family in Botswana in 2011; however, the report had limited information on parenting practices. The dearth of local literature has caused scholars and policy makers to overly depend on out dated texts and foreign materials that are often incompatible with the Botswana context in which decisions on parenting practices are taken. The gap unfavourably impacts family policy, practice and child protection measures in the country. The situation justifies the relevance of this study in Botswana. I relied on studies carried out in other countries due to lack of research with particular reference to Botswana. Moreover my research interests, personal experience as a parent as well as interest to support families and children to enhance their lives motivated me to undertake the research study.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

1.3.1 The aim of the study

The main aim of the study is to ascertain, interpret and describe factors that influence parenting practices of women with children in the following family structures: a) female headed families where the head of the family was employed, b) two parent families where both parents were employed c) a two parent family where the woman was unemployed and her partner was employed.

1.3.2 Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

1. What parenting practices were used by women in raising children?
2. What factors influenced the choice of a parenting practice?
3. What similarities existed in parenting practices among women across the different family structures?

4. What differences existed in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures?
5. What reasons accounted for the similarities and differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures?

1.3.3 *Specific objectives*

1. To understand parenting practices that women preferred and used in raising children.
2. To understand factors that influenced parenting practices of women.
3. To identify and document the similarities in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.
4. To identify and document the differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.
5. To identify reasons that accounted for similarities and differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned by critical/structural social work theory and intersectionality. Both critical social work theory and intersectionality appreciate the role of dominant discourses and social structures in preserving social injustice. Social structures are the institutionalized ways in which beliefs, ideas and socially constructed meanings are endorsed and reproduced within the structural systems such as social, political, legal and educational spheres (Allen, Lloyd, & Few, 2009). Some of the proponents of critical theory include scientists associated with Frankfurt school of thought such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse. The conventional theories focus on superficial explanations of issues but critical theory interrogates issues and is directed at facilitating social change. Critical theory builds on Foucault's idea that power is socially constructed and that dominant socio-cultural discourses shape individual circumstances (Foucault, 2012). Critical social work theory challenges social injustice emanating from structural, interpersonal and personal dynamics and recognizes the social construction of knowledge (Fook, 2003).

Critical/structural social work is rooted in Marxist ideas that caution that if we treat the individual and society as two separate entities there is a possibility to blame people who experience social injustice (Rossiter, 1997). Thus failure to challenge the individual/social dichotomy contributes to failure to challenge the dominant structures that perpetuate social injustice. Structural social work theory is of the view that because of social inequalities, isolation and disadvantages created by political, economic and social structures, and intersecting criteria like race, class and gender, people's choices are constrained. The theory acknowledges that social problems and personal challenges emanates from several interrelated injustices that originate from how our society is structured (Mullaly & Mullaly, 2010). That is, structural social work theory speaks to the overwhelming influence of societal power dynamics.

Critical theory calls for an analysis of women's diverse experiences beyond simple identification of experiences but to consider the underlying social systems, and multiple intersecting social criteria that cause difference. Critical theories are appealing because unlike the conventional theories they do not analyze issues based on dichotomy but rather they define issues as rooted in unjust social and structural systems. Abbey (2001) and Sewpaul (2013) criticized the dichotomous and biased analysis of issues, and as they challenge us to examine people's experiences beyond the individual level. Intersectionality is grounded in critical feminist theory and its principles are in line with critical-structural social work theory as it appreciates the impact of the complex intersection of various structural factors on preferred and used parenting practices. Intersectionality is embedded in feminist theory and social justice (Dill & Kohlman, 2012). Intersectionality recognizes that parents have diverse interrelating identities that mutually contribute to parenting practices. Intersectionality enlightens that related systems of oppression, domination, and discrimination are influenced by social criteria such as gender, race, religion, age and class which intersect in a multifaceted manner to influence human development and functioning (Sewpaul, 2013). Gender does not act in isolation to create and disperse power in families but rather acts collectively with diverse and encrusted identities and systems of power and privilege such as race, class, sexuality, age, nationality and ability to create inequalities that affect families and influence parenting practices (Allen et al., 2009; Cole, 2009; Mama, 2011). Intersectionality promotes a social justice approach that reveals sources of inequalities and dominance (Allen et al., 2009; Sewpaul, 2013). It is within the family that women might concurrently exercise power and privilege in one area, while experiencing oppression in another (Allen et al., 2009) that does impact parenting practices.

Intersectionality supports a structural social justice approach to family policy as proposed by Sewpaul (2005) in her critical analysis of South Africa's draft National Family Policy. This is what we need in Botswana if we were to deal with some of the structural challenges discussed in this thesis. According to Sewpaul (2005) families do not exist in isolation and therefore policies targeting families need to take into account structural forces that hinder their functioning such as systems of oppression, discrimination, racism, sexism, and patriarchy and income distribution. Accordingly, it was important to understand the nature of parenting practices of women in the study along the same lines because they carried out their parenting duties within similar contexts. In patriarchal societies such as Botswana parenting practices are gendered. Gender describes and assigns social roles according to people's sexual or biological differences to maintain social hierarchies. We often fail to reflect on or question gendered parenting practices because they are socio-culturally constructed and normalized (Sewpaul, 2013). Gendered parenting practices are influenced by the patriarchal nature of our society, characterized by male dominance and androcentric thinking and practices at different societal levels (Coltrane & Adams, 2008).

Critical theory has a high regard for empowerment and social justice and fits well with the consideration of research as a subjective process, the use of reflexivity as well as development of interventions that are empowering and focused on social justice. Reflexivity as an ideology that appreciates research as a subjective process was critical to the study (Chilisa, 2011;Denzin, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Margaret Fonow & Cook, 2005). Empowerment entails impartation of knowledge and skills that lead to consciousness raising as well as to allow them equitable access to resources and life changing opportunities (Larsen, Sewpaul, & Hole, 2014). Reflexivity challenged me to be aware of how my conscious and unconscious assumptions and beliefs influenced the research process as well as to raise my awareness on some of the dominant structures that I had always overlooked but that played important roles in parenting practices. Lastly, as a result of the use of critical theory, the recommendations provided are engrained in social justice, and they aim to empower multiple actors across various systems of society.

1.5 Significance of the Study

At the time of undertaking the research study it was distinct in its methodology and findings when compared to previous research studies conducted in Botswana on families and

children. While previous research studies on issues related to family in Botswana (Akindele & Trennepohl, 2008; Akinsola & Popovich, 2002; Babugura, 2008; Dintwa, 2010; Gaisie, 2000; Lucas, 2017) have been undertaken, they were not specifically informed by critical theory which is a defining feature of this research. The focus on this research was not on the family broadly, but on the parenting practices of women across three different family structures. The findings speak to the rights and welfare of children, which is a major concern locally and internationally. The results highlight the need for change at personal and structural levels as a way to empower parents, to promote the rights of children, and consequently bring social justice at both micro and macro levels.

The findings of the study provide a platform to sensitize social work students, practitioners and researchers on how structural systems converge to impact women's preferred and used parenting practices. Chapters seven and eight of the thesis provide a detailed discussion on the findings of the study. In Chapter nine, I discuss empowering recommendations embedded in the principle of social justice to reinforce social work training, practice and research in Botswana as well as to enhance family functioning, and to facilitate adoption of positive parenting practices by parents irrespective of gender.

The results and recommendations of the study will be a resource to policy makers with specific reference to family and child welfare. Policies that are based on empirical evidence are more effective because they are tailored towards the experiences and needs of the beneficiaries. The results and recommendations become handy to support proposals channelled towards development of social security and social protection programs. The recommendations of the study call for evaluation of existing biased policies, programs, and laws that maintain violation of human rights and social injustice in the society, such as the Employment Act and Children's Act. Establishing evidence based policies do not come easy. Gershoff (2010) highlights that policy makers often do not appreciate research findings based on political reasons. In such cases, social workers need to be more radical and advocate for policies that promote social justice.

The study bridged the gap in research with documentation of parenting practices in families in Botswana, and thus makes a valuable contribution to knowledge development. Ntarangwi (2012) articulated that research, similar to this study, provides opportunities to challenge western ideologies of parenting and the role of parents in the socialization of children. It also helps African scholars to re-think ways in which they document issues relating to parenting and childhood development in an African context. This is important because the use of critical theory to inform my study made it possible to bring to surface

some of the subtle but embedded abusive ways in our social structures that oppress women and children. The study has identified other research areas that need further examination, such as understanding men's or father's parenting practices in the context of Botswana (See Chapter nine).

1.6 Study Setting

The study was conducted at Selebi Phikwe, a town in the central district of Botswana. Selebi Phikwe is approximately 500 kilometers from the capital city, Gaborone. At the time of data collection, it was the third largest town in Botswana and relied mainly on copper-nickel mining revenue. The company that led the mining process was called Botswana Colliery Limited (BCL). It was unfortunate that after a few months of collecting data in 2016, the BCL mine was officially closed which left many of the residents unemployed. The mine was the largest employer of the residents and a source of income for a lot of families. However the town is still mainly populated with people who are employed by the government and private sectors and the government is currently trying to find ways of creating employment opportunities in the town. Selebi Phikwe Economic Diversification Unit (SPEDU) was established to diversify economic activities to reduce dependency on mining. Its population was 49411 in 2011 and it was expected to increase to 55133 in 2016 (Statistics Botswana, 2011). But since the mine closed towards the end of 2016, that could have been unlikely by the end of that year. Prior to undertaking the study, the percentage of males was slightly higher than females with the male to female ratio being 50.1% to and 49.9%. At the time of data collection, Selebi Phikwe had the highest HIV prevalence rate in the whole country at 27.5%, and females had a higher prevalence of 29.3% compared to 25.4% for men (Government of Botswana, 2013). This site was chosen mainly because Statistics Botswana (2011) showed that migration to urban areas as well as associational migration of dependent children was higher than in other areas. Of late, Botswana experienced an increased percentage of female headed households and female single parents in towns when compared to the past years (Statistics Botswana, 2018). Selebi Phikwe town offered an opportunity for participants' diverse socio-economic backgrounds given the high rates of migration from rural to urban areas as well as an increase in female headed households and female single parent families.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context of this study:

Empowerment from a critical perspective, has “as its key thrust, consciousness raising by engaging people in reflexive dialogue and activities to understand sources of oppression and/or privilege on their lives, and in doing so increasing people’s hope, self-esteem and creative potential to confront oppressive power dynamics and structural sources of injustices” (Sewpaul, 2014, p. 238). It includes equipping people with the necessary skills and knowledge, engaging people in forms of praxis that liberate them mentally, expanding opportunities, and connecting people to needed resources to positively influence their lives (Busch & Valentine, 2000; Larsen et al., 2014; Sewpaul & Jones, 2005).

Gender is a reproduction and presentation of behaviors based on one being male or female that has been endorsed by society or culture (Abbey, 2001). Gender is a socio-politically and culturally constructed concept where, “on the basis of biological manifestations, people have attached to them social descriptors and cultural extensions that have come to be widely accepted and naturalized to maintain social hierarchies” (Sewpaul, 2013). For the purpose of this study the following definition was accepted: “gender should be understood not as a ‘real’ social difference between men and women, but as a mode of discourse that relates to groups of subjects whose social roles are defined by their sexual/biological difference” (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 201).

Masculinity is the dynamic ways in which men and boys express themselves as determined by different socio-cultural norms African masculinities, embedded in colonialism, historical transformation, patriarchy, culture, and religion, manifest in diverse ways to determine women’s and men’s levels of power, roles, and responsibilities within the family and other societal structures (Uchendu, 2008).

Parenting denotes activities and behaviors adopted by parents to enable the physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing throughout the child’s lifespan (Danford, Schultz, & Marvicsin, 2015a; Liang et al., 2000).

Parenting practices are positive and negative goal-oriented behaviors that parents and family members use in their interaction with children (Bornstein & Cheah, 2006;

Tramonte, Gauthier, & Willms, 2015). For the purpose of this study, parenting practices, parenting approaches and parenting strategies were used interchangeably.

Parenting styles are constant multifaceted behaviors and beliefs that form the context in which parenting practices occur and have an indirect effect on children's behavioral outcomes (Brenner & Fox, 1999).

Patriarchy is a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions (Coltrane & Adams, 2008).

Social justice is a concept that has been broadly defined, but emphasis is on interrogation of the social, economic, political, and interpersonal factors that cause and maintain injustice, with the aim of affirming the dignity of people, working towards equality and providing equal opportunities to access necessary resources (Humphries, 2008).

1.8 Summary

Section one: Background

In this Chapter I deliberated on the context of the study. I presented the research problem, research questions, theoretical framework and the significance of the study in social work. Specific terms and acronyms were explained. The significance of the study in key social work areas of policy, research and practice was highlighted. Below I provide an outline of sections two to five and briefly highlight the content of the Chapters under each section.

Section Two: Literature Review

Section two is made up of Chapters two, three, four, five, which provide an overview of the literature about various aspects of parenting, childcare, parenting practices and related issues. Chapter two focuses on types of parenting and parenting practices. Chapter three discusses factors that influence parenting practices by exploring different theoretical perspectives. Chapter four explores how the link between family structures and resource availability impact parenting practices, and Chapter five focuses on examining cultural norms and children's rights, especially in the context of Botswana.

Section Three: Study approach and design

Section three is made up of Chapter six only, which highlights the study methodology by providing the steps and processes undertaken to complete the study such as sampling strategies, data collection and analysis methods, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. Justification for the choice of research design is discussed.

Section Four: Research Findings

Section four presents the results and discussion of the study. The section is composed of Chapters seven, and eight. I discuss the themes and sub themes that speak to women's preferred and used parenting practices as well as the motivating factors and challenges. The results showed that intersecting factors such as legislation, gender, cultural practices, education, religion, income, employment status and social support networks were critical in determining women's parenting practices.

Section Five: Final Interpretations

Section five is composed of Chapter nine where I deal with the major conclusions and recommendations based on the key research findings of the study. The recommendations that target key stakeholders and actors are provided specifically to challenge social work training institutions and social work employers to facilitate and promote critical theories, especially intersectionality at training and practice levels. Recommendations include requiring the Government of Botswana to change discriminatory laws and policies that perpetuate social injustices, the abuse of children and gender inequalities. The Chapter highlights key areas for future research related to parenting practices.

SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWOK

Section two presents the literature review of the study. The literature review has four chapters (Chapters two to five). The chapters provide an overview of the literature about various aspects of parenting, childcare, parenting practices and related issues. Chapter two focuses on parenting and parenting practices. The chapter discusses and elaborates on the meaning of parenting and parenting practices. Chapter three discusses factors that influence parenting practices by exploring different theoretical perspectives. With regard to intersectionality, I discuss how gender intersects with other criteria such as socio-economic status to influence parenting practices. Although “race” was not vital to the study as participants were all black women of Botswana nationality, it is important in most instances as it determines access to resources in stratified systems of society. Race is in inverted commas because it is unreal. Although it is socially and politically constructed, its effects are very tangible, visible and real (Sewpaul, 2013). Since I interviewed women from different family structures in the study, chapter four of the literature review specifically focused on resource availability and parenting practices in different family structures. At the end of the chapter, I attempt to demonstrate how family structure intersects with other social criteria to determine preferred and used parenting practices. The last chapter of the literature review section (chapter five) is dedicated to understanding the relationship between cultural norms, parenting practices and children’s rights in the context of Botswana. In chapter two below I review and examine the literature on parenting practices.

CHAPTER TWO

2. PARENTING PRACTICES

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I critically review the literature on parenting practices, how they differ with parenting styles and the structural factors that impact their quality. Parenting, which at the most basic level, involves caring for children, is a multifactorial process influenced by individual and contemporary social, political and cultural factors. Historical factors include parents' childhood developmental processes, individual characteristics and personal issues such as a child's personality, whereas social factors include marital satisfaction, social support networks, and circumstantial factors such as poverty (Smith, 2010). The above mentioned issues are ingrained in the dominant structural systems and often translate into challenges for parents to meet the basic human rights of children (Dunn & Keet, 2012). These include issues such as financial crisis, divorce, marital conflicts, parental illness, as well as parenting stress (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002). The difficulties in meeting children's needs are likely to downgrade the quality and effectiveness of parenting practices and consequently complicate children's development.

The effects of parenting on the child depend on a combination of attributes that form any of the following parenting styles: authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian. Authoritative parents are characterized by warmth and sufficient control towards the child; controlling and restrictive parents are authoritarian; whereas those who do not control children adequately are permissive (Smith, 2010). Parenting styles are not influenced by child behavior but the effects of relationships and non-relational factors on parenting behavior (Baumrind, 1991).

McNeely and Barber (2010) argue for supportive parenting because it promotes healthy development of children as it cultivates positive mental health, social competence, confidence, educational excellence and ability to have healthy peer interactions. Supportive parenting is characterized by provision of emotional or compassionate, instrumental and informational support (McNeely & Barber, 2010). Emotional support constitutes parenting practices that indicate that the child is loved and cared for, such as spending time with the child to listen to his or her concerns, praising the child when necessary, physical affection

such as kissing, being attentive and responsive to the child's needs, and instrumental support is provision of physical care such as bathing the child; financial and material resources include practices such as buying clothes, books, and paying school fees (McNeely & Barber, 2010). Informational support is the provision of information, moral guidance and advice to assist the child to overcome challenges towards building social competence and self-esteem (McNeely & Barber, 2010).

Supportive parenting shares characteristics with positive parenting, as espoused by George and Rajan (2012) that parents need to provide children with holistic support by positively responding to their needs to achieve positive behavioral outcomes. For example, positive parenting assists children to develop socially and emotionally by equipping children with skills that help them interact with their peers in a healthy manner. Socio-economic, political and cultural factors may enhance and/or hinder positive and supportive parenting practices. The following discussion elaborates on categories of parenting practices as per the literature reviewed.

2.2 An overview of Parenting Practices

“Parenting practices are actions that parents engage in as individuals and as members of the family that differ according to family size, socio-economic status and gender of the children” (Tramonte, Gauthier & Willms, 2015, p. 397). Thus, they are the actual experiences of parents in relation to their children (Bornstein & Cheah, 2006). Parental practices have both positive and negative impacts on children's behavioral outcomes. Drawing from the literature, Dunn and Keet (2012) perceived parenting practices to be a child development process influenced by the environment, thus emphasizing that parenting practices change from time to time in response to environmental variations that determine children's development as well as their future behaviors.

The difference between parenting style and parenting practices is based on their individual effects on children's behavioral outcomes (Brenner & Fox, 1999). Parenting practices are observable, changing specific-goal oriented behaviors that have a direct link to or effect on children's behavioral outcomes as well as their lives, but parenting styles are constant multifaceted behaviors and beliefs that form the context in which parenting behaviors occurs and have an indirect effect on children's behavioral outcomes (Brenner & Fox, 1999). For example, Brenner and Fox (1999) study analysed data of a stratified sample

of 1056 mothers of children aged one to five years to establish whether patterns of maternal parenting practices could be identified using a Parent Behavior Checklist (PBC) in an urban setting in United States of America, with an over representation of middle and upper middle income families. The PBC intended to establish parents' "discipline (responding to difficult behavior with verbal or corporal punishment), nurturing (parental behaviors that promote psychological growth), and expectations (developmental tasks that the parent believes the child should be capable of performing)" (Brenner & Fox, 1999, p. 345) as well as factors associated with parental behaviours such as age, educational status, number of children and socio economic status. The results of the study concluded that mothers with poor academic credentials and socio economic standing reported children's behavioral problems when compared to middle and upper middle income families.

Parenting practices are motivated by parental goals to nurture and protect their children. Parents modify children's character by using behavioral, physical and psychological control strategies. For example, behavioral control is exercised by setting rules to monitor children's activities and psychological control includes guilt inducing strategies, withdrawal of love and intrusiveness to impact children's emotions (Grusec, 2002). Parenting practices are inclusive of vast parenting behaviors, such as parent-child relations, types of home environments created for children, and acceptable, encouraged and prohibited networks created for children outside the home (Hoff, Laursen & Tardif, 2002).

Ideal parenting practices positively contribute to a child's behavioral outcomes but the attainment of positive outcomes might be compromised due to various challenges that parents encounter on a day-to-day basis, many of which are entrenched in structural systems of oppression. The results of a study by Spjeldnaes, Moland, Harris & Sam (2014) on the perceptions of 22 female and male adolescents aged 15 to 19 years about mothering in Limpopo, South Africa, indicated that adolescents viewed responsible mothering as first being there, that is, the emotional and physical presence of a mother on a daily basis. While the adolescents perceived living together as physical presence, they thought a mother who was emotionally there did not have to be physically present as long as she communicated to maintain the bond with the adolescents. This is perhaps related to the normalization of distance parenting in the South African context (Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming). Second, was provision of the adolescent's needs such as school fees, books, transport and food. Third, a responsible mother was perceived as the one who guided the child's transition to adulthood by providing information and guidance on issues such as HIV and Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and reproductive health. While some adolescents

expressed the view that they will be receptive to such information, others were reluctant. Fourth, most of the adolescents perceived mothers as trustworthy, so they were likely to confide in them (Spjeldnaes, et al, 2014). The adolescents' perception of mothers as confidants illustrated gendered relationships between parents and children. Only three of the participants grew up in families with both the mother and father. Therefore, much of the data focused more on the mother. Those who had the experience of living with both the mother and father often talked in comparison terms hence conclusions could not be drawn in regard to adolescents' relationships with their fathers. The answers to that could be many, but they are often rooted in the structural systems that have created gendered parent-child relations and parenting practices. Another qualitative study by Dunn and Keet (2012) in the Western Cape Province in South Africa that used semi structured interviews and focus group discussions to explore children's perceptions of parenting practices in which 211 school children were engaged, showed that the majority of children regarded the need to spend time with their parents as important and raised concerns relating to inadequate social and financial security.

The above mentioned studies may not be about factors that influence parenting practices but they point to critical issues about children's expectations of parenting practices, and indicate that parents need to be transparent about their challenges to children so that when they fail to fulfil children's expectations, it does not come across as neglectful behavior or failure. Various authors differ in how they classify parenting practices, but the content of the classification is similar. For example, Brenner and Fox (1999) classify parenting into three aspects: 1) promoting acceptable behaviors by either discipline or reinforcing positive ones, 2) nurturing to enhance physical and psychological growth and 3) expectations which involve parents giving children tasks that are geared towards cultivating children's capabilities. George and Rajan (2012) are more specific and elaborate in their categorization of parenting practices with an identification of thirteen factors: acceptance, punishment, protectiveness, responsibility, responsiveness, reward, understanding, non-critical, permissiveness, encouragement, rapport, emotional stability and patience.

UNICEF (2011a) grouped parenting practices into three major focus areas: first, dialogic practices that enhance children's positive behavior whose purpose are to expose, explain and expand. Second, are detect-connect practices demonstrated by the parent's attempts to expose children to new learning opportunities such as new information and experiences, and third are control and criticism practices which indicate parents' control over the ordinary aspects of the child's life. Control practices are the extent to which parents

control, restrain and condemn certain behaviors of the child, and the ordinary aspects of the child's life (UNICEF, 2011a) but some of the control practices are negative because sometimes they disregard children's right to participation and decision making as they are often forced to comply with parents' preferences, while their preferences are disregarded. The "explain and expand" practices by UNICEF (2011a) raise important issues about communication. Explain practices focus on the use of verbal communication, preferably through the use of mother tongue to help the child understand the meaning and purpose of phenomena by providing candid clarification of the expectations. Expand practices (scaffolding) are parent's supplementary verbal comments that expand (Hoff, et al., 2002) and enhance the child's knowledge so as to facilitate effective problem solving skills (Barbarin, 2015). These may include exposing children to new information and experiences such as academic or social activities. As a way to improve communication, the parent attempts to discuss and explain issues and activities to the child with the hope of helping the child understand and draw conclusions. Thus, the parent needs to observe the child and attempt to respond to the needs of the child without causing frustration (UNICEF, 2011a).

As part of their efforts to guide children, parents provide children with relevant information to aid their knowledge about important issues. Information support assists the child to overcome challenges towards building social competence and self-esteem by providing moral guidance and advice. Furthermore, to guide or advice the child, the parent may allow the child to watch certain TV programs, teach the child how to do household chores, and demonstrate acceptable behaviors such as respect and love (McNeely & Barber, 2010). Hoff, Laursen and Tardif (2002) identify three categories of parenting practices namely: verbal interaction practice, direct control practice and the managerial control. The verbal interaction practices encompasses ways in which parents give children clear information about why things happen when communicating with their children. The direct control practices involve a situation where parents are more controlling, restraining and condemning of children's behaviors. Lastly, the managerial control parenting practices relates to practices that are less directive but rather unconsciously teach children through experiences such as creating a physical environment that stimulate aspired behaviors. The managerial control practices are the same as detect-connect practices by UNICEF (2011a) because they both expose children to new information and opportunities that enhance positive behavior. Hoff, Laursen and Tardif's (2002) direct control practices are similar to the control and criticism practices of UNICEF (2011a). Based on the above authors' different categorization of parenting practices, I summarized parenting practices into: 1) disciplinary practices, 2)

psychological development practices 3) social development practices and 4) physical development practices.

2.2.1 Disciplinary practices

According to Brenner and Fox (1999) discipline is enforced to indicate acceptance or disapproval of the child's behavior. Child discipline entails a web of physical and psychological techniques, which vary culturally and contextually, and are meant to help the child to know what is wrong and right as well as to highlight parents' expectations of child behavior (Mudany, Nduati, Mboori-Ngacha, & Rutherford, 2013). Disciplinary practices are meant to correct, guide and control the behavior of children by punishing children for negative behaviors or rewarding them to enhance positive behavior. Parents make efforts to supervise and monitor children's activities and movements and communicate to them parental behavioral expectations (Simpson, Ferguson, Barber, Mmari, & Bernstein, 2007). Parenting practices that control children include regulating time spent outside the home, choosing the kinds of clothes children wear and the kinds of friends they keep. Monitoring practices comprise of finding out about children's whereabouts, and enquiring from others about their children's activities (Wamoyi, Fenwick, Urassa, Zaba, & Stones, 2011). Parents' disciplinary practices are meant to discourage children from engaging in predicted and unpredicted unacceptable behaviors (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). Disciplinary and control practices are meant to regulate children's health behaviors, especially sexual conduct (Wamoyi et al., 2011). For example, parents do not want their children to get sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, therefore they make efforts to ensure that their children do not engage in unprotected sexual intercourse as well as to not have early sexual intercourse debut. Therefore, parents, especially in high risk environments constantly monitor their children's whereabouts to ensure their safety and that they do not engage in deviant behaviors such as stealing and vandalizing property. Parents also monitor their children's movements and the kind of peers they keep (Hoff, et al., 2002).

On the one hand, the intention is to prevent unplanned pregnancies and illnesses and on the other hand parents want to maintain a good social representation of their families (Wamoyi et al., 2011). In some communities, marriage is important, so parents monitor children's sexual conduct, more especially girls to ensure that they do not have unplanned pregnancies and lose the chances of getting married in the future (Wamoyi et al., 2011). It

can be said that such gendered practices reproduce belief systems and stereotypes that often place the girl child in subordinate positions and enhance negative masculine behaviors among the boy child. Disciplinary methods are also a way of protecting the child from harmful circumstances (Simpson, et al., 2007). Sometimes children are confined to their homes as a form of punishment and to protect them from negative peer influence, and in the long run they miss the chance to interact with their peers and non-relatives (Edwards, Knoche, & Kumru, 2003). Some parents use psychological ways of discipline such as reasoning or withdrawing love, privileges, and humiliation, as opposed to physical forms of discipline such as spanking or beating (Grusec, 2002).

2.2.2 Psychological development practices

Parents spend time to learn and know their children's feelings, experiences, expectations and attempt to cultivate a healthy relationship with their children characterized by honesty and sympathy as well as willingness to forgive and guide them accordingly (George & Rajan, 2012). These entail the parent's capability to attend and respond appropriately to the emotional needs of children by providing empathy, affirmation, praise, information, direction, and reassurance, positive responses to address fear, anger, disengagement and frustration as well as constructive feedback (UNICEF, 2011a). Constructive feedback is when a parent identifies both negative and positive behaviors of a child and encourages continuation of positive behaviors. Parents have to give children constructive feedback instead of being critical because criticizing children can lower their self-esteem (George & Rajan, 2012). However, some parents use criticism to discipline children. Parents who are sarcastic towards the child's efforts and give the child negative feedback (that focus on mistakes) rather than providing support and guidance negatively affect the cognitive and psychological development of children (Barbarin, 2015).

Monitoring and supervision is meant to safeguard children's developmental needs and societal expectations. Children's cognitive and psychological development is enhanced when parents take time to understand a child's feelings and needs as it builds rapport between them and the children. It is important for parents to maintain emotional and mental stability to ensure that they are consistent in how they interact with their children. That is, children should be able to predict when their parents will be angry with them, and they should know that they are always welcome to share their concerns and be open to communicate their

concerns (George & Rajan, 2012). Consistent discipline is critical to a child's psychological development because it stabilizes their ability to process information and consequently enhance self-esteem. Jäkel, Leyendecker, and Agache (2016) undertook a quantitative longitudinal study and analysed the data from a sample of 191 fathers in Germany consisting of 115 Turkish immigrants and 76 German fathers (who responded to the inconsistent discipline scale items of the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire) using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to examine whether Turkish Immigrant and German fathers' disciplinary practices predicted children's mental health. They found that high levels of inconsistent discipline negatively affect children's mental health by causing children to develop anti-social internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Halgunseth, Perkins, Lippold, and Nix (2013), interviewed 324 adolescents and their parents in 28 rural areas in the United States of America to examine the mediating factors of their conduct behaviors. Jaekel, et al.'s (2016) study results were consistent with the findings of the study by Halgunseth et al. (2013) which found that inconsistent discipline predicts adolescents' delinquent behaviors such as lying, shoplifting and cheating that consequently predicts unacceptable conduct behaviors. Consistent discipline minimizes the likelihood of children developing anti-social behaviors.

2.2.3 Social development practices

Parents instill responsibility by applying positive control parenting practices (George & Rajan, 2012) to enhance children's social development. A healthy control of a child's behavior is important. The other purpose of control practices is to ensure that children conform to societal expectations. Control practices are meant to ensure that children develop acceptable manners that conform to family and societal expectations. However, some parents may over-exercise the power to control their children and this can become abusive. The child needs to have freedom to do things independently (Hoff, et al., 2002; George & Rajan, 2012). A balanced control helps the child to learn to be independent and inter-dependent, instead of being too dependent on others (George & Rajan, 2012). Excessive control hinders the child's ability to be autonomous and to make mature decisions (UNICEF, 2011a). Being too dependent on others is termed co-dependence. Codependency results from learned behaviors, feelings and beliefs that lead to pathological psychological and social attitudes (Raklova, 2013) that make it difficult for a person to function normally without the help of others.

Bolton, Signor and Moreiral (2014) used telephone interviews to collect data from 505 individuals who sought information about treatment for drug abusers from different families in Brazil through an assisted self-report questionnaire in a cross sectional study and analyzed the data using SPSS. The findings of the study showed that codependency in the family influenced the individual family members' use and abuse of substances, as well as the family members' tendencies to neglect personal needs as a result of putting more effort in helping substance users in the family (Bolton, et al., 2014). Thus, the families often experience a lot of health and relational problems.

2.2.4 Physical development practices

Hoff, et al. (2002) refers to physical development practices as managerial control practices. Sometimes parents engage children in physical activities to teach them acceptable behaviors and to stimulate their physical development. Physical development practices are less directive and parents unconsciously teach their children through experiences such as creating a physical environment that stimulates aspired behaviors, such as helping children with homework, reading together and engaging them in skill activities like playing games (Hoff, et al., 2002). Playing games can be encouraged through children's participation in school and out of school sports activities.

2.3 Summary

In this chapter, I explored key issues from the literature about parenting practices. Based on the review of the literature, I categorized parenting practices into disciplinary, social, psychological and physical parenting practices. The grouping of parenting practices was based on how parents meet the needs of the children within the family and broader society. As noted earlier, parenting practices are subject to economic, political, social and cultural factors that underscore the need to examine the impact of structural factors on parenting practices. In chapter three, I review some of the theories of parenting practices, and I argue for foregrounding the understanding of parenting practices within critical social work theory.

CHAPTER THREE

3. THEORIES OF PARENTING PRACTICES

3.1 Introduction

Parenting practices differ across the world's cultures, socio-economic status and generational status, and age of the child (Smith, 2010). Parenting practices are important for both the survival and successful development of children until they reach a societally accepted independent stage where they no longer rely on parental guidance. The manner in which human behavior (including parenting practices) is analyzed has evolved over time such that complex systematic principles and procedures are used to interpret it (Sameroff, 2010). Parenting practices are no exception because parenting has become more complicated due to evolving social change and social structures. Parenting practices reverberate the context in which both children and parents live, and speak to their interaction with existing socio-structural systems. As a result of the complex nature of parenting, there is an array of theories that address parenting practices. This chapter presents some of the theories that explain parenting practices as well as the one that guided my research study. The theories covered in this chapter are: the bio-social, developmental, ecological and social learning. It is in this chapter that the choice for the critical social work theory and intersectionality is justified. The bio-social perspective leans more towards nature and nurture; developmental perspectives focus on child growth, especially ages of children; ecological perspectives emphasize a person's reciprocal interaction with the environment; social learning concentrates on learned behaviors through modelling, reinforcement and punishment. Both structural social work theory and intersectionality are grounded on critical theory. They both appreciate the impact of the complex intersection of various structural factors on preferred and used parenting practices.

3.2 Bio-Social Perspective

The bio-social perspective considers both biology and the social environment as key factors that shape human behavior, including parenting styles and parenting practices. The

biological aspect of the bio-social perspective upholds nature (physiological, temperament and genes) as critical to human functioning, while the socio-cultural side emphasizes nurture (UNCRC, 2006). Nature entails intrinsic aspects such as genetically inherited and instinctual behaviors whereas nurture includes socio-cultural and environmental issues such as poverty and cultural norms (Sameroff, 2010). Socio-biologists support those instincts to motivate parents to use various parenting practices to protect and care for their children. Parenting actions based on instincts come across as natural and parents are likely to have no special reasons for choosing them. Biological instincts usually drive parents to respond to children in special ways and to teach children certain behaviors. As a result, parenthood is perceived as a lifespan responsibility. According to Papoušek and Papoušek (2002) parents usually unconsciously perform such parenting practices based on their intuition, without prior experience. For example, mothers usually talk to their babies even if they are aware that they cannot hear what they are saying (Papoušek & Papoušek, 2002). Generally, such responses to babies help them to develop speech, learn mother tongue and most importantly to recognize the caregiver or mother by the voice. Instinctual responses between the mother and child are said to be inborn because when children are young, parenting behaviors interact with the child's biological characteristics (temperament) to develop a child's socially desirable behavior (Danzig, Dyson, Olino, Lupton, & Klein, 2015).

The nature of a child's temperament is very important in determining parenting practices because it changes as a response to environmental factors and correlates with parental characteristics (Herbert, 2004). The bio-social perspective concurs with the lifespan approach and Erik Erikson's developmental stages of life that children have to complete different developmental tasks from birth to live a successful life. In order for children to successfully grow, and attain autonomy, parenting practices need to be geared towards age and be developmentally appropriate: (a) physical care and protection (b) affection and approval (c) stimulation and teaching (d) discipline and control, (e) opportunity and encouragement (Herbert, 2004). Thus societal concerns relating to parenting follows a lifespan approach where parenting practices are supposed to meet societal expectations such as a child growing up to be a responsible citizen. If a child fails to attain the foregoing listed tasks, he or she is likely to be distressed and rejected by society. Some of the developmental tasks entail biological aspects but as a result of socio-cultural expectations that parents need to successfully raise their children, parents who fail to successfully support children to achieve developmental goals and their children are generally victimized and stigmatized. Positive parenting practices stimulate children's sense of trust, autonomy, initiative, duty and

accomplishment and a sense of identity. Overstimulation and over controlling hinders the child's development of autonomy and independence (Hoff, et al., 2002) and is likely to lead to codependence. As it has been noted earlier, codependence is a dysfunctional relationship that supports or encourages disempowering behaviors such as irresponsibility, substance and alcohol abuse. It is characterized by being emotionally dependent on others, and it often makes it difficult for persons to live or function without external support.

Mothers' relationship with an infant is very important in child development. Mothers' relationship includes maternal involvement, sensitivity, and intrusiveness (Smith, 2010). Maternal involvement includes the mother's participation in a child's life through communication channels such as maintaining eye contact or playing with the child (Smith, 2010). Maternal directedness on the other hand includes mothers continually guiding and creating a structured environment for the child (Smith, 2010). Maternal sensitivity means that the mother appropriately attends to the toddler's responses such as arousal, interests and abilities whereas maternal intrusiveness means that mothers overly or unnecessarily overreact to children's needs such as physical manipulation or restricting children from doing things for themselves such as over-stimulating or overly controlling the child. One could also argue that Smith's (2010) idea links with the aforementioned argument of socio-biologists that mothers' personalities are influenced by biological instincts that prompts them to parent children in certain ways. For example, the ability of the mother to play with the child or to talk to a baby who is a newborn is a biological instinct. These views are challenged by theorists who argue in favor of socialization and the power of environmental influences on child rearing.

While biological arguments promote nature, the socio-cultural and environmental theories favor nurture. Thus the bio-social perspective focuses on the co-existence of nature and nurture. It embraces that biological aspects are in constant interaction with the social environment, as the evolutionary and biological facets feed into the cultural and developmental aspects of human behavior. However, the dichotomous analysis of behavior overlooks the critical aspects embedded in structural systems that promote social injustice. The biological sex (male or female) often translates into the gendered parenting roles. "Biological processes unfold in a cultural context and are themselves malleable, not stable and inevitable" (Lancaster, Altmann, Sherrod, & Rossi, 2010, p. 64). In most countries, Botswana included, women mostly take the primary responsibility to care for children whereas men play in the role of providers. It is only in rare occasions such as when mothers are absent that fathers take care of children (Lancaster et al., 2010). Thus, femininity and the capacity to care are deemed to be biologically determined and that is often translated into the

natural ability to parent. From a biosocial perspective, there are gender differences in social and cognitive abilities that determine the quality of parenting practices. Thus, emphasis on mothers as key players in an infant's life relates to the bio-social perspectives' approval of gendered parenting and the participation of fathers in parenting is meant to enhance gender differences rather than to disband them.

3.3 Child Development Perspectives

Child developmental perspectives mainly consider cognitive and physical development as well as the age of a child to be critical in the choice of parenting practices, especially that parenting is a dynamic process that requires parents to change their parenting behaviors as per each child's developmental needs (Gutman & Feinstein, 2010). Thus parenting practices are a reflection of responses to the child's psychological and physical development (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). According to B. Nsamenang (1999) the developmental approach takes into account the environment in which children live and how parents view their roles and tasks of raising children. As a result, it allows the community to put together the different ways in which children are connected to societal institutions such as school and church. To facilitate easy understanding of how child development perspectives explain parenting practices, this section places Erik Erikson's theory at the center of the discussion. While Erikson's theory is too deterministic, in that it asserts that successful handling of each developmental phase is critical to successful handling of later phases, and is based on the assumption of a two-parent nuclear, western family (Wheeler, Ampadu, & Wangari, 2002), it's overall analysis has become widely recognized and applied in social work research and practice.

Erik Erikson's epigenetic theory of human development divides childhood stages into five phases as follows: infancy, early childhood, preschool, school, and adolescent stages (Erikson, 1965; Pretorius & Niekerk, 2015). Erikson's five stages are a section of his famous eight stages of human development documented in his book titled *Childhood and Society* (Pretorius & Niekerk, 2015; Erikson, 1965). Individual psychological factors as well as environmental forces affect the succession through the different phases of development. It is in that regard that parenting practices are affected by the developmental phase of the child, regardless of their chronological age, although Erikson placed preeminence on age related tasks, achievements and challenges. Adequate and effective parenting practices would focus

on the child's developmental phase to help the child to attain or fulfill the positive aspects of each stage.

In Botswana, a child is any person under eighteen years of age (Government of Botswana, 2009). The present study targeted women with children under nineteen years that correlate with Erik Erikson's five phases of child development. The same was also adopted by Pretorius and Niekerk (2014) in their study about childhood psychosocial development and fatal injuries in Gauteng, South Africa as follows: zero to one year (infancy), one to three years (early childhood), three to six years (preschool), six to twelve years (school age) and twelve to nineteen years (adolescence). The age of the child influences parenting practices because as the child gets older, he or she gets less supervision and is allowed to make choices to enhance independence. Parents respond to meet the developmental needs of their children, which gives children varying experiences (Allan & Crow, 2001). While strongly advocating for viewing the holistic structural determinants of child development, Sewpaul (1993, p. 190) argued "viewing the developmental life cycles in terms of specific phases provide us with a useful tool in understanding the totality of human life, including the historical dimension." When I interviewed women about their parenting practices I also considered their experiences of parenting from a period when their children were born.

From zero to one year (Trust vs. Mistrust) the parent or primary caregiver is expected to promptly respond to and meet the primary or basic needs adequately so that the child develops trust and if they are not met the child develops mistrust (Statistics Botswana, 2015). Sewpaul (1993, p. 192) quoted Erikson's argument about infancy stage (Trust vs. Mistrust) that 'a sense of identity which will later become a sense of being "all right", of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become'. According to Heinrich (2014) children require well established families with caregivers who are responsive to their emotional and basic needs such as food, health care, shelter and being protective as well as creating safe environments that allow them to explore safely. During the preverbal stage, infants learn that vocal interchanges play a particularly significant role because parents have a tendency to communicate with their children using different sounds and words to stimulate communication ability (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002). Generally, when children are young, parents have a tendency to be more affectionate towards them. There is close supervision and monitoring for extended periods of time compared to the care given to older children. The variation in parental behavior as children grow up could be compelled by the parents' need to protect babies and to keep them safe from accidents and injuries given that they are physically and mentally underdeveloped (Hoff, et al., 2002). A study carried out through

observations by Eibesfeldt (1978), among the Xhosa Bushmen to determine their socialization, found that babies and toddlers were rarely physically disciplined and that older children were more likely to be scolded than beaten. However, as a result of limited research in parenting practices, current parenting practices of the tribal groups have not been established in contemporary Botswana.

The developmental challenge of early childhood is Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt according to Erikson (1965). The parenting practices should help the child develop basic skills such as toilet training and self-feeding to foster the child's independence, failure of which will lead to the child being doubtful about self (Berns, 2012). The challenge of the pre-school stage is Initiative vs. Guilt. Reflecting the thesis of Erikson, Sewpaul (1993, p. 193) contended that initiative is "directed as children learn to deal with infantile jealousy and rivalry and as they are helped to negotiate infantile sexuality and the incest taboo". Children are also caught in between their personal interests and those of others (Sewpaul, 1993). Parenting practices are supposed to help the child to explore the immediate environment with minimal parental supervision and to learn other roles, such as gender roles (Statistics Botswana, 2015). However, the possible negative consequences of such socialization is the entrenchment of gender-role stereotypes, that disadvantage both females and males, more particularly females (Sewpaul, 2013).

The next challenge is that of Industry vs. Inferiority experienced by the school age child (Erikson, 1965). At this stage children's psychological and physical abilities develop further as they gather new knowledge and skills through their social interactions beyond the family to include the neighborhood and school and engage in social activities such as clubs (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002). As a result, parenting practices have to stimulate children's interaction with the institutions other than the family and help them to build the confidence to connect with the different social institutions. If children do not have a sense of competence to harness several social institutions they develop an inferiority complex (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002; Pretorius & Niekerk, 2015). From a cognitive lens at this stage, children are perceived as intellectually mature. Therefore, parents use managerial control practices for middle age and older children (Hoff, et al., 2002). That involves encouraging children to participate in activities outside the home environment such as clubs and private organizations (Hoff, et al., 2002), indicating that older children need less parental supervision. The kind of disciplinary and control practices must be appropriate to the child's level of cognitive development (Roberts, Block & Block, 1984). For example, as the child gets older and matures from early childhood to middle childhood, parents reduce physical discipline

practices and use more verbal communication strategies such as reasoning, explanations, and withholding privileges to punish the child, as well as limiting physical affection and time spent with the child (Roberts, et al., 1984).

The adolescent stage is a critical stage in which parents usually find themselves having to wrestle with proper ways of responding to children's needs. Adolescents are faced with multiple challenges, related to health and reproductive issues, particularly in Africa. For example, adolescent girls aged fifteen to nineteen years in Africa have an average fertility rate of 98 births per 1000 that is more than twice the world average of 45 births (You, Hug & Anthony, 2015). Erik Erikson's adolescence stage is called Identity vs. role confusion. At this stage parenting practices have to focus on helping the child to adjust to both physical and psychological development. The child is also given support in order to develop personal and social identity as well as skills to fit in the different social groups without loss of personal values. Failure to develop personal identity leads to role confusion (Pretorius & Niekerk, 2015). According to Sewpaul (1993, p. 195) "the major task of the family is that of balancing teenage freedom with responsibility". There are instances when the adolescent's emphasis on freedom and parents' need to regulate that freedom to protect the child causes conflicts in the family, especially between parents and adolescents. Demandingness is observed when parents regulate, supervise and require maturity. Responsiveness is observed at the level to which parents are warm, accommodative and engaged (Linchwe, 1994). As children get older and develop into adolescents, their inclination to obey parents decline because they want to exercise autonomy over their lives. This does not negate the place of fair and negotiated rules. When parents establish such rules in the home, adolescents become more accepting of parents as authority figures and they are more likely to comply with the rules (Darling, 2007).

Parenting practices at the adolescent phase are influenced by several factors such as parents' goal to ensure that children adjust to the adolescent phase in preparation for adulthood (Linchwe, 1994). Parents often have to re-think their parenting practices at this stage as adolescents struggle to develop their individual identities. Therefore, parents generally control and support their adolescent children in response to adolescents' cognitive, social and emotional changes that occur as part of the developmental process. The application of control and support is regulated based on the developmental stages of children, and environmental factors. For example, despite children's and younger adolescents' search for independence, parents need to set firm boundaries for them because of their cognitive and

social immaturity (Linchwe, 1994). The tendency to control and support children is referred to as demandingness and responsiveness.

In some cultures, parents have structured ways of teaching children about adulthood as soon as they reach puberty. For instance, as a way of responding to child development practices, when girls from the Bozos tribe of Mali reach puberty, they stay with their grandmothers to teach them about womanhood whereas boys spend time with their fathers to teach them about fishing and fatherhood. In Sub Saharan Africa, the Ndebele people, known as the IsiZulu and IsiXhosa speaking people of South Africa take young boys to initiation schools where they learn about adulthood (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014). Sidze and Defo (2013) oppose the transfer of parental responsibility to other people because they highlight that parents should be aware of the importance of having close relationships with their children, especially during adolescent and young adulthood stages. Such a stance suggests that parent-child relationships should be worth strengthening through programmatic efforts (Sidze & Defo, 2013). However, the argument of the current study is that in order to improve parent-child relationships, there is a need for some groundwork that explores determinants (especially the dominant structural strands that are often overlooked in family research studies) of parenting practices. Griffin, Botvin, Scheier, Diaz, and Miller (2000), suggest that longitudinal studies should be undertaken to study the mutual nature of parenting and adolescent problem behavior throughout adolescence to determine how parenting impacts adolescent behavioral problems. Even though the current study did not study how parenting impacts adolescent behavior, by researching the factors that influence parenting practices among women from different family structures, it offers insight on the choices of parenting practices when children are in their adolescent stage.

Adolescents often find themselves having to conform to the various expectations within different territories such as among peers, school, home or family and church that require them to adjust their behaviors in order to conform to those that are deemed acceptable in different contexts (Simpson, et al., 2007). A study that investigated the effects of parental control and support on adolescent adjustment in Italy and Netherlands revealed that children who get parental support adjusted well to their adolescence, whereas those who experienced parental control had poor adjustment (Linchwe, 1994). The aforementioned study failed to further identify the reasons that create irregularities in parental control and supportiveness. The current study attempted to address such gaps by examining factors that influence parental practices of women in different family structures.

Child development parenting practices are child-centered and their focus is on the physical and mental health of the child. (Pence & Hix-Small, 2009). Child development focused parenting practices often overlooks the effects of parents' emotional state on the children's behavior and successful development of a child. For example, parents with low and high levels of emotional intensity have differing impacts on children's behavioral outcomes. Parents with high levels of emotional intensity might be overly reactive and might misinterpret their children's behaviors as socially inappropriate, and they might respond to children in inconsistent ways (Danzig, et al., 2015). As discussed above, it is critical that parents maintain consistent parenting practices to enhance children's psychological and social development. Since parents are in constant interaction with the environment, the following discussion focuses on the ecological perspective.

3.4 Ecological Perspective

An ecological perspective perceives the active parent (referred to as woman in this study) at the center of the social systems. The individual is the key unit of analysis, within their broader social environments, where people define their own experiences and respond differently to situations within a specific time period (Darling, 2007). The emphasis is on system's striving for homeostasis and the need for families to adapt. However, Sewpaul (2005) noted the negative consequences of the adaptation discourse, as sometimes families are exposed to and are expected to adapt to extremely difficult and oppressive environmental conditions. Parenting practices are influenced by the parent's interaction with environmental systems and factors within and outside the family (Danford, Schultz, & Marvicsin, 2015b; Luster & Okagaki, 2006). Parents differ in their parenting practices as a result of their response to varying environmental circumstances, such as their interaction with children, work, neighborhood, community and other family members. Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective perceives the individual, in this case, the parent as having a two-way (bi-directional) relationship with the environmental systems.

Bronfenbrenner (1994) summarizes the ecological perspective as a combination of system layers constantly influencing each other to create equilibrium. Firstly, is the individual's characteristics or intra personal systems, and the immediate family members and friends (micro system), and secondly, the institutions and persons outside the immediate family such as schools, neighborhood (mesosystem). Thirdly, the broader social system in

which the individual is not directly involved in, but which has a profound influence on the person such as employment conditions of parents that impact that can impact parenting and child development (exosystems), the macro system which focuses on the larger societal expectations such as societal values, policy and beliefs, as well as the chronosystem which related to the time factor (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Parents actively shape the environment in which they live and they also respond to environmental circumstances. Parents' choices of parenting practices depend on individual characteristics, parent-child relationship as well as the parent's relationship with the larger societal context.

According to Corter and Fleming (2002) mothers' parental behaviors and beliefs are a reflection of their interaction with the environment and the social systems such as the family structure. At an individual level, parenting practices are driven by the aims and desires parents have for their children (Spera, 2005). However, from an ecological perspective, the aims and desires of a parent for the child can be achieved when other systems such as family, the school and neighborhood and broader economic and political systems provide support and resources to attain the goals.

The ecological systems perspective recognizes that parenting practices are linked to systems outside the family. Therefore, the parent's relationship with other social systems influences the kind of parenting practices exercised. For example, parents who experience a lot of problems in their families are less likely to find and seek help from resources outside the family (Epstein & Sanders, 2002). That indicates that being poor hinders a bi-directional relationship that the mother should have with the social systems beyond the family. Lack of social systems to reach out to poor families also generates negative parenting practices, and mothers who are economically and socially disadvantaged have limited opportunities to access resources. While the ecological perspective provides a sound basis for holistic assessment and interventions at micro, mezzo and macro levels, its major limitation is the lack of focus on how societal power dynamics retain people in poor, marginalized and excluded positions, and that influence access to resources (Sewpaul, 2005). The following section focuses on how social learning theories explain the choice of parenting practices.

3.5 Social Learning Perspectives

Both negative and positive reinforcement are effective in shaping and enhancing child development (Roberts, et al., 1984). Social learning theories consider parenting practices to

be learned through social models. Social learning theory was developed by Albert Bandura (Bandura, 1971). Bandura emphasized that people learn new behaviors by observing and copying what their models do. Behaviors that are appreciated and considered positive are rewarded and those that are not accepted are rejected by applying some form of punishment and for a behavior to be internalized, there has to be a negative or positive reinforcement. The rewarding of positive behavior is similar to positive reinforcement and punishing negative behavior is related to negative reinforcement in classical conditioning (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem, & Nolen- Hoeksema, 1996). The proponent of classical conditioning is Ivan Pavlov. In a parenting context, positive reinforcement is rewarding a child for accepted behavior to stimulate its repetition whereas negative reinforcement involves removing any barrier that could hinder continuation of the desired child behavior. Thus, a child's likelihood of engaging in a specific behavior depends on the past experience or thought of the reward or the punishment she or he received for the act.

Parents attempt to enhance warmth and security so as to build a child's trust by providing rewards, reinforcements, modeling, sensitive responsiveness, proactive regulation, emotional communication, and by establishing family routines and rituals (Laible & Thompson, 2007). Such rewards can be in the form of verbal praise, hugging, smiling to enhance self-esteem and to motivate the child to behave in an accepted manner (Laible & Thompson, 2007). Emotional communication helps children to rely on internal rewards as opposed to sole reliance on external rewards to display appropriate attitude (Laible & Thompson, 2007). Social learning theory also acknowledges responsive imitation, that is, young children learn by observing other people in their environment such as parents and siblings (Laible & Thompson, 2007). Parents may leave children under the care of others or assign children tasks that they do with their siblings to foster social skills and emotional competencies.

Parenting practices might be passed from one generation to the other, not within a socio-biological framework, but through modeling, imitation and learning (Smith, 2010). In a research study by Chan and Koo (2010), about parenting style and youth outcomes in the United Kingdom, mothers attested to intergenerational parenting practices. Social learning perspectives perceive such practices as a reflection of what the parents have learned from other people through modeling (Ladd & Pettit, 2002). From a social learning perspective, parents teach their children acceptable behaviors by modeling them with the expectation that children imitate such conduct (McNeely & Barber, 2010). Parents also deliberately do some activities with the children to model the kind of attitudes and behaviors that children need to

acquire (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). Learned behaviors thorough modeling result in informational cascades that are likely to manifest into substandard behavior (Giraldeau, Valone, & Templeton, 2002). That is, modelled behaviours can be misinterpreted and misused by children as actions can be understood differently under varying circumstances.

The assumptions of social learning theory, especially those that are centered on passing information learned from one generation to the other through modeling, links well with the ideas of structural social work theory. The structural social work theory considers the governing ideas of how the society functions as distributed from one person to the other through socialization. However, examples of such ideas are hegemonic discourses and practices rooted in particular ideologies within a structural theoretical framework. For instance, the stereotypical roles of girls, boys, men and women, reinforce gender inequality.

3.6 Critical/Structural Social Work Theory and Intersectionality

This study is underscored by critical/structural social work theory and intersectionality because they both recognize that parents have diverse interrelating identities that mutually contribute to their parenting practices. Therefore critical theory and structural social work theory are used interchangeably in the study. The use of critical theory was significant for the study because “as societies developed and their structures became more formalized, parenting became increasingly formulated in religious, economic, civic and cultural contexts” (Hoghghi & Long, 2004, p. 3). Critical/structural social work theory acknowledges that there are several factors that influence behavior. These factors are interrelated and originate from how our society is structured (Mullaly & Mullaly, 2014; Sewpaul & Jones, 2005).

Critical/structural social work theory is of the view that due to social inequalities, isolation and disadvantages created by political, economic and social structures, and intersecting criteria like race, class and gender, people’s choices and access to opportunities become limited. The theory speaks to the overwhelming influence of societal power dynamics, and differs from the ecological as well as other approaches discussed above epistemologically because they have varying approaches, methods, scope to analyze issues and to creating knowledge relating to specific issues. Critical theory is more inclusive and complex because it considers how criteria like gender, race, and class intersect to influence access to power, status and access to resources (Sewpaul, 2013). Structural theory engages in

critique of the power of socialization and dominant discourses and practices in maintaining status quos of inequality (Mullaly & Mullaly, 2010).

Intersectionality challenges us to examine people's experiences beyond the individual level. Intersectionality is embedded in critical feminist theory and social justice (Dill & Kohlman, 2012). From a feminist point of view, some of the gendered practices within the family are an indication of conformity and socially acceptable practices that often go unchallenged despite their negative consequences on child development (Gqola, 2007; Parker, 2003; Van Wormer, 2008). Situating that within parenting practices, I argue that intersectionality considers that gender overlaps and connects with other structural factors to influence parenting practices. Feminist scholars in family studies contend that gender does not act in isolation to create and disperse power in families but acts collectively with diverse and incrustrated identities and systems of power and privilege such as race, class, sexuality, age, nationality and ability to create inequalities to affect families (Allen et al., 2009; Cole, 2009; Mahalingam, Balan, & Molina, 2009; Mama, 2011) and influence parenting practices. Social structures are the institutionalized ways in which beliefs, ideas and socially constructed meanings are endorsed and reproduced within the structural systems such as social, political, legal and educational spheres (Allen et al., 2009). Therefore, intersectionality promotes a social justice approach that reveals sources of inequalities and dominance (Allen et al., 2009; Sewpaul, 2013). It is within the family that women might concurrently exercise power and privilege in some areas and experience oppression in other areas (Allen et al., 2009) that impact parenting practices and children's behavioral outcomes.

Intersectionality supports a structural social justice approach to family policy that Sewpaul (2005) proposes in her critical analysis of South Africa's draft National Family Policy. This study is of the view that the same structural social justice policy would suit Botswana as a strategy to improve family functioning and to facilitate adoption of positive parenting practices. According to Sewpaul (2005) families do not exist in isolation and therefore policies targeting families need to take into account structural forces that hinder their functioning such as systems of oppression, discrimination, racism, sexism, patriarchy and income distribution. Accordingly, it was important to understand the nature of parenting practices of women in the study along the same lines because they carried out their parenting duties within similar contexts of poverty and inequality. Intersectionality called for an analysis of women's diverse experiences beyond simple identification of experiences but to consider the underlying social systems that contribute to inequality. Gender describes and assigns social roles by people's sexual or biological differences to maintain social hierarchies

and thus we often fail to reflect or question gendered parenting practices because they are socially constructed (Sewpaul, 2013). Gendered parenting practices are influenced by the patriarchal nature of our society. Patriarchy is male dominance or power at different societal levels such as family and community (Coltrane & Adams, 2008). The patriarchal nature of Botswana families necessitated the use of intersectionality to enhance an understanding on how gender interrelates with other factors to influence parenting practices. Feminists have critiqued the dominant societal discourses and psychodynamic emphases on intensive mothering that tends towards mother-blaming (Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming) with the latter arguing that intensive mothering needs to be disarticulated from its negative connotations. While the literature emphasizes intensive mothering, there is no such discourse in intensive fathering. “The discourse needs to shift from the *privilege* of intensive mothering to the *right* to intensive parenting for all people...irrespective of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, family structure or family type” (Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming, highlights in original).

Critical theory helped in data analysis as it formed the basis for identifying the dominant discourses that hindered or enhanced women’s positive parenting practices. Critical theory and the use of reflexivity challenged me, as an African woman and a mother, to be aware of how my assumptions and beliefs influenced the research process. In addition, it raised my awareness about some of the dominant structures that I had always overlooked, but which played important roles in the types of parenting practices preferred or used by parents, and might I say, myself. Similar to the women who participated in the study, undertaking a research study of this nature was also an empowering personal journey for me. This is further elucidated in the methodology chapter.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, I explained how biological, developmental, ecological and social learning theories explained how parents come to exercise specific parenting approaches. Ecological theories consider that there is a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the environment as a result of the interaction of the person’s immediate environment and larger social structures, assuming that the individual has the capacity to influence the immediate environment as well as the environment having the capacity to change individual behavior. Social learning theories acknowledge the power of modeling and imitation, and that

parents learn parenting practices from other persons in their environment, and they emphasize the roles of reward and punishment in shaping behavior. Social learning perspectives tend to minimize the bidirectional effects between the child and the parent that the ecological-transactional perspectives consider in child development (Roberts, et al., 1984).

Unlike the other theoretical lenses that depoliticize parenting practices, critical/structural social work theory examine the complexities of parenting practices by considering the intersection of various social criteria. Critical theory considers how different factors such as gender, race, culture, age, social and economic resources impact parenting behavior, and exposes how inequalities within and outside families impact parenting practices. Although some of the literature might have implied that the determinants of parenting practices are exclusive to each other, their interconnectedness cannot be overemphasized as there was a back and forth reference to similar issues in the previous chapters and the ones that follow. That was also evident during the research process because when I arranged the thesis chapters, I had to re-do them several times because of the interconnectedness of the issues and systems that challenge family functioning, decision making processes and parenting practices. In chapter four I discuss parenting in different family structures and the implications of socio economic status in parenting practices.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. FAMILY STRUCTURE, AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND PARENTING PRACTICES

4.1 Introduction

In chapter four I discuss parenting practices in different family structures and the impact of socio-economic and cultural resources on parenting practices. Research (Brown, Smith, Thornton, Bowie, Surkan, Thompson, & Levine, 2015; Brown, 2004; Demuth & Brown, 2004) presents various family structures; single father only, female headed families, two parent families, same sex parents, and no parent families, commonly known as child headed families. The family is important because it is the primary unit in which parenting practices occur (Brown et al., 2015) and thus its status determines the wellbeing of children (Daly et al., 2015). Both UNCRC and ACRWC maintain that children need a family for their successful development. Additionally, the UNICEF global research agenda on family and parenting support (Daly et al., 2015) seeks to promote well-functioning families for children. The adequacy of resources at various societal levels plays a major role in the choice of parenting practices. Resource availability and social background are often related to family wellbeing but rarely to parenting practices. The following sub-section focuses on the relationship between socio-economic status (SES) and parenting practices. Socio economic factors are critical in parenting. Sewpaul (2016, p. 34) critiques social workers' tendency to disguise socio-economic deprivations as culture, asserting that: *"While socio-economic factors influence patterns of savings and investments, and the rearing of children, these factors are often minimized in favor of cultural explanations."*

Voegel and Willenbacher (1993) classify resources into socio-economic and socio-cultural resources. Socio-economic resources are all sources of income that enhance the social position of families and parents in society, whereas socio-cultural resources are offered by social settings and accessibility to resources such as institutions and infrastructure and are propelled by socio-economic status (Voegel & Willenbacher, 1993). Research reflects that in most families, social and economic status are likely to be a major factor in determining a number of issues such as general lifestyle, and parenting practices (Kotchick & Forehand,

2002; Weis & Toolis, 2010; Youn, Leon, & Lee, 2012) . Socio economic status is said to be complex as it reflects the following: family's financial capital such as income, material resources, knowledge of child development, and human and social capital such as parent's educational status, social networks and social support (Weis & Toolis, 2010). This resonates with Smith's (2010) view that socio economic status influences parenting practices.

The family has been given the “pre-eminent position in child-rearing and socialization” (Sewpaul, 1993, p. 193). This assertion implies that the structure of the family is imperative in examining parenting practices. The composition of the family has changed over time. Family used to be defined mainly in terms of biological and marriage relations as well as honorary kin ties. However, contemporary societies are witnessing different formations as a result of social factors such as increased numbers of cases of divorce, cohabitation, migration, remarriage, sexual orientation and same sex households (Allan & Crow, 2001).

Differences in family structure determine the adequacy of resources and ultimately parenting practices (Gibson- Davis, 2008; Thomson, Hanson, & McLanahan, 1994). The complexity of defining families arises from individual choices on whether kin ties become legitimate or not after divorce, cohabitation or remarriage, which highly depends on the personal relationships established (Allan & Crow, 2001). Despite these changes, women continue to do a larger amount of household chores when compared to their male partners, and they also bear greater child care responsibility (Burnett, Gatrell, Cooper, & Sparrow, 2010). Failure of parents to provide children with basic needs also creates problems in parenting practices (Dunn & Keet, 2012). Berger and McLanahan (2015) used an oversample of non-marital and marital data, sourced from a population based Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing (FFCW) longitudinal birth cohort study of 4897 children born between 1998 and 2000 in large USA cities mainly from Hispanics, African Americans and low-income families to determine the relationship between income, relationship quality and parenting across family types. Berger and McLanahan (2015) concluded that maternal engagement with children did not differ by family type, which as the literature reflects, is a contested issue.

Research shows that there is a correlation between availability of resources and parenting practices found in the different family structures today. To a certain extent, mothers' inability to be fully involved with their children is connected to limited human, cultural and social capital resources (Botswana Government, 2006/7). Human capital consists of the skills and knowledge that people have, usually linked to educational status, that

stimulate children's learning, whereas social capital is the relational status of people both within and outside the family (Lee & Bowen, 2006). For instance, availability of social capital in the family is shown by parents who are home most of the time, and are readily available to attend to their children's needs as well as availability of relatives in the home to help take care of the children. The presence of parents in the home enables adequate supervision and monitoring of children's behaviors. Cultural capital is a collection of different characteristics such as beliefs, taboos, and norms that form part of a specific cultural identity (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

In Botswana, the influence of structural factors such as socio-economic status has been noted by Draper and Cashdan (1988) who undertook a study in the Kalahari desert of Botswana between foraging and sedentary Bushmen (Basarwa) to examine parenting practices. Systematic observation to study parent-child interactions occurred by observing children aged four to fourteen years from eight in the morning to six in the evening in the group for ten minutes per day. The results of the study indicated that although parents influenced children, it is the social and economic factors that determined the parent-child relationships. Foraging groups adopted peer rearing approaches, where the older siblings had to look after younger ones because parents had to leave children for a longer time to go and look for food, whereas those in sedentary or settled groups did not adopt such practices because mothers were primary caregivers and took children with them if they needed to go out and gather food. The results also showed that mothers primarily took care of younger children because they prolonged breast-feeding for up to three years. This was more likely to stop when the mother was pregnant because she had to go out and find food outside the home, so did not have time to return home for nursing (Draper & Cashdan, 1988).

Hoff, et al. (2002) undertook a literature review of research on SES and parenting. The aim of the study was to establish the interconnected factors within SES that influence parenting. The results reflected that parents with higher socio economic status are more likely to use psychological practices of disciplining such as reasoning and guilt while they also attempt to maintain more egalitarian relations with their children. Mothers from lower socio-economic status tend to be restrictive. They are more likely to be pushy, quick to apply physical discipline, and tend to talk a lot to guide small children. As a result, they give children less independence compared to mothers from a higher socio-economic status (Hoff, et al., 2002). Dunn and Keet (2012) conducted a cross sectional, qualitative collective case study to explore children's perceptions of their parents' parenting practices. Data were collected using individual semi structured interviews using incomplete sentences and

drawings as well as focus group discussions from a total of 211 male and female school children from the Western Cape, South Africa in their schools. Data were analyzed using psychometric and content analysis. The study showed that most children described the mother as playing a major role as both a caregiver and disciplinarian even in families where the father was present, thus validating the role of mothers as primary caregivers for children. Based on the findings of their study, Dunn and Keet (2012) concluded that children's view of parenting practices relied on the socio-economic background of their families, presenting parents from high economic background as more engaged with their children than those from impoverished families.

Choi, Palmert and Pyun (2014) carried out a study to investigate the relationship between non-resident fathers' involvement, mothers' parenting and parenting stress on children's behavioral and cognitive development. The study focused on a sub sample of 1228 families from a major sample of 4898 families. The conclusions of the study were that "fathers' child support payment is positively associated with mother's parenting" (Choi, et al., 2014, p.287), suggesting that if fathers pay maintenance fees, their financial contribution is likely to improve mothers' parenting practices.

McNeely and Barber (2010) explored how parents make adolescents feel loved in black communities in Cape Town, South Africa and the results indicated that children feel loved when parents provide necessities such as clothes and food. The data came from a survey of adolescents aged 14 to 17 years from 12 countries with varying socio-economic status, religions, family structures, race, ethnicity and political backgrounds residing in urban settings (McNeely & Barber, 2010). The findings emphasized that parenting practices were driven by parents' intention and obligation to meet the basic needs of their children. However, in most instances it is expected that parents who cannot provide for the children ought to be proactive in terms of linking children with resources outside their homes to enhance their growth and lives (Simpson et al., 2007). It can also be argued that in some instances parents who have inadequate resources also lack information and knowledge about resources available for their children as well as limited opportunities to access resources.

The differences imposed by varying socio-economic situations as discussed above indicate that parents from families with higher SES use positive parenting practices, whereas parents from poor families use negative practices. To further epitomize the foregoing argument, parents with high income have the opportunity to engage children in educational entertainment and extra-curricular school activities that stimulate both mental and physical development, whereas those from a lower income status have less opportunities to do so

(Gutman & Feinstein, 2010; Kotchick & Forehand, 2002). Research also reveals that mothers with higher educational and income status were found to be more interactive and engaged in outdoor activities with their eighteen-month old children than mothers with less education and working mothers (Gutman & Feinstein, 2010). The foregoing argument validates the idea that mothers experiencing problems in income generation also have a more passive involvement with children's physical activities (Brown et al., 2015). Moreover, parents' choices of investing in their children vary according to availability of resources. For example, parents with limited financial resources decide to invest the bulk of their resources on either educating the child or on households needs. However, having a higher socio-economic status does not guarantee that parents will automatically spend more time with their children (Heinrich, 2014), but such parents do have greater options available to them. The research findings cohere with the basic premise of critical social work theory which emphasize that political, economic and social systems are the primary dictators of people's lifestyles, and in this case parenting practices. Thus social inequalities, low educational status and limited resources isolate those who are disadvantaged because of limited opportunities to access relevant resources (Mullaly & Mullaly, 2010).

SES has a direct link to the nature of social support systems. Social support networks modify parenting practices by either reinforcing certain practices or introducing new ones through constructive feedback about how parenting occurs. Social support networks can be teachers, religious leaders, friends or relatives. A study among African Americans to examine the influence of the extended family on children's physical activity revealed that extended family members were actively involved with children and had a more direct influence on children's recreational activities when compared to primary caregivers (Brown et al., 2015). The above-mentioned finding suggests that in families where there are multiple adults or caregivers, biological parents are less likely be involved in their children's activities. This assertion overlaps with Heinrich's (2014) idea that the number of parent figures staying with the children, and their level of involvement with child rearing, influence parenting practices. The participation of relatives and influential community members in childrearing, especially to educate children about reproductive health and life issues is common among African cultures (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014). Social support networks are critical in enabling positive parenting practices. Parents can get support from different individuals such as friends and relatives. However, some relationships can be strenuous and they can bring distress to the parent, contributing to poor parenting practices (Crnic & Low, 2002). Parents who live in neighborhoods without social support networks might miss the opportunity to learn positive

parenting practices critical for child development. Parents with limited resources have problems setting clear boundaries and monitoring children, especially when a child's behavior is perceived as deviant by the parent (Crnic & Low, 2002). Parents who are stressed and do not get resources to help them are likely to use reactive and punitive ways on children (Crnic & Low, 2002). It can be observed that social support networks such as relatives are crucial in supporting positive parenting practices because they can be buffers in situations where parents need assistance with child care (Crnic & Low, 2002). Shaibu (2013) conducted a qualitative descriptive study in Botswana by collecting data from twelve grandmothers aged sixty years and above. The study used face-to-face semi structured interviews to ascertain their experiences of looking after orphans. The results of the study indicated that social support was critical for caregivers because participants indicated that without the support of extended family members, grandmothers experienced challenges such as inadequate income and social support to relieve them from their day-to-day duties (Shaibu, 2013). Further the presence of extended family members and communal living is an economic necessity under circumstances of dire poverty (Sewpaul, 2016) for some families because if multiple family members generate income, and pool their resources it increases the living standards of families and makes it possible for parents to meet the needs of children.

The impact of schools and teachers on families cannot be overemphasized. Schools generally have some partnerships with parents, and it is through these partnerships that parenting practices can be influenced. Parents who have school going children usually encourage their children to take their studies seriously, and might visit schools to enquire about children's academic progress and they might attend school meetings (Gould & Ward, 2015). For example, parents who constantly interact with a child's school by visiting the teachers, participating in school committees stands a chance to help the child with school homework, and in similar manner teachers are likely to know the academic and non-academic needs of the child. That shows that inter-dependence exists between the parent and the school, creating a two-way flow of communication that is likely to influence positive parenting practices. The extent to which the parent collaborates with the school is likely to influence parenting practices such as time management, monitoring and discipline. When parents become aware of the kind and amount of school work children are expected to do, they would teach children and monitor their movements to ensure that they have time for school work, play and household tasks (Epstein & Sanders, 2002). In Botswana, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) committees have been a great resource network for teachers, schools, parents, pupils and the government to enhance solidarity in improving the academic

performance of children as well as enhancing their lives outside the school. The Government of Botswana, has also trained some teachers (called Guidance and Counseling Teachers) in basic counseling skills to help them identify children with academic and social challenges as well as to offer basic support before they refer students for professional counseling. Nonetheless, teachers alone cannot adequately support parents and children with non-academic issues and hence require the assistance of professionally trained social workers in schools (Maundeni & Ntseane, 2004).

Additionally, SES determines the families' residential location as well as access to and the kind of support networks available to them. Families with lower SES often live in poor neighborhoods, characterized by violence and unsafe surroundings where parents are constantly forced to strictly control children to foster obedience and conformity to parents' behavioral expectations. The parents' goal is to protect their children from harm as parenting practices are, to a large extent, influenced by the extent of danger or threat within the immediate social environment (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002). Environmental issues may promote or hinder adequate parenting practices rather than individual circumstances, thus emphasizing the need to consider structural factors when studying parenting practices. Kotchick & Forehand (2002) add that parents in poor and dangerous neighborhoods are likely to apply increased control, monitoring, supervision, obedience, and respect for authority that interfere with children's play. Play is a practice that enables parents to enhance physical and mental development and enables children to gain mastery in their environment (UNICEF, 2014b). As the current study investigates parenting practices of women in various family structures, the following sub section specifically discusses parenting practices within different family structures.

4.2 Parenting within family structures with varying SES

In the following sub sections, I discuss how different family structures link to parenting practices. As the intersection of gender, family structure, neighborhood, and socio-economic background on parenting practices cannot be undermined; I will mention some of the issues I have already discussed, though from the angle of their relationship to family structure and parenting practices.

4.2.1 Single parent families versus two parent families

Single parent families, especially those that are headed by women are more negatively affected by contextual factors such as socio-economic status (for example, level of education, income status and availability of social support) when compared to two parent families. The increase of female-headed families has reduced the role of men in families, leaving women with the economic burden of child care (Nsamenang, 2002). Allan & Crow (2001) posit that many single mothers are marginalized economically, socially and geographically and as a result most of them have minimal economic opportunities due to limited educational qualifications and gendered inequalities in the labor market.

Mothers who are economically disadvantaged as well as those with limited social support tend to apply harsh and controlling parenting practices (Smith, 2010). Smith (2010) studied how multiple determinants of parenting were associated with individual differences in maternal parenting in the United States of America. The study observed mothers' interactions with their toddlers through two play sessions for an hour in a laboratory, and analysis of mailed questionnaires that mothers completed prior to participation at the laboratory. There were 140 mothers and their toddlers aged between 30 and 36 months, recruited from local child care centers as well as developmental sciences database. Correlation and regression analysis were used to analyze relations of determinants of parenting. The results indicated that maternal controlling behavior correlated with mother's lower socioeconomic status, working outside the home, and more extraversion and neuroticism, and those maternal supportive behaviors were predicted by higher levels of child social responsiveness (Smith, 2010).

Even though previous quantitative research by Berger and McLanahan, (2015) indicates that the type of family structure and matrimonial status do not influence mothers' parenting, most of the literature shows that family structure does, indeed, influence parenting practices (B. Nsamenang, 1999) Mothers' parenting practices are affected by factors such as socio-economic status, family size, and whether it is a single parent family, type of occupation and children's characteristics (Botswana Government, 2006/7). For instance, the way both the family and neighbourhood are organized determines the parents' levels of monitoring children's play inside and outside their homes (Edwards et al., 2003). Thus, a family with many people will usually encourage children to play in the homes rather than to play outside the home, whereas in a situation where there are few people in the family,

children would be allowed to play outside the home (Edwards et al., 2003). However, it must be remembered that other factors, such as cultural beliefs, values and environmental threats and hazards, either perceived or real also influence such practices.

Single parent families are prone to live in disadvantaged communities or neighborhoods characterized by violence, juvenile delinquency and overpopulation. This kind of environment often exposes children to more challenges when they reach adolescence compared to families with more social and economic resources. Kotchick and Forehand (2002) reported that mothers with poor socio-economic status were associated with more controlling, restrictive parenting practices and were disapproving toward young children when compared to those from a higher socio-economic status. For example, a study by Sewpaul and Pillay (2014) showed that children from families with both parents were less likely to be hit, while children from single parent or step-families reported being hit. Parents raising children under difficult circumstances have to put more effort to ensure that they protect their children, especially adolescents against negative influences, but limited resources often make it difficult to ensure children's safety (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002). Griffin et al. (2000) suggest that parents should be taught parenting skills such as monitoring, communication, and coping to stimulate proactive parenting and ensure that children develop resiliency for survival in risky environments. Such direct interventions do not negate the importance of advocating for structural changes to provide safer and more conducive environments to ensure the wellbeing of families and children.

Two parent families often have more resources and live in safer environments when compared to single parent families as they are likely to be under-resourced and reside in poor neighbourhoods (Gibson- Davis, 2008). IASSW (2018) and Sewpaul and Pillay (2014) have highlighted that family structure affects parenting practices such as parent's disciplinary approaches, communication strategies, and support to children e.g. helping children with homework. Heinrich (2014) reviewed the literature and past research studies related to parents' employment and children's wellbeing. Heinrich (2014) observed that inadequate parenting practices are common among single parent families with low income. The findings of Wamoyi et al. (2011) in Tanzania showed that parental monitoring and control varied by family structure and gender. Children from single parent families received less supervision when compared to those from two parent families. The father's presence in the family increased effectiveness in controlling sexual activities of children. In schools, female children were supervised more compared to male children (Wamoyi et al., 2011).

Limited supervision of children is widespread as parents often have low paying jobs with rigid, inflexible work schedules. They spend long hours at work and work night shifts, which force them to leave their children unsupervised at home. Furthermore, parents from single parent families are less involved in school work and provide limited supervision outside the home when compared to two parent families. It can, therefore, be argued that the number of parents or adults in the family is vital for adequate supervision (IASSW, 2018). When mothers work in jobs with rigid working hours they are more likely to quickly return to work after giving birth. This in turn denies their children the opportunity to be breast-fed for longer periods (Heinrich, 2014). The above discussion aligns with the central argument of intersectionality that gender intersects with various societal systems to determine parenting practices. For example, if work hours were made flexible, working parents could spend more time with their children to enhance monitoring and supervision.

In addition, single parent and step-parent families often fail to maintain their authority because of parents' inclination to confide in their children. In some instances the step-parent does not feel the obligation to discipline, and as a result the boundaries between them and children weaken resulting in difficulties or failure to exercise proper discipline (Brenner & Fox, 1999). A similar pattern of parenting practice has been noted among self-employed parents. The foregoing statement is based on the results of Brenner and Fox (1999) study of a stratified sample of 1056 mothers of children aged one to five years. The study found that mothers with lower educational and socio economic status regulate the severity of disciplinary actions based on the children's age. Thus the mother's decisions of whether to apply severe or soft punishment was based on the child's age rather than on the child's behavior.

Thomson et al. (1994) examined how economic resources and parental behavior relate to each other in different family structures to influence child wellbeing. The study randomly selected 3488 families in the United States of America with children aged five to 18 years (with a higher number of cohabiting and single parents in the sample). The results indicated that economic resources accounted for a greater disadvantage in single-mother families when compared to mother-partner families. Children who have two parents have the advantage of benefiting from the other parent if one of them is not adequately contributing to his or her wellbeing (Day & Padilla-walker, 2009). The majority of men are socially and economically well placed in society compared to women, therefore a father's presence in the family often boosts women's economic resources. That helps women meet the basic needs of children and other supplementary items that may stimulate the physical and mental development of

children, such as ready-made toys. Moreover, male presence in the family is often helpful in situations where children do not comply with mothers' instructions. According to Wamoyi et al. (2011) a father's physical presence may instill fear in children, making them to comply in situations where they might be less likely to listen to their mothers. Although the aforementioned statement put fathers in a position of being supportive to mothers, it demonstrates gendered child-parent relationships, and power imbalances that disempower women by relegating them to subordinate positions, making it hard for them to exercise preferred parenting practices. Chan and Koo (2010) carried out a research study to examine the influence of family structure on caregiving, maternal stress, parenting and attitudes towards corporal punishment among African American mothers. The study revealed that married women had the greatest economic resources when compared to single-women and that poverty was influential on parenting experiences. Chan and Koo (2010) sampled 1456 children aged 15 years, using questionnaires between 1994 and 2001 from a larger database of the British Household Panel Survey in 250 areas in Great Britain to analyze how they related to and interacted with their parents. The study concluded that poor and single mothers have scarce resources; however, they have good resilience and strength that buffer the possible negative consequences of their circumstances. Chan and Koo (2010) concluded that it is important to note that being poor or having limited resources does not necessarily predict inadequate parenting practices.

Sewpaul and Pillay (2011) conducted a survey with 328 students in Chatsworth area, South Africa selected through stratified and simple random sampling to explore the association of family structure with different socio-economic outcomes. The results of the study indicated that children from two parent families were talked to a lot, and were less likely to be physically disciplined whereas children in step-parent and single parent families were likely to be beaten. The findings support that family structure, which does intersect with other socio-economic variables, influences parenting practices. Roman (2011) undertook a study with 245 school going children in the Western Cape schools in South Africa by collecting data using group questionnaires, completed in the presence of a trained fieldworker and analyzed the data with descriptive statistics. The study compared children's perception of their mother's parenting within single and married families. The results indicated that children from both families viewed their mothers' parenting in a similar way. They characterized their mothers as supportive, warm, allowed them to participate in activities, involved them in decision making based on their age, and encouraged them to be independent (Roman, 2011).

Since two parent families sometimes include the union of two parents either through cohabitation or legal marriage, I think it is important to give a glimpse of how the quality of parents' relationships in the family impact parenting practices. Crnic and Low (2002), emphasized that women in unhappy marriages ineffectively respond to child prompts and hardly reward children's positive behavior. Parents are likely to use poor parenting practices and be inconsistent in the way they parent their children as a result of marital problems where spouses do not give each other adequate support in raising children (Crnic & Low, 2002). Environmental challenges and powerlessness among marital families hinder couples to develop a high degree of self-differentiation that exposes family members to multiple challenges such as enmeshment and power struggles that might contribute to mental health problems (Sewpaul, 1993), that consequently affects parenting behavior. Parents who experience stress often use inconsistent disciplinary practices (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). Gibson & Callads (2015) undertook a quantitative study to measure African American, Caucasian and Hispanic (159 male and 182 female) participants (N=341) experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) the impact of IPV, power and equity in parenting and child outcomes in an urban setting of USA. The results of the study indicated that IPV, power imbalances and inequities were a hindrance to effective parenting and positive child outcomes (Gibson & Callads, 2015).

4.2.2 Families with employed parents versus those with an unemployed parent

A family with both parents employed is called a dual career family (Gibson- Davis, 2008). Prosek (2006) argues that parenting differences exist between employed and stay at home parents. This implies that a parent's employment status is important in determining parenting practices. In families where both the mother and her partner are working the partner can provide both financial and social support (Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 2002). It is important to note that dual career families are not immune to parenting challenges because both single parent families and two parents' families can be equally affected by work stress that can contribute to poor parenting practices. For example, if one parent is stressed, it is possible that the condition may negatively affect the other parent resulting in limited supervision or harsh discipline, leaving children without parental support (Heinrich, 2014).

Even though employment gives women financial power, women continue to do most of household work and are more involved in parenting compared to men (Larson, Wilson,

Brown, Furstenberg Jr, & Verma, 2002). The results of a study in the United States of America (Botswana Government, 2006/7) showed that mothers, employed full time were less involved with their children's academic work than those employed part time. Youn et al. (2012) study used latent growth curve model (LGC modelling) to analyze data from 17565 kindergartens through third grade children of all ethnic groups sampled from an Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. The study examined how parental involvement explained the associations between maternal employment status and math and reading achievements. The results indicated that mothers employed part-time interacted more with their children, and that their children showed improved academic learning compared to full time employed mothers (Botswana Government, 2006/7).

Women who are parenting and employed require the capacity and skills to manage their parenting roles and their employment duties. McLellan and Uys's (2009) exploratory study on balancing dual roles among self-employed women found that long hours of work, flexibility of work schedule as well as availability of support structures influence how they spend time with their children. Guided by social constructionism, McLellan and Uys's (2009) carried out face-to-face interviews with five white self-employed women in Gauteng, South Africa to determine how they balanced their work demands as executives and their roles as mothers. The focus of the study was on how people perceived and interpreted their situations, so the grid enabled the interviewers to elicit participants' positive and negative common experiences about their lives (McLellan & Uys, 2009). The results of the study indicated that most of the participants prioritized family responsibility over work, they spent quality time with children and family, structured and planned their work and used support networks to enhance balancing work-family dual roles (McLellan & Uys, 2009). McLellan and Uys (2009) concluded that despite women's ability to balance work-family roles, women bore a higher work load of household and child care responsibilities.

Similarities among employed and unemployed mothers have been noted. Parenting practices of working and non-working mothers with younger children are similar because mothers, who spend more time away from their children, seek helpers to play their parenting roles (Gottfried, et al., 2002). In most developing countries, older female relatives usually play the role of the children's mother where the biological mother has passed away or is employed outside the home (Bianchi, 2000).

Crnic and Low (2002) argued that availability of social support networks, such as nannies or relatives influence positive, adequate parenting practices and gives women opportunity to work. In families where there are other individuals who assist in parenting

children, such as the father, it helps children to acquire more support in their education as well as enhance their cognitive and affective development (Gottfried, et al., 2002). In Botswana, generally families with working parents experience limited support to take care of their children and the situation often contributes to them adopting unsafe childcare arrangements such as leaving children in the care of other children (Ruiz-Casares & Heymann, 2009). Such practices are likely to be detrimental to children and call for further research on alternative child care practices in the country.

4.3 Summary

The above discussion shows that structural factors intersect in different ways to determine the nature of parenting practices. It highlights that though in some instances family structure seems to influence how parenting occurs, most of the research studies indicate that it is not family structure alone that impacts parenting practices. It is the intersection of family structure and other structural factors such as gender, availability of resources, and the nature of parents' relationships that determine of parenting practices. Gender acts in mutual ways with other structural aspects to influence parenting practices and family functioning. The discussion indicates that single parent families, especially those that are headed by women with limited resources hinder positive parenting practices. What is lacking in the previous discussion is how culture coalesces with legislation and policies to influence parenting practices. In chapter five that follows, in light of human rights (especially children's rights) and international standards, I deliberate on the role of policy and legislation on parenting practices with specific reference to Botswana.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CULTURAL NORMS, PARENTING PRACTICES AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

5.1 Introduction

Human rights are political and legal standards that promote the dignity and worth of persons (Bielefeldt, 1995). The extent to which a country promotes human rights provides vital information on the wellbeing of people. Botswana's effort to promote human rights is reflected by its signatory status to several international standards such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). A signatory status communicates a country's intention to abide by expected standards and conformity is reflected in its legislation and policies that monitor and regulate family life, set parameters for parental responsibility, and prioritize the rights and needs of family members, children included (Garbarino, et al., 2002). However, legislation might perpetuate the inequalities at family level and reproduce gendered parenting practices.

Social, economic and political demands on the family have changed family relations and the functioning of the family. The government, non-governmental and private organizations as well as international laws demand certain standards of lifestyle in contemporary families, which are often reflected in social or public policies (Allan & Crow, 2001). A policy is a framework that guides us on what we can do to address certain issues or meet the needs of specific groups of people in our society, whereas legislation or Acts are passed by parliament and are legally binding. Legislation is important as it facilitates development and implementation of policy.

Torjman (2005) categorizes policy into substantive and administrative, vertical and horizontal, reactive and proactive, as well as current and future. Substantive policy focuses on the basic needs of the public such as social protection and social security, while administrative policy is concerned with administrative procedures. Vertical policy is that which is internally developed in organizations whereas horizontal policy is developed outside the organization that implements it. Reactive policy is developed when there is a crisis, whereas proactive policies are deliberately developed. Current policy refers to policies that

are already in place, whereas future policy means the ones that have never existed but are likely to be pursued. Policy may target the whole nation or a specific group in the community (Torjman, 2005). Policies are not legally binding. For instance, assistance given to families may be provided in-kind and/or as financial assistance. Public and private organizations may also have special benefits for employees with children to help them balance work and family demands. Public policies serve regulatory functions, as they may set restrictions on parents' behavior, and parenting practices. The regulatory functions also stipulate how parents should treat their children and outline the needs and rights of children (Garbarino, et al., 2002; Paglioca, et al., 2002). Family policies are developed to improve the welfare and functioning of families and consequently facilitate positive parenting practices.

Policies provide a framework in which parents make decisions regarding the upbringing of children in the family and society at large. However, research reveals that some parents have limited knowledge on legal expectations about child rearing, often linked to scarce child and family public resources. Critical theory used in the study provided a platform to examine women's perceptions on legislation and how they impacted parenting practices. According to Sewpaul (2005) policy development and programmatic interventions are needed to enhance family resources, which are vital in addressing the root causes of women's challenges such as race, gendered discrimination, and inequality. Focusing on the debilitating effects of neoliberalism on family life, Sewpaul (2005, p. 319) asks the following pertinent question: *"If external socio-economic, political and cultural factors are maintaining families in poor, dispossessed and helpless positions, how are such families expected to move toward independence and self-reliance within the same structural constraints?"*

Some public policies do not adequately contribute to the functioning of the families and parenting practices, as policies are developed and operated without consideration of family needs (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002). The United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council urges member states to enhance family policies to stimulate achievement of developmental goals (United Nations, 2015) especially eradication of poverty in families. Different countries are often compelled by international treaties to develop policies and legislation to enhance family functioning, either through provision of social safety nets and establishment of programs to offer social and psychological support services that indirectly and directly influence parenting behavior. The United Nations (2015) highlighted that member states are lacking in their efforts to provide social protection, especially for disadvantaged families with young children. Botswana is rated a middle

income country and among the countries with scarce family focused policies; one of the factors that motivated this current research.

The Tri-African Advisory Services (2011) undertook a national situational analysis of the family in Botswana, financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) across the ten administrative districts. Face-to-face, and electronic individual, focus group and key informant interviews with public, private and organizational representatives, policy makers as well as civil and community leaders were conducted. Tri-African Advisory Services (2011) also reviewed literature and official documents with the view to operationally define the family in the context of Botswana, and determine gaps and weaknesses that hinder implementation of programs targeting families. The aim was to develop relevant National Family Policy for Botswana to guide programming for the promotion and protection of the family. The results indicated that families experienced parenting challenges and other problems such as domestic violence, marital conflicts, lack of family and community support networks and called for the urgent development of a Family Policy for Botswana. Currently the Department of Social Services is in the process of creating a family law/policy reference group that will result in the production of the Family Policy of Botswana as per the consultancy recommendations.

The delayed development of Botswana's family policy is associated with limited resources in the face of prioritization of the HIV AND AIDS pandemic, and fragmented legislations that are not compatible with establishment of a family policy (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011). As a result of the HIV AND AIDS pandemic the country experienced high death rates and health problems that weakened the employment sector and family functioning, and increased numbers of children who are orphaned (Jacques, 2003; Republic of Botswana, 2013a). That prompted the government of Botswana to give priority to the eradication of HIV AND AIDS in the country as more attention and resources were invested into the health sector, such as the provision of free anti-retroviral treatment to those who were infected.

The successful development of the National Family Policy requires those incompatible legislations, such as Marriage Act, Children's Act, Married Persons Property Act, Employment Act and Adoption of Children's Act to be reviewed (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011). In addition, the situation is complicated by Botswana's lack of family focused social policies as the country has compartmentalized social security programs, policies and pieces of legislation that target different vulnerable groups, families and needy individuals. The programs and policies mainly aim at eradication of poverty and examples

are: Destitute Persons Program, The World War II Veterans Program, Old Age Pension Scheme, Community Home Based Care Program and Remote Area Development Program (RADP) (Ntseane & Solo, 2007). Poverty is more prevalent in households with children under four years (UNICEF 2011), and the government attempts to counteract this through the infant feeding programs where supplementary food is given to children aged six months to five years on a monthly basis and a feeding program for school children (Ntseane & Solo, 2007). In addition, the Botswana National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2010-2016) was designed to respond to the needs of orphans and needy children in the country.

Legislation that targets families include: Adoption of Children Act, Disserted Wives and Children Act, Domestic Violence Act, Matrimonial Causes Act to name a few. Non-governmental organizations such as Botswana Family Welfare Association (BOFWA) and Women's Shelter also play major roles in promoting family functioning (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011; United Nations, 2015). BOFWA encourages Planned Parenthood through family life education, and the Women's Shelter mainly provides psychosocial counselling to victims of gender based violence and domestic violence. Such organizations are helpful in situations where women have children because they can influence their parenting practices by providing emotional support through counselling and linking women with relevant resources to boost their ability to take care of children.

Cultural norms, beliefs, and the law conjoin to influence parenting practices. Cultural beliefs, scripts and values operate as a source of knowledge for parents to bring up children in such a way that they conform to the dominant cultural expectations (Nsamenang, 2009). They specify the accepted and the expected parenting practices (Bornstein & Cheah, 2006). Parents' beliefs are critical in shaping child development, instilling discipline, and in engendering changes (George & Rajan, 2012; Liang et al., 2000). Parents' beliefs echo their experiences with the dominant structures and account for the variation in parenting practices (Halpenny, et al., 2010). In the context of Botswana, the law condones cultural norms and beliefs that to a large extent violate children's rights. The country has been reluctant to enforce major legal reforms that oppose the cultural norm of corporal punishment. That could also be related to failure of the country to develop a family policy despite the recommendations to do so by Tri-African Advisory Services (2011). Family policies differ by context and goals but they are likely to embrace issues regarding family creation, economic support, childrearing, and family caregiving (GIEACPC, undated).

5.2 Universal Rights of Children in Relation to Cultural Specific Norms

Children's rights cannot be divorced from parenting practices because both international treaties and local statutes expect parents to act in the best interest of children. Children's rights are often integrated in social policies, legislation, programs and services. Cultural norms can enhance or violate human rights; more especially children's rights. Cultural norms and beliefs such as: gendered allocation of household chores and child care; children should always defer to the authority of elders; beliefs that children cannot make sound decisions; differential treatment of children born in or outside wedlock; and approval of corporal punishment (CP) negatively impact parenting practices and violate children's rights.

Article 31 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) states that:

“Children have responsibilities towards the families and societies, to respect their parents, superiors and elders, to preserve and strengthen African cultural values in their relation with other members of the communities” (African Union, 1999).

The first section of the above article that focuses on the child having responsibility towards their family and the relationship with members of the community is related to an African custom of assigning children various activities inside and outside the homes based on their age and gender as a way to cultivate a sense of responsibility in them (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014; Nsamenang, 2013). Research has shown that it is a common parenting practice among parents of African descent to assign children chores to help in the family (Omorodion, 2008; Renzaho, Green, Mellor, & Swinburn, 2011). Cultural expectations of what men and women do within and outside the family or household are gendered and in contemporary times, seem to be more common in African contexts than in Western contexts. Developed countries are more advanced in terms of promoting gender equality and social justice when compared to many African countries such as Botswana. Some of the gendered practices within the family are an indication of conformity to socially acceptable practices that often go unchallenged despite their negative consequences on parenting practices and child development (Gqola, 2007; Parker, 2003; Van Wormer, 2008).

The way parents treat and relate to the boy and girl child as well as assignment of household activities in the family result in gendered interpretations of parenting practices for male and female children (Omorodion, 2008; McNeely & Barber, 2010). Among the Masai,

and the Gabaras of Kenya, boys and girls are taught different household chores as young as three and four years of age to engender responsibility at an early age (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014). Both the Gabaras and the Masai teach the boys chores that are related to farming and herding animals, whereas girls are taught house chores such as cooking and fetching water (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014). Similar findings of gendered roles at family level were found in Canada among African immigrants (Omorodion, 2008). Assigning household chores without regard to children's welfare facilitates parental disengagement and might expose children to other forms of abuse (see chapter seven). The practice should be commended for teaching children to be independent as they learn life skills, but the gendered nature of role allocation that characterize family tasks perpetuate the burden of caregiving and household chores on the girl child. As a result children, especially girls are often denied adequate time to rest and play as stipulated by Article 31 of UNCRC (UNCRC, 1989).

The gendered nature of care and tasks at the family level is also evident in Botswana's Employment Act 1984, and the Revised Employment Act 2010. Public policy that supports parents should foster positive outcomes of parents' work on children's wellbeing by buffering the effects of stressful work conditions on children (Heinrich, 2014). Currently, policy makers on a global level want to create work-life balance policies to ensure that employees have flexible working hours. This is as an attempt to create gender neutral domestic and childcare responsibilities in homes, with the ultimate goal of reducing the amount of work that employed mothers do at home (Burnett et al., 2010). The International Labor Organization (ILO) advocates for breast-feeding and childcare arrangements in the work place as these contribute to improved health of mothers and their children (ILO, 2014). The ILO does not specify the amount of time nursing mothers should be given and how individual countries have to make their own arrangements. Botswana is one of 39 countries that provide breast-feeding arrangements in Africa whereas Algeria, Kenya and Namibia are some of the countries in Africa that do not have feeding arrangements in the workplace (ILO, 2014).

Although the ILO (2014) calls for paternity leave to be made available to fathers, similar to other Sub-Saharan African countries like South Africa, Botswana does not have a paternity leave provision in the Employment Act. Lack of paternity leave reinforces traditional beliefs and assumptions that women are the ones who are responsible for taking care of children. Social norms learned through socialization communicate that men are not adequate caregivers and parents (Sallee, 2008). Such cultural stereotypes assign the bulk of domestic chores and parenting responsibilities to women (Muasya, 2014). The absence of gender-neutral policies undermines the role of men in childcare and is likely to contribute to

some fathers' negligence of parenting responsibilities. Such limitations consequently reinforce patriarchal power and place the burden of care of children on women (Richter & Smith, 2006). Maharaj and Sewpaul (2016), in a study on accidental burn injuries in children under five years of age in Durban, South Africa, highlighted the gendered burden of care and the effects of socio-economic deprivation in relation to lack of parental supervision. This in turn exposes children to hazardous environmental conditions. Using Kenya as a case study and her experiences as a working mother, Muasya (2014) observed that most women employed in the formal sector often found it difficult to tackle their work expectations and childcare responsibilities when compared to those in the informal sector or those doing part time jobs. As a result of the challenges of balancing work and domestic work, women end up engaging part-time or full-time helpers, to help with the care of children or household chores (Muasya, 2014). However, this is not always possible in a situation where women have poor jobs or limited family income. Sub-Saharan countries such as Botswana have to mount family-work policies that help employees to effectively balance work and family (Mokomane & Chilwane, 2014).

While the International Labour Organization (ILO) does not have any standards pertaining to paternity leave, it has made some recommendations to governments to improve work and family balance. One of the major recommendations is for governments to create adequate policies such as paternity leave to enhance the ability of both women and men to balance work and family responsibly (ILO, 2014). In countries where paternity leave is available, it is often given to fathers in the form of family responsibility, compassionate and special circumstances leave (ILO, 2014). Such an arrangement does not help in combating gendered parenting as it sends out a message that fathers are not equally responsible for child care as mothers. Parental leave grants both the mother and father an opportunity to look after their new born child for some time without losing their jobs or employee benefits (Richter & Smith, 2006). Maternity leave provision in Botswana is in accordance with the traditional practice of confinement called "Botsetsi". "Botsetsi" is supposed to enhance bonding and attachment between the new-born child and the mother as well as support the mother emotionally (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011).

Losike-Sedimo (2018) describes "Botsetsi" as the beginning of mothering and a period where the mother has to stimulate the cognitive development of a child, and it is the mother who carries the blame if the child develops any intellectual disability. During confinement or "Botsetsi", fathers do not play any role in the care of the baby. The mother and the baby are secluded and men are banned from interacting with them, hence the

responsibility of child care is put on the mother. Sallee (2008) points out that lack of paternity leave acknowledges and reinforces the existing gender roles and assumptions that perceive women as primary parents, and it represents a stereotypical definition of family structure that overlooks same sex families. To change such views towards parenting there is a need to amend policy and structural factors that facilitate non-gendered approaches to recognize that both women and men have equal responsibilities in parenting. Parental leave must become more inclusive to recognize that both men and women are entitled to parenting benefits, and to reflect all kinds of family structures regardless of the sexual orientation of the parents. If such policies are in place they are likely to contribute towards enriched and more effective parenting practices.

Although the extended family has been dissolving in Botswana, there is a general appreciation that child rearing is a communal practice. The collective nature of parenting reflects article 31 of the ACRWC (African Union, 1999) that parenting is a communal activity. Botswana Children's Act 2009 recognizes the importance of the community in the upbringing of children. Part V, Section 30 of the Act expects community leaders to discuss issues of concern regarding the wellbeing of children in the community. Section 33 advocates for the establishment of village child protection committees whose functions should be to educate community members about child abuse and to monitor the welfare of the concerned children (Government of Botswana, 2009). The approach is in line with a common belief among African societies (including Botswana) that a child belongs to a community and thus every community member should take responsibility for children (Ntarangwi, 2012). The custom maximizes social support networks, teaches children the value of shared responsibility at a young age and acts as a supportive measure to safeguard children, thus promoting children's rights to protection.

On a different note, the provision of Article 31 of the ACRWC that children should respect their parents, superiors and elders to preserve African values reflects a one directional flow of power. In an African context, respect between parents and children entails a substantial power imbalance. Parents, adults and elders have greater power over children as children's ideas and participation are hardly considered at all different levels of society. This is contrary to provisions of the UNCRC that emphasize that any decision concerning children should be evaluated to determine if it's in the best interest of the children, and children's right to participation (UN, 1989). In the African context, parents are considered experts at all times regardless of the age of the child, as it is believed that adults and people of superior status are mature and have wisdom.

Emphasis on adults and parents as experts over children's issues infringe children's rights, sustain parenting practices that promote and maintain adult ideas, and marginalize children's opinions on matters that affect children. In most African contexts, Botswana included, children have limited participation in decision-making but rather take orders from parents (Maundeni, 2002; Omorodion, 2008). Parental sovereignty and the belief that children are owned by their parents is enshrined in the African culture (Lloyd, 2002). For example, African American parents in the United States apply parenting practices that value respect for authority and quick compliance with adults' directions when compared to their Caucasian American counterparts (Weis & Toolis, 2010). The same situation has been observed among parents from Africa, residing in other parts of the world. A study by Renzaho et al. (2011) on parenting, family functioning and lifestyle revealed that African immigrant women raising children in Australia enforce obedience in their children to make them understand that adults or the older generation are forever in positions of authority.

Research findings (Brown et al., 2015; Renzaho et al., 2011; Weis & Toolis, 2010) also indicate that parents of African descent apply parenting practices that value respect for authority and compliance with adults' expectations and demands as well as meeting communal expectations. Weis & Toolis (2010) observe that, in some instances, respect is often conflated with fear. The "respect" often dictates a controlled line of communication between children and their parents and other elders in the community such that children end up not being allowed to question or disagree with parent's decisions and commands. For example, most Tswana speaking tribes of Botswana have certain pre-requisites for a person to be considered fit to participate in decision making; one has to meet the cultural definition of an adult. An adult is considered a "woman" or a "man". Being a "woman" or a "man" is a label given to individuals who have gone through different rites of passage such as initiation ceremonies and marriage. Children of all ages, who have not gone through these rites of passage, are largely excluded from any discussion or decision making. The cultural practice violates articles 7 and 12 of the ACRWC respectively, which state that "any child who is capable of communicating his or her own views should be allowed to express his or her opinions freely" and that "Children have a right to play and to participate fully in cultural and artistic life" (AU, 1999). These two articles are in line with Articles 19 and 27 of the UDHR that emphasize freedom to express ideas and participation in various activities respectively. Cain & Combs-Orme (2005) and Renzaho et al. (2011) state that African traditional values and beliefs about parenting and child rearing are passed from one generation to the next as a result of internalized cultural practices and beliefs. and that they are characterized by

communal and family values (Renzaho et al., 2011). However, these expectations often interfere with the child's developmental need for autonomy and self-identity (Barber, et al., 2007).

Thus, the thrust of this study, underscored by critical theory examined how collective values and structural systems such as those mentioned above influence family functioning and parenting practices. This is supported by Renzaho et al. (2011) who conducted a study in Australia where African immigrant women's internalized cultural parenting practices, such as corporal punishment, which clashed with public expectations. The critical theory, used in this study, made it possible for me to expose some of the salient and subtle structural factors that influence negative parenting practices.

Sociologically perceived misbehaviors are measured in terms of conformity to the larger social norms. For example, parenting practices such as feeding practices change based on cultural expectations as well as societal definition of children's developmental needs and maturity. A study conducted in Uganda, explored the barriers to the use of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices by primary caregivers in a rural district. The study revealed that cultural practices resulting from the influence of esteemed members of the family and community were significant barriers to appropriate feeding practices (Nankumbi & Muliira, 2015). Thus, both members of the family and community play significant roles in relation to appropriate feeding practices. Linchwe (1994) purposively selected and interviewed 80 mothers of reproductive age in different hospitals and clinics in Botswana to determine factors that influenced discontinuation of breast feeding. The findings were that social factors such as the mother's poor health and personal embarrassment to breastfeed in public for fear of stigmatization as well as -cultural factors such as the child's father instructing the mother to stop contributed to discontinuation of breastfeeding. The results of the research studies on feeding practices in Uganda and Botswana indicate that parents often do not have control of how they want to feed their children, but rather that power and control lies in the intersection of dominant socio-structural factors. For example in the case of Botswana, the fact that a child's father can instruct the mother to stop breast feeding could be related to the intersection of gender, patriarchy and socio-economic status. Most women are economically dependent on men as a result of the patriarchal nature of a culture that has traditionally given men provider status in families while women remain in positions of subordination (Kidd, 1997; Lesetedi, 2018).

According to Kidd (1997, p. 13) "patriarchy imposes economic constraints such as limited access to employment opportunities and property rights, which lead to unequal power

relations between men and women.” As a result of the economic and social power that men have over women, men tend to have control over what parenting practices are acceptable in the families as women are often silenced in decision making processes and activities, and are rendered incompetent. The subordination of women in decision making at family level among several tribes in Botswana are reflected in the cultural practice of labelling wives and mothers as part of children in the family. Thus fathers or husbands would generally be asked in Setswana “ba kae bana?” or “baa tsoga bana?” When translated to English, it means “Where are the children?” or “Are the children well?” Such kinds of cultural practices emanate from the belief that children are incompetent and women are often reduced to the level of children, and they reflect the institutionalization of male dominance over women and children within the family unit (Kidd, 1997). These practices perpetuate social injustice and internalization of inequalities in families and the larger social context (Sewpaul, 2013). Research studies (Lucas, 2017; Taylor, Fleckman, & Lee, 2017) have shown that children are capable of speaking and making decisions for themselves. To reduce the women to the level of children perpetuates both sexism and ageism. There is need to facilitate participation of women and children in decision making at various societal levels.

Article 25, section 2 of the UDHR also emphasizes that all children should enjoy social protection, whether born in or out of wedlock (United Nations, 1948). Botswana’s Children’s Act 2009 also aims to ensure that children are brought up within their families and points to the family as bearing the primary responsibility to protect, guide, and support the needs of the child, and to act in the best interest of the child (Government of Botswana, 2009). Culturally, there is unequal treatment of children born inside or outside wedlock (including those in extra marital affairs) and those deserted by their fathers. Children that live under such circumstances are culturally labelled illegitimate by society because legitimacy of the father is only recognized when the father pays *lobola/bogadi* (bride price). A father that fails to pay *lobola/bogadi* is often denied the right to fully participate in the care of his child. The cultural and legal practices generally disadvantage fathers with low socio-economic status and block their opportunities to participate in the care of their children. It is a general practice in Botswana for men to adopt non-biological children of the women they marry. Traditionally the biological fathers of the children are not consulted if he had not been actively involved in the care of the children. Discriminatory practices overburdens women with parenting responsibilities and escalate gendered parenting practices in society. The failure of women to pursue legal maintenance from fathers could be related to the different cultural norms and practices such as *bogadi/lobola* (Kimani & Kombo, 2010; Swartz &

Bhana, 2009). Children left under the sole care of their mothers are likely to be denied the right to interact with their fathers as well as access to their father's inheritance. Children are denied the right to be cared for by both parents as emphasized by the UNCRC (UN, 1989) and the ACRWC (AU, 1999) and the right to maintenance as well as opportunities to establish a bond with their biological fathers (Kumar, 2009).

The practice and belief that children can be adequately groomed by mothers alone has several disadvantages. It encourages the gendered nature of care, contributes to cases of absent fathers, and children neglected by fathers in our society. Sidze and Defo (2013) carried out a study to determine the impact of parenting practices on adolescents and young people's sexual risk behaviors in Cameroon using data from the Cameroon Family and Health Survey with a sample of 447 unmarried, sexually active individuals aged fifteen to twenty-four years old. The results showed that quality parent-child relationships, measured in terms of high levels of connectedness, monitoring and parent-child communication, reduced children's sexual risk behaviors, especially the chances of males having multiple sexual partners and females being sexually active. The literature and research studies cited above only considered the surface issues surrounding parenting practices but did not extensively examine the core factors that influenced parenting behavior. Such a surface approaches to analysis of parenting issues do not adequately address the challenges of families and parents but perpetuate some of the stereotypical assumptions about family functioning and parenting practices (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017).

The cultural norms, discussed in this chapter, reflect that children are marginalized as parents are culturally perceived to be experts. Children are often exposed to inhumane parenting practices - the most prevalent being corporal punishment (CP). In Botswana, the predominant use of CP is perpetuated by the authoritarian parenting practices embedded in the culture that hinders children's freedom of speech and participation in decision making processes (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming). CP is a culturally approved method of discipline and thus children become accustomed to it. Even if children were to challenge its use, it will not be easy because of their subordinate and constrained participation in decision making as discussed above. Parents use CP primarily to control perceived and actual negative behavior to secure children's compliance and to uphold the parents' authority positions (Gudyanga, Mbengo, & Wadesango, 2014). This concurs with Ntshwarang and Sewpaul's (forthcoming) argument that in Botswana CP is used as a strategy to maintain parental authority over children. Renzaho et al. (2011) observe that the type and intensity of

disciplining children depended on the severity of perceived misbehaviors, and that CP is often equated with serious misbehaviors.

Botswana is one of the countries where CP, as a disciplinary parenting practice, is largely upheld at all levels of society. It is among the few African countries where CP is legalized, with others being Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (GIECPAC, 2017). Botswana's acceptance of CP is embedded in both culture and law. The key laws that embrace CP are: Botswana's Penal Code (section 28), 1964 (Government of Botswana, 1964); sections 23 and 24 of the Education Act of 1967; section 21 (2) of the Customary Law Act, 1969 and the Children's Act, 2009. Even in places where CP is legally prohibited, it is widely used on account of cultural norms and beliefs (Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009; Lansford, 2010).

Article 5 of the UDHR denounces ill-treatment of people and Article 19 promotes the protection of children against abuse, and Article 16 of the ACRWC is against inhumane treatment of children such as physical and mental abuse. CP is a parenting practice that has been enshrined in the culture and legal system of the country. Based on the review of African literature, Mudany et al. (2013) found that most African societies preferred physical punishment, more especially whipping rather than psychosocial interventions. Similar results were yielded in a cross sectional quantitative study to elicit parents' and caregivers' perceptions of child discipline which was conducted in Nairobi, Kenya across different institutions (Mudany et al., 2013). The UDHR calls for all people to be treated with humanity by supporting their right to life, freedom, and security. Thus articles three and five respectively note:

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person” and “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

To a large extent Botswana has failed to abide by the above clause as the Children's Act allows children to be punished if found guilty by the court. Other studies conducted among Africans have shown that CP is a widely acknowledged cultural parenting practice. A research study on the extent to which CP is used by parents was done by Mudany et al (2013) in Kenya among a sample of 538 fathers and mothers, whose children were aged eighteen years. The study showed that only a few participants (18) were against the use of physical punishment (Mudany et al., 2013). Religious beliefs are also influential in parenting decisions. Brody & Flor (1998 , p. 813) define the term religiosity is “a set of beliefs, values, and norms that influence the community's ideas about the ways in which children should be reared”. Parent's religious/spiritual beliefs that are often publicly demonstrated through

association with religious groups influence parenting practices. Religion generally determines a person's spirituality. Spirituality is "the manners in which individuals frame their relationship to the universe, environment, and cosmos that creates meaning and connects them to something larger than themselves" (West-Olatunji, Sanders, Mehta, & Behar-Horenstein, 2010, p. 141). The connection to a larger being is often demonstrated by affiliating with different religious groups that often become resource networks for parents. However, it is important to note that religious beliefs facilitate both positive and negative parenting practices as well as determine power relations and decision making processes within the family.

Christianity, although borrowed from the west, has influenced cultural and legal systems in many African countries, including Botswana. West-Olatunji, et al. (2010) points out that religious affiliation can enhance positive parenting practices by offering resources for parents to make it easy for them to fulfil their parenting roles. On a different note, religious affiliation sometimes facilitates negative parenting practices such as CP (Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009). Physical discipline among people of Christian religion is motivated by the biblical Proverb 13: 24 "spare the rod and spoil the child". Similar sentiments are also shared by Islam, which also approves of CP. Omorodion (2008), who examined parenting experiences and practices of black families from sub-Saharan Africa residing in Canada, exposed that women appreciated physical punishment because they were also spanked by their parents while growing up in their countries of origin.

CP is a contentious issue because it has hidden psychological effects that negatively impact the functioning of those who had experienced it (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, Forthcoming). CP is seen to strengthen positive behavior such as child compliance, but its negative consequences such as physical and emotional abuse are often overlooked and measured on short time basis (Renzaho et al., 2011). In the context of Botswana, CP is further preserved by the cultural authoritarian principle of *Botho* (translated into English as respect) which requires one to be silent over certain issues, including oppressive matters as a sign of good manners. Omorodion (2008) found that parents of African descent preferred physical punishment such as spanking with a cane. Physical discipline has short-term and long-term negative psychological effects such as depression and physical consequences such as physical abuse on children (Dietz, 2000; Gershoff, 2010). Given that mothers are mostly the primary givers in the context of Botswana, Losike-Sedimo (2018) compares them to protective chickens that provide security and nurturance to its chicks. Therefore, when that protection is violated by the primary care giver, children develop mistrust and internalize the shame

which manifest in adulthood mental health problems such as co-dependency, addictions and negative survival techniques (Bradshaw, 1996). In a situation where negative parenting practices such as CP are entrenched at micro and macro levels of society, children are unlikely to oppose it. This compromises a child's right to protection and increases vulnerability to abuse (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming). Since there is a fine line between CP and physical abuse Durrant (2016), Gershoff (2010) and Lansford (2010) call for its abolishment. Since CP is legally approved in Botswana, legal reform is a necessary mechanism to make it easy for child protection advocates and activists, such as social workers to achieve their work against CP.

5.3 Summary

In this chapter I discussed how cultural norms, policies and legislation interrelate to influence parenting practices. I discussed how international organizations such as the ILO make recommendations for gender equality in the work place, and call upon states to change laws for the benefit of enhancing parenting experiences. Policy and legislation cannot be divorced from decision making processes surrounding parenting practices. Changes in legislation and policy do not act in isolation to influence family functioning (Coltrane & Adams, 2008). Transformations are an outcome of the multifarious historical, cultural, social and economic activities at the larger societal level that support that gender cannot be examined as an isolated variable when studying parenting practices.

The issues discussed validate the meaningful argument that power and dominance are institutionalized (Van Dijk, 1993) and supported by legislation that consequently impact family functioning and parenting practices. This thesis supports the structural theoretical approach, which calls for researchers, practitioners and policy makers to deal with the key determinants of inequality and oppression, and how these might influence parenting practices. In the following section, I discuss the study approach and design by giving a detailed presentation of the research methodology.

SECTION THREE: STUDY APPROACH AND DESIGN

CHAPTER SIX

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

Chapter six discusses the research design, and describes how the study was conducted. The chapter covers ethical issues considered in the study, sampling methods specifying the recruitment of participants, data collection techniques as well as data analysis strategies. A description of how the requisite of trustworthiness of data was adhered to is also given. Chapter six concludes by highlighting the challenges and limitations encountered during the course of the study. These limitations underscore methodological constraints as well as the challenges I experienced prior to and during fieldwork.

6.2 Research Approach and Design

A research design is an elaborate outline that describes how a research study was undertaken by specifying how the study sample was selected, operationalizing variables, detailing actual data collection methods and how data were analysed to yield results (Babbie, 2015, 2016; Grinnell Jr & Unrau, 2005; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Babbie (2016) states that research studies can either take a qualitative or quantitative paradigm that can be undertaken as cross-sectional or longitudinal studies at one time or stretched over a long period. A mixed method combines qualitative and quantitative approaches. Cross-sectional studies investigate and analyse a particular section of phenomena at one time and longitudinal studies focus on examining and understanding the processes of phenomena by comparing the results of data collected from multiple time points (Babbie, 2016).

Qualitative studies do not presuppose a particular classification of responses and require the researcher to inductively analyse data by getting categories from participants' responses, whereas quantitative data predict participants' responses and collect data to confirm or dispute existing ideas (Amoateng & Richter, 2007; Babbie, 2016; Darlington & Scott, 2003; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Qualitative research utilizes open-ended questions that do not direct participants to any particular answers, whereas quantitative or survey research

uses structured or closed questions that target specific answers (GIEACPC, 2017, 2018). Qualitative studies are flexible and changes can always be made during the research process. Although it is common to highlight the difference between qualitative and quantitative methodology, the two are similar (Amoateng & Richter, 2007) in the sense that they are both interested in the functioning of people and how people answer specific questions about their unique experiences. The main difference is in the approaches followed and the tools used to acquire and analyse data (Amoateng & Richter, 2007).

This study adopted critical/structural social work theory and the lens of intersectionality to ascertain women's parenting practices and factors that influenced their decision making relating to preferred and used parenting practices. The study fell within the exploratory-descriptive continuum as it was the first study undertaken in Botswana to research factors that influence parenting practices of women in different family structures. Previous research in the area conducted in the context of Africa, specifically in Botswana was very limited. Exploratory studies produce new discernments and understanding in the subject (Babbie, 2016; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). It is appreciated that descriptive designs enable the researchers to define and describe social phenomenon (Grinnell Jr & Unrau, 2005). The descriptive design helped me to focus on the nuanced and lived experiences of women in the study, drawing on their voices to provide detailed descriptions with rich and thick data (Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007; Kuckartz, 2014) which brought the research within the realm of the phenomenological approach (GIEACPC, 2017, 2018). Qualitative research methods met the goals of both structural social work theory and Intersectionality because the strategies used for data collection such as face-to-face interviews provided data that best explained the realities and experiences of women who participated in the study (UNICEF, 2013).

GIEACPC (2017) noted five qualitative research traditions of inquiry as biographical or narrative, phenomenological, ethnography, case study, and grounded theory. Biographical studies seek to understand behavior in historical terms and how that relates to current behavior. Ethnography focuses on observations in settings where issues to be discussed take place and there are no formal interviews undertaken whereas in case study, the researcher selects certain or different players in the system to find out about the issue of interest. A phenomenological study seeks to explore, understand and describe people's experiences through their own perceptions (Chilisa, 2011; GIEACPC, 2017).

Reflexivity made it possible to relate my own experiences with those of the participants in the study. Reflexivity is the ideology that research is subjective and that the

researcher has the potential to impact processes and outcomes (Chilisa, 2011). Reflexivity allowed me to integrate personal and professional experiences in the interview process as ways to establish trust, collaboration and personal relationships with participants (Denzin, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Margaret Fonow & Cook, 2005). The use of eco-maps and genograms was enlightening and empowering as women had an opportunity to take part in the drawings and self-reflect in relation to their parenting practices and their children's life transitions and experiences. According to Sewpaul (1993, p. 190) "critical life events or life transitions are viewed as potentially growth promoting and empowering not as pathological". The study considered the parenting practices of women within the different developmental phases of children, which allowed the women to describe how parenting behaviors unfolded over time.

Reflexivity was used to monitor the effect of my background and worldview on the research process (Chilisa & Preece, 2005) by keeping a diary to record experiences. It also served to monitor how my beliefs, values and experiences influenced the study, as well as planning for subsequent interviews. "Reflexivity is the process through which a researcher recognizes, examines, and understands how his or her own social background and assumptions can intervene in the research process" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 129). Reflexivity influences "research question, data collection methods, data analysis, report writing and interpretation of results" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 144). For example, my biographical background - being a woman, a married woman, brought up by a single mother, being a Christian, a parent, a working mother (career oriented), a social worker as well as the general experience of interacting with parents and various structures in the community all influenced my decision to undertake such a study. But I knew that the primary focus was for me to obtain the experiences of participants, and to not have them contaminated by my background and experiences. Reflexivity assisted me to acknowledge that, as a researcher, I was "a meaningful research tool that shifted back and forth between multiple, and sometimes conflicting role performances and the implications of this for my research relationships and decisions" (Day, 2012, p.71).

Reflexivity was practiced throughout the research process and it involved acknowledging the power dynamics between myself as a researcher and my participants (Day, 2012). Keeping a research journal assisted me to reflect on how my biography, and my positioning as a university lecturer studying towards a PhD, might have influenced the research process and how I consciously used some of my experiences to build rapport with participants and help them share the information that they might not have otherwise willingly

shared. Positioning myself within the research helped to reduce power imbalances and to minimize anxiety on the part of the participants, which facilitated reciprocity and stimulated rapport (Elmir, Schmied, Jackson, & Wilkes, 2011). Sometimes building reciprocity and rapport requires the researcher to disclose personal information to the participants. The biographical information such as my Christian beliefs, being a mother, being married as well as experiences of being a social worker that I shared with participants established a positive relationship with them. The kinds of biographical information that I shared with the participants depended on the uniqueness of each participant, and the issues we discussed. Sensitively sharing my biographical information helped participants to position me within their social world and required me to re-negotiate my position within the research relationship (Day, 2012).

The interview sessions and relationships I had with each of the women who participated were different, and the time taken to build rapport with each of them was different. For some participants it was spontaneous and for others it took some time. Further, the reflexivity and the conversational style of interviewing revealed some of the assumptions and stereotypes that I did not know I had as a researcher. For example, in one of the interviews that I had with an unemployed married woman with 10 children who relied on her husband's salary for family income, I realized later when I wrote my research memo and transcribed the interview that I was curious and at the same time appalled by the number of children that the participant had. That experience revealed my bias and stereotypes towards the number of children that a family should have in contemporary times, more especially in a situation where the source of income is unstable. I also had to reflect on and weigh my taken-for-granted assumptions regarding corporal punishment. Apart from the journaling, the reading of the literature and supervisory sessions proved to be central to the development of reflexivity. Reflexivity is further discussed under the section on data collection methods.

6.2.1 Sampling and recruitment of participants

A qualitative study requires working with small samples to enhance in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied (Maxwell, 2012). In qualitative research there are no restrictions to sample size but a researcher is regulated by availability of resources, the funder and the context in which the research is undertaken, as well as the researcher's satisfaction with data saturation. A point of saturation is when the researcher gets similar data

and that there is no point to continue with data collection as the chances of getting new data are slim (Brod, Tesler, & Christensen, 2009; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Mwansa, Malinga, Ntshwarang, & Maripe, 2011). Non-probability snowball and purposive sampling strategies were used to select eight women from each family structure to make a total of 24 participants. Initially I had envisioned a sample size of 30 participants but I realized that the data reached a point of saturation by the 24th participant. When compared to probability sampling strategies, which are systematic, non-probability sampling methods such as snowball and purposive sampling are haphazard and prone to researcher bias (Babbie, 2015, 2016; Neuman, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Purposive sampling was used to deliberately select wards that fall within the Selebi-Phikwe district (study location). Purposive sampling is a method that obliges the researcher to use discernment and judgment in making decisions about selection of participants based on the goals and objectives of the study (Babbie, 2016; Neuman, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Purposive sampling gave me control over the sample and I did not waste time interviewing participants who fell outside of the scope of the research (Babbie, 2016; Chilisa, 2011; Neuman, 2007).

I began snowball sampling by walking in the first street of one of the wards in Selebi-Phikwe and I shared the information about my study with the first woman that I met. After my short conversation with her, I realized that she qualified to take part in the research study. I made an appointment with her to be interviewed at her home. After the interview she referred me to other women she thought were potential participants. Since recruitment was also done concurrently through radio announcements, posters, newspapers and newsletter advertisements, I received phone calls and messages from potential participants. I shared the information about the study and assessed participants' eligibility to take part in the study over the telephone, and I scheduled face-to-face interviews with those who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. At the end of the interviews I asked participants if they knew any women who met the criteria for the study and I made telephonic contact with those women. Sometimes I was directed to the homes of the potential participants and I would go there to interview them in person to assess their eligibility to participate in the study. If they agreed to participate and met the criteria, I scheduled face-to-face interviews with them. All women who did not qualify to participate in the study were courteously and respectfully informed that they could not take part in the study. All the interviews were conducted privately in the participants' homes.

I recruited participants by making announcements of the study in two popular radio stations, as well as through posters, a public newspaper, and the Selebi Phikwe town

newsletter called “*Maitiiso*” that was owned by the Botswana Colliery Limited (BCL) mining company and distributed freely to the town residents to update them about various issues and events that took place in their town. Most people responded to the advertisement of the study through the radio. Out of the 24 participants that were included in the study, five were recruited through the radio, two through the posters, one through the newsletter and 16 through snowball sampling. The snowball method turned out to be most effective in recruitment of women who met the criteria of the study when compared to the other methods. This was perhaps because the women who referred me to other women understood the requirements for participation, and the word of mouth referral might have helped prospective participants to be more trusting and willing to participate.

Prior to pasting posters in key strategic areas such as clinics, banks, supermarkets and community halls in each ward, permission was sought from the Bye Law Enforcement office at Selebi Phikwe Town Council. To ensure that potential participants were not burdened with the costs of communication, the posters and adverts emphasized that women who were interested in participating in the study should send a cell phone message with their telephone numbers so that I could call them to provide more information about the study. Moreover, the posters and adverts emphasized flexibility of time to facilitate participation.

6.2.2 Study population and sample size

The study population was women with children. During fieldwork two women who started the interviews did not complete them, citing time constraints and being overwhelmed with other responsibilities as problems. Those women were replaced with two other women of the same family structure. Among the sample of 24 women, eight were single working women who headed their families, eight were working women from dual career families and the other eight were unemployed women who had employed partners. Other family structures were excluded due to time limitations as well as to narrow the scope of the research study for the purpose of aesthetics and clarity.

6.2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria clarify the study population by explaining the external characteristics of the participants (Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007). In my study, women of any age parenting children from birth to 19 years from families with at least one adolescent child were selected for the study. Families with adolescents were chosen because it allowed me to understand women's parenting practices across children's earlier phases of life. The early adolescent phase starts from 10 years of age (Hervish & Clifton, 2012; UNICEF, 2011b).

The study did not intend to include women with any mental illness. When I approached women on the streets for participation in the study, I did not ask them about their mental health status prior to the interview. However the behavior of participants was monitored during the interview to rule out such instances. All the women who participated in the study did not show any obvious signs of mental illness and none of them disclosed any diagnosis of mental illness.

6.2.4 Data collection methods

The section on data collection methods elaborates the procedures that I followed during fieldwork to collect data. I detail how I used individual in-depth interviews, genograms and eco-maps to collect data as well as how the semi structured interview guide assisted me to keep in line with the objectives and goals of the research study. Additionally, I discuss how I maintained reflexivity and conscious partiality throughout the study, and how I dealt with some of the challenges I encountered during the research study. The legal and ethical preparatory procedures I had to fulfil before the onset of the study are detailed.

Interviews

There are many qualitative data collection methods such as observations, focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews (Babbie, 2016; Rubin & Babbie, 2016) but the interviewing process is dynamic and changes, depending on the time and context (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). For the purpose of this study, I used the in-depth face-to-face interviews with the aid of an audiotape to record the interviews, as well as semi structured interview

guide (see appendix one). People are experts of their own experiences and the interview allowed them to tell their stories and to speak about their lived situations from their perspectives (Babbie, 2016; GIEACPC, 2018). Face-to-face interviews required asking questions and actively communicating with participants such as keeping eye contact, probing, seeking clarification for issues discussed and keeping participants actively engaged throughout the conversation and listening actively to responses (Grinnell Jr & Unrau, 2005; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Active communication created a chance to have prolonged conversations with the participants and opportunities to probe for necessary data on the subject of discussion.

In-depth interviewing involved uncovering and sourcing data about women's realities that might frequently go unnoticed and not communicated, while at the same time appreciating that, as a researcher, I was a co-producer of the data sourced (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Hesse-Biber (2007, p.118) observes that in-depth interviews are "issue oriented and aim at acquiring subjective meanings and allows the researcher access to the views of those who are marginalized in a society such as women, people of colour, homosexuals, and the poor." Face-to-face interviews helped the participants to reflect on their experiences and reduced insecurity because they provided opportunities to facilitate active and empathetic listening, observation of non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, tuning into the change of voices and feelings as well as asking direct questions for clarity when necessary (Elmir et al., 2011). Even though the face-to-face strategy was the most effective way of acquiring data as it allowed me to probe, it is not always the best when conducting research on sensitive issues. According to Elmir et al. (2011) some participants may be embarrassed or intimidated to share sensitive issues in person and prefer other non-contact methods such as telephone and computer assisted interviews. The following discussion focuses on how reflexivity and sensitive interviewing were used to cope with some of the disadvantages of face-to-face interviews in qualitative research.

Reflexivity and conscious partiality

In quantitative research, the researcher seeks to minimize subjectivity. Qualitative research, on the other hand, acknowledges subjectivity and the researcher is encouraged to confront it by keeping research journals or memos that demonstrate how subjectivity impacts

the research process (Berg & Smith, 1985; D’Cruz, Gillingham, & Melendez, 2007; Day, 2012). In this study, I kept research field notes that provided important information on how to organize data collection and the kind of questions I had to focus on in the study. Keeping notes also helped me to plan for subsequent interviews. Keeping field notes and engaging in critical reflection was part of a reflexivity exercise that allowed me to identify my biasness. Field notes helped me to recognize some of the stereotypes and biases I had as a researcher that raised my awareness about understanding how structural factors influence participants’ experiences as well as my personal experiences as a researcher. Reflexivity empowers both the researcher and participants by enhancing awareness of their power positions, their contributions to the research as well as facilitating the interview process, as the discussion that follows shows.

Sensitive interviewing is part and parcel of reflexivity. Initially, I thought my study was not about a sensitive issue but I had to incorporate sensitive interviewing during data collection because some participants did not want to share some data. Sensitive interviewing allowed me to acquire some of the data that they were not comfortable to share. Elmir et al. (2011) acknowledge that sensitive issues have detrimental consequences on both participants and researcher such as physical and psychological distress. In my study I realized that while some issues might not have had detrimental effects on participants, they made them feel uncomfortable. In addition, Hämäläinen and Rautio (2015, p. 07) noted, “apart from the issues or topic discussed during research interviews, the family becomes a sensitive space because the family involves studying personal lives and relationships as well as the home.” The home is a sensitive context because it is a symbol of identity, as it is connected to the participants’ memories, relationships, life events, and people’s interaction. The home also provides those who dwell in it comfort, ease, intimacy, relaxation as well as security (Hämäläinen & Rautio, 2015). Some participants are likely to be intimidated by the interview process such that they feel incompetent (Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007) or unwilling to share information, especially in a situation where the researcher is seen as an outsider. Hesse-Biber (2007, p. 139) adds that “Issues of perceiving the researcher as an insider or outsider relates to the impact of differences and similarities during the interview process”. Furthermore Merriam, et al. (2000) observe that the position of the researcher as insider and outsider is fluid through the interview process and it is impossible to distance oneself from that, as it is important for self-reflection, knowledge co-construction and informed research. The above discussion coheres with critical social work theory that considers how power

relationships and asymmetrical relationships, based on various social criteria, intersect to influence our behaviors.

The process of sharing information about oneself as well as thoughts or ideas about some issues during the interview is termed “researcher self-disclosure” (Elmir et al., 2011, p. 14). Self-disclosure does not guarantee that the participants would be comfortable to share their private information because, in some instances, the outsider status could be advantageous, especially when doing research in an area where the researcher is known (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Given this position, I had to be sensitive about when and how to disclose my personal information to gain an insider status. I did not want to be perceived as an expert during interviews but rather as another parent who might experience similar challenges like them. Keeping research notes and acknowledging the diversity of the participants as well as being sensitive to their needs helped me to know when it was necessary to disclose. I had to be sensitive that I did not lower the motivation and self-esteem of participants during the interviews. For example, one of the participants in the study had a problem of partial hearing in one ear. I did not let that discourage her from participating but rather I assured and I spoke louder, willingly repeated what I said when necessary and showed her that I am interested in listening to her experiences. Sensitive interviewing required more time to establish rapport, build trust and to ensure that the participants did not lose interest in the study (Elmir et al., 2011; Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007). In addition, the more time I spent with each of the participants allowed for greater disclosure of personal experiences, as repeated interview sessions communicated that I valued their personal experiences (Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007), and it helped to build trust between me and the participants. To ensure that I engaged in reflective listening, I used the strategy of “listening to what the participant said, interpreted it, and stated it in the form of a question”(Kirkevold & Bergland, 2007, p. 74). Reflexivity acknowledges that both the researcher and the participants are co-participants in the production of data.

This study was conducted in women’s homes and some of the participants linked their parenting experiences to their homestead and neighbourhood. Interviews carried in the participants’ familiar places helped participants to be more relaxed as the interview became less formal (Hämäläinen & Rautio, 2015). Undertaking the study in the homes also helped me to observe the places they lived in, and I was able to link my observations to their personal experiences. I noted that most of the women who had lower income lived in poor neighbourhoods and their home conditions were often poorer when compared to women with higher income. That connected me to their life stories and enhanced my understanding of

their situations. In my study I found that some participants were open to an extent that we continued talking about different issues after ending the interview sessions. Despite the advantages of undertaking interviews in the homes, Hämäläinen and Rautio (2015) highlighted that some participants may not be comfortable about their homes being used as a place to do research interviews, and they might try to impress the researcher by not revealing some of the real life family interaction such as conflicts. However, undertaking the study in the home was only a disadvantage when I interviewed women with young children as they interrupted our conversations. This is discussed later in the thesis under the sub-section on challenges and limitations of the study.

Further, reflexivity helped me to recognize the gender biasness of my sample and study. Prior to the study I thought that the selection of women was exclusively based on the reasons I discussed earlier in chapter one, but as I analysed the data and examined the results I realized my bias could have been influenced by the fact that I grew up in an extended family with a lot of single mothers, which is quite normalized in Botswana. Additionally, as I conversed with the women I realized the importance of the father in parenting which broke the assumption that I have always held that father figures are not crucial to the upbringing of children. Unexpectedly, the research study triggered a greater appreciation of the role my husband played in the care of children in our family. It also enabled me to notice how his role diverted from the mainstream cultural beliefs and practices that denote women as primary caregivers and men as providers because we equally share parenting and household responsibilities in the family. However, I should note that his active participation in child care, which is not the norm, could be linked to his educational background and his experience of being raised by a single father.

One of the main challenges for me was re-thinking my views on corporal punishment (CP), which is supported by law and culture, and widely practiced in Botswana. I initially saw nothing remiss in the women's reports about the use of CP as a disciplinary strategy, as I had normalized the dominant discourse and practice. The reflexive discussions with my supervisor, and the extensive sociological and psychological evidence detailing the short and long-term impacts of CP made me re-think my views. This demonstrates the power of knowledge and reflexive dialogue in heightening consciousness and challenging taken-for-granted assumptions, which the IASSW (2018) considers to be a core ethical imperative in social work. Principles 4.7 and 4.8 relevant to this are formulated as follows:

“4.7 Social workers recognize that dominant socio-political and cultural discourses and practices contribute to many taken-for-granted assumptions and entrapments of thinking, which manifest in the normalization and naturalization of a range of prejudices, oppressions, marginalization, exploitation, violence and exclusions.

4.8 Social workers recognize that developing strategies to heighten critical consciousness that challenge and change taken-for-granted assumptions for ourselves and the people whom we engage with, forms the basis of everyday ethical, anti-oppressive practice” (IASSW, 2018, p. 6).

Semi structured interview guide

A semi-structured interview guide (see appendices one and two) was used, with flexibility, to ensure uniformity of areas of discussion (Babbie, 2015). The semi-structured interview guide was an important tool that ensured consistency of the questions and areas of exploration with participants to maximize comparability of responses (Babbie, 2016; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). The interview guide helped me to ensure that if participants went off track, I gently guided them to the focus of the study. I constructed questions prior to the interviews to ensure that the interviews yielded information that was relevant to the goal and objectives of the research study. The semi-structured interviews allowed me to control the interview process to a certain extent because I prepared a list of questions that needed to be covered prior to the interview. While I controlled how the interview was conducted, I left room for the participants to be spontaneous in the way they answered questions, probed and asked follow-up questions where necessary.

The semi-structured interview guide and the conversational style interviewing process were in line with the phenomenological nature of the study, underscored by the exploratory-descriptive design, and it guide facilitated reflexivity during data collection. As I discussed above, reflexivity required me to consider both my experiences and those of the participants to direct the progress of the study, which could have been challenging if I opted to use a rigid interview instrument. For example, during the interviews I found that some of the participants were not willing to share the exact amount of their family income but preferred to share estimates. The semi-structured interview guide was relevant as I had the opportunity to

rephrase questions to ensure that participants were comfortable to share information about sensitive and potentially sensitive issues (Elmir et al., 2011).

To appreciate qualitative approach as a process of co-construction of knowledge, I actively engaged women in data collection by using genograms and eco-maps. The validity of both the genogram and the eco-map depended on the information sourced from participants interviewed. I would like to acknowledge that varying information could have been given if other members of the family were interviewed (Olsen, Dudley- Brown, & McMullen, 2004). Additionally, the accuracy of drawn eco-maps and genograms might change over time because individual and family experiences are not static as they are impacted by the dynamic socio-structural systems (Olsen et al., 2004).

Genograms

A genogram is an extension of a family tree diagram used in various fields of practice such as medicine, psychology and social work to assess issues in generational families to get data about individuals, groups and families at a multi-contextual level (Butler, 2008; United Nations, 1990). Genograms differ from family trees because they include more information about families such as communication, emotional and social patterns (Olsen et al., 2004; Rempel, Neufeld, & Kushner, 2007; United Nations, 1990). Upon giving consent to participate in the study and to be audiotaped, conversational style, in-depth interviews with women were conducted over at least one hour to one hour 30 minutes per interview. I started the first two interviews by asking participants about their demographic characteristics and going into detail about their parenting arrangements before asking them to draw the genograms to illustrate their family composition. However, I realized that it was limiting because it leads to a lot of repetition and was time consuming. Discussing the family composition without a genogram made it difficult for me to understand how the family was organized, especially how people that were mentioned in the interview were related to the participants. In the subsequent interviews, after getting participants' biographical information, I stopped the recording of the interview and engaged participants in drawing the genograms. The process of drawing the genograms was excluded from the audio tape recordings because it entailed long pauses and participants were informed about the process prior to the interview. Before the participants started drawing, I asked them if they had ever

heard about the genograms and I explained what it was. The participants were also shown a diagram of a genogram to make it easy for them to understand how a completed genogram looked like. Symbols used in the drawing were explained to the participants. The participants were given information about what genograms were and the purpose they served in data collection prior to engaging them in drawing. After the genograms were drawn, the interviews were resumed by engaging in a conversation with the participants to explain the contents of the drawing, and I asked for clarification and probed for the necessary information that related to parenting practices. Figure 6-1 displays symbols used to draw genograms. Figures 6-2 to 6-11 are representations of the types of relationships participants had with their family members and others as well as life events. The relationships shown are heterosexual relationships because none of the participants reported that they were in a same sex relationship.

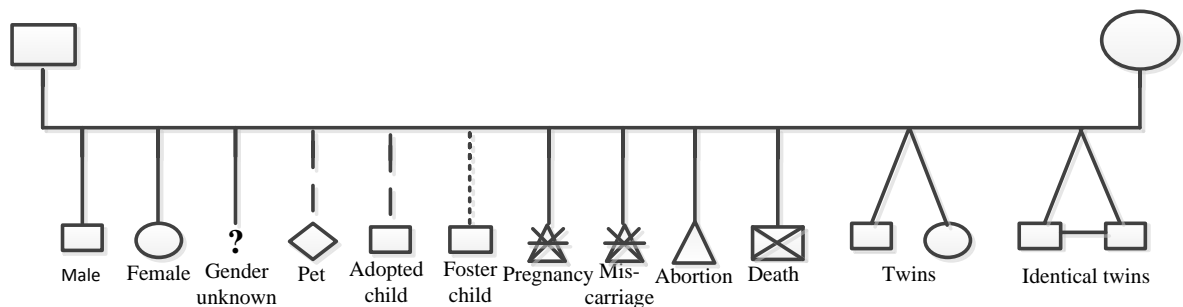


Figure 6-1: Symbols used to draw genograms (Adapted from Hartman 1978; Rempel, 2007)



Figure 6-2: A) Death B) Marriage



Figure 6-3: Living together



Figure 6-4: Significant non-cohabiting continuing relationship

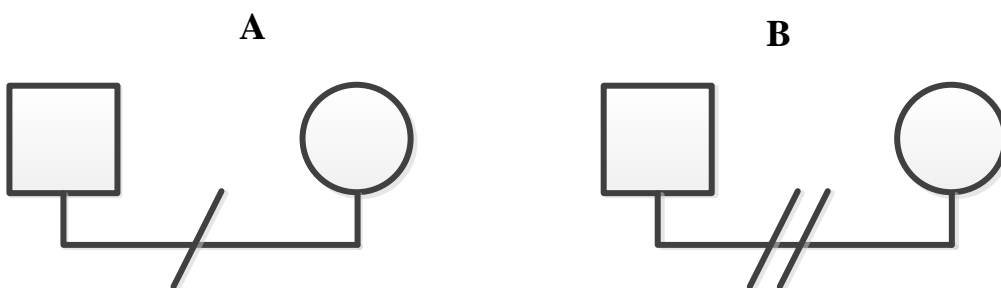


Figure 6-5: Genograms A representing separated couples and B represents divorced couples

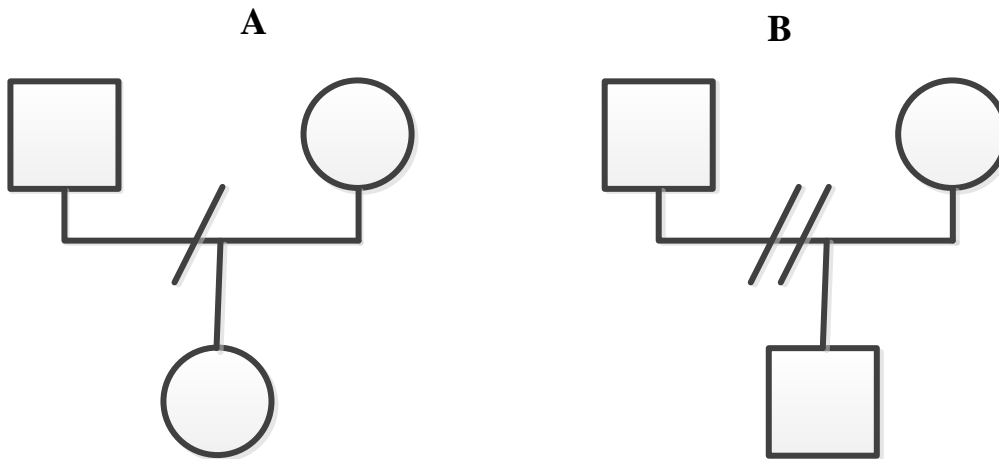


Figure 6-6: Genograms A representing divorced mother with custody of female child. Genogram B separated mother with custody of a male child

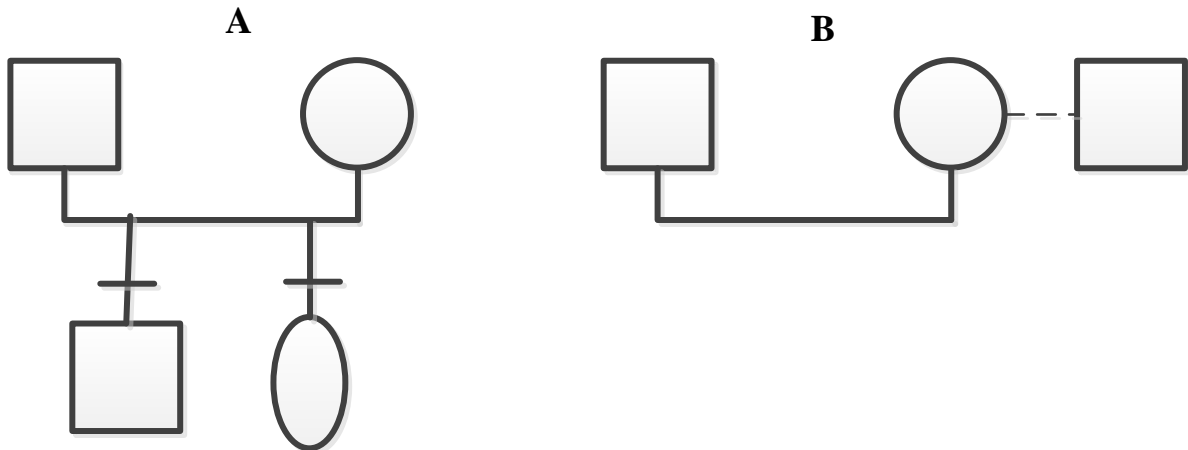


Figure 6-7: Genogram A representing children out of the home Genogram B wife with extramarital affair (current)



Figure 6-8: Symbols representing conflictual relationships (Adapted from Hartman, 1978; Rempel, 2007)

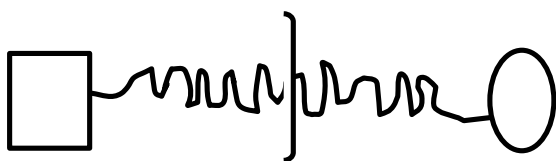


Figure 6-9: Symbols representing conflictual relationships cut off (Adapted from Hartman, 1978; Rempel, 2007)

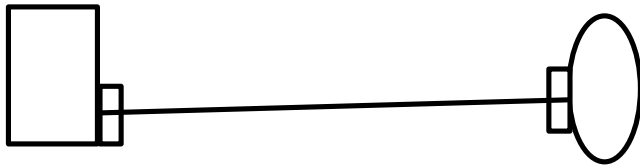


Figure 6-10: Symbols representing distance relationships (Adapted from Hartman, 1978; Rempel, 2007)

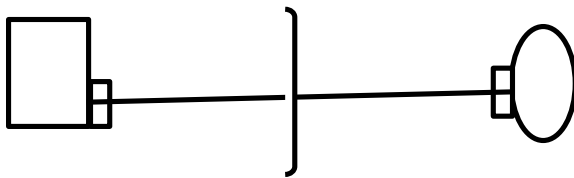


Figure 6-11: Symbols representing distance relationships cut off (Adapted from Hartman, 1978; Rempel, 2007)

Eco maps

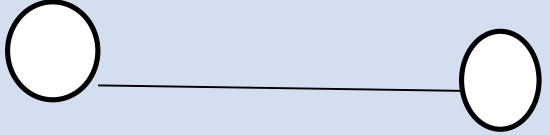
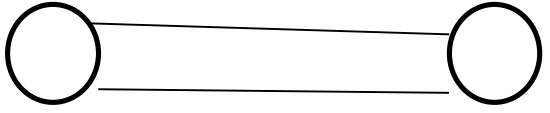
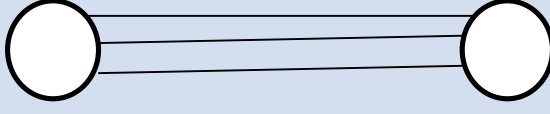
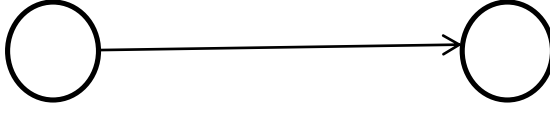
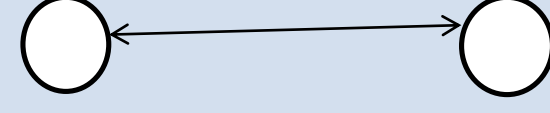
The proponent of eco-mapping in social work is Anne Hartman who made it possible for the tool to assess individual and group needs (Baumgartner & Buchanan, 2010). Eco-maps are used to identify the types of supports or resources that individuals, groups and families have as well as the nature and strength of the relationship (Mpulubusi, 2016; Olsen et al., 2004; Rempel et al., 2007). Consequently, eco-mapping provides insights on the interconnection of individuals, families and their communities by establishing the nature, adequacy and strength of resources (Olsen et al., 2004). In my study, I focused on helping women to identify their support network or resources, the nature of support resources and the strength and the level or quality of support as well as how they facilitated or hindered their preferred and used parenting practices. Material support included items such as housekeeping services, money or clothing. Informal support was mainly help that was provided in a casual manner, whereas emotional support was when others responded to a participant's emotional or psychological needs such as offering encouragement, showing confidence in others to motivate them in their course as well as making any empathetic expressions (Baumgartner &

Buchanan, 2010). In addition, eco-maps showed barriers or hindrances to access resources. It was done by drawing a circle to represent the participant in the middle of the paper and sources of support such as services, organizations, groups, and other individuals were shown by drawing other circles around the one at the centre. Specific lines representing level of access, strength, and quality of flow of resources were drawn between the circle at the centre and those surrounding the middle circle (See Table One).

Similar to genograms, the process of drawing the eco-maps was excluded from the audio tape recording because it entailed long pauses. The participants were given information about what eco-maps were and the purpose they served in data collection before I asked participants to draw. After the eco-maps were drawn, the audio tape recording of interviews was resumed by engaging with the participants and asking them to elaborate on their eco-maps and I probed for the necessary information that related to parenting practices. The eco-maps were drawn towards the end of the interview after participants were asked to elaborate their genograms, and after having discussed some of the key issues that were included in the semi-structured interview guide. I started the eco-map drawings by saying to the participants “I am now going to ask you to put in drawing or pictures all the resources that contributes to your parenting and indicate their level of impact or strength of the connection”. Similar to what I did with the genograms, before the participants started drawing, I asked them if they had ever heard about the eco-maps and I explained what it was. I also showed them a picture of the eco-map and what the symbols represented. The eco-maps also assisted in the identification of structural sources of support and/or obstacles to women’s preferred and used parenting practices, and the types of relationships that women shared with the various systems in the community and with their relatives.

After the drawings, discussions were continued with audio recording. Before ending the interview, I asked all the participants to talk about any issues that they thought affected parenting practices that I did not mention or talk about in our conversation. It was difficult to complete all the processes in one interview session, so I met and conversed with each participant for a minimum of two interview sessions. Genograms and eco-maps helped to elicit data on the composition and structure of families, and on personal and family relationships through drawings (Olsen et al., 2004; Rempel et al., 2007; United Nations, 1990). Table 6-1 on page 91 shows the lines used in the eco-map to represent the strength of the relationships and quality or level of support.

Table 6-1: Representation of Eco-maps Symbols (Adapted from Hartman, 1978; Rempel, 2007)

Serial	Description	Symbol
A	A. Solid thick line indicating weak flow of resources, energy or interest.	
B	B. Solid 2 thick lines indicating moderate flow of resources, energy, or interest	
C	C. Solid 3 thick lines indicating a strong flow of resources, energy or interest	
D	D. One directional flow of resources, energy or interest	
E	E. Two sided arrow indicating a bi-directional flow of resources, energy or interest	

Detailed eco-maps and multi-generational genograms are not easy to draw and would have required participants to practice drawing them before they made a final picture. In the study I chose to help participants draw simple genograms and eco maps separately, considering that they were a diverse group, and differed in age, educational status and level

of awareness. These activities involve using specific shapes and lines to demonstrate the structure of the families and the kinds of relationships they had within the family as well as with individuals outside the family and with community resources. Examples of participants' genograms and eco-maps are provided in Chapter seven on data analysis and results. Eco-maps and genograms can be used in parallel or collaboratively as one diagram to generate data (Rempel et al., 2007). I also had to deal with time constraints. I aimed at ensuring that the participants got out of the interview having learned and understood something, without being confused by complicated drawings. I helped those participants who could not read and write by interviewing them and putting in pictures of what they were saying to me. I did not monitor or keep record of the time that participants took to draw the genograms and eco-maps because the sessions were blended into the interviews that generally lasted for an hour and 30 minutes. Follow up interviews were held with all participants.

Remuneration

At the end of all the interview sessions, participants were given juice and biscuits to thank them for their participation in the study. Darlington and Scott (2003) warned about using incentives or a reimbursement by noting that they often interfere with the participants' ability to freely give informed consent. In this study, participants were not informed about the fact that they will be given biscuits and juice at the end of the interview. There was no financial incentive that could have served as inducement to participate.

6.2.5 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis focuses on reporting the thoughts and experiences of people (Amoateng & Richter, 2007; Kuckartz, 2014; Statistics Botswana, 2011). Data were transcribed verbatim into text and thematic qualitative text analysis was used to identify emerging themes, categorized and openly coded (Kuckartz, 2014; S. B. Merriam, 2002). Open coding starts as soon as one examines, compares, conceptualizes and classifies data (Kuckartz, 2014). Thematic analysis relevance and reliability in research has been tested in

many studies (Kuckartz, 2014). This study adopted both deductive and inductive approaches. Topical categories were identified based on the objectives and research questions, and sub themes based on the data (Kuckartz, 2014). Data were transcribed immediately after recording and analysed throughout the process of data collection. This was meant for guidance in data collection as well as capturing emotional content and non-verbal communications (Darlington & Scott, 2003). The interviews were mainly conducted in the local language, Setswana and the transcribed data translated into English and a sample of the translations was given to an expert to review before analysis. That included data recorded while interpreting and discussing eco-maps and genograms with the participants. After the reviewer approved the translation, I followed Kuckartz (2014) thematic analysis process of analysing data that included the code-recode of data. Kuckartz (2014) defines code-recode procedure as coding the same data repeatedly in intervals to assess whether similar results will be attained. Recording ensured dependability of data that was measured in consistency (Chilisa & Preece, 2005) and facilitated trustworthiness of the study. After transcribing the data I carefully read the data to ensure that I gain in depth familiarity with it, and to highlight important passages as well as to identify topical categories derived from the following themes linked to the objectives and research questions:

- (a) Parenting practices that women preferred and used in raising children.
- (b) Factors that influenced women's parenting practices.
- (c) Similarities and differences in parenting practices.
- (d) Reasons that accounted for similarities and differences in parenting practices.

After that, common themes or patterns of experience in the text that fell under the above topical categories were marked. The text assigned to the major themes was assembled, combined text assigned to major themes was pinpointed and sub-categories identified as well as text that complemented the subcategories. Conclusions were drawn from the analysis and results were presented. Thick descriptive analysis was used to retain women's voices (Amoateng & Richter, 2007; GIEACPC, 2017, 2018). Thick description is the meaningful description of rich data that can be interpreted in many ways (Amoateng & Richter, 2007; GIEACPC, 2018; Kuckartz, 2014). A comprehensive account of women's experiences as reflected in their circumstances, intentions, actions, emotions, thoughts and feelings are provided. This was meant to support and retain the quality of the results. Thick description enables other researchers and readers to determine the transferability of the findings of the

study (GIEACPC, 2017, 2018). Thick descriptions provide comprehensive and impenetrable information about the participants, study settings and context so that readers can judge whether the study is credible and trustworthy (Chilisa, 2011; GIEACPC, 2018). Purposive and snowball techniques gave me control over the sample (Rubin & Babbie, 2016) to ensure that relevant participants take part in the study.

Transcribed data were analysed separately from the genograms and eco-maps. To analyse the genograms, I identified the number of family members, and how the participants related with their immediate family members and their relatives. I used the eco-maps to identify the women's sources of support or resources, their strengths and I examined how the sources of support differed across women in the different family structures as well as how they influenced parenting practices. Additionally, the eco-maps and genograms revealed some of the obstacles that made parenting difficult for the women.

Auditing augmented conformability, hence the study's trustworthiness. My supervisor monitored the study and had access to raw data and any other information related to the study to ensure that data analysis and interpretation were consistent with data. In addition, data translated from the local language (Setswana) to English was given to an expert in my area of research for review and to ensure that the meaning of original data was not lost through translations before it could be used for analysis. The expert wrote to my supervisor confirming the accuracy of the Setswana-English translations.

6.3 Ethical Considerations

The subsection on ethical considerations discusses the following; issues of permission, informed consent, benefits and risks, voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, and storage of study materials and handling of data, trustworthiness of the study and finally dissemination of results.

6.3.1 Permission to conduct study

Prior to undertaking the study, ethical clearance was granted by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see appendix nine) and the Ministry of Local

Government in Botswana through the University of Botswana research office (see appendix 10).

6.3.2 *Informed consent*

The purpose and objectives of the study were clarified with participants verbally and in writing using the language that the participants understood (See appendices three and four for English and Setswana consent forms respectively. Hesse-Biber (2007, p. 120) emphasized that “the study and participant’s informed consent and voluntary participation must be explained before consent is granted and be reiterated prior to beginning the interview.” Participants were asked to sign a consent form prior to participation in the study to confirm their willingness to participate in the interviews and for the interviews to be recorded. Copies of the signed consent forms were given to the participants. I conducted all the interviews and transcribed them. Any identifying details from the transcripts were deleted before being read by the expert for the purpose of translation.

6.3.3 *Benefits and risks*

There were no direct benefits to participate in the study. However, the results of the study add value to research, and will inform social work practice and policy formulation in Botswana. For example, the findings are likely to enhance child and family welfare services in the country. At an individual level, participants had the opportunity to reflect on their parenting practices as many of them indicated that they became aware of some of the issues they took for granted. Findings of the study would be disseminated through publications, workshops and conferences without any information that discloses the identity or participants’ real names.

A supportive environment was created by allowing the participants to choose a place within their homes that they were comfortable in and which offered us privacy. I used my social work skills, values and principles to assist interviewees on site, to ensure closure and make appropriate referrals where necessary. For example, in situations where I realized that a participant needed more information or clarification on certain issues such as government

resources for special groups, I encouraged them to visit the nearest social worker or social welfare offices for further assistance. Linking participants with resources is one way of empowering them. Empowerment at a personal level (micro) does not bring changes at the structural level but the participants benefitted from the reflective dialogues during the interviews, and they gained awareness about external obstacles, and strengths and resources as they worked on their genograms and eco-maps. In doing so they developed more acute awareness of external sources of stress as well as of their personal power and control. Furthermore, the experiences of the women were used to make recommendations for further research, social work practice and for legislative and policy development, which take us into the macro dimensions of structural change and empowerment.

6.3.4 Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation was explained and emphasized to participants before they signed the consent forms. Participants were told that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving reasons for their decisions. Interviews were undertaken at times convenient for the participants and prior arrangements were made with participants before I conducted the first and follow up interviews.

6.3.5 Anonymity and confidentiality

I took the necessary steps to safeguard confidentiality. The interviews were conducted at the participants' homes in privacy. Data collected from participants were kept confidential. Only processed or analysed data are included in the thesis, and I ensured that participants' identities are not revealed. Participants used real names during the interview but I used pseudonyms when transcribing the interviews to disguise the identity of participants. All research materials were stored in a locked cabinet and I was the only one who had access to the key.

6.3.6 Storage or handling of research materials and data

The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed immediately after the interview, and transcribed recordings were held in a password-protected file in my personal computer. The expert who assisted in reviewing translations in the study to ensure that the original meaning of data is not lost, signed an agreement that bound her to abide by research ethical standards and to keep all the information confidential (see appendix 11).

6.3.7 Trustworthiness in qualitative study

Most of the information on how trustworthiness was attained in the study had been discussed in detail under the research design section. To ensure credibility, I had prolonged and substantial engagements and used sensitive interviewing techniques to enhance trust, build rapport, and ensure comfort (GIEACPC, 2018). I scheduled follow-up interviews with the permission of the participants. As part of reflexive practice, I kept a diary to record my experiences, and to monitor how my beliefs, values and experiences influenced the study (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). Sometimes I would share my experiences and thoughts with participants to acknowledge that I was part of the research process. Day (2012) emphasized that the way a researcher conceptualizes and incorporates reflexivity is flexible.

Dependability was assured through consistency (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). That was achieved by thick descriptions and the data code-recode procedure, which required me to code the same data repeatedly in intervals to assess whether similar results will be attained (Chilisa, 2011). After completing the first thematic analysis in July 2017, I repeated the process in August and October 2017 and I kept revisiting the data as I wrote the thesis.

6.3.8 Dissemination of study findings

Findings of the study would be disseminated through publication of articles in academic journals and books. Additionally the results of the study would be presented in

local and international workshops and conferences. Electronic and hard copies of the thesis would be made available to different institutions as per the requirements by the Government of Botswana, the University of KwaZulu-Natal and University of Botswana libraries, the Office of Research and Development at the University of Botswana, the National Art Museum and Gallery, National Assembly, National Archives and Records and the National Library.

6.4 Challenges and Limitations of the Study

The major disadvantage of qualitative research relates to the small sample size that makes it impossible for the findings to be generalized. Qualitative research is concerned with depth and meaning, not numbers and the concern is to ensure that data is analysed in context and is transferable, rather than generalizable (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002).

Face-to-face interviews are prone to participant bias when compared to other methods like surveys because the interviewees are likely to respond with the goal to impress the interviewer, instead of giving true accounts of their experiences. That is it might have enabled socially desirable responses from participants. Social desirability is when respondents focus on adhering to social norms by providing positive information, independent of their genuine attitudes and behaviors to provide answers to impress the interviewer (Krumpal, 2013). I used probing and reflective questioning and used my personal experiences as a social work practitioner and educator to establish a collaborative relationship with participants to build trust, enhance trustworthiness and minimize participant bias (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

I found that after the first interview sessions the participants became more comfortable and open in the subsequent sessions. I used a conversational style of interviewing. Since there was no systematic way of interviewing, the approach made it easy for participants to relax and talk freely about their experiences. Keeping research journals helped me to document and pay attention to factors that affect the quality of the interviews and to deal with them as the study progressed.

Although audio recording ensured the accuracy of the data obtained, its disadvantage was that participants were uncomfortable with being recorded and they might have been cautious about the words they used during the interview when compared to other methods such as note-taking. However, note-taking during interviews could have been destructive

because it was likely to reduce attentiveness and would have required me to pause several times to take notes, and I could have written words that were different from that of the participants (Fraser, 1997). To enhance the comfort of the participants with audio recording, I assured them that it was solely for the purpose of capturing data accurately, that I would delete the recordings after transcription, and I repeatedly assured them of confidentiality. The flexibility of the qualitative study approach is one of the strengths of qualitative research.

Face-to-face interviews via home visits, transcribing and code-recode procedures were time consuming, so the study took longer than anticipated. As I did the transcriptions, I noted issues that needed further clarification and I had to schedule additional interviews with the participants.

Since I also used snowball sampling, I experienced two incidents where participants referred me to people who did not meet the inclusion criteria of the research study. In one instance the woman did not have an adolescent child and in another instance I found out that the woman had children who met the criteria but they lived with their grandmother in the village and she only met them during short visits. In both scenarios I stopped the interviews upon realization that they were not eligible and removed them from the study sample with courtesy and respect.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see appendix nine) to undertake the study but my study proposal had to undergo another lengthy ethical approval process through the University of Botswana Internal Review Board that also delayed the timely commencement of the study. As an employee of the University of Botswana my proposal had to be reviewed for additional ethical clearance before I was awarded the Government of Botswana permit (see appendix 10) to undertake fieldwork.

Although interviews were conducted in private places, young children often interrupted the interviews by coming to their mothers to seek something or report some issues. In such cases, I paused the recording so that the mother could attend to the child and resumed the recording as soon as the child was out of sight. In the homes where fathers, spouses and partners were present, I ensured that prior to conducting the interviews, I informed them about the purpose of the study and that the interviews were supposed to be conducted privately with the women. After that I kindly requested them to allow myself and the participant a private moment to undertake the interview. There were no objections encountered in that regard. In retrospect, I realized that I did not probe and reflect on participants' emotions as adequately as I should have done. I think to a larger extent I was carried away by concentrating on getting data about parenting practices, and the women's

presentation of resiliency in their challenges which contributed to my failure to more fully explore their feeling about different issues. In addition, I should also say that to some extent, our cultural upbringing teaches us to be strong by not being too expressive of how we feel and I think that somehow extended to my interviewing processes.

Reflexivity encourages that “we need to integrate ourselves into the research process, but it is anxiety-provoking in that it increases feelings of vulnerability” (England, 1994, p. 251). The anxiety I had as a result of feeling vulnerable during data collection could have negatively impacted on the quality of the research process as I struggled with negotiating to what extent I should immerse myself or share biographical information, especially at the beginning of the interviews. My biographical background could also have added some limitations on the quality of data, especially in a situation where the interference might have been unconscious. The research process and supervision in particular helped me to understand some of the dominant discourses that I have normalized based on my own socialization experiences such as the perception of corporal punishment as a harmless parenting practice. As a result of the internalized and normalized cultural norms, initially I minimized the salience of the data. However, as I read more empirical data and got guidance from my supervisor, I was able to discern some of the taken-for-granted assumptions and practices that are critical in the wellbeing of children and women at the family and societal levels. Additionally, as I studied more empirical data and got constructive feedback from my supervisor it enhanced my analytical skills and I had made I attempts to apply what I learned from my thesis in the other areas, such as during teaching.

My personal characteristics and those of the participants could have hindered or facilitated understanding of some issues, as well as enhanced my power in the interview process (England, 1994). For example I realized that when interviewing older people, I battled between trying to maintain respect by not being too intrusive, while at the same time trying to find ways in which I could ask questions without appearing being too blunt because culturally that would show disrespect to older people. That revealed some of the unconscious cultural practices I have internalized because in traditional Tswana culture (especially in the context in which I grew up), age determined ways of communication between people and terms of respect. Further, being the kind of person who did not normally share personal information with strangers, it was both a disadvantage and an advantage. It was a disadvantage in the sense that holding back information could have hindered the building of rapport and trust with participants, and an advantage in the sense that even if it took time for participants to open up to me, I could understand because I could relate that to my own

personality. Reading further on reflexivity and its importance in research helped me to cope with the process. Reflexivity does not end the issues of power and powerlessness but facilitated awareness of such issues as I acknowledged the power, privileges and biases brought into the research process (England, 1994).

The study did not include children, fathers, and key stakeholders such as policy makers and professionals like social workers and psychologists. Data from key stakeholders could have enriched the data by providing information about factors that influence parenting practices, especially on issues relating to policy based on their different experiences. The other stakeholders were not included as the study focus was on the views and experiences of women. They were excluded to safeguard the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study and to meet the objectives of the study.

Two months after completing data collection, BCL mine in Selebi Phikwe was closed, that indicated to me that a longitudinal study could have been more relevant to undertake, given the economic instability of the study area but due to constrained resources it was not possible for me to do this. Lastly, there was an incident where my personal computer was hacked. This created anxiety about whether my research work was protected despite me using passwords to ensure data protection. I dealt with this by changing the computer password, the network password and increasing back up saving mechanisms.

6.5 Summary

This chapter highlights the processes I used to carry out the study and strategies that ensured trustworthiness, rigor as well as the challenges and limitations of the study. In addition, my experiences prior to and during the study are noted. The study is qualitative, phenomenological in nature, and the goal was to ascertain and describe factors that influenced women's parenting practices. The chapter has indicated that a qualitative research study was chosen because it allowed prolonged face-to-face interviews that yielded rich data and facilitated the use of thick descriptions in the analysis of data. The following section focuses on the findings and discussion of results.

SECTION FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA AND THE GENDERED DIMENSIONS OF MANDATORY AND SUPPORTIVE PARENTING PRACTICES

7.1 Introduction

Chapter seven presents the key research findings. As it has been noted in chapter one, the study took place in Selebi Phikwe. The other name for Selebi Phikwe is Phikwe. Therefore, I used Phikwe and Selebi Phikwe interchangeably in the study, especially during the interviews. Phikwe is home to Botswana Colliery Limited Mining Company, is referred to as BCL in short. It is important to underscore that the goal of the study was not to investigate parenting styles of women but to examine the actual strategies (parenting practices) they used to care or parent children and the factors that facilitated the preferred and used parenting practices. Parents' primary roles are to protect, socialize, and nurture children in the family (Heath, 1995). It is by no chance that all the women's parenting practices geared towards those goals. In line with the first objective of the study, which was to understand the parenting practices preferred and used by women, the key research findings reflect that the women in all the family structures combined negative parenting practices with positive parenting practices; that parenting practices were dynamic influenced by both positive and negative societal influences; and that the women were not constrained to a specific parenting practice throughout the child's development. These were contingent on different social and economic factors, children's developmental needs and the ages of children. Disciplinary practices varied and parental attitudes and expectations towards children changed as children grew up. The second objective sought to understand factors that influenced parenting practices of women and the results showed that the parenting practices were influenced by an array of intersecting factors, such as culture, legislation, family structure, father's absence, social support networks, family income, and parents' educational, and employment status. The third and fourth objectives sought to identify the similarities and differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures respectively. The fifth objective was to establish the factors that accounted for the similarities and differences identified in objective three and four. The results indicated that the women used and preferred parenting practices were similar across different family structures. The women's parenting

practices were generally rooted in oppressive cultural practices as discussed in this thesis. However, different intersecting socio-structural factors mentioned above facilitated or hampered desired parenting practices at particular points in time.

7.2 Summary of women's profiles

All participants, except one, were Botswana nationals by birth. One participant of African descent acquired Botswana nationality through marriage. When compared to other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa such as South Africa, Botswana is less multi-racial but more of an ethnic or tribal country. However, as a result of the British colonial influence before independence, there was an assimilation of diverse ethnic and tribal groups that resided in the then Bechuanaland into the Tswana culture to create a mono-ethnic state (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006). The nationalization of the country into a mono ethnic culture has contributed to people being more conscious of their national identity rather than their ethnic identities. The exclusion of how parenting practices linked to ethnicity or tribal identity does not imply that I undermine the role it plays in parenting practices. Nevertheless, participants identified with the “Tswana” culture. During the interviews, participants would state their ethnic or tribal affiliations, but they kept referring to their practices as “Setswana” which is a national representation. Since independence, most people in the country appreciated the mono ethnic culture. Nowadays there are human rights activists who oppose the mono-ethnic nature of the state (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006). All the women's partners and spouses were males; none of the participants was in a same sex relationship. The inclusion criteria for the study did not allow me to interview foreigners. In order to protect the identities of the participants, pseudonyms are used. It is important to note that some of the women were very sensitive to disclosing their salaries and the family income, therefore some of the family incomes are estimates. I present family income in Botswana Pula (P) in the thesis. At the time of the study, one Pula was equivalent to 0.0096 US Dollar. I sourced the information on the profiles of the participants from participants' genograms, eco maps and interviews. The participants wrote “ME” in the eco-maps instead of their names; hence, I maintained the diagrams as such when I re-drew the diagrams using Microsoft word and publisher. Figures 7-1 and 7-2 represent genograms and figures 7-3 and 7-4 represent examples of eco-maps drawn by women from different family structures who participated in my study.

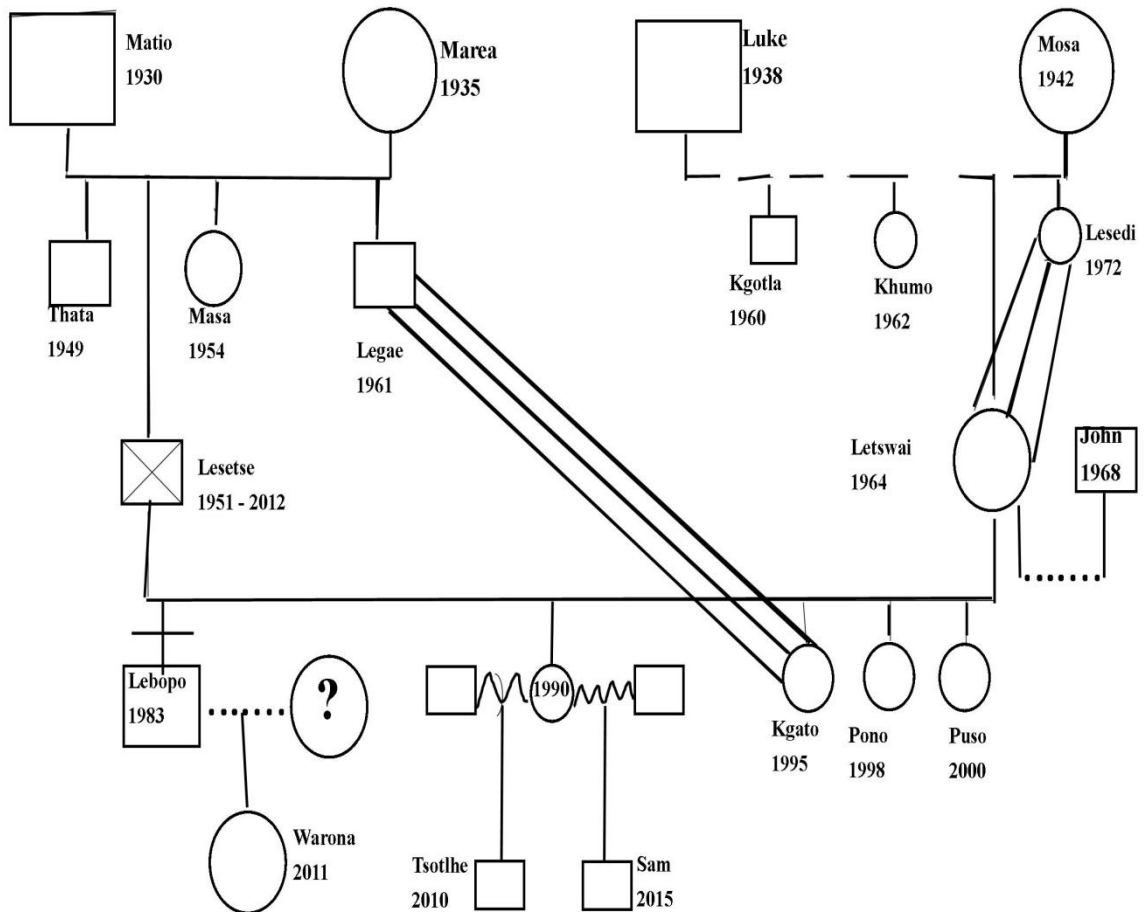


Figure 7-1: representation of simple genograms drawn by a woman from a Dual Career Family (DCF)

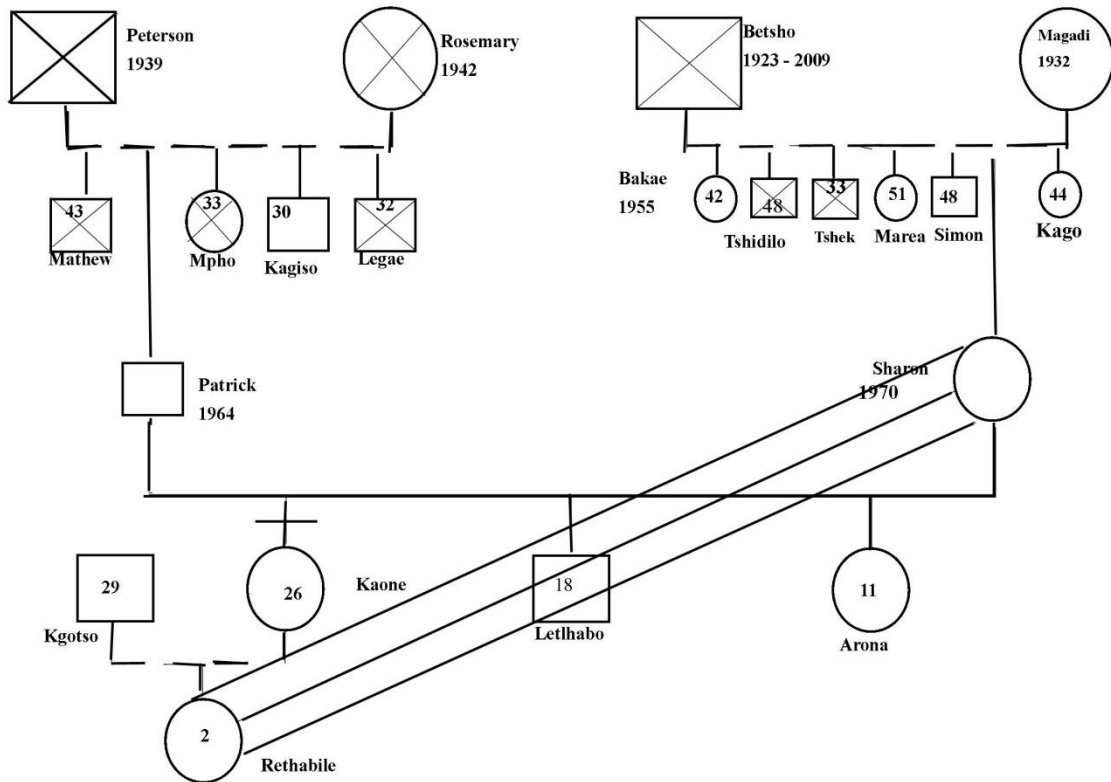


Figure 7-2: Genogram drawn by a woman from Families where women were unemployed and their partners were employed (FWUPE).

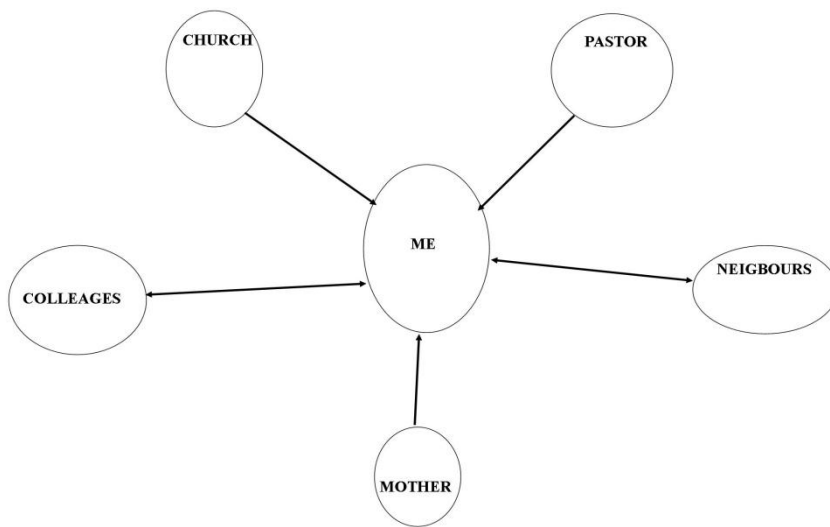


Figure 7-3: Simple eco-maps drawn by a woman from a Female headed family (FHF)

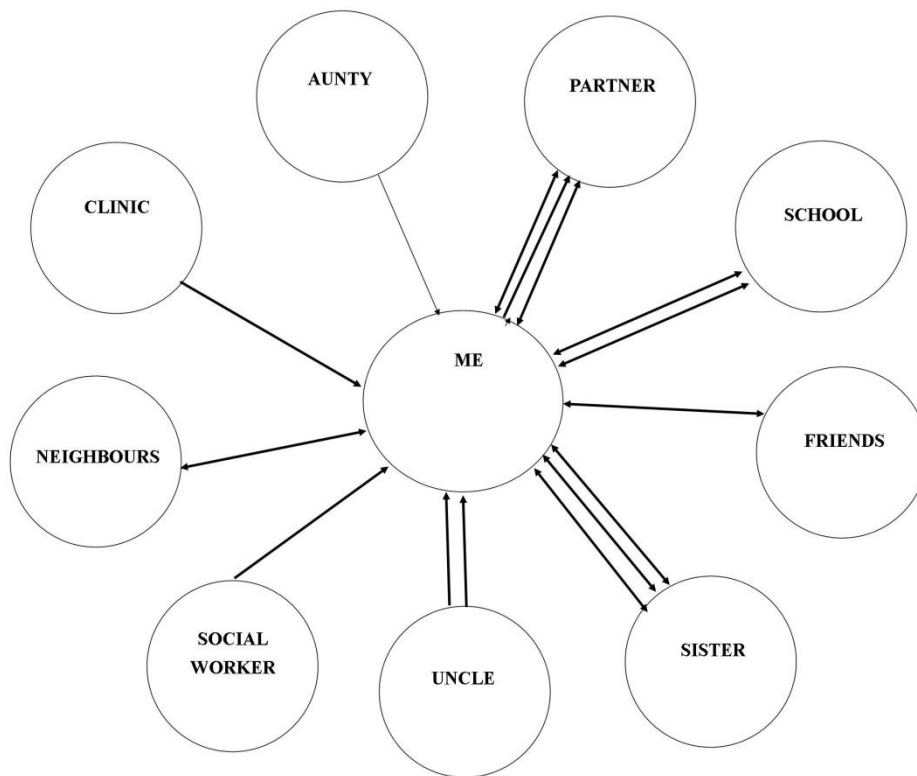


Figure 7-4: Drawn by a woman from a Dual Career Family (DCF)

7.2.1 Demographic Data

The majority, 14 (58.3%) of women who participated in the study were aged 36 to 45 years. The average age of all the participants was 38 years. The women’s ages fell within Botswana’s 12-49 year fertility age. Most, 16 (66.7%) of them had children aged 10 to 19 years old and a few, eight (33.3%) had children aged zero to nine years old. The total number of children each woman had in her lifetime ranged from one to ten but at the time of the study, the number of children who were aged 0-19 years in each family ranged from one to four. On average, each woman in the study had at least two children at the time of the study. This corroborates with Statistics Botswana’s (2015) finding that the country has a relatively low and declining fertility. Only half (50%) of the women who participated in the study lived or cohabitated with the biological father of all their children. The result corroborated Central Statistics Office’s (2009) finding with Botswana national statistics that show that, 45.2% of the children aged 0-4 years lived with their mothers. National statistics also show that only

28.7% of children aged 0-17 lived with both biological mothers and fathers (Central Statistics Office, 2009). As discussed in chapter eight, father presence has implications for family resources and positive parenting practices.

Half (50%) of the women in the study were married, followed by 16.7% who were cohabiting and 12.5% who were single and never married. Those who were widowed, divorced, and cohabiting rated 4.2% for each category. The marital status of women in the study differed with the findings by Botswana AIDS Impact National Survey (hereafter referred to as BIAS IV) which showed that the majority (56.9%) were never married; 18.5% were married; 16.2% were cohabiting; 3.8 % were widowed, 1.2% were divorced and 0.4% were separated (Republic of Botswana, 2013). The difference between BIAS IV study results and this study results was primarily due to the small and purposive nature of the sample of my study, as it excluded male participants and I selected women from pre-defined family structures.

The majority, 18 (75%) identified as Christians, including those who were not actively going to any particular church and a few, six (25%) indicated that they were not affiliated to any particular religion or church. For example, when I asked 50 years old Maipelo about her religious affiliation, she responded:

“Re batho hela, re dumela mo modimong, e seng sepe gape”, which literally means, “We are humans, we believe in God only.”

The higher numbers of Christian participants support the country’s population and housing census 2011 analytical report (Statistics Botswana, 2015). The results echoed those of the BIAS IV study that found that the majority (85.2%) identified as being Christian and a few (9.4%) had no religious affiliation (Republic of Botswana, 2013). Additionally, the Botswana Population and Housing Census 2011 analytical report indicated that Christian believers were many (79.3%) in the country, when compared to other religions such as Muslim and only 15.3% of the population had no religious affiliation (Statistics Botswana, 2015).

It is significant to note that the women sometimes talked about being a church member rather than specifying being a Christian per se, because Christianity is the dominant religion in Botswana (Statistics Botswana, 2015). Therefore, people generally would ask what church one goes to, rather than one’s religious affiliation, with Christianity seen as a self-evident truth. Of those 95.8% who had been to school, 33.3% acquired tertiary education, followed by those who had been to primary school by 25%, 20.8% had been to secondary

school and few (16.7%) had junior secondary school education. The majority (20.8%) of the women who had tertiary education was from female-headed families (FHF), and a few 12.5% were from dual career families (DCF). None of the stay at home mothers had tertiary education. The results showed that 37.5%, the largest proportion of my participants had secondary education, substantiating the results of the BIAS IV study, which indicated that most (46.9%) of the household population had secondary education (Republic of Botswana, 2013). Similar to the result of the BIAS study that 25.6% had primary education (Republic of Botswana, 2013) the findings from the study also had almost the same percentage. Of the women who participated in the study, (4.2 %) had never been to school. The BIAS study recorded 9.0% at (household level) women with no schooling (Republic of Botswana, 2013). While illiteracy among women is still a problem, the Botswana Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Status Report 2015 “Sustaining Progress to 2015 and Beyond” showed Botswana’s progress and success in providing basic education and fulfilment of the MDG (two) to achieve universal primary education (United Nations, 2015).

The majority 13 (54.1%) of women had a family income above P7000.00. Among those women, only two (8.3%) from female-headed families were in the above-mentioned income category, compared to six (25%) and five (20.8%) women from dual career families and from families where women were unemployed (and their partners were employed) respectively. The majority of women in female-headed families had high educational status and at an individual level, their salaries were slightly higher than those in a DCF. However, on average, women in female-headed families earned slightly lower when compared with those in dual career families, as the study reflects the combined family income. The higher educational status of women in female-headed households enabled them to get better paying jobs than those with a lower educational status. For example, the highest paid woman among female-headed families earned approximately P21000 while the lowest paid earned P540.00. Among women in dual career families, the highest earned approximately P18000.00 and the lowest paid woman earned P540.00.

The results of the study present family incomes supplemented by other family members and relatives. At an individual level some women with lower educational background were employed in low paying jobs and earned slightly lower or higher than Botswana’s poverty datum line (PDL) of BWP 878.87 (World Bank, 2015b). Women who earned lower than the PDL mostly worked in the drought relief programs. According to Statistics Botswana (2011) “a poverty datum line (PDL) is the cost of a basket of goods and services deemed necessary and adequate to meet basic needs for household members.” (p.01).

The Government of Botswana revised some of its cash social assistance programs that are provided in the form of employment such as “Ipelegeng” drought relief program to provide income support that is equal to or higher than the poverty datum line. “Ipelegeng” means to be “self-reliant” and it is a government public works program that intended to provide temporary economic relief, but has since become a poverty eradication program (UNICEF, 2012). The program is weak and provides temporary relief as the earning is too little to uplift and sustain the majority of the poor to a level of financial independence (UNICEF, 2012). This reflects a weakness in the formulation of policies that do not consider the intersection of structural factors in identifying social problems and program interventions. The research findings call for the dissection of various structural elements in the lives of people and the formulation of policies that are empowering at both the micro and macro levels of society.

Unemployed women were not happy about their unemployed status, as they indicated that they were unable to meet the basic needs of the family, and they bemoaned their dependent status. Some of them were jobless because of their poor educational status that made it hard for them to be absorbed in the formal job market. Botswana’s national statistics reflect that women are the least employed, with an unemployment rate of 21.4% compared to 14.5% of men (United Nations, 2015). Although the study used snowball and purposive sampling, the data tends to be consistent with national statistics that show that households located in urban settings are headed by people employed in the private sector (33%) and a few (25%) in the government sector (United Nations, 2015). Considering that Selebi Phikwe is a mining town, it makes sense that the government employed a few of the head of the families. The majority (93.7%) of women who were not head of the families reported that their partners worked in the mine. The result of my study also showed that most families, whether headed by males or females, earned income through non-agricultural strategies. The Botswana Population reported similar findings and Housing Census 2011 analytical report that indicated a high percentage of both female and male-headed families’ households acquired income through other means as opposed to agricultural and household undertakings in cities and towns (Statistics Botswana, 2015). Table one below summarizes participants’ demographic data. The table shows the characteristics of women across the three different family structures.

Table 7-1: Summary of participants' demographic characteristics (N=24)

Characteristics	Women from FHF*		Women from DCF*		Women from FWUPE*		TOTAL	
	n=8	%	n=8	%	n=8	%	N=24	%
Age (in years)								
31-35	0	0	1	4.2	2	8.3	3	12.5
36-40	2	8.3	4	16.7	2	8.3	8	33.3
41-45	3	12.5	2	8.3	2	8.3	7	29.2
46-49	2	8.3	0	0	0	0	2	8.3
50 and above	1	4.2	1	4.2	2	8.3	4	16.7
Marital Status								
Married	1	4.2	5	20.8	6	12	12	50
Divorced	1	4.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.2
Separated	2	8.3	0	0	0	0	2	8.3
Single and never married	3	12.5	0	0	0	0	3	12.5
Never married but cohabitating	0	0	2	8.3	2	8.3	4	16.7
Widowed and cohabiting	0	0	1	4.2	0	0	1	4.2
Widowed and single	1	4.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.2
Educational Status								
Tertiary	5	20.8	3	12.5	0	0	8	33.3
Secondary	1	4.2	2	8.3	2	8.3	5	20.8
School								
Junior Secondary School	0	0	2	8.3	2	8.3	4	16.7
Primary	1	4.2	1	4.2	4	16.7	6	25.0

School								
Never been to school	1	4.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.2
Family Income Per Month (Pula)								
1000-2000	1	4.2	1	4.2	1	4.2	3	12.5
2001-3000	0	0	1	4.2	0	0	1	4.1
3001-4000	3	12.5	0	0	1	4.2	4	16.7
4001-5000	1	4.2	0	0	1	4.2	2	8.3
5001-6000	1	4.2	0	0	0	0	0	4.1
6001-7000	0	0	0	0	1	4.2	1	4.1
7001+	2	8.3	6	25	5	20.8	13	54.1
Religious Status								
Christian	6	25	7	29.2	5	20.8	18	75.0
None	2	8.3	1	4.2	3	12.5	6	25.0
Affiliated Number of children								
0-9 years old	1	4.2	4	16.7	3	12.5	8	33.3
10-19 years old	4	16.7	6	25	6	25	16	66.7

*FHF = Female headed families *DCF = Dual career families *FWUPE= Families where women were unemployed and their partners were employed.

7.3 Key Research Findings

One of the major objectives of the study was to understand parenting practices that women preferred and used in raising children as well as factors that influenced their parenting practices. Three types of family structures targeted were: a) female headed families where the head of the family was employed (FHF), b) two parent families where both parents were employed (DCF) c) a two-parent family where the woman was unemployed and her partner

was employed (FWUPE). To simplify the questions, I used synonyms such as take care, bring up and parenting a child interchangeably during the interviews. Although the above types of families were selected as the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the study, the results of the study reveal that these family structures also fit the definition of nuclear and single parent families and that the families also relied on relatives although they did not live with them on a daily basis.

It was beyond the scope of the study to investigate the consequences of parenting practices on children's behavior. Therefore, I sparsely discuss parenting practices and their linkage to children's behavioral outcomes. I have discussed women's preferred and used parenting practices as well as their deterrents and expeditors. I drew few of the women's accounts from the three different family structures from the immense data to make illustrations in the key research findings. The results showed that it was not family structure per se that determined women's preferred and used parenting practices but rather the intersection of gender, income, family structure and other structural factors.

The major and sub themes that made up the key research findings are discussed in chapters seven. In chapter seven, I discuss four major themes: parenting practices to meet children's basic needs, parenting practices to impart skills, father's absence and inadequate participation as well as parenting practices adopted to discipline children and to ensure safety and security. The first theme: parenting practices to meet children's tangible and non-tangible basic needs focuses on five key subthemes: (i) provision of children's basic needs as every woman's primary responsibility (ii) employment and exclusive breastfeeding (iii) health workers, significant others and exclusive breast-feeding (iv) confinement and (v) providing emotional support. The second theme parenting practices to impart skills focuses on (i) women's efforts to teach children household chores as a life skill as well as (ii) nurturing children's academic skills and performance. The third theme on fathers' absence and inadequate participation elaborate women's experiences of their relationships with biological fathers of their children and father figures as well as how it affected parenting practices. Father figures included partners and spouses irrespective of whether they were biologically related to all the children in the family or not.

7.3.1 Parenting practices to meet children's basic needs

One of the primary parenting responsibilities is to provide children with basic needs to meet their psychological and material needs, as well as to equip them with survival life skills for their ideal development and growth. In this chapter, I discuss women's parenting practice to meet children's basic needs. Heath (1995) refers to these practices as mandatory practices because they involve provision of tangible and non-tangible primary needs. Tangible needs include clothing and food, while non-tangible practices include feeding methods as well as ways to fulfil emotional needs. The labelling of such practices as mandatory does not degrade the importance of the other parenting practices in children's development, such as their behavioral outcomes. Dunn and Keet (2012) referred to mandatory practices as caregiving parenting practices. Similar to other types of parenting practices identified in this study, mandatory parenting practices are facilitated or hindered by the interconnection of gender, employment or income status, educational status, support networks and cultural norms. Mandatory practices are essential to satisfy physical, emotional and other health needs and to enhance the development and general welfare of children.

Provision of children's basic needs as every woman's primary responsibility

All eight women in each of the family structures (FHF, DCF, and FWUPE) equally indicated that it was their primary responsibility to ensure that they fulfilled children's basic needs. Their concerns about meeting children's material and basic needs confirmed Morrell's argument that the fundamental ingredient in African parenting is successfully fulfilling children's essentials, and corroborate Berger and McLanahan's (2015) finding that the type of family does not determine maternal engagement with children. The basic needs were food, clothes and toiletry whether the children's fathers were there or not. Mma Thobo, a 45 year old nurse said:

"As a woman [referring to me] you know my responsibility: Is to ensure that children have bathed, eaten, they have enough clothes for winter and summer. If they don't have all these, I need to tell their father, you understand how I do it?"

Mma Thabo's answer was interesting as she placed me as an insider, and as a Batswana woman expected me to know the self-evident truth of women's primary, socially constructed role. She reflected an understanding of women and men's parenting and household roles, as well as childhood socialization as gendered. Stereotypical gender roles promote men to a provider status, and contribute to a disproportionate burden of care that women carry (Maharaj & Sewpaul, 2016; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Messner, 1994; Richter & Smith, 2006). The women's perception of basic child care as a woman's core role is reinforced by many cultural practices such as confinement of mothers and their new babies, as well as legal provisions that reinforce gendered parenting practices. Because of normalized gendered parenting practices neither women nor men challenge the father's absence in parenting children, especially in the provision of support such as cooking, bathing children and being emotionally available to children.

Although women from FWUPE were more available to their children and had more time, all of them bemoaned that they were dependent on their partners for financial resources. Their dependence on men constrained their ability to adequately meet the needs of children. However, three women from FHF and two from DCF complained about their limited income as a constraint on their ability to perform mandatory parenting practices such as provision of food and clothing. The women shared their concerns.

Naledi, a stay at home mother of four said:

"Yes it is good that I spend adequate time with them. However, being unemployed is a disadvantage because there are some things that they might need but I fail to provide because I do not have enough income. If I was employed, I would divide my time in such a way that I would know that there is time for work and time to spend with children. I am unemployed but there are times when my children want me to buy them some things that I cannot afford. That becomes a challenge."

Other employed women, such as 39 year-old Botho, who was cohabiting and worked as a domestic worker from DCF experienced financial challenges because of poor income as well. She lamented:

"I earn very little income, and my partner only helps with money for the rent. When a woman does not have adequate financial support like me, it is hard to provide all necessary basic items that children need. For example, my son

wanted me to buy him grasshopper school shoes, I couldn't because they are expensive although they are durable and could last him a longer time."

The findings show that family income, unemployment and women's access to adequate income in contemporary Botswana affect parenting practices. The results of Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey (BMTHS) of 2015/16 revealed an unemployment rate of 17.7 % (Statistics Botswana, 2018). Women are the most unemployed and living in poverty as they have limited access to job opportunities and they are likely to work in low paying jobs when compared to their male counterparts (Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis: BIDPA, 2013). Additionally, a situational analysis undertaken to inform the development of a family policy in Botswana revealed that poverty and unemployment were the two major challenges affecting families (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011). The two issues are interconnected and they relate to income. Women continue to be overburdened with household work and care of children in families, yet they often do that with limited finances. Parents with high income have the opportunity to engage children in educational entertainment that stimulate both mental and physical development, whereas those from a lower income status have less opportunities to do so (Gutman & Feinstein, 2010; Kotchick & Forehand, 2002).

While the women included relatives such as their own and those members from their partner or spouse's extended family members in their genograms and eco-maps, none of the women lived with their extended family members at the time of the study. The findings of the study affirmed Jacque's (2003) as well as Maundeni, Levers, and Jacques' (2008) assertion that the extended family system in Botswana that used to be a strong support system for many people has been weakened by modern socio-economic systems and social problems.

Thirty four years old Maano from a DCF made a similar observation on the deterioration of social support mechanisms such as the extended family. She said:

"A child's attitude can be discouraging, especially when the child does not listen to the parent, poverty can also make it difficult for one to provide for the child, when the parent does not have outside support, especially from relatives. For example in the olden days, people were willing to help each other, when a child got out of hand, a parent could call aunts and uncles to help discipline the child. Ah! [Gesture] people live separate lives. The other one is there and the other there!"

Maano's statement upheld Maundeni, Levers, and Jacques's (2008) argument that the traditional extended family forms that were common in pre-colonial African societies are no longer common in contemporary societies. The findings of the study showed that all the women in the DCF and FWUPE lived in nuclear form of families. Among the FWUPE, two women lived with their grandchildren, while two families within the female-headed families in the study met the definition of nuclear family and six met the definition of a single parent families. Among the women from FHF, there was one woman who lived with her 18 year old daughter, two children above 21 years and grand children aged below five years. Given that, the traditional extended family involves staying with multiple generational kin or relatives (Maundeni, Levers & Jacques, 2008) I concluded that families of women staying with their grandchildren were fit to be defined as nuclear instead of extended families. That was not a barrier to access the support of relatives as a way to enhance positive parenting practice and children's behavioral outcomes for most of the women in the study.

The findings of the study revealed that although the women in this study lived in nuclear and single types of families, they contacted the extended family members or relatives specifically to meet particular family needs and to boost their preferred parenting practices. The relatives were not part of the day-to-day decision making processes in the women's families. For example, grandmothers only stayed temporarily with the families during confinement, and the women contacted uncles and aunts when they thought that their methods of disciplining children were not bearing positive results. According to Tri-African Advisory Services (2011) some of the major sources of diminishing the extended family system and support in Botswana include migration, socio-economic changes, HIV and AIDS as well as the evolving gendered roles.

In the current study, this support was in the form of finances, and in some form of non-financial contribution to the raising of a child. Eleven women expressed appreciation of the support they got from their siblings. Among them, the majority (seven) of the women who got help were from FWUPE, three were from FHF and two from DCF. Lack or limited income to meet basic needs was a problem across the different family structures by women that took part in the study. There was limited income due to unemployment, and low income from low paying jobs that seem to be linked to lack of formal qualifications and poor educational status. For instance, women from FWUPE cited unemployment as the major reason for low family income, while those from DCF and FHF cited low paying jobs. Low family income hinders positive parenting practices. Siblings and relatives stepped in at times to offer financial support to fulfil some of their children's mandatory needs.

It was not surprising that the majority of women from FWUPE were the ones who were more reliant on relatives for support because they complained about having poor family income because of unemployment. Evidence of support from support networks were sourced in pictures by asking participants to draw eco-maps which were followed by an in depth discussion. During the in depth discussion of eco-maps, women disclosed information that reflected presence of significant support networks, such as social workers, that had an effect on parenting practices.

While most of the women relied on relatives for material support, four from FHF, three from DCF and one from the FWUPE reported that they consulted social workers when they had trouble in providing for children's material needs and in disciplining children. The women's accounts indicate that, on a positive note, social workers played an important role in promoting positive parenting practices and positive parent-child relationships. Mareledi, a 48 year old widow, who had two dependents aged between 10 and 19 years, said that she sought the help of social workers after the death of her husband. The social workers assisted her with school uniforms and school fees. This was in accordance with the Botswana government's social protection services unit. The unit intends to promote needy children's welfare by providing a monthly nutritional food basket, school uniform, toiletry and transport (Republic of Botswana, 2017).

Employment and exclusive breastfeeding

Another key parenting practice that was important to all the women in the three different families structures, but highly determined by employment status and significant others, was exclusive breast-feeding. Breast-feeding was one of the most important mandatory parenting practices after giving birth for all the women in FWUPE, DCF and FHF. This study established that the employment status of women determined the length of exclusive breastfeeding. The six months exclusive breast-feeding practice for infants primarily protect children born to HIV positive mothers from being infected with the virus (WHO, 2016). The women did not talk about the feeding practices when children were one year and above because they introduced a variety of food types at that time. Women who had the experience of working while breast-feeding from the three family structures talked about how their employment conditions influenced the length of exclusive breastfeeding. Jane, a

34-year-old mother of two boys from a FWUPE commented: *“I breast fed him for two full years. I did not have a formal job. People came to our place for plaiting, and therefore I did not see any reason for me to rush into weaning the baby.”* Although Jane was unemployed at the time of the study, her statement indicated that women who have informal jobs and those who have flexible work schedules are likely to successfully practice exclusive breast-feeding. Flexible working hours also allows parents to have greater control over parenting practices favorable for their children.

Letso, a 47-year-old self-employed mother from a FHF, who bore her children while she was still in formal employment said:

“I breast fed both of them up to a year. I introduced mixed feeding with formula milk when I went back to work after three months of maternity leave. At six months I introduce semi solids foods and as they grew I gradually introduce harder foods until they reach one year and that stage they almost eat most of the things that adults eat.”

Unlike the situation demonstrated by Jane, Letso’s statement illustrates that formal work has rigid work hours that interferes with mothers’ exclusive breast-feeding. Letso’s narrative reflect that work procedures that are not favorable to families with children denies parents chances to exclusively breast feed babies for extended periods (Heinrich, 2014). Similar findings were observed in previous research (Mirkovic, Perrine, Scanlon, & Grummer-Strawn, 2014). The result corroborated Mirkovic et al. (2014) findings of a longitudinal research study with 1172 women in the USA where women intended to breast feed for three months, but had to return to work before the end of the three months were unlikely to complete their breastfeeding intended course. The result of both the present study and Mirkovic et al.’s (2014) study suggested the need for support mechanisms to assist women in formal jobs to have opportunities to continue breastfeeding.

Health workers, significant others and exclusive breastfeeding

Health workers, relatives or significant others also influenced the women’s exclusive breastfeeding. The majority (15) of the women who participated in the study engaged in mixed feeding. The nine women who engaged in exclusive breastfeeding cited health workers

as influential in this decision. Among the 15 who talked about relatives and significant others, four were from DCF families, five from FWUPE and the other six from FHF. It is not surprising that most of the women across family structures cited relatives or significant others as influential in the feeding practices because all the women in the study reported practicing confinement after one of their children`s births. As discussed in the section on confinement below, the caregivers such as grandmothers are traditionally regarded as experts of childcare. As a result, nobody was likely to object the caregivers` feeding recommendations. The lower rates of exclusive breastfeeding in my study substantiated the finding of previous studies. Kimani-Murage, Madise, Fotso, et al. (2011), for example, found that out of 4299 infants only 2 % were exclusively breastfed for six months.

Among the nine who referenced health workers, four were from DCF, three were from FWPUE and two were from FHF. The women mentioned that health workers regulated feeding practices as they had control on what children feed on and at what age as well as how to feed them. Letso a single, never married mother of two with a college diploma from FHF said: *“...During ante-natal and post-natal health check-ups they always emphasized that children should be fed solids at six months. I had to abide, because they attached health reasons to the idea.”* Leina, a 37 year old married receptionist from DCF admitted to following the health professionals advice to exclusively breastfeed for six months as she mentioned: *“ I exclusively breastfed my children up to six months then I introduced mixed feeding because that is what the health professionals expected us to do”*

The above women`s accounts corroborated Hoddinott and Pill (2000) finding that some women often breastfed as a result of pressure from health workers in contrast to their own personal preferences. The health workers emphasis on the six months exclusive breastfeeding was in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation for exclusive breastfeeding and infant feeding practices (WHO, 2016). Exclusive breast-feeding is associated with improved infant iron status, decreased morbidity and increased motor development and enhanced infants` immune system, given that expectant and breast-feeding mothers have adequate nutritious food (WHO, 2016). In contrast to the above recommendations by WHO the findings of my study indicated that the majority (15) of the participants introduced mixed feeding earlier than six months because of the influence from relatives and significant people in their homes. For example, 34 year old Jane from FWUPE introduced mixed feeding when her baby was four months old because of her grandmother. She stated: *“My grandmother said that breast milk alone was not enough for the baby because he has grown up. She also said that baby boys tend to eat more food than girls.”*

Similar to Jane, MmaThobo a 50 year old nurse from DCF attested to the role of significant others in influencing mothers to introduce mixed feeding earlier than six months. She asserted that sometimes they introduce other foods earlier than six months against their personal will when they are not able to express breast milk because of the stigma from family members. She admitted:

“Most of the time we preach that message, don’t mix, and don’t mix [lowering her voice]. But we mix at the end of the day when you have a helper and your mother with you, you cannot express breast milk, people shun the milk.”

Jane and MmaThobo’s responses corroborate Nankumbi and Muliira (2015), finding that esteemed members of the family and community play a critical role in parents’ feeding practices. Exclusive breastfeeding is critical for infant’s development and the prevention of HIV transmission from the mother to the child (PMTCT). Botswana has an HIV prevalence rate of 16.9 % (Republic of Botswana, 2013a) and the national HIV prevalence rate among women in 2013 was estimated at 20.8% compared with 15.6% for men (Republic of Botswana, 2013). In 2013 Selebi Phikwe had the highest prevalence rate in the country at 27.5 % (Republic of Botswana, 2013b). The PMTCT is part of the antenatal care program in the health system of the country that has reduced HIV transmission at the rate of 35-40% among mothers with an HIV positive diagnosis (Republic of Botswana, 2016). Exclusive breastfeeding for six months is one of the HIV transmission prevention methods that has been highly recommended by the health sector to protect babies from being infected. Nyepi, Bandede, and Mahgoub’s (2006) study findings in the context of Botswana revealed that children who were breastfed had fewer (14.7% and 13.7%) cases of underweight problems when compared to those who were never breastfed (40%).

Despite the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, the results of this study support Wall’s (2001) argument that breastfeeding is a public health issue that is socially and culturally constructed. Breastfeeding is culturally associated with good mothering (Earle, 2002; Wall, 2001), but the prevalence of HIV and AIDS has complicated discourses on breastfeeding and formula feeding. Botswana government provides free formula milk to HIV positive mothers who do not want to breast feed and to those who graduate from exclusive breast feeding after the first six months of the baby until the babies become one year old (Republic of Botswana, 2016). As a result of this free provision of formula milk to HIV positive mothers, formula feeding is generally stigmatized. Kebaneetswe’s (2007) finding in the context of Botswana revealed that formula feeding is associated with the mother’s HIV-

positive status and as a result it is often a barrier to successful implementation of PMTCT in Botswana. This can also become difficult for HIV negative mothers to freely opt for formula feeding if they do not want to breast feed. Other research studies (Balogun, Dagvadorj, Anigo, Ota, & Sasaki, 2015; Kimani-Murage et al., 2011) showed that several factors such as age, income status, employment status, social support and cultural beliefs impede or facilitate exclusive breastfeeding. Seepamore and Sewpaul (forthcoming) underscored the contested nature of mothering as they argued that mothering is varied and multifaceted as aspects such as patriarchy, social status and race influence it. Thus, health promotion activities should uphold gender equality by recognizing the role of both fathers and mothers in childcare. Efforts should be made to allow women opportunities to establish identities outside pregnancy, childbirth and mothering (Earle, 2002).

As I talked to women they also disclosed that health services provide free supplementary foods to children aged 6 months up to 4 years 11 months to support feeding at home which is a public program to ensure that children have adequate nutrition. The children's supplementary food rations that the women talked about include, "Tsabana", "Malutu", beans and cooking oil supplied by the local clinic. From the discussions that I had with women, it was clear that the supplementary food were shared by all family members; this might contribute to child malnutrition of children under five years in Botswana. Figures indicate that in Botswana, 31.4% of children less than five years old suffer from malnutrition (BIDPA, 2013). Botho from DCF who worked as a domestic worker was hesitant to reveal that other members of the family fed on her child's food supplements. Nevertheless, she finally disclosed:

"The clinic encourages mothers to breast feed and feed children correctly. It encourages monthly postnatal visits to monitor child growth. The health facility also offers vaccinations against diseases, and food rations. The support is much appreciated because we also eat from the ration [Laughing]"

Naledi a mother of two highlighted:

"We need to cook the food and share with the children. In some instances, when a child eats "tsabana" for the first time and react to it by either having diarrhoea, parents are quick to conclude that it is not good for the child. However, it is usually a reaction to food that occurs when the child eat the food for the first time. As a parent, I need to continue to feed the child the food until he/she gets used to it. Nevertheless, most of us Batswana we have a tendency to

stop feeding the child “tsabana” as soon as the child reacts and only prepare it for the adults.... Some fathers even take it as lunch boxes [Laughing]. But the government does not supply the ration for such purposes; the food is a nutrition supplement for the children.”

Botho’s account and Naledi’s observation highlight the need for health workers to maximize information dissemination to parents and families about the preparation of children’s food supplements and feeding practices. The women’s report of children’s food supplements could also suggest inadequacy of nutritious food in families with children. The program reflects gaps, in that while the needs of children are catered for, the needs of the whole family are overlooked. Thus, in poor families the nutritional supplements intended for children are shared by other family members.

Confinement

With regard to confinement, family structure did not play any role to influence the women to practice it. All 24 women from the three different family structures at one point confined their new babies for at least two months immediately after childbirth. They have all had the experience of confinement in a room with a caretaker, who happened to be a mature woman who determined who entered the room. The majority (15) of women in the study reported being cared for by grandmothers during confinement as they are traditionally considered to have wisdom concerning parenting issues.

Mma Thobo described that even if one holds a prestigious status in the community and does not see the value of the practice, one has to perform it to conform to cultural expectations. She said:

“Though I am a nurse, I do confinement. I have been raised in a traditional Setswana set up. Our parents think we should continue to do that. Therefore, whenever I give birth I go for confinement. For my first born, I went back home, at the village and had my first born for confinement because I was young at that time. For my second born child, the old woman came here to keep me in confinement. She was here. Strictly the men do not enter; my husband does not see the child until after a certain period.”

MmaThobo's statement above confirms Sewpaul's (2013) argument that culturally ingrained practices become *inscribed in our blood* such that they are practiced without paying attention to hidden injustices embedded in them. Thus, the women's practice and support of confinement highlight that parenting practices are in some instances meant to fulfil cultural expectations, rather than individual parent's goals (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002; Kotchick & Forehand, 2002; Renzaho et al., 2011; Weis & Toolis, 2010).

The cultural practice of confinement bars the father from visiting the mother of their new born child. Despite that, most women in the study talked about confinement in a positive way. The taboos and beliefs surrounding the practice of confinement reaffirm women as primary parents and men as secondary parents. All the women, across different family structures, confirmed that for a certain period during confinement, the father of the child and other men were not allowed into the confinement room, yet this is a critical time for bonding between parents and the child. The time at which the father is allowed to bond with the baby varies across the society and is largely dependent on the cultural beliefs and personality of the person caring for the mother and the new baby. For some the father is barred from entering the house until the baby is four months old.

Jane, a 34-year-old mother of two children from a FWUPE shared insights on why her child's father was not allowed to see the baby after birth:

“My grandmother was the one who decided on who was allowed to come inside the house because she said that some people had ‘hot or warm feet’, meaning that they carried some infections that could harm the baby and make them sick. My husband was only allowed to see the baby after two months.”

The results indicate the cultural myths embedded in our society that undermines the importance of fathers in nurturing and caring for children, especially babies. Maharaj and Sewpaul (2016) point out that cultural myths lead to gendered family roles and functioning. The discourse speaks to burdened caregiving on women and the tendency of men to abstain from domestic activities. Thus, the practice of confinement reflects a reproduction of cultural and traditional practices that prescribe and construct gendered roles in parenting.

The practice of confinement denies men an opportunity to bond with their children at an early age. This practice reinforces the ideology that fathers, and men's participation in childcare is peripheral from an early age. During confinement, men - regardless of their biological linkage to the child or mother - are not permitted entry into the confinement room. The results of the study, as illustrated by women's experiences, support the premise of

intersectionality that the simultaneous interaction of gender with other structural factors determine parents' experiences and perceptions, and reproduces dominant gendered practices (Allen et al., 2009; Cole, 2009; Mama, 2011; Sewpaul, 2013). Confinement, as practiced in Botswana, reflects the tendency of the society to augment patriarchal power relations that apportion primary responsibility of children to women by placing men's value at a public level, and detaching them from the childcare and household dominion. Several authors emphasize that cultural beliefs, values and communally acknowledged actions have an influence in parenting practices (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002; Bornstein & Cheah, 2006; Kotchick & Forehand, 2002; Renzaho et al., 2011; Weis & Toolis, 2010). The foregoing discussion highlights the over-riding influence of cultural norms in perpetuating gendered norms in parenting practices.

Providing emotional support

The use of positive parenting practices to respond to children's emotional needs was reflected in more than half of the women in each family structure (eight from a FHF, five from a DCF and six from FWUPE). The women reported that they talked to their children about issues bothering the child when they realized that the child was moody and they sought the help of guidance teachers and counselors at the child's school. Motlale who was more authoritative in nature talked fondly about her daughter. She said:

“When she is happy she will start calling my name the moment she enters the house. ‘Mum! You cannot believe what happened today! She will then tell me her day experiences with excitement. However, on a bad day she would just come in quietly. I usually ask her what is wrong, sometimes I talk to her, and at other times, I ask her to go with me to the shops. After that she will open up about what is bothering her.”

As observed by McNeely and Barber (2010), the women's experiences show that the majority in the study were able to practice supportive parenting by providing emotional support (McNeely & Barber, 2010) to children. Women's ability to have time to study, observe their children's emotional changes and respond to them has the potential to build healthy relationships with children (George and Rajan, 2012). The women's reports of how they emotionally reached out to children did not minimize the harsh disciplinary methods

they used when the children did something that was not accepted. The finding of Spjeldnaes, Moland, Harris and Sam (2014) in a research study in Limpopo, South Africa, showed that reaching out to children's emotions is important. Their study reflected that adolescents viewed the mother's emotional and physical presence as a demonstration of responsibility. The positive response to children's emotions fits well with UNICEF (2011a) dialogic practices that enhance children's positive verbal interaction behaviors.

Despite efforts made by women to support their children emotionally, 17 of them - four from FHF, seven from DCF and six from FWUPE highlighted that identifying their son's emotions and reaching out to them emotionally was difficult. The women expressed that they often struggled to connect with their sons emotionally compared to their daughters because "boys are not like girls" and that it is not easy to assess their emotions.

Naledi, a 40-year-old devout Christian from a FWUPE narrated the following:

"The boy is naturally energetic. It is not easy to assess his emotions. He can easily hide his emotions. The boy is less open than the girl is. For example, it is hard for him to be open about simple things. Sometimes he would fail a test but it will be hard for him to tell me that he has failed the test. I would be the one trying to guess what is wrong."

It was interesting that the women who did not have female children such as Mma Thobo from DCF (who has two sons) complained that it were difficult to reach out to the boy child emotionally. Mma Thobo described her eldest son as reserved and thus making it difficult for her to reach out to him. She said, *"He is too quiet and reserved. It becomes a burden to me because I wouldn't know what he wants and likes."*

It is not surprising that Mma Thobo, who did not have a daughter, shared similar sentiments with Naledi, that it is easier to identify girls' emotions when compared to boys. This could relate to the tendency of mothers to see the girl-child as a representation of herself. As a result, mothers easily identify with the girl child's needs when compared to the boy child, an observation made by Nice (1992). The differences observed in views towards raising the boy and girl child is a cultural norm in many societies. Abbey (2001) points out that the dichotomous analysis of the behaviors conceals the recognition of gender as a socially constructed concept. Boys learn ideas about masculine behaviors such as non-expression of emotions from dominant socio-cultural structures, such as the family, school, the media and dominant cultural discourses that entrench gender stereotyping. According to Dooley and Fedele (2001), the boy child's failure to conform to societal expectations of

masculinity is usually negatively sanctioned. Steinberg and Silk (2002) argued that boys' lack of emotional expression should not be perceived as problematic, but it should rather be seen as necessitating readjustment of parenting practices to appreciate their quest for autonomy and reinforcement of parent-child relations (Sidze & Defo, 2013). Abbey (2001), however, argued that boys are often trapped in the dyad longing to fulfil internal needs and the conventional expectations by society, such as having to be strong as a man for identity development. Such interpretations come from socio-cultural beliefs that we are socialized into, that often encourage gendered interactions and roles that are unconsciously expressed in adulthood and played out in adult parenting practices (Sewpaul, 2013)

7.3.2 Parenting practices to impart skills

Teaching children household chores as a life skill

All eight women per family structure in both FHF and FWUPE, compared to six from DCF, reported that they taught children household chores. The reasons included building a child's independence and confidence and the parents recognizing that children were old enough to perform chores. The two women from DCF who did not talk about teaching their children household chores had full time domestic workers who did most of the household chores. I could relate to women who perceived teaching their children household chores as essential because I value the practice as well. McNeely and Barber (2010) as well as Parenting in Africa Network (2014) indicate that giving children household chores is a form of moral guidance and it builds social competence as it instils responsibility in children.

Leina, a 37 year old mother from a DCF indicated that it was important to teach children household chores to prepare them for life transitions. She said that children must learn to be independent in the absence of parents, and be prepared for the unexpected life events such as the death of parents. She proudly divulged:

“I teach them because nobody is going to live forever on earth. I want them to be able to do things for themselves in my absence. I always give them an example about one woman who was our neighbor who died when her child was their age. I emphasize to them that it is not that I am strict with them; I want them to be able to survive without me.”

On the other hand, 40-year-old Naledi, a Christian mother of two boys and two girls from a FWUPE said that she taught her older children household chores so that they could take care of the younger ones in her absence:

“Yesterday I left her [referring to her 12 year old daughter] with the younger children when his older brother was at school. She had to bath the children, and prepare meals for them. She does not know how to cook heavy meals but she has to try. She has to wash her clothes. I just tell them that you are old enough to wash your own clothes.”

Naledi’s approach could have been rewarding to the older children. Laible and Thompson (2007) highlighted that leaving younger children under the care of older siblings strengthens both the social and emotional aptitudes of older children. The women in the study perceived assigning children household chores and giving older children responsibility to care for their younger siblings positively. However, it is important to note that if it is done without caution children might be overwhelmed with parental duties and be denied the right to enjoy childhood.

Loago from a FHF, who happened to have a lot of experience handling students, cautioned against overburdening children with household chores as it might affect their educational performance. She emphasized that:

“As a teacher I am exposed to different student cases that show some of the challenges that children have in their educational journeys, such as lack of parental care and support. Sometimes I come across children who are overloaded with household chores and they don’t have time to study.”

The practice of older children being entrusted with the care of younger siblings in the family has been going on for decades. The women’s narratives corroborate Bianchi’s (2000) assertion that in many of the developing countries, such as Botswana older family members, mostly females take the role of care takers during temporary or permanent absence of a biological parents. In the late 80s the foraging groups in Botswana adopted peer rearing approaches where the older siblings had to look after younger ones as parents had to leave children for a long time to go and look for food (Draper & Cashdan, 1988). While it is common for parents to assign children household chores based on their gender, the responses from women in my study differed from some of the past literature (Darling, 2007; Linchwe, 1994; McNeely & Barber, 2010; Omorodion, 2008) that alluded to the gendered assignment

of households chores among children. The findings of the study indicated that women who participated in the study focused on the child's age or maturity rather than gender when assigning children household chores. However, it is important to note that the results could have been influenced by the small sample of the study. The study area could have a bearing on such findings as the research study took place in a small town setting where there was limited variety of activities that took place within the home and community. The results could also be reflective of Nsamenang's (1999) argument that due to the current socio-economic change in Sub Saharan Africa, African parents are likely to present a combination of traditional and modern oriented parenting values. Abusive and exploitive use of child labor tends to be underreported (Statistics Botswana, 2008). The Botswana Family Health Survey 2007-2008 report indicated that about four percent of children aged between 12 and 17 years, especially those from poor families work more than an hour in a week (Statistics Botswana, 2008). Additionally, most (41%) children who engage in low levels of work are under the age of 14 years and 13% are aged 14 years (UNICEF, 2011a). This violates the provision of the Botswana Employment Act that prohibits children under the age of 14 years to work (Government of Botswana, 2010). My study did not examine the duration of time that children had to do household chores, but the findings of the study indicate that all the women appreciated assigning household chores to children. The women assigned children chores from a young age and the amount of work and kind of work changed gradually as children grew up.

Nurturing children's academic performance

When children struggled academically as reflected by child's poor performance, women provided support by visiting the school or teachers, personally assisting children with schoolwork or hiring a tutor to assist them. The approaches chosen by women depended on the women's capabilities as defined by their educational background and economic capacity. For example, most with lower educational status indicated that they could not personally help their children with schoolwork. The majority (21) of the women in the study visited school or teachers to assess the children's performance and discuss ways in which they could help their children. Gould and Ward (2015) as well as Epstein and Sanders (2002) argued that parents

with school going children who go to schools to enquire about their children's performances motivate them to take their schoolwork seriously.

Among the 21 women who visited teachers, eight were from female-headed families, six were from dual career families and seven were unemployed women from families where one parent is working. The majority (six) of the women from FHF were the ones who personally helped children with schoolwork when compared to other women from the two other family structures. Only two women from dual career families and one unemployed woman reported helping children with schoolwork. The difference could be due to the diverse educational backgrounds of women. Most (six) women from female-headed families had college or tertiary education making it easy for them to personally assist children with schoolwork. The demographic profiles of participants indicate that only three women from dual career families had college education and none of the unemployed women had college education. Six of the women from FWUPE indicated that their limited educational status was an obstacle towards personally assisting their children's academic work. Jane, a 34 year old stay at home mother, who schooled up to junior secondary school, declared: *"Uneducated women like me sometimes are not able to help children with their school work; therefore in that case one needs support of relatives and friends at home to assist the child with homework."*

On the other hand, women from FHF and DCF with a higher educational status expressed how their backgrounds facilitated their ability to help their children with schoolwork. Rose, a 43 year old teacher by profession, said: *"I am a teacher so it is easy to help them with their school work. I always check their assignments. When they do not understand I help them. Their father also helps them when I am not around."*

Inadequate income is one of the major causes of family disruptions (Thomson et al., 1994). Adequate income is necessary to enhance family stability and to enhance positive parenting practices. In the study, women who were financially stable were able to go an extra mile by hiring tutors for their children to aid their academic performance. Four women from DCF reported hiring tutors to assist their children with academic work, compared to one and two from FHF and FWUPE respectively. The higher number of women who used tutors in DCF families when compared to other women in the other two family structures was likely due to having inadequate time to assist children with homework because of work commitment. Additionally, the demographic information indicates that DCF families had a higher income when compared to the other two family structures hence their ability to hire tutors for their children. Women from FHF used less tutors because the (six) majority of

them personally helped their children with schoolwork, and they had lesser financial resources to pay tutors. Women from FWUPE could not afford tutors due to inadequate financial resources. Having a higher socio-economic status is important because it offers parents greater options available to them and their children (Heinrich, 2014).

On a different note, unemployed women talked passionately about their low educational and unemployed status, and felt the negative consequences of being unemployed and having to depend financially on their partners. They were supportive of their children's education and their quest for their academic success was immense. Sharon, a 43 year old stay at home mother of three who held a primary school certificate and was financially dependent on her husband, declared:

"I am not educated. I wanted them [her children] to be more educated so that they can work for themselves. If you are not working, regardless of whether you are unemployed and married being dependent on another person is not good. If one has to ask for something from her employed husband and he refuses, one gets demoralized, and one would start devaluing self. I am not working, I am not doing anything, I am useless, and one sees herself as a person of no value. I had wished my children could get educated and work, if some of them get married, yes it is fine but they should be employed."

On another note, Thalo, a 45-year-old stay at home mother, who has been cohabiting with the father of her children for over 25 years and dependent on him for income perceived education as a gateway to financial stability. Thalo did not want her children to experience similar challenges as hers. She asserted:

"I keep saying to them my children, you see I am not educated, we are only depending on your father, but my wish is that you be educated so that when we are gone, you do not remain stranded."

Although Thalo's and Sharon's narratives indicate that women with poor educational background and limited sources of income wished their children better achievements. The women's statements also indicate they are likely to gain a sense of achievement through their children's successes. Additionally the results show that adequate parent's support of school going children can enhance their stage of industry vs. inferiority. At this stage parental support is important because it plays a crucial to build children's confidence and build their competency to interact with other people in institutions other than the family such as the

school (Erikson, 1965; Pretorius & Van Niekerk, 2015). The unemployed women's devaluation of themselves are reflective of broader societal discourses and practices, where women's contributions at the household level remain unrecognized, invisible, unpaid and undervalued (Fraser, 1997; Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming).

7.3.3 Father's absence and inadequate participation

The women also indicated how some of biological fathers as well as father figures in the families failed to actively participate in the care of children or support their efforts to care for children. Men who play father roles to non-biological children as a result of formal adoption or having a relationship and living with their mothers are called social fathers. Only half (12) of the women who participated in the study lived or cohabitated with the biological father of all their children. Among those women, four women were from DCF and eight were from FWUPE families. None of the FHF lived with a man who was the biological father of all her children. That is, in the study all the women in a FWUPE were the only ones residing with the biological fathers of all their children. The results emulate the nature of children's living arrangement in Botswana. Central Statistics Office (2009) show that out of 724,082 children aged 0-17 in Botswana, only 28.7% lived with both of their biological parents compared to 39.3% and 3.2% who lived with the mother or father respectively. Among these children, 45.2% aged 0-4 years live with their biological mothers (Central Statistics Office, 2009). As children grow older their chances of staying with their biological mothers decrease as many of them are taken care by grandmothers (Central Statistics Office, 2009). As a researcher, I also realized that I had normalized absent fathers and, despite having a supportive and engaged spouse, I did not fully appreciate the importance of fathers in the care of children. This is because I was raised by a single mother, which is typical in the context of Botswana as noted above. As I engaged with the women, steeped myself in the review of the literature, and engaged in conversations during supervision, I was able to reflect on my own subject location and my taken-for-granted assumptions. The courts' tendency to grant women child custody of young children at the time of parents' separation or divorce exacerbates the situation (Machisa & Van Drop, 2012).

However, such practices reinforce societal assumptions that women can care for children better than men and that they can successfully raise children without their fathers' support. It is important to note that in some instances, informed non-custodian biological

fathers in Botswana legally seek shared custody of the children. In the study, whether the men were biological or non-biological fathers, the majority (16) women complained about father's limited participation. They spoke about the absence of the fathers in parenting roles such as disciplining children as an obstacle in their ability to exercise various parenting practices. Among the 16 women, five were from FHF, six from FWUPE and five from DCF. Thus, the presence of fathers in the home did not entail their active participation in all the spheres of parenting. The results coheres with the finding of Seepamore and Sewpaul (forthcoming) and Ntini and Sewpaul (2017) in the South African context that child care is unduly feminized.

In the context of Botswana, customary law allows biological fathers to pay once off maintenance child support to the mother as per traditional customary practices as a way to relinquish future obligations. A once off payment culturally renders adoption of the child into the biological mother's family and that of the mother's marital family if she were to get married (Republic of Botswana, 2017). Many communities engage in the cultural practice although the Revised Affiliation Proceedings Act recognizes the need for both parents to take equal responsibility to care for the child until the age of maturity, regardless of whether the child was born outside or inside wedlock. (Republic of Botswana, 2017).The Affiliation Proceedings Act allows either parent to seek a maintenance order if the other parent neglects his or her parental responsibilities.

In the current study, fathers' roles manifested: (a) inconsistent participation in the care of children (b) limited contact and communication with children and (c) parental power imbalances and spousal/partner abuse. Inconsistent participation of fathers or father figures in the care of children was one of the major obstacles to women's ability to exercise desired parenting practices across the three family structures. Baboloki, a 36-year-old mother of three who was cohabiting with the father of her youngest child could not hide her frustration about the limited participation of her partner in the care of children. She divulged:

“My big challenge is my partner; he is not completely involved in the upbringing of the children. He only participates when he wants. Therefore, it is not nice that way. A parent should be a parent at all times. A parent should be a parent all the time in the morning, during the day and at night. He should be aware that children need to be fed. I stayed with him because I thought that he was a man, a man of the house, and head of the family. He is the one who should

know that children are fed and dressed. It's a big challenge; it's a burden to me."

Baboloki's narration supported why she regarded herself as the head of the family. She also gave her personal descriptions of the roles of a man at family level. While it was valid for Baboloki to criticize her partner's lack of participation in child care, her expectation of her partner to play the head of the family role affirms Sewpaul (2013) assertion that people often normalize societal messages that oppress women and put them in subordinate positions. From Baboloki's point of view men are supposed to be head of families and she perceived herself as playing a man's role. Her outcry about being strained by excessive parenting roles and family responsibilities is reflective of wider empirical data (Maharaj & Sewpaul, 2016; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Muasya, 2014; Richter & Smith, 2006).

Women described fathers as having limited contact and communication with children. Kaone a 51-year-old unemployed mother said that despite being legally married, her husband used the money he earned in any way he wanted without informing her. She described her partner as a financial provider who hardly took part in the day-to-day care and discipline of children. Kaone said that she could adequately provide for material needs of her children, and that there was poor communication between her husband and the children. She expressed her sense of hopelessness as she explained how her children hardly communicated their needs to their father:

"Sometimes one (referring to one of the children) would come to me and say, Mum, I want this, and I tell her that I don't have money and she would say, why are you refusing since you are not working. [Laughing], our dad is the one who is working. Then I would say, yes, tell him so that he can give you. Then they would say: 'dad gives you money so that you can give it to us'."

Kaone's children perceived the father as financial provider and their mother as a liaison who had to communicate information between them and their father. Fathers such as Kaone's husband are financial fathers, who are financially supportive but not emotionally involved in childcare and have limited communication with children (Swartz & Bhana, 2009). Fathers' limited contact and communication relates to some of the cultural norms such as gendered caregiving roles discussed earlier. The nature

of the working environment, employment conditions and labor laws reinforce such negative parenting practices. Women employed in the formal sector, such as Marea, indicated that the Employment Act preserves the gendered burden of care on women, as it tends to recognize the role of mothers in childcare and not the role of fathers. Botswana Employment Act offers mothers maternity leave but does not have paternity leave. Marea, who was married and working as a nurse from DCF did not hide her concern:

“What I have observed with the current Employment Act is that it is only favorable to women, fathers are not catered for because it seems like the government do not recognize their importance in parenting. I am the only one entitled to confinement leave, my husband is not eligible.”

Marea’s statement corroborates Maharaj & Sewpaul’s (2016) conclusion that culturally oriented structural systems and the law have a tendency to reproduce social injustices. This also corroborates Ntshwarang and Sewpaul’s (forthcoming) finding that the law and culture in Botswana intersect in many ways to work against the interests of women, men and children. The Employment Act disadvantages both fathers and children by denying fathers their rights to parent, and denies children the right to be equally cared for by both parents. The Act is biased because it only offers maternity leave for mothers but not paternity leave for fathers. Policies and laws need to enhance children’s lives by creating work conditions favorable to their parents based on create gender balanced parenting (Burnett et al., 2010). Thus, the women’s concerns are valid and indeed call for the revision of the Botswana’s Employment Act.

The results revealed that parental power imbalances and spousal/partner abuse also contributed to negative parenting practices. A total of 10 (41.7%) women who participated in the study reported having experienced some form of abuse from their partners at some point in their lives. The women reported that their partners abused them physically, financially, and emotionally in different ways. Abuse exacerbated father’s limited participation and absence in the care of children. Grace, a 36-year-old administrator, from a FHF, reported that her husband (on separation at the time of study) physically, emotionally and financially abused her. She recalled her experiences before her separation from her husband:

“When you are married to an older man more especially that mine was 15 years older I respected him too much, because for me, I was married when I was very young. I was completely dependent on him from then. I was struggling because

he would give a limit as to how much I could spend. Boys are expensive, for a woman who raises children without adequate support, I struggled to meet their needs.”

Grace’s utterance show that her husband did not adequately support the family financially and that he abused her. Father’s financial support has the ability to promote positive parenting practices as the active participation of fathers in families accelerates children’s cognitive and affective development (Choi, et al., 2014; Gottfried, et al., 2002). That is, the status of the relationship of a child’s parents or caregivers is of crucial importance in parenting because it determines the kind of parenting practices in their homes. The results corroborated the argument that “*Gender operates in social structures that define power relations in a society*” (Bornstein, Putnick, Bradley, Deater- Deckard, & Lansford, 2016, pp. 10-11). Power imbalances between parents escalate the limited participation of fathers in childcare and accounts for many of the challenges women face in exercising positive parenting practices, especially disciplining children. Power is “*the ability to influence another person*” (Balswick & Balswick, 1995, p. 297). Power imbalances in the women’s and their partners’ relationships sometimes manifested in the form of partner abuse, that hindered women’s ability to successfully exercise different parenting roles. The women reported different types of abuse in their relationships and its contribution to their struggles in exercising parenting practices. The study findings revealed that fathers’ misuse of their power hindered women’s access to family resources and contributed to parenting challenges.

The absence of one or both parents in the family has detrimental effects on parenting practices. The common trend between the women (irrespective of the structure of the family) who complained about lack of father support was their hopelessness about their situations, which translated into resignation and complacency. That was apparent in instances where the women did not make any efforts to challenge oppressive situations encountered. According to Sewpaul (2013) this demonstrated the way people facilitate the reproduction of gendered practices and discrimination. Men often demonstrate their masculinity in abusive manners. Masculinity is the dynamic way in which men and boys express themselves as men and as determined by different socio-cultural factors and men often express it through abuse and oppression of women (Uchendu, 2008). The ways in which men express masculinity influences both family functioning and parenting practices. In the study, women highlighted that father figures expressed masculine power in silent responses when requested to assist in parenting children. Sharon, a married stay at home mother, from FWUPE described her

husband as self-centered. She reported that he denied her the use of the family car because she did not contribute financially to it. She said that there was poor communication between them as parents and she could not hide her displeasure about her husband's lack of participation in parenting children:

“Sometimes when I talk to him to raise concern about a child, he keeps quiet and shows less interest. For example, when I go to him and say, please help me with the child, especially with our boy child, he ignores me. It is challenging for me to raise a boy child”

Sharon expressed the need for her husband's contribution, especially in the care of their boy child. If one parent is stressed or non-involved it might negatively affect the other parent by contributing to limited supervision or harsh discipline, leaving children without parental support (Heinrich, 2014). Sharon admitted that she resorted to permissive parenting and provided limited supervision. She said: *“I have resorted that I don't need to grieve over his [son's] behavior. I have decided to ignore the situation and pretend that I don't hurt.”* It was thus not surprising that Sharon reported her son being disrespectful towards her. Dooley & Fedele (2001) and Abbey (2001) underscored that the boy child is likely to act out behavior associated with learned masculine behavior from his father. Children learn gender appropriateness at a very young age through their engagement with their immediate family members (Bornstein et al., 2016).

Although the results of the study may not have revealed significant cases of abuse among families, the findings indicate that domestic violence and parenting practices cannot be divorced. The findings call for the strengthening of Domestic Violence Act 2008 to maximize the prevention of women and child abuse within families. Gender based abuse is a major problem; the Gender Based Violence Indicators study conducted in 2010 revealed that 67% of women in Botswana experienced gender abuse in their lifetime from men. Men's lack of parental involvement is their way of demonstrating masculinity (Segal, 1993) embedded in the patriarchal system. Gendered parenting practices and gender-based problems are a result of the patriarchal nature of our society (Gqola, 2007; Parker, 2003; Van Wormer, 2008). Botswana was established around a patrilineal descent system where family structure and family functioning gravitate towards a male-controlled arrangement (Tshitswana, 2003). Thus, different socio-structural factors underpin men's privilege within relationships and negatively affect women's parenting practices. Entrenched in the family structure are power

inequalities that appear in the form of different kinds of exploitation such as physical, financial and emotional abuse that block women's participation in decision making (Parker, 2003). According to Foreman and Dallos (1993) men use material, financial, and ideological power to abuse women and to keep them in controlled subordinate positions. Violence in the family has negative impacts as it increases member's vulnerability to mental health and negative parenting practice (Sewpaul, 1993).

Grace remembered how she struggled to teach her children respect because of the physical, financial and emotional abuse from their father. She spoke with an aggressive tone to demonstrate how she talked with anger and aggression with the children. She said:

“To be abused in front of the children it changes also the way you would want them to view their father. When you are supposed to tell them that they should respect their father or husband, instead of telling the child that a man deserves respect, you come to a situation where you now change the language. You should study hard so that you do not end up abused by men. You understand. It now changes the language.”

Grace's statement support Patterson and Fisher's (2002) assertion that parents with distress use inconsistent parenting practices. In recognition of the effects of abuse on women's parenting practices, Seno shared her professional experience and observations within the legal system. She reported:

“As a law enforcement officer, I have handled so many cases of domestic violence. In most of these cases women reported that they were verbally or physically abused by their partners and husbands in the presence of their children. Women end up not being able to take care of their children adequately because some of them sometimes have to run away from their abusive partners leaving their children behind. Some children become disrespectful to their parents and that makes it hard for their mothers to discipline them.”

Baboloki, who described her partner as an abusive person, reported that because of abuse, her partner used negative parenting practices. She explained:

“Most of the time, he tries to bond with them but he does not do that in a good way. He wants to show the children that I am a bad mother. After he abuses me

in front of them, he would call them and say to them, my children your mother is bad, can you see that she shouts at me?"

Baboloki and other women's narratives above corroborate Crnic and Low (2002) argument that partners who have conflicts are unlikely to give each other adequate support in parenting children. Baboloki further explained that abuse creates animosity between the parent and the child. She said: *"They are not happy around him. They are afraid of him. When he is around one could see that they are not free. Even his biological child is not comfortable around him anymore."*

The results substantiated Gibson and Callads' (2015) finding that intimate partner violence (IPV) and gender inequalities contribute to poor parenting practices and children's negative behavioral outcomes. Children exposed to violence become more vulnerable to different types of abuse and are more likely to have psychological problems (Chander et al., 2017; Holt, Buckley, & Whelan, 2008; Tailor, Stewart-Tufescu, & Piotrowski, 2015). Violence in the families should to be counteracted urgently to enhance family functioning and child protection.

7.4 Summary

In this chapter, I discussed women's parenting practices to support and meet children's primary needs as well as to impart life skills. The findings revealed that income and educational background facilitated or hindered women's positive parenting practice as they had major influence on resource availability across the three family structures. Additionally, the results indicate that gendered parenting practices are common among the three different family structures. The findings corroborate the literature (Republic of Botswana, 2017) that children reside within gendered circumstances. Culture and law come together to minimize the roles of fathers and allow men to renege on their responsibilities, thus placing a disproportionate burden of care on women. Segal (1993) further adds that attitudinal changes can only occur if society challenges social, economic and political conditions that disadvantage women and perpetuate gender equality. Thus, the findings of the research study show that there is a need to advocate for active father participation in parenting children. In chapter eight, I discuss parenting practices adopted by women to discipline children and to ensure their safety and security.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8. INSTILLING RESPECT, SETTING FAMILY RULES AND THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

8.1 Introduction

Child discipline involves a combination of physical and psychological parenting practices that are supposed to stimulate children's positive behavioral outcome (Mudany et al., 2013). Disciplinary practices differ culturally and contextually. Disciplinary practices purposively punish children for unacceptable behavior and reward them for positive behavior. These include supervision and monitoring practices such as rules to communicate expected behaviors (Simpson et al., 2007), and parents' regulation of children's movements and the company they keep (Wamoyi et al., 2011) in an effort control children's predicted and unpredicted unacceptable behaviors (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). Additionally, some disciplinary parenting practices intentionally enhance children's safety and security. The nature of disciplinary, safety and security focused parenting practices are important for healthy children's identity, cognitive and moral development as well as social competency (Hoff, et al., 2002).

8.2 Key Findings

In the study three key parenting practices that seemed important in disciplining, and ensuring safety and security in the three different family structures were: (i) the non-participation of children in development and implementation of family rules and (ii) teaching children respect (iii) corporal punishment (CP) as a normalized practice.

8.2.1 Non-participation of children in development and implementation of family rules

When children are in their adolescence, parents intensify their supervision and monitoring efforts because it is a phase when children start to discover their identities. Parents are required to become more knowledgeable about children's whereabouts, what they do in and outside their homes and the company they keep (Kerr & Stattin, 2003). Parents monitor children to ensure that they do not get exposed to negative peer pressure (Darling, 2007; Darling & Steinberg, 1993) as well as to protect them from other types of harm. The findings of the study indicate that family rules were instituted throughout the developmental stages of children, and the level of strictness depended on the parent's values and environment and children had no or limited contribution on their formulation. Family rules and boundaries constitute monitoring mechanisms used by parents as a form of behavioral control (Grusec, 2002). Having family rules in place included having a timeline for being at home after school or when children have gone out of the home. Thirteen women indicated that they had family rules and expectations in place, such as children having to be in and out of the home at certain periods of time, when to wake up and sleep, and time spent on homework and watching TV. Five of the women were from DCF and the other five from FHF and the least (three) were from FWUPE. The women wanted children to be home at specific times but the reasons behind that differed as per the woman's expectations from their children and the intended behavioral outcomes. As we conversed, what emerged was that the rules and expectations were rigid across the three family structures. The women's family rules and boundaries fell within the direct control practices category identified by Hoff, Laursen and Tardif (2002) and authoritarian parenting style by (Smith, 2010).

As a result of the nature of their strictness in terms of the expectation that children follow family rules and boundaries, the women's responses support the claims that it's common for parents of African descent to apply parenting practices that value respect for authority and quick compliance with authority figure's demands (McNeely & Barber, 2010; Nankumbi & Muliira, 2015; Renzaho et al., 2011; Weis & Toolis, 2010). Maipelo, who was a 50-year old married parent and stay at home mother said: *"No. There is nowhere I loosen the rules. I will only go easy on them when they no longer live with me."* Gorata, a 42-year old single parent and teacher by profession emphasized:

“I never sought any more information because from my own experience I know that the owner of the home is the ultimate decision maker of what happens in her home. If she or he does not want anything to happen in her or his home, children have to abide. For example when the owner says “children do not go anywhere, stay at home.” So we would listen as children and obey what the parent said. The same applies to me when I tell my children not to eat at other people’s homes, I expect them not to. I guess you understand that in the olden days when you were forbidden to eat at other people’s homes but you do it any way, you end up being beaten.”

Maipelo and Gorata’s narratives echoed the rigidness and authoritarian nature of rules as well as children’s lack of participation in family decision making. Women who resided in the outskirts of the town such as Botho were more concerned about their children’s safety and security and expressed some of the challenges they encounter in their neighborhoods. Botho, a 39-year-old mother who had two boys aged between 10-19 years said:

“We live in an unsafe neighbourhood, especially during month end when a lot of people can afford to buy alcohol. Drunken people roam the streets and some of them fight. If one doesn’t regulate what time children should be home, they may end up being exposed to such things.”

Botho’s statement confirms Kotchick and Forehand’s (2002) finding that parents living in unsafe neighbourhoods intensified monitoring, supervision and control to maximize children’s safety and security. Botho’s reasoning was valid given her intention to protect children from harm, but if it is done without taking into consideration the need to balance responsibility with freedom, rigid rules are likely to interfere with the healthy development of children. Authoritarian rules deny children social interaction with peers outside the home (Edwards et al., 2003). Abusive parenting practices such as rigid rules are not favorable for the cognitive and emotional development of children. Families should strike a balance between adolescents’ freedom and responsibility to enhance children’s successful attainment of developmental tasks and ego identity (Sewpaul, 1993). Family rules that are mutually agreed upon, and that respond to the needs of the children are likely to enhance children’s compliance (Darling, 2007).

According to Powell, Taylor, and Smith (2013) children have the capacity to influence society but most of the time they are perceived as the ones needing regulation from

society through parental guidance. Botswana has made strides in terms of promoting children's participation at the macro level. At one point, Botswana established a children's parliament but it has since died a natural death. Of recent, the government of Botswana established a National Children's Consultative Forum (NCCF). The NCCF is composed of 160 children from the 16 districts in Botswana. The purpose of the NCCF is to discuss issues affecting children in Botswana and make recommendations to the National Children's Council (NCC). NCC is tasked to sensitize communities about Botswana's Children's Act of 2009, conduct research, and identify children's challenges and consultative forums on children's welfare (Government of Botswana, 2009). The NCC, however, has not adequately served its purpose due to limited funding (Republic of Botswana, 2017).

In addition to the NCCF and NCC various districts have started to institute Village Child Protection Committees (VPCs) as recommended by Botswana Children's Act, 2009. At the time of the study 320 VPCs were established in different districts across the country. VPC's mandatory role is to educate communities on children's issues such as abuse and key instruments that promote child protection such as the Children's Act, CRC and ACRWC. In contrast to efforts made by Botswana government to enhance child participation at macro level, at a micro level such as family settings, that is not visible as the findings of my study showed. Only one woman in the study reported that her children were involved in family decisions. Marea, a 37 year old married mother from a DCF shared what is atypical in Botswana families. Marea was one of the three women who reported that they did not use corporal punishment. She indicated that, occasionally, they held family meetings to share ideas with children. She proudly said:

"Sometimes their father calls them and says, my children you should be honest and open. If you think that there is something that we are doing wrong, tell us. You should be open to me and your mother. The truth is that as parents we may do wrong things, so children should be open and tell us if we are unfair to them..."

Marea's assertion showed she and her husband treated their children in ways that did not accord with the "seen but not heard" practice, discussed by Maundeni (2002); that is the tendency of adults and parents to give limited or no attention to children's concerns and opinions. Marea and her husband's positive parenting practices are in line with Botswana's Revised Children's Act 2009 which emphasized the involvement of children in decision

making processes (Government of Botswana, 2009), and with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which highlight children's right to participation.

The family rules used by women in the study represent a traditional rules-based and collective system of problem solving by consensus. Collective consensus is usually undertaken through the "Kgotla" system. The "Kgotla" is a consultative forum where community members gather to discuss issues of concern and the chief, as the leader of the community, facilitates such meetings (Maundeni & Jacques, 2012). To a large extent the limited consultation of children by parents in the establishment of family rules are reminiscent of how the Kgotla operates. Although the Kgotla is useful in solving community problems and carrying out developmental projects, to a large extent, it is biased because most of the time only a small number of privileged people get to comment or raise their concerns. In a situation where consensus cannot be reached, the chief is the ultimate decision maker as he has authority and privilege in the community that he leads. In Botswana, the numbers of males in positions of chieftaincy outnumber that of females.

Similar to the women that participated in the study, as a parent, I often find myself caught up in the same practice of not involving my children in planning or decision making. Such kinds of oppressive parenting practices are often learnt and internalized during childhood socialization (Sallee, 2008). Our interaction with different societal structures reinforce them and they become part of us such that we practice them without self-reflection and interrogation (Sewpaul, 2013). Thus, while monitoring children in unsafe neighborhoods is important, it can influence parents to exercise intense control and place undue, excessive restrictions on children's movements. Kotchick and Forehand (2002) point out that it can deny a child the opportunity to enjoy playing with their peers, and for children to realise their full potential. The interconnection of parents' apprehension about children's attitudes and behaviors and excessive use of coercion is likely to cause children's low self-esteem (Heath, 1995). Given the authoritarian nature of family rules and limited participation of children in decision making, it was not surprising that the majority (21) of women who participated in the study used corporal punishment (CP) to discipline children as the following discussion illustrate.

8.2.2 Corporal punishment (CP) as a normalized practice¹

Botswana has made several strides in its attempts to adhere to human rights standards especially in relation to children's rights. The country is a signatory to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and the UN 1990 World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. Article 19 of the CRC requires states to take:

“all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.”

The CRC and the ACRWC emphasize the right to be treated with dignity, protection and integrity, with article 37 of the CRC calling for children to be protected from “torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”, a right also enshrined in the UDHR. Botswana promulgated the Children's Act of 2009 (Government of Botswana, 2009) that is largely (but not entirely) aligned with the CRC and the ACRWC. Nonetheless, the use of corporal punishment (hereafter referred to as CP) in Botswana at family and state levels indicate that disciplinary practices that are normalized in law and culture are unlikely to be perceived as a threat to children's rights and well-being. It is an anomaly that while adults are protected in law against assaults, children - who on account of their age and size are more vulnerable - are not granted such protection.

Article 15 of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children's Rights and Welfare asserts that: “All children must be given the chance to find their identity and realize their worth in a safe and supportive environment, through families and other care-givers committed to their welfare” (UN, 1990). However, not every society conforms to established rights, largely on account of entrenched and enduring cultural practices. The majority of countries do not prohibit CP in the home, even where it is prohibited in other spheres, and CP affects 80% of the world's 1.7 billion children who experience violence (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2007 –

¹ This section is largely derived from a forthcoming article by Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, based on the results of this study.

[GIEACPC, 2017). Despite progress with 53 states across the world now banning all forms of CP in all settings, nine out of 10 children worldwide live in states where the law does not recognize their rights to protection from CP (GIEACPC, 2017).

Botswana is one of the few countries where CP is not prohibited in *any* setting, and is one of six African countries with non-prohibition in *all* settings, with others being: Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (GIECPAC, 2017 b). Botswana's Penal Code (section 28), 1964 (Government of Botswana, 1964); sections 23 and 24 of the Education Act of 1967; section 21 (2) of the Customary Law Act, 1969 and the Children's Act, 2009 all condone CP of children. The Children's Act of 2009 prohibits only "unreasonable" correction of a child by parents, thus allowing "reasonable" correction. Articles 27 and 61 of the Children's Act, 2009 expressly state that the legal provisions protecting a child's dignity and prohibiting cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment do not preclude the use of CP.

Corporal punishment (CP) is a contentious practice that is widely used across the globe. (M. A. Straus, 2010) defined corporal punishment as an intentional use of bodily strength to infuse pain on children as a way to rectify unacceptable attitudes and behaviors, without causing any bodily harm to the child. The foregoing definition links with the findings of the study because all the women in the study considered it to be the rightful disciplinary method as long as it did not lead to physical injuries. The definition is contentious as enforcing pain on another person is not a guarantee that it will not cause damage, even when overt signs of abuse are not evident. Corporal punishment also causes psychological harm. CP includes pinching, spanking, hitting or whipping (Alyahri & Goodman, 2008; Avinun, Davidov, Mankuta, & Knafo- Noam, 2018; Becker, 2018; Breen, Daniels, & Tomlinson, 2015; Fréchette & Romano, 2017).

Women in the study reported using various disciplinary practices, but the most common practice, across the three family structures, was corporal punishment. Out of the 24 women who participated in the study, only three reported that they did not use corporal punishment. All (16) of the women in FHF and FWUPE and five in DCF reported using CP such as beating with a rod and pinching. The results resonate with Dunn and Keet's (2012) finding in the context of South Africa where the majority (202 out of 211) children reported that their parents used corporal punishment. Chaffin et al. (2004) asserted that children's initial encounter with physical abuse is with their parents, and that this often instils in children the mentality that violence can be used to deal with issues. The three women who did not use corporal punishment were the youngest in the DCF; two of them were aged 37

and the other one was 31 years. They indicated that they “*didn’t like to do it.*” Motlale, a 37 year old mother of two who was cohabiting with the father of her children, emphasized that her childhood experience played a key role on why she did not use corporal punishment. She said: “*I don’t like to beat children because I was never beaten when I grew up. I call a child and talk to her.*”

Motlale further said that when talking did not work, she got support from the teachers. She explained:

“I talked to her several times but when I realized that she did not listen to me, I took the matter to school, and told her, we will meet at school. I reported her to her teachers and she was able to listen, she stopped her unnecessary visits to friends since then.”

One of the women who did not use CP, 31 year old Maano, a Christian and nurse by profession was aware of the effects of corporal punishment as she justified: “*I think if one beats a stubborn child too much, it worsens the situation. Sometimes severe beatings can lead to injuries.*” Among the women who identified as Christians, six women from FHF, four from DCF and three from FWUPE indicated that their religious affiliation encouraged them to use corporal punishment. Thus the findings resonate with Ellison and Bradshaw’s (2009) finding that there was a positive association between religion and corporal punishment. The predominant use of corporal punishment by the women validated Halpenny, et al.’s (2010) finding that belief systems stimulate parents’ characters and world views that consequently have an effect on parenting practices.

The results of the study indicated that the entrenchment of CP in Botswana is deep, and it cuts across different family structures and socio-economic status. This resonates with Sebonego’s (1994) findings that CP was a universal form of discipline in Botswana, embedded in Tswana traditions. The common use of CP by participants in the three family structures in this study confirms the finding of Breen et al. (2015) in Khanyelitsha township, South Africa. Their study concluded that although physical discipline had negative emotional and behavioral outcomes, it was a common disciplinary method at family level. The women who used corporal punishment said that they talked to their children several times before applying CP. They said that CP was meant to show the children that the continued misbehavior or failure to do as being told was unacceptable. The results affirmed

that: (a) parents used corporal punishment to enhance children's compliance with parents' orders and demands (Renzaho et al., 2011); (b) parents of African descent use parenting practices that value respect for authority figures and obedience to adults' expectations and demands and that corporal punishment is common in African societies (Brown et al., 2015; Mudany et al., 2013; Weis & Toolis, 2010). The normalization of CP to discipline children is endorsed by supportive societal attitudes and norms, even where CP is not condoned in law (Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009; Lansford, 2010). However, Durrant (1999), a strong advocate against CP, discussed attitudinal changes following the legal banning of CP in Sweden. There are a number of factors that contribute to the use of CP. These include: 1) the belief that is the right and duty of parents to discipline children via the use of CP, as enshrined in the biblical injunction of "spare the rod and spoil the child" (Proverbs 13:24); 2). In African traditional practices such as in the context of Botswana there is a pre-eminence on respect for authority, elders and customs, and there is a tendency to conflate fear with respect (Weis & Toolis, 2010); 3) CP allows parents to feel in control and to ensure children's compliance (Renzaho, Green & Mellor, et al. (2011); 4) Fear that children will become uncontrollable in the absence of the use of CP; 5) Belief that CP shapes character and strengthens children's moral development; and that 6) CP serves as a deterrent to undesirable behaviors (Gudyanga et al., 2014).

The results accord with the views of Mudany et al. (2013) who argued that parents in African societies frequently used physical punishment instead of psychological discipline as a way to improve children's behavior. Similar findings on the common and frequent use of CP were also observed in research conducted in Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania by Mweru (2010), Breen et al. (2015) and Hecker, Hermenau, Isele, and Elbert (2014). The results of a study that interviewed both female and male teachers aged 23 to 51 years old indicated that they used corporal punishment because the students' parents approved it. Breen et al. (2015) conducted a qualitative study with 24 Xhosa students to examine children's experiences of CP in Khanyelitsha township of South Africa. The study found that it was a common disciplinary method used by parents. Hecker et al. (2014) undertook a research study on schooling children in Tanzania to examine the incidents of CP in the homes and schools and its relationship to children's externalizing behaviors. The results revealed that all the participants reported exposure to CP in their homes and schools, and a positive correlation between CP and externalizing problems.

In this study all the women in FHF, DCF and FWUPE who used CP reported that they used a rod or lash to punish the child, except Kaone, a 51 year old married stay at home

mother who indicated that one of the reasons she stopped beating children was that she used anything to beat them: *“When I beat a child, I lashed them with anything I find near me. And honestly speaking I lashed them too hard.”* The findings of the study showed that there was limited awareness and understanding of the law pertaining to children’s rights in Botswana, which accord with prior studies (Kibria, 1987; Sebongo, 1994). All 24 women indicated that they had heard of children’s rights in the abstract, but the majority (18) was unaware of the Botswana Children’s Act of 2009. The results indicated that women who held higher educational qualifications, and who worked in specific sectors such as education and health had an advantage in terms of access to the Children’s Act 2009. Gorata, who was a 42-year-old single parent and a teacher, and had worked as a school guidance counselor said:

“I am aware of that. I have read it. It is helpful because it sends a reminder to the parent that one has to act in the best interest of the child ... It is helpful in curbing abuse of children ... Children sometimes misuse their rights but they have to know them. A parent should teach her children about their rights ... I tell her [her daughter] that she should not use her rights to abuse me or to abuse others, because if one is not aware of his or her rights the child could take advantage of a parent’s lack of knowledge and abuse him or her. Sometimes when I tell her that I am going to beat her, she tells me that: ‘this time when you beat me, I am going to the social workers to report you that you abuse my rights’, I tell her that, ‘this house is mine, as long as you live with me and under my care, you have to listen to me, whether you have rights or not, we both have rights so we need to meet somewhere.’

Gorata’s narrative emphasizes both children’s and parental rights and responsibilities. Even with her background and knowledge, there was an over-riding narrative of parental power over children. The discourse speaks to the lesser status of children, with the child’s dependent status translating into *“you have to listen to me”*, and to fear about parental abuse by children. Gorata’s knowledge of children’s rights did not prevent her from using CP. This coheres with the finding of Julius (2013) in the Kenyan context, where the majority (78%) of guidance counselors expressed the view that CP was very effective or effective in disciplining children, yet paradoxically the majority of the 300 male and female learners, from day and boarding schools included in the study, believed that they should be referred to guidance counselors for assistance, rather than be subject to CP.

The women's knowledge about children's rights did not translate into ensuring that those rights were respected. Sharon, who was a 43-year-old stay at home mum, adopted primarily authoritarian parental practices. She said:

“I think I should discipline the child. I am not afraid to beat my child on the basis that my child has rights. My child cannot threaten me by telling me that he or she has rights and therefore she or he is going to report me for beating him or her ... Sometimes when I listen to radio discussions about children's deviant behaviors, I have heard parents complaining that we fail to discipline our children because of children's rights.”

Naledi, a 40-year-old unemployed woman, said: *“I only heard about children's rights but not that much. I know that we are not supposed to abuse children such as beating them too much.”* Naledi's view resonates with the Children's Act, 2009 that approves reasonable use of CP. The Botswana Children's Act, 2009 tolerates reasonable use of CP, as Section 61(3) states: *“The provisions of this section shall not be construed as prohibiting the corporal punishment of children in such circumstances or manner as may be set out in this Act or any other law.”* This is in opposition with the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, GIEACPC (2017) that states:

“Physical and humiliating punishment breaches the fundamental rights of children, completely disregards their entitlement to respect, dignity and integrity, undermines their development, damages their self-esteem, and perpetuates the thinking that it is alright to hit and hurt others.” (p. 12).

Regina, a 34-year-old, unemployed woman with primary school education, who said she knew about children's rights, indicated that they played no role in her disciplining her children. She said: *“I beat them and when a person comes by and says ‘their rights’, I tell them to go away with them (rights) because I am disciplining my child.”* She said, *“I beat a child just right”* adding, *“I never play with a child”* (meaning she was hard on children when disciplining them). Regina, as with the other participants, said she knew that the child had a right not to be beaten, but believed it was wholly okay for her to do so. The women expressed

the view that they had to exercise control, and that it was their duty to discipline their children. Baboloki, who was from a female-headed family, and worked as a cleaner, said: *“I like to talk to them before I introduce the whip, but when they do not listen or do as I want, I really discipline them”*, while Lesedi asserted, *“If one doesn’t beat them a bit one may find that one song is sung on a daily basis. Once you introduce a whip to beat them they will do as you want quickly.”* The voices of the women support the notion of parents getting gratification from children’s immediate compliance and obedience, while failing to consider the long-term consequences of their actions. The results are consistent with prior studies. Renzaho, et al (2011), for example, found that parents used CP when the children failed to comply with their demands, and Weis & Toolis (2010) found that parents of African descent used parenting practices that valued respect for authority figures, and unquestioning obedience to adults’ expectations

As they did not know of the specific provisions of the Children’s Act, 2009 allowing for *reasonable* CP, the participants erroneously believed that all forms of CP were illegal. Their responses suggest that even if national law prohibited CP, they would most likely continue to use it. Disciplining of children was clearly not seen to be within the purview of the state, but as a private matter with the state having no right to intrude into the private space of the family. Given the extent of the normalization of the use of CP, this is not unusual. Julius (2013) reported that over 90% of the 300 learners in his study in Kenya, reported the continued use of CP, despite its banning, a finding reported by others such as Mweru (2010). The views of the participants were contrary to that expressed by the GIEACPC (2017) that proclaimed, *“Violence is not a private matter that should be left to families to resolve, but a matter of human rights that states have a duty to uphold”* (p. 11). Kaone, a stay at home mum, who also believed that the law prohibited CP, had this to say: *“Yes, it is very difficult for me, when it comes to rights ... I just talk on the side saying, ‘Hey, these rights I think they have spoiled our children.’”* Kaone went on to say:

“If one gives her a few lashes she would go to the police. When you get there, they will tell you, ‘this child has rights.’ When she is 19 years old! And then you ask yourself, they say she has rights but she is 19 years old and I feed her and clothe her, but they say she has rights!”

Kaone described how, *“I lashed them with everything I find near me ... And honestly speaking I lashed them too hard ... I beat children with anything”* and talked about the

intervention of the pastor at church in getting her to desist from extreme assaults on her children. Koane's utterances reflect the refrain of those who support CP about the discourse on children's rights "spoiling children", and parental entitlement to discipline via the use of CP, as they are the primary providers for their children. The fear of giving up parental authority, and the possibility of the emphasis on children's rights paving the way for parental abuse by children was reiterated by Maano, who held a college diploma and worked as a nurse:

"Yes, children abuse us. When you talk to today's children, they talk about Childline, and children's rights...When you attempt to discipline a child, the child tells you 'I will report you' ... I think children should also be taught about their parents' rights, they should not only emphasize their own rights."

In desperation Maano said, *"The law only pays attention to child abuse but overlooks parent abuse. Children abuse us, yes"*, and she was of the view that the issue of parental abuse required urgent attention. Maano's concerns bear some legitimacy, particularly in the face of lack of public education campaigns for children and adults on their reciprocal rights and responsibilities, and on the use of alternative, positive parenting practices in the home, in schools and in alternative care settings for children. While Obmori, Nyakan and Yambo (2016) found higher levels of indiscipline among learners following the banning of CP in Kenyan schools, they did not recommend its reinstatement, but called for education and sensitization about alternative forms of discipline.

The results show that CP has been entrenched into the culture of parenting such that it goes unrecognized in society, and its application is widely welcome (Straus & Donnelly, 1994). The authoritarian nature of parenting practices and the cultural context of Botswana does not give children the opportunity to oppose their parents' attitudes and abusive practices. The foregoing confirmed the findings by Tafa (2002) that physical discipline is a common and internalized cultural practice in Botswana. While Tafa (2002) study set out to investigate experiences of new teachers in Junior Secondary schools in Botswana, there was frequent talk about CP and teachers generally provided accounts of the necessity of CP in schools.

Besides cultural practices and the Christian religion that is dominant in the country (Republic of Botswana, 2013) Statutes such as Penal Code (Government of Botswana, Government of Botswana, 1964), Education Act (Government of Botswana, 1967), and Children's Act (Government of Botswana, 2009) endorse the use of corporal punishment. The norms of society and the legal sanction of CP in all spheres in Botswana enable its

pervasive use. The State, as custodian of children's rights have an obligation to protect children, educate its citizens about the harmful consequences of CP, and foster positive parenting practices. The justification of the law being informed by "the norms of society", is akin to the tail wagging the dog, and the State abrogating its responsibilities. Legal reform is no guarantee of the protection and promotion of human rights. But, it does play a huge role in enabling the achievement and protection of rights. At the very least, it makes the roles of advocates against the use of CP easier. It is harder to confront, challenge and change harmful cultural practices when there is legal sanction for them. For example, Part IXV, Section 85 of Botswana Children's Act, 2009 states:

"Where a child charged with an offence is tried by a children's court and the court is satisfied of his or her guilt, the court shall, after taking into consideration the general conduct, home environment, school records and medical history (if any) of such child dispose of the case by...(d) Sentencing the child to corporal punishment"

Sewpaul (2013, p.119) argued that "ideology is socially, culturally and politically constructed". In this instance, the dominant use of CP reflects particular worldviews and constructions of children as persons with no rights on their own. The women's practice of CP is engraved in prevailing social institutions. One could argue that since the government of Botswana has legal systems that approve physical discipline, there is no way it can be viewed as inhumane at family level. CP is abuse but it opens doors to other forms of child abuse. The frequent use of CP is associated with poor parent-child relations, and poor attachment as parents who use CP fail to build emotional bonds with their children (Gershoff, 2010). Parents are the primary caregivers who are supposed to ensure that children feel secure. When children are exposed to pain by the very persons that are supposed to protect them, it contributes to mistrust and internalized shame, which may in later life manifest in co-dependent or survival personalities that typify a range of mental health problems, including addictive disorders (Bradshaw, 1996). CP is performed with the deliberate intention to cause pain on other persons to correct undesirable behaviors without causing injuries (Lansford, 2010). While Lansford emphasizes not causing injuries, the GIEACPC (undated) asserts that CP "includes any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light, as well as *non-physical forms of punishment that*

are cruel and degrading” (emphasis, added). CP is not only an assault on the bodies of children, but their spirits; it is degrading and inhumane and produces enduring effects. The Government of Botswana rejected the recommendations of the international community to ban CP, arguing that: “it is a legitimate and acceptable form of punishment, as informed by the norms of society” (GIEACPC, 2018, p. 5).

Gershoff and Grogan-Kaylor (2016) undertook a meta-analysis of 17 research studies to examine whether the extent of the consequences of spanking differed with those of physical abuse in children. The results showed that CP increased the risks of physical abuse and it was positively associated with increased hostility, anti-social behavior, internalizing and externalizing problems and distressful or constrained relationships with parents. Other research studies (Hecker et al., 2014; Mulvaney & Mebert, 2007) mentioned earlier conducted in the African contexts indicated that CP was positively associated with children’s increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors, such as aggression.

The use of corporal punishment at home and other societal institutions is not unique to Botswana. Hecker et al. (2014) carried out a study in Tanzania where all the 409 private primary schooling children in grade two to seven that participated in the study reported that they had been exposed to CP in their home. If children are taught to appreciate and support CP it is more likely to become an intergenerational practice (Dawes, Kafaar, de Sas Kropiwnicki, Pather, & Richter, 2004). Given that there were more females in the FHF and FWUPE groups where all the participants reported the use of CP, one could not draw conclusions that gender or family structure played a significant role in determining the use of CP. The findings of the study were in contrast to Halpenny, et al ‘s (2010) reports that female children were open to less physical punishment when compared to male children.

Maipelo, a 50 year old unemployed mother, chuckled as she emphasized her use of CP: *“I don’t really talk to a child many times. When I talked to a person the first time and they don’t listen. The second time ...The third time, I lash them and I do it soundly”*. Sarah, a self-employed and religious mother whose parenting practices were generally authoritarian supported the idea that CP has to be used appropriately, as she asserted:

“When they are toddlers, I think five to six years, I beat them but I don’t use a big stick. I use a small size that is good enough for their small bodies. But at about three years we start making threats of beating the child...I also threaten to beat them or kill them. I also tell them that if I did not like them, I could have

aborted them but the fact that I carried them in my tummy for nine months and bore them shows that I love them. They listen!”

Vicious language such as used by Sarah is rooted in the dominant socio-political systems that support the use of insensitive and dehumanizing words that promote violence (Frimoth, 2018). There is no doubt that Sarah and the other women were not aware of the psychological effects of verbal and physical abuse on children. In a cultural context where physical discipline is deep-rooted, its potential to harm on children is often overlooked. The findings of Hecker et al. (2014) in a Tanzanian context revealed that 25% of the 409 children who participated in the study reported that they were injured when CP was administered.

While CP gives parents immediate gratification with children’s conformity and obedience (Bitensky, 1997; Gershoff & Bitensky, 2007), there is evidence that it has physical, psychological and emotional consequences that impede healthy functioning. The negative consequences of CP have been documented in relation to: decreased cognitive ability, poor academic performance, and school school-drop out (Ahmad, Said, & Khan, 2013; Gershoff, 2010; Tafa, 2002; UNICEF, 2014a); manifestations of depression and anxiety in later life; and reproduction of violence and aggression (Gershoff, 2010; Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016; Grogan-Kaylor, Ma, & Graham-Bermann, 2018; Taylor et al., 2017); inability to contribute to the internalisation of ethics and desired societal values (Shumba, 2004) and to the acquisition of problem-solving skills (Smith, et al., 2004). Apart from its consequences, there are arguments that the use of CP is intrinsically unacceptable, as it violates the dignity of children; children are not property for parents to act upon them as they please (Shumba & Moorad, 2000). The distinction between CP and physical abuse is thin, thus the call for its total abolishment (Durrant, 2016; Gershoff, 2010; Lansford, 2010). However, Gudyanga et al. (2014), who approve of the use of CP under given circumstances, argued that “the absence of corporal punishment is not a guarantee to achieving zero physical abuse of children” (p. 495). Given the size and age of parents compared with children, and the power differential between them, the harmful effects of CP on a child’s sense of self (Bradshaw, 1996; 2005), and its potential for physical injuries, cannot be refuted (Gershoff, 2010). Parents might not intend to harm children, but the use of CP does cause emotional and physical harm (Gershoff, 2010; Lansford, 2010).

Abuse demeans and is likely to increase children's feelings of rejection and abandonment (Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009). Lansford et al., (2014) adds that frequent use of CP corporal combined with high maternal warmth increases anxiety and aggression over time, thus discrediting the use of physical discipline. The outcome of physical discipline at adolescent stage includes obstruction of identity development and autonomy, and at this critical stage teenagers often resist physical discipline because they perceive themselves as mature enough not to be treated like children (Straus & Donnelly, 1994).

8.2.3 Teaching children respect

The didactic and authoritarian parenting practices are enshrined in the principle of *Botho* which has a strong influence in the lives of the society as well as in parenting practices. *Botho* means respect, good manners, good character and playing expected roles. Due to the patriarchal nature of our society, *Botho* has been corrupted because it is used to silence women and children. It is in the family, through parenting practices such as modelling, family rules and corporal punishment that parents teach children and reinforce respect or *Botho*. The subordination of children renders them incapable. Culturally, children are generally encouraged to keep quiet and not query any point of view or opinion, especially if it comes from an authority figure such as the instructor, teacher, parents and persons older than them, especially adults. This consequently leads to a culture of silence, inactivity and lack of participation in social activities (Akindele & Trennepohl, 2008).

Teaching children respect seemed important for a majority (21) of women in the study. None of the women reported a specific parenting practice to teach respect. However, the majority (six) of the women from FWUPE preferred teaching and modelling appropriate behavior to children. Five women from FHF and eight from DCF, on the other hand, demonstrated respect by asking for an explanation before punishing a child as well as talking politely to them. The difference could be due to the ability of women in FWUPE to spend more time with children at home; hence, it gives them an added advantage to teach and model behaviors when compared with women from the other two family structures.

Regina, who was a stay at home mother and identified as a Christian but rarely attended church, emphasized that children should respect parents. She said:

“The teachers also teach them to respect people such as being taught that a parent should be greeted. They also teach them not be stubborn when parents talk to them. These are some of the things that I teach them at home.”

Teaching and modelling respect and responsibility are important aspects of child rearing. But the emphasis on children always being obedient to parents is a reflection of the nature of most African practices that values compliance with the demands of authority figures such as parents and community elders (Renzaho et al., 2011; Weis & Toolis, 2010). Respect for adults has also been established in Chinese traditional beliefs (Chen & Luster, 2002). This practice was similar to what has been established by Parenting in Africa Network (2014) among the Masai. In an African context, respect is often conflated with fear resulting in minimal parent-child interaction, and exclusion of children in decision making processes. Emphasis on total and unquestioning obedience to parental demands might be linked to parent’s fear of loss of control and authority over children, and it might render children more vulnerable to abuse (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming).

As highlighted earlier, CP is a mechanism to enforce respect and children are unlikely to protest when they are punished. Leina, a 34 year old married receptionist and firm Christian described why she beat her daughter and son:

“The last time I beat these last two children was last year because they liked to fight each other, they don’t respect each other. I was tired of talking to them so I took a whip and beat them. I locked them inside the room and whipped the two (son and daughter) of them, they cried but after that they laughed about it.”

Leina’s report infers a number of things. Firstly, that corporal punishment is used on children regardless of their gender. In contrast to Halpenny, et al. (2010)’s reports that female children were open to less physical punishment when compared to male children, the results of my study showed that women used corporal punishment on their children regardless of their gender or sex. In my study, the total number of children per family structure was as follows: there were 12 females and seven males in FHF, 11 males and 14 females in FWUPE, 12 males and seven females in DCF. Given that there were more females in the FHF and FWUPE groups where all the participants reported the use of corporal punishment compared

to five women from DCF which has a higher number of males than females, one could not draw conclusions that gender or family structure played a significant role in determining the use of corporal punishment. Secondly, that CP is approved by both parents and children. Thirdly, that the fact that children were being beaten for fighting is a sign that they have also learned that physical acting out is an acceptable way of resolving issues. And lastly that CP is part and parcel of childhood socialization process. Thus the results show that the children have become passive towards CP. Children who do not oppose corporal punishment are generally perceived as respectful and having *Botho*. Children grow up to become passive figures in society as corporal punishment and the demand to respect authority impedes their freedom of speech. Consequently, children's culture driven passivity increases their vulnerability to poor security and abuse, as they are unlikely to oppose other forms of abuse such as bullying and sexual abuse. CP reduces the humanity of children as it both threatens and violates their human rights as it counteract children's human protection rights to life, freedom, and security and zero exposure to pain, suffering, inhumane, demeaning conduct or punishment.

8.3 Summary

Based on the findings of my study and the literature review, I call for more egalitarian and reciprocal respectful relationships between parents and children, and for all forms of physical punishment to be banned in Botswana. Structural change in the form of law reform is critical to promote the best interests of children in Botswana. Tearing up the roots of such an authoritarian and degrading parenting practice as CP is challenging as it is normalized in law and in culture in Botswana. The results of this study show that CP is used by parents regardless of family structure and socio-economic background. The structural dimensions of law and culture intersect to play a critical role in maintaining and reproducing parenting practices that hinder children's rights, particularly their right to protection.

Harmful cultural practices endure, often from one generation into the next, as ideology constitutes false consciousness that one is generally not aware of (Althusser, 2006; Sewpaul, 2013). But this does not mean that ideology cannot be disrupted. Change is attainable because "if people are provided with alternative learning experiences whether

formal or informal they have the ability to disrupt dominant thinking” (Sewpaul, 2013, p. 119). The UNCRC (2006) advises:

“The first purpose of law reform to prohibit corporal punishment of children within the family is prevention: to prevent violence against children by changing attitudes and practice, underlining children’s right to equal protection and providing an unambiguous foundation for child protection and for the promotion of positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing [...] the aim should be to stop parents from using violent or other cruel or degrading punishments through supportive and educational, not punitive, interventions.”

Parenting is challenging and daunting, and parents need support with child-rearing and positive parenting, which include the following key components: long-term solutions directed at children’s self-regulation; clear communication of expectations, rules and limits; building mutually respectful relationships; teaching children skills for life; increasing children’s confidence and ability to deal with challenging life circumstances; and teaching courtesy, non-violence, empathy, human rights, self-respect and respect for others (Durrant, 2016; Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming).

As professionals in Botswana, including social workers, are part of their socio-cultural and legal contexts, they are subject to the same dominant discourses and practices, and might have themselves normalized the use of CP. Research into the views of social workers, as was done by Julius (2013) with school principals, guidance counselors and teachers in Kenya, will be useful. Social workers must engage in processes of on-going self-reflexivity to be aware of the values and assumptions that they bring into their relationships in working with people, and they must work towards social justice by challenging all forms of discriminations, oppressions and transgressions of human rights (Sewpaul, 2013; IASSW, 2018). Social work researchers, educators and practitioners, in collaboration with other stakeholders nationally and internationally, must advocate for laws and policies that prohibit CP in all settings.

Parents in this study had no awareness of the long term repercussions of CP on their children, and of their violation of children’s rights. Some of them were also concerned that the dominant discourse on children’s rights might hinder parental rights, and contribute to the abuse of parents. While there are huge power imbalances between children and parents, CP cannot be condoned. The concerns of parents must be addressed. Parental abuse by children

is equally unacceptable. There is a need for broad-based community education that deals with parents' and children's rights and responsibilities, combined, when necessary, with individual, family and small-group based interventions to deal with family conflicts and violence, and to enhance parent-child relationships.

SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER NINE

9. MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

The goal of the research study was to ascertain, interpret and describe factors that influence parenting practices of women with children in the following family structures: a) female headed families where the head of the family was employed (FHF), b) two parent families where both parents were employed (DCF), c) a two parent family where the woman was unemployed and her partner was employed (FWUPE). The following research study objectives were met:

- 1) To understand parenting practices that women preferred and used in raising children.
- 2) To understand factors that influenced parenting practices of women.
- 3) To identify and document the similarities in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.
- 4) To identify and document the differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.
- 5) To identify reasons that accounted for similarities and differences in parenting practices among the women across the different family structures.

The findings of the study indicated that, it is not family structure per se that defines parenting practices because all the women in the three family structures (FHF, DCF and FWUPE) applied similar types of parenting practices. Their choices of parenting practices were influenced by intersecting socio-structural factors such as educational status, income status, cultural norms and beliefs. The women's experiences and parenting practices in the study reverberated that gender acts collectively with diverse and incusted identities and systems of power and privilege to create inequalities that affect family functioning (Allen et al., 2009; Mahalingam et al., 2009) including parenting practices. The study shows that there is an interdependence of gender and socio-structural systems resulting in the types and nature of parenting practices preferred and used by the women in the study. The study also reflects that there are intervening factors that play a critical role in determining women's parenting practices. These factors are support networks, income and employment status, educational

background, religion, traditional and cultural practices. Interactive power in parents' relationships embedded in dominant structures has also been found to have a vital role in the parental practices. Findings of previous research also observe that such dominant structures have effects on family functioning (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002; Renzaho et al., 2011; Sewpaul, 2013). The influence of societal constructions on behavioral patterns such as effective and positive parenting practices is paramount to family functioning, including parenting practices (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Sewpaul, 2013, 2016; Smith, 2010; Weis & Toolis, 2010; Youn et al., 2012)

9.2 Major Conclusions

The following key conclusions drawn from the results of this study guided the recommendations that follow.

9.2.1 Types of Parenting Practices

The results of the study indicated that there were no major differences in the types of parenting practices that participants used to punish children because the use of physical punishment was reported in each family structure (FHF, DCF and FWUPE). The results reflect that the parenting practices of the women changed through the developmental stages of children. The study also revealed that the women in the study acted within a cultural and political context, which the socio-economic factors such as education and employment seemed to mediate. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of a study that revealed that prevailing social structures have an influence on parenting practices. The study was conducted on four teenage fathers and seven teenage mothers in Inanda, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa. This study concluded that social elements such as culture, economic and political status were grounds for both teenage pregnancy as well as teen parents' parenting practices (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017). The current study also shows that women's parenting practices across the three family structures were highly influenced by cultural practices that they have learned and internalized, rather than the family structures per se. The interaction of family factors and societal structures played a critical role in women's choices of parenting practices as suggested by Danford, Schultz and Marvicsin (2015) as well as Luster and

Okagaki (2006). The women's individual financial situations, family income, employment and educational status intersected to moderate their capacity to fulfill their preferred and used parenting practices.

As a result of parenting practices that changed from time to time due to the different dynamic socio-structural conditions and developmental needs of children it was difficult to categorize the women's parenting practices into the usual parenting typologies of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive styles (Mpulubusi, 2016; Smith, 2010) throughout the developmental stages of a child. Authoritative parenting practices are characterized by warmth and sufficient control towards the child; authoritarian practices are controlling and restrictive; whereas those that exhibit inadequate supervision and control are permissive (Smith, 2010). In the context of the study, it was relevant to conclude that the women's parenting practices in all the three family structures were primarily authoritarian in nature for the most part of their parenting, especially disciplinary practices. Parenting practices across the three family structures were mainly controlling and definitive in nature, conceding Morrell (2001) observation that African parenting practices, especially disciplinary ones are authoritarian in nature. The engagement of children's participation in most areas of the family by the women in all the three family structures was insignificant. The study reflects that children are denied participation in issues that affect their wellbeing, and this consequently leads to the abuse of parental powers and disregard of children's rights to participation and freedom of speech.

The women's parenting practices were authority centered as the majority preferred firm control of children and physical punishment over other methods. For example, the majority of the women in all the family structures preferred corporal punishment and the children were expected to be obedient to parents' expectations without contest. Similar research findings were established by Weis and Toolis (2010) and Renzaho et al. (2011) that parents of African background expected children to be obedient to adults. That was similar to what has been established by Parenting in Africa Network (2014) among the Masai as well as in Chinese traditional beliefs (Chen & Luster, 2002). With regard to setting of rules and discipline, none of the social criteria such as income, education or family structure played any decisive role. The dominant cultural context reinforced by religious injunctions and how children are constructed within African paradigms overrode these. The women's preference for corporal punishment could be related to the fact that at the time of the study, corporal punishment was embedded in various structural levels in Botswana including the constitution of the country. The Children's Act, Penal Code (Government of Botswana, 1964), Education

Act (Government of Botswana, 1967) and religious beliefs that condone physical punishment. Corporal punishment (CP) and its effects on children's behavior are discussed later in the chapter. Although the effects of parenting practices were not established in the study, they have an impact in children's behavioral outcomes as well as in their adulthood, as discussed in the thesis.

This study also revealed that women's support practices were inconsistent. This inconsistency is attributed to the internalized negative parenting practices as well as socio-economic challenges. Support parenting practices intended to address children's emotional, academic and personal needs. The family structure did not play a significant role in the women's ability to provide support to their children but rather dependent on women's educational status and family income. For example, women with poor educational status emphasized their inability to help children with school work, but they emphasized their interest in their children's academic success regardless of the children's gender. Some women reported that emotionally relating and tapping into the boy child's emotional needs was difficult when compared to relating to the girl child. While the different biological and developmental needs of boys and girls cannot be overlooked, it is important to note that to a large extent our society is structurally designed in a dichotomous manner that socialize women and men to behave differently. Such culturally engraved teachings become *inscribed in our blood* such that we act them unconsciously even in situations where there is a possibility to instill change (Sewpaul, 2013). As a result such dichotomous treatment of children translate into the differential treatment of the girl and boy child, consequently leading to intergenerational gendered practices at different societal levels such as expecting boys to be brave and to do more physical work. It is difficult to expect parents to use positive parenting practices, when dominant societal discourses and practices go unchallenged, and to play a role in child protection while the legal system of the country legitimizes abusive and outdated authoritative practices.

9.2.2 Gendered nature of parenting practices

The results of the study also underscore some of the mute but dominant and gendered parenting practices embedded at family level that are often overlooked when we use conventional theoretical frameworks. The use of critical social work theory helped to expose such salient discriminatory practices. Dominant ideologies sanctions specific patterns of

thinking and behavior to the extent that these are perceived as desirable, making it difficult to identify their discriminatory characteristics (Gilbert & Sewpaul, 2015; Kidd, 1997; Sewpaul, 2013, 2014). The women's parenting practices affirmed that socio-political and economic factors such as culture, religion and unjust legal systems produce parents' world views, experiences and reproduction of behaviors that facilitate gendered and oppressive practices (Cole, 2009; Mama, 2011). Such practices were reflected by women's emphasis on confinement practices, differential treatment of boys and girls as well as the dominant constructions of motherhood and fatherhood.

Both confinement and maternity leave constituted double-edged swords for women. While they gave women an advantage of spending time with children and taking care of them, they also overburdened women with the care of children without support from fathers. How power and privilege affect women has been discussed by Allen et al. (2009) and Sewpaul (2013) who highlighted their oppressive nature. The women in the study had never really questioned confinement practices, especially the prohibition of father's participation in the care of the confined child; they accepted the practices as given, and as requisites of cultural expectations. This validates Lesetedi's (2018) argument that patriarchy is not sustained by men alone, but also by women who unconsciously identify with and defend it to such an extent that they do not even see the need to challenge and oppose it. The results show that as women we have a tendency to normalize and reinforce gender stratification embedded in cultural practices as well as maintenance of the subordination of women in society.

As Sewpaul (2013) discussed in her article titled "inscribed in our blood", I am equally accountable for the normalization of this gendered practice. Similar to the women in the study I have been intuitively condoning confinement practices without scrutiny as it was part of my tradition. But it is through the research study that I had been emancipated to examine its preservation of gender inequalities as I engaged with the women during the interviews, analyzed the data, immersed myself in the review of the literature, and engaged in reflexive dialogue, particularly with my supervisor. The exclusion of fathers from confinement when the baby is at an infancy stage entrenches gendered parenting practices, and reinforces the idea that the responsibility of parenting children lies with the mother. Legal and cultural frameworks intersect to construct the roles of fathers as peripheral to the lives of children, which are factors that contribute to the high rates of father's non-involvement and absence, as discussed in this thesis.

In the paper titled "Challenging dominant discourses on abortion from a radical feminist standpoint" Gilbert and Sewpaul (2015) observed that the dominant constructions of

motherhood relegate the household chores and child care to women. It also escalates gendered burden of care and increases women's vulnerability to social injustices in the form of unemployment and poverty. Renzetti, Curran, and Maier (1992) noted that the prescription of gender roles divert attention from understanding people's experiences from a socio-structural point of view as emphasis is put on the individual, rather than on how society influences accomplishment of such roles.

9.2.3 Dominant constructions of fatherhood and motherhood

With reference to father absence and/or lack of involvement in the raising and care of children, culture and law come together to minimize the roles of fathers and allow men to renege on their responsibilities. As a result, dominant ideas about fatherhood assign men the provider role and consequently places disproportionate burden of care on women (Gilbert & Sewpaul, 2015; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming). Dominant constructions of motherhood ascribe behaviors and activities to mothers that are bound to nurturing and caregiving roles. Both motherhood and fatherhood are conceptualized differently at individual, family and societal levels. The women in the three family structures complained about fathers and men's limited participation in the daily nurturing and care of children. A survey research study to investigate the level of father involvement among adolescent school children aged 14-16 years old was conducted in Botswana. The results indicated that children perceived present and supportive fathers as having high levels of involvement (Dyer, Roby, Mupedziswa, & Day, 2011). The presence of fathers in the home does not automatically suggest that they are involved with the children.

The various reasons for absent fathers include political, socio-cultural, economic status, policy and laws that reinforce men's limited participation in child care (Eddy, Thomson-de Boor, & Mphaka, 2013; Engle & Breaux, 1998; Hunter, 2006; Kimani & Kombo, 2010; Mabusela, 2014; Makofane, 2015; McDaniel & Zulu, 1996; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Thupayagale-Tshweneagae, Mgutshini, & Nkosi, 2012). It is important to note that the women who complained that fathers were physically absent, but only financially supporting their children were women who had a higher educational status (college diploma). These women were in contact with the fathers of their children since they were young, and the fathers were employed. Women whose accounts described men as physically absent and not providing any form of support to the children were fathers who had abandoned their children

and women had no contact with them. The third category of fathers were described as being present at home most of the time, but showed more interest in providing for material needs, such as food and clothing. The women reported that fathers showed little interest in disciplining children, and meeting the emotional and academic needs of children. As the descriptions above show, father absence is not only synonymous with physical absence (Kimani & Kombo, 2010; Swartz & Bhana, 2009). There are many ways to define father absence and reasons that account for that. Fathers may fail to actively take care of their children due to unemployment or failure to fulfill cultural practices such as *ilobola* (bride price) (Swartz & Bhana, 2009), whereas in some instances, mothers may decide not to disclose the identity of biological fathers to children and children may also not want to question their mothers about their whereabouts (Nduna & Sikweyiya, 2015). While most of the time emphasis is on the importance of biological fathers in raising male children, non-biological fathers and other male figures in the family are significant (Ratele, Shefer, & Clowes, 2012). In the study women were often assisted by male relatives such as uncles to play father roles by supporting and nurturing the children, referred to as social fathers. Social fathers may or may not be biologically related to children but support and nurture children as if they were their own (Ratele et al., 2012; Richter & Smith, 2006).

The limited participation of fathers in parenting children in the study could also be an indication that men lack support networks to help them perform and sustain fatherhood roles. Although the women complained about men being reluctant to actively take part in parenting practices, they accepted that nurturing and caring for children were the primary responsibility of women. This often perpetuates men's lack of support in child care and women end up being overburdened with care. The role of fathers is culturally undermined. Fathers need to be involved in their children's lives because they perform other roles such as emotional support other than being providers. The findings exhibit the internalized dominant constructions of fatherhood and motherhood that emphasize men's roles as of material and financial providers, and that of women as caring and nurturing. Despite the construction of men as providers, the women in the study did not pursue legal father maintenance claims from unsupportive biological fathers, perhaps a reflection that in some contexts the roles of women as both provider and nurturer have become normalized (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017). In Botswana there has been a general acceptance of an evolving culture of single parenting. This can be observed where mothers are perceived as being able to raise children single handedly, without biological fathers' support. The evidence from the study shows that women struggled to adequately care for and support their children without father support. Father absence can

have negative socio-economic and psychosocial impacts at individual and family level. That was corroborated by Kimani and Kombo's (2010) in the Kenyan context, where the majority (81%) of female participants expressed that father absence lead to children's indiscipline, school drop outs, poor school performance, and the family's vulnerability to poverty. Children may also experience the physical and emotional absence of biological fathers as a loss (Ratele et al., 2012) and as a result develop feelings of anger and hate towards their mothers, blaming her for failure to connect them with their fathers (Thupayagale-Tshweneagae et al., 2012).

When men accept the fatherhood role they also contribute to the broader goals of gender equity. Change in gendered social norms through policy reforms infused into public institutions would go a long way in enhancing father participation in parenting. Fatherhood can make a contribution to the lives of men as it can give meaning to their lives and open up unexplored channels of emotional engagement. It is not just the physical presence of fathers, but their financial provision and emotional availability to their spouses and children that count. Father involvement must be encouraged as it can benefit both children and parents. Present and economically active fathers enhance the income status of the family and provides a buffer for poverty (Engle & Breaux, 1998). The results of this study, and the literature suggest the need for research on the motivating factors for father involvement and parenting practices in the context of Botswana.

9.2.4 Socio-cultural and legal constructions of gendered parenting roles

Some policies and laws are responsible for discriminatory behaviors in our society. Inequitable gendered parenting practices are perpetuated by neoliberalism in the form of laws and policies that are ignorant of the challenges faced by many of the disadvantaged populations (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017). The absence of gender-neutral policies undermines the role of men in childcare and is likely to contribute to some fathers' negligence of parenting responsibilities. Such limitations consequently reinforce patriarchal power and put the onus of care of children on women (Richter & Smith, 2006). The absence of gender-neutral policies undermines the role of men in childcare and is likely to contribute to some fathers' negligence of parenting responsibilities. Gendered policies overlook the importance of co-parenting by implicitly or explicitly perpetuating the gender biases that prevail in cultural stereotypes and mainstream parenting practices. There is no doubt that the findings of the

study affirm the aforementioned author's line of argument. The government of Botswana plays a part in the formulation and reinforcement of gender stereotypes and discriminatory parenting practices that put greater parenting responsibility on women by enforcing laws that are patriarchal in nature.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) considers maternity leave a human right, but SADC member states, such as Botswana, consider it a social right that could be associated with failure to comply with the minimum 14 weeks expected by the ILO standards (ILO, 2014). ILO has recommended that countries must increase the maternity leave days to 18 weeks but many of them fall short of the recommended time. For example, Tunisia provides the shortest maternity leave of 30 days (ILO, 2014). Zimbabwe provides 98 days and Libya 14 weeks with countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia as well as Scandinavian countries such as Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland offering the longest maternity leave of at least 21 weeks. Algeria, Malawi and Zambia are a few of African countries that do not offer compulsory maternity leave (ILO, 2014).

According to ILO (2014) paternity leave is provided only to fathers immediately after the birth of a child ranging from one day to 90 days. Similar to other Sub-Saharan African countries like South Africa, Botswana does not have provisions for paternity leave in the Employment Act. Lack of paternity leave in Botswana approves the traditional beliefs and assumptions that women are the ones who can effectively take care of children. Lack of paternity leave acknowledges and reinforces the existing gender roles and assumptions that perceive women as primary parents, and it represents a stereotypical definition of family structure that overlooks same sex families (Sallee, 2008). Social norms learned through socialization communicate that men are not adequate caregivers and parents (Sallee, 2008). Such cultural stereotypes assign the bulk of domestic chores as well as parenting responsibilities to women (Muasya, 2014). In a study on accidental burn injuries in children under five years of age in Durban, South Africa, Maharaj and Sewpaul (2016), highlighted that the gendered burden of care and the effects of socio-economic deprivation enhance lack of parental supervision, and exposure of children to hazardous environmental conditions.

State legislation and social policies that communicate gendered and discriminatory practices reinforce negative parenting practices. It can be noted that the gendered nature of parenting practices that is rooted in the dominant socio-cultural constructions of fatherhood and motherhood contribute to absent fathers and the gendered burdened of care on women in families. The dominant sexual division of labor within the family has implications outside the family as it often translates into women working part time or in underpaid employment that

does not embrace their multiple roles (Coltrane & Adams, 2008). For example, employed women in the study were forced to introduce mixed feeding because they had to return to work, and the Employment Act did not offer favorable feeding hours. The study results corroborate Mirkovic, Perrine, Scanlon, and Grummer-Strawn's (2014) finding that failure to maintain breast feeding beyond three months was higher among mothers who made the decision to return to work. The results call for reform in the current labor laws in Botswana to ensure that they meet the needs of working parents and families with children. Currently, policy makers in other countries want to create work-life balance policies. This is mainly meant to ensure that employees have flexible working hours. It is also an attempt to create gender neutral domestic and childcare responsibilities in homes, with the ultimate goal being to reduce the amount of work that employed mothers do at home (Burnett et al., 2010).

9.2.5 Socio economic status (SES) as a factor in determining the nature of parenting practices

Education and income over-rode family structure with regard to the material provisions of children's needs. The women from a DCF, who were more able to meet basic needs and to hire tutors for children, succeeded by virtue of them having combined income that allowed for greater material provision and other services such as domestic workers. Two parent families such as DCF are more likely to have adequate socio-economic status when compared to single parent families (Allan & Crow, 2001). In the study women from FHF who were educated and earned a higher income were equally able to provide for their children. The literature supports that children from families with stable incomes are adequately cared for and supported (Day & Pailla-Walker, 2009). Adequate income expands opportunities for mothers and fathers to be actively engaged.

Higher education allowed for more direct involvement e.g. help with children's home work. One would have expected unemployed women to be more engaged with their children, but their generally lower educational attainment seemed to hinder this. Also, perhaps more importantly they had constructed themselves as dependent and useless. This sense of devaluation comes from dominant views where women are undermined by being restricted to low paying jobs and unpaid work. For example, women are highly concentrated in caregiving and underpaid jobs such as foster care mothering, and day care centers (Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming). In the study women, especially stay at home mothers,

provided child care and other domestic work services at no cost. Similar to other countries in developed and developing nations, a capitalist nation such as Botswana prioritize profit by commodifying everything and that often comes at the expense of devaluing women's labor and rendering it unpaid work. As a result, women take on this dominant societal view and devalue themselves. Additionally, Botswana has poor economic diversification that makes it difficult to harness resources to support families (Tri-African Advisory Services, 2011) and that further enhances women's vulnerability to labor exploitation. In contrast to the above arguments, Cudd (2015) argues that capitalism empowers women through technological developments that give them material gain and the use of machines in the home that decreases domestic labor. Cudd (2015) insists that gendered roles and exploitation of women's labor is exacerbated by traditional patriarchal cultures, and religious constructs because they determine the allocation of goods and labor among the sexes and consequently put women in subordinate positions. The choice does not have to be made between capitalism and traditionalism; there is extensive literature and empirical data that detail the negative consequences of both neoliberal capitalism and traditionalism on the lives of women, children and men (see for example, Sewpaul's (2016) arguments about the pernicious consequences of both neoliberalism and traditionalism, as well as Kamali's & Jonsson's (2018) edited text on the negative consequences of neoliberalism). The Nordic welfare states which have been the bastions of egalitarian, socialist-democratic redistributive ideals (Kamali & Jonsson, 2018) are an example of a possible alternative to the choice between capitalism and traditionalism.

Socio-economic status is also boosted by availability of social support networks for families. Social support networks provide financial support and hence enhance the socio-economic status of families. Although Botswana has made major strides in economic development at macro level and put in place several economic strategies such as the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) the results of my study indicate that at micro levels such as the family, limited income makes it difficult for women to fulfill preferred parenting practices. Factors such as educational status constrain women's access to formal employment and other economic resources that could enhance family income, and consequently enhance parenting practices. If parents find it difficult to meet their children's basic needs, it also creates problems in parenting practices, especially for those from poor families (Dunn & Keet, 2012).

According to Lesetedi (2018) gender and low educational level increase vulnerability to poverty and consequently contribute to negative parenting practices. The women in the

study, especially those from FWUPE emphasized the importance of education as a personal investment that contributes towards human development as it broadens one's choices. As a result of limited education, some of the women felt devalued as they could not assist their children academically and that lead to parenting dissatisfaction. The result coheres with previous research findings by Heinrich (2014) that parents who were socially and economically advantaged had more options when compared to their counterparts. The literature (Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Gibson-Davis, 2008; Thompson et al., 1994) on parenting practices has demonstrated that women from two parent families had more resources than those from single parent families, and hence were able to adopt positive parenting practices. The results of the current study showed that the structure of the family per se does not automatically denote that women will readily have access to those resources to fulfill their parenting roles. Previous research has also demonstrated that there was discrepancy in resource availability to children in single and two parenting practices. That also echoes evidence from the study that other factors such as women's power and accessibility to financial and non-financial resources linked with family structure to influence women's parenting practices (Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Gibson-Davis, 2008; Thompson et al., 1994). It could be argued that women in a DCF and a FWUPE could have been advantaged to adopt positive parenting practices, if there was more equal sharing of power, resources and parenting roles, as Day & Padilla-Walker (2009) claimed that these can positively benefit children as most of their needs are likely to be met.

Financial stability emerged as one of the factors that had a bearing in the parental practices of women who took part in the study. The findings indicated that without financial resources, women's parenting practices were likely to be misrepresented as they struggled to exercise their preferred parenting practices and to meet the needs of their children. Some of the women with lower educational status and low paying jobs in both dual career and female headed family structures faced financial struggles. They indicated that their low academic qualifications and low paying jobs resulted in failure to fulfill preferred parenting practices, especially mandatory and support practices. Similar complications that reflected the intersection of gender with structural factors were also found among women from FWUPE. These women expressed difficulties in the adoption of positive parenting practices as a result of unemployment. This was mainly attributed to inadequate qualifications, lack of skills, having no other means of income generation, and being dependent on their spouses or partners for their personal and children's needs. The results from this study confirmed the importance of socio-economic background on families and parenting practices (Kotchick &

Forehand, 2002; Youn et al., 2012). Afolabi (2013) reviewed 2500 articles to examine the effects of family socio-economic status on children's behavior and concluded that poor socio-economic status contributes to children's physical and psychological disorders. In extreme cases, women might be compelled to abort pregnancies as a result of poverty and abandonment by fathers of expected children (Gilbert & Sewpaul, 2015).

The outcomes of the study attests to the imbalanced distribution of power and resources between men and women (Dintwa, 2010; McDaniel & Zulu, 1996; Ruiz-Casares & Heymann, 2009; United Nations, 2015), which contribute to the subservience of women at family, community and societal levels that subsequently influences parenting practices. The power and resource imbalances were mostly experienced by women from FWUPE than the women in the DCF & FHF families. As discussed above the dominant constructions of fatherhood and motherhood that render men providers, degrade women to positions of care givers and dependents. The tendency of society to place men's value at a public level and detach them from the household domain, augments patriarchal power relations that apportion primary responsibility of children to women (Mirkovic et al., 2014; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Swartz & Bhana, 2009). Such practices have often worsened inequalities rooted in patriarchal systems, such as inappropriate display of masculinity that hinders and negatively impacts women's parenting practices. Masculinity perpetuates women's economic dependency on men that sustains gender violence in families (United Nations, 2015). The women's experiences of emotional, verbal, financial and physical abuse were also rooted in male expressions of masculinity. This coincides with their economic status resulting in further subordination and diminished power in their ability to engage in preferred parenting practices. That often left women feeling frustrated, hopeless, and powerless. A feeling of powerlessness as a result of environmental factors is often internalized by allowing one's emotional, intellectual and spiritual mentality to overlook available opportunities and resources (Parsons, 1991). Negative parenting practices damage children's self-concept and self-esteem, antagonistic behaviors such as anger, uncooperativeness with parents, impulsiveness, and difficulties in dealing with stress (Heath, 1995 & Smith, 2010). There is a need to boost women's economic status at family level in order to diminish the impact of poverty on parenting practices.

While some women's economic status was boosted by adequate family income as a result of better jobs, other women's poverty status was hidden by informal and formal social support networks. Formal support networks such as social workers and health workers assisted families with children to meet basic needs such as food and clothing. Social support

networks were important in enhancing women's freedom to exercise their preferred parenting practices. Support networks such as relatives are decisive in supporting positive parenting practices as they can be buffers in situations where parents need assistance with child care and material help (Crnic & Low, 2002).

Formal services such as teachers, social workers and health professionals play critical roles in cultivating positive parenting practices. The findings indicated that a few women, especially from female headed families accessed the help of social workers when they struggled with disciplining and monitoring children. Social networks can also contribute to negative parenting practices such as corporal punishment (CP) and gendered confinement practices in situations where there are shared cultural norms and practices regarding parenting. Parents without social support are vulnerable to stress as they often do not have resources to buffer their stress and that might translate to child abuse (Thompson, 2015). As it was established in this study, informal and formal support networks provided various emotional and material services to parents. Thompson (2015) cautions that while informal support systems can help in monitoring, identifying family stress, and possible child abuse, they can hold potential to exacerbate child abuse. Neighbors, friends, and relatives often share common cultural beliefs, values and norms that support particular child rearing practices, which although harmful, might be normalized and reproduced. It must be noted that professionals are not immune to transferring and supporting abusive practices because they are learned through cultural practices and laws of the country (Thompson, 2015). That line of argument corroborates Sewpaul (2013) notion that if negative beliefs and practices are internalized they are likely to be used and passed on to others unconsciously. Child protection structures can only become significant and purposeful when the laws and policies of the country place value on the safety and welfare of children (Wamimbi, 2018).

The majority of women in this study assigned household chores to children, the rationale being to teach children responsibility and life skills (McNeely & Barber, 2010), which in moderation are laudable and necessary. However, excessive and long term children's work is child labor. Child labor is a form of child abuse that is often taken for granted, as a way of life and integral to the social functioning of communities (Maundeni & Jacques, 2012). As discussed earlier, women continue to do a larger amount of household chores, and they bear greater child care responsibilities compared to their male counterparts so women might use child labor to cope with the burden of care (Burnett et al., 2010).

If children are not assigned household tasks cautiously, safely and in moderation their rights are more likely to be violated (Prosek, 2006). When factors such as the age of the child,

hours of work, type of work and supervision are not taken into consideration, children end up being overly worked. Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Children allows parents to assign children harmless, non-exploitative tasks that are suitable to their development and they do not in any way violate any of the children's rights (UNICEF, 1989). In my study some children were left to perform household chores such as cooking and looking after their siblings without supervision of an adult. Such negative practices escalate children's vulnerability to injuries and child labor.

Parental disengagement and the overburden of children with household chores could be associated with lack of a public policy that offers working parents' flexible times of work to adequately balance job and family responsibilities. As a result, parents are likely to assign children some of their household responsibilities to keep up with their busy schedules. A public policy that supports parents is vital as it fosters positive outcomes of parents' work on children's wellbeing by buffering the effects of stressful work conditions on children (Heinrich, 2014).

9.2.6 Culture, law and parenting practices

Despite the Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment of Children (2016) and the United Nations (2016) appeal to end violence against children, physical discipline is promoted through various structures in Botswana and that needs to be challenged. The results of the study show that family structure and gender do not act alone to impact parent practices but rather intersect with other dominant systems. These are cultural beliefs, legislation and religion to reproduce and maintain parenting practices that violates children's human rights (Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017; Sewpaul, 2013). The findings of the study as discussed in chapter eight and nine show that certain factors regulate family life, set parameters for parental responsibility, and prioritize the rights and needs of family members, which might contribute to the violation of children's rights. These factors include religious beliefs, cultural practices as well as public policy and legislation (Garbarino, Vorrasi & Kostelny, 2002). Given the extent to which the use of corporal punishment has been entrenched at various levels of society, the opportunity of the majority of children in the country to enjoy their right to protection remains elusive. Corporal punishment increases children's vulnerability to abuse and violates their rights (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming). CP is considered an Adverse

Childhood Experience (ACE) because its mental health effects on children are similar to those exerted by physical and emotional abuse (Afifi & Romano, 2017).

Childhood physical abuse contributes to intergenerational violence as children who have experienced corporal punishment when they were young are more likely to be abusive during adulthood (Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015). The findings of my study have shown that normalized negative parenting practices such as CP are not influenced by the socio-economic status of the parents, thus reflecting the power of dominant cultural norms. The results of this study indicate that parents were unaware of the psychological and emotional effects of CP. Parents in this study had no awareness of the long term repercussions of CP on their children and of their violation of children's rights. The findings of the study support Donnelly (1984) assertion that, in a cultural context where CP is deep-rooted into parenting its potential to harm children is often overlooked. The practice of CP at family level and at a legal system in Botswana supports Sewpaul's (2013) contention that "ideology is socially, culturally and politically constructed" (p.119). That is the beliefs and parenting practices that women adopt such as corporal punishment are engraved in the prevailing social institutions. The law of Botswana conflicts with CRC Article 19 that calls for the protection of children against all forms of violence. What is striking is while Botswana has ratified the CRC, which encourages states to take measures to safeguard children's rights, the revised Botswana Children's Act 2009 condones children's physical discipline. One could argue that since the government of Botswana has legislations and policies that approve CP, it might not be viewed as inhumane at family level. High or frequent exposure to CP increases the risks of physical abuse. Victims of childhood trauma often carry their experiences into adulthood that may manifest in mental health problems (Bradshaw, 1996; Menger Leeman, 2018; Mweru, 2010; Van der Kolk, 2017).

Some of the women in the study were concerned that the dominant discourse on children's rights might hinder parental rights, and contribute to the abuse of parents. There are huge power imbalances between children and parents, and CP cannot be condoned, the concerns of parents must be addressed. Parental abuse by children is equally unacceptable. Given that physical discipline has debilitating mental health effects and violate human rights it should be rendered a public health matter (Afifi, Mota, Dasiewicz, MacMillan, & Sareen, 2012). There is a need for broad-based community education that deals with parents' and children's rights and responsibilities, combined, when necessary, with individual, family and small-group based interventions to deal with family conflicts and violence, and to enhance parent-child relationships (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming).

The findings of the study indicated that the participants were not aware of the existing laws and policies that support children's rights, child protection and positive parenting practices. Additionally, a few who were aware of the instruments hardly considered them in parenting. Such knowledge gap could be related to participants' poor educational status that made it difficult for them to access information. The lack of family policy and parenting education programs for parents in Botswana also makes a contribution to this. The results of my study exposed the general lack of knowledge about relevant laws that support child protection, children's rights and positive parenting practices, and the need to establish education programs for parents on positive parenting practices and the impacts of negative parenting practices. The study also argues that knowledge of the child protection instruments alone is not adequate to stimulate positive parenting practices. As it has been discussed earlier, as long as existing legal instruments support abusive practices, parents' perceptions and beliefs about negative parenting practices such as corporal punishment would be sustained. Botswana Children's Act 2009 that is supposed to take precedence in protection of children to some extent has conflicting messages. Section 61: 1-3 states:

“(1) No person shall subject a child to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. (2) No person shall subject a child to correction which is unreasonable in kind or in degree relative to the age, physical and mental condition of the child and which, if the child by reason of tender age or otherwise is incapable of understanding the purpose and fairness thereof. (3) The provisions of this section shall not be construed as prohibiting the corporal punishment of children in such circumstances or manner as may be set out in this Act or any other law.”

Section 85 of the same Act states:

“Where a child charged with an offence is tried by a children's court and the court is satisfied of his or her guilt, the court shall, after taking into consideration the general conduct, home environment, school records and medical history (if any) of such child dispose of the case by (d) Sentencing the child to corporal punishment.”

The above quotes indicate that parents could use the very same instruments that are supposed to protect children to support the use of CP. That is a cause for concern because it shows the state's failure to protect children from abuse at various societal levels, including the family. There are possibilities to teach parents positive disciplinary practices. Some studies done elsewhere such as by Kyegombe et al. (2017) have proven that corporal punishment can be unlearned. Negative or discriminatory behaviors, including parenting practices are learned and internalized, signifying that there is a possibility to unlearn them given the right circumstances and opportunities (Sewpaul, 2013).

Women's parenting practices are influenced by the interrelationship of several factors such as cultural practices, gender, educational qualification, income status, employment status, and the law, highlighting the importance of critical theory, with its emphasis on intersectionality. The recommendations recognize the intersection of dominant discourses and practices. Socio-cultural norms, taboos, beliefs and legislation that support abuse in subtle ways such as corporal punishment, confinement, make it hard to detect or diagnose child abuse as well as discriminatory practices that create and uphold cycles of violence and social injustice (Van der Kolk, 2017). Changes at structural levels would enhance family functioning and positive parenting practices.

9.3 Recommendations

The results of this study corroborated observations in the literature (Allen et al., 2009; Carniol, 1992; Sewpaul, 2013) that systems of oppression, discrimination and exploitation are interconnected. Factors that influence women's parenting practices cannot be discussed in isolation from one another. The findings of the study provide evidence that gendered child care and parenting among families reflect broader, persistent structural discourses, as was concluded in previous research (Maharaj & Sewpaul, 2016; Ntini & Sewpaul, 2017). The results support Ntini and Sewpaul's (2017) argument that it is important to contest dominant constructions that reproduce gendered parenting practices.

The recommendations have implications for social work training, practice, research and policy in the country. In recognition of social justice as one of the core values of social work that promotes the dignity and worth of persons and the liberation of people, Sewpaul (2005) and Mullaly and Mullaly (2014) appeal for states to consider the debilitating effects of socio-economic, political and cultural factors on families, often consequent upon

neoliberal policies. First, I discuss the necessary reforms that have to take place at training and practice level, second I briefly reflect on policy issues and what measures need to be taken at various levels of society to enhance the functioning of families as well as positive parenting practices. Third, I chart the way forward on the key research areas for the immediate and distant future.

9.3.1 Strengthen social work training to promote social justice and human rights informed practice

Lucas (2017) indicated that social protection measures in Botswana are ineffective as they are not modelled on social justice. The author called for the need of social workers in Botswana to be radical through advocacy and social action. This will enable them to overcome some of the challenges they face in performing their practice mandates. As a way of stimulating positive parenting practices we need well-functioning families that have the support of competent social work practitioners. The results show that most intergenerational negative parenting practices are culturally normalized and internalized. In its recent Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles, the IASSW (2018) observes that social workers, as products of their socio-political and cultural worlds, are not immune to bringing to their practice contexts culturally infused values. It is vital for employers to provide social workers with opportunities to engage in on-going critical reflexivity, with developmentally-oriented supervision, job retreats, workshops and conferences so that social workers begin to acknowledge and undo their complicity in perpetuating injustices, and aspire towards the highest possible standards of ethical practices.

9.3.2 Maximize the use of critical theories at training and practice levels

I propose the maximum use of critical theories at training and practice levels to empower social workers so that they competently analyse issues beyond personal levels. This is important because normative beliefs of professionals such as social workers and teachers can either decrease or escalate parents' use of corporal punishment (Lee & Bowen, 2006). I do not undermine the current training program offered by social work training institutions in Botswana, but there is a need to strengthen students' exposure to critical theories. Given that

parenting in most African contexts is predominantly gendered, the analysis of family issues at training and practice levels must be informed by critical social work theory, with a focus on intersectionality. This will empower learners and practitioners with a worldview and practice skills to challenge gender stratification and power imbalances, and to infuse social justice models in service provision (Allen et al., 2009; Sewpaul, 2013). The curriculum needs to promote a course content that consistently links with socio structural issues embedded in the dominant discourses. Sometimes as social work educators and practitioners we become accustomed to adopting traditional and non-critical and individualized analytical approaches that promote victimization of the people we work with as opposed to empowering them. One of the prerequisite for the successful completion of social work field work internships in Botswana must be that students demonstrate competence in understanding how various structural factors interconnect to influence their lives, and the lives of people who they work with, which is seen as an ethical requisite (IASSW, 2018). This is more of an imperative considering the ethical dilemmas that social workers experience in fulfilling their mandates in contexts that are regulated by political agendas and hegemonic oppressive societal discourses and practices (Lucas, 2017; Mwansa, Malinga, Ntshwarang & Maripe, 2011; Dlamini and Sewpaul, 2015). Dlamini and Sewpaul (2015) discussed political interference on the roles and responsibilities of social workers, and how, informed by critical theory, social workers engaged in a politics of resistance to get management to support working conditions and interventions in the interests of social justice.

Sewpaul, et al (2015) highlighted that interventions must focus on liberating people from the constraints of their own thinking and from structural impediments. If social workers' consciousness is raised, they can engage in public awareness on how socio-structural and cultural systems facilitate negative and positive parenting practices. Given my prior normalization of certain parenting practices, such as gendered confinement practices and CP, my capacity to influence public thinking and policy in a positive direction was non-existent. The heightened awareness gained through reflexive exercises, as discussed in this thesis, made me aware of the power of critical theory.

9.3.3 Introduce School Social Workers

The constant interaction of parents with the school and teachers calls for the government to consider school social work. The government has absorbed social workers in

other departments such as health. Teachers alone cannot handle non-academic issues that children and families grapple with. The school provides an ideal space within which socio-educational groups and psychosocial interventions, which social workers have expertise in, can occur (Sewpaul et al, 2015). Social workers, who have had the benefit of critical education, can play a vital role in working with teachers and guidance counsellors in challenging and changing blind spots (Maundeni & Ntseane, 2004), as this study and research reveals popular support for the use of CP in schools. Social workers in schools can also engage in experiential and didactic teaching on positive parenting practices, and use the schools as a base from which outreach programs on the same are conducted, as Sewpaul et al (2015) did in the instance of dealing with teen suicides.

Social workers can work with Parent Teacher Associations in schools and have opportunities to impart knowledge and information on non-gendered positive parenting practices and engage in various discourses regarding families and parenting practices. Educational strategies must be directed at engaging parents in dialogue about positive parenting skills, and the promotion of resiliency in children (Griffin et al., 2000). Social workers in schools are in strategic positions to identify some of the challenges experienced by children and parents and to provide timely services to advance positive parenting practices and desired outcomes.

9.3.4 Family and parenting educational programs

Educational programs are necessary to enhance dialogue and critical consciousness (Parsons, 1991) on parenting practices in the context of Botswana. Research finding by Lansford et al. (2017) revealed that legal bans of CP should be accompanied with rigorous public awareness on the bans and educational mechanisms on alternative disciplinary methods. “The more knowledge people have the more they understand about family development, tasks, crises and expectations and the more awareness they develop about the family in context, the more in control would they be over their lives.”(Sewpaul, 1993, p. 198). The deconstruction of negative cultural parenting practices such as confinement and corporal punishment can be attained through public education. For instance, educating parents and the society at large about the consequences of negative parenting practices, particularly corporal punishment and providing alternative disciplinary practices is important. Sewpaul (2013: 119) writes that “if people are provided with alternative learning experiences

whether formal or informal they have the ability to disrupt dominant thinking”. Learned negative parenting practices such as corporal punishment can be unlearned. This has been proven in other African countries that culturally condone CP. A research study in a Ugandan school by Kyegombe et al. (2017) proved that the culture of using CP can be changed if relevant interventions are implemented. The researchers examined the impact of the Good School Toolkit (GST) in the reduction of the use of CP by teachers. The Good School Toolkit is “an intervention that aims at changing the operational cultures of schools by positively enhancing teacher – student relations, peer to peer relations, and parent, community and school governance relations” (Kyegombe et al., 2017, p. 11). The findings of the study indicated that the Toolkit supported positive behavior change towards the use of CP, increased the use of alternatives, such as guidance and counseling, rewards and praise, and peer to peer discipline, and consequently improved student participation and relations with teachers. As in the case of Uganda, the ban on CP in Botswana must be accompanied by reinforcing alternative disciplinary methods. Parenting lessons have proven to have played a major difference in Sweden’s positive response to the ban on CP (Durrant, 2000); this can be emulated in Botswana. Based on Article four of the CRC that point to the obligation of government to promote the protection of children’s rights, I recommend that the Government of Botswana needs to consider the following to promote human rights and social justice.

9.3.5 Legal and policy changes to promote social injustice

Legal reform is essential to challenge and deconstruct dominant constructions of parenting practices and family functioning.

Abolish corporal punishment at all levels of society

The laws supporting the use of CP in Botswana must be amended to ban the use of CP. Corporal punishment is legal in Botswana (Government of Botswana, 1964), however there is overwhelming literature (Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2003; Durrant, 2000; Gershoff, 2010; Seepamore & Sewpaul, forthcoming) that highlight the negative impacts of CP on children. The UNCRC Article 19 makes an appeal to safeguard children from abuse and Botswana’s Revised Children’s Act of 2009 had been implemented to promote child protection in the country. The country’s legal recognition of physical punishment as a form of

discipline in the courts and schools contradicts the goals of the Children's Act. The abolition of corporal punishment at institutional and family level is long overdue.

A cultural context such as Botswana that supports CP at various societal structures is likely to face challenges in stopping corporal punishment. As Garborino (1994, p.51) highlighted, "A culture that defines children as private property and writes violence into its most basic normative scripts is weak when it comes to preventing child abuse." In the context of Botswana, CP should be dealt with firstly by declaring physical forms of punishment at all levels of society illegal. The penal code (Government of Botswana, 1964) and all the other Statutes in Botswana that promote CP such as Children's Act 2009 (Government of Botswana, 2009); Education Act (Government of Botswana, 1967) should be revised. The foregoing statutes are inconsistent with the country's intention to meet the goals of empowering women and promoting gender equality, as well as its efforts to end domestic violence and to promote children's rights and protection by combating child abuse. Further, GIEACPC (2017) calls for states to consider CP a violation of human rights and put an end to it. The changes should also include reconciling the definition of a child in all statutes to ensure that the definition of a child remains consistent.

Changes at structural levels have the potential to bring transformation of families (Straus & Donnelly, 1994). The abolishment of CP in developed countries such as Sweden has demonstrated success in the reduction of child abuse and promotion of positive parenting practices (Durrant, 2000). Other developed countries that borrowed the Swedish strategy to end CP are Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Austria (Straus & Donnelly, 1994). In most countries corporal punishment is a culturally accepted form of abuse, and it is not easy to ban its practice (Gershoff, 2010). I argue that if some African countries such as Kenya, South Africa and Uganda have banned the use of CP, it means that with appropriate education and alternative disciplinary strategies for teachers and parents, Botswana can be successful in the abolishment of CP.

In Sub Saharan Africa, South Africa is one of the countries that has taken a major leap in the issue as it has banned corporal punishment since 1996. The positive development is not without challenges because parenting practices that are rooted in cultural practices and other dominant social structures are often hard to change, especially when there are no alternatives strategies in place (Morrell, 2001). But, beyond the law is the role of social workers as cultural mediators (IASSW, 2018), as evidence suggests that banning of CP is, in itself, insufficient to produce desired changes. Social workers need to engage communities in dialogue to challenge some of the taken-for-granted assumptions underlying CP by providing

evidence-based research that documents the negative consequences of CP, and engage in public education about alternatives, embracing conscious, positive parenting practices (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming). Conscious parenting is intentional and the parent is aware of his or her actions on the child (Jones-Smith, 2011). The banning of CP combined with public education holds potential for “breaking the intergenerational cycle and reducing the long-term negative impact on children, families and society” (GIEACPC, 2017a). Such education must be underscored by the use of emancipatory forms of praxis and consciousness raising, designed to disrupt deeply held myths and misconceptions (Ntshwarang & Sewpaul, forthcoming).

Implementation of the National Family Policy

The development of Botswana’s Family Policy has been an activity that has been on-going for some time though Tri-African Advisory Services (2011), and Ntshwarang (2017) endorsed the urgency of its implementation to enhance family functioning and parenting practices. A social justice approach to family policy (Sewpaul, 2005) is advocated for to ensure the development and wellbeing of people. Systems of dominance and discrimination must be confronted and changed. Family policy includes income support services and parental leave to promote positive family functioning (Daly et al., 2015). The experiences of women who participated in the study, reflect an urgent need for policy makers, researchers and practitioners to upgrade the analysis of family issues beyond individual and family levels to integrate the impacts of structural factors on family functioning. Intersectionality that guided the research study supports a structural social justice approach to family policy that Sewpaul (2005) proposes in her critical analysis of South Africa’s draft National Family Policy. According to Sewpaul (2005) families do not exist in isolation and the policies targeting families need to take into account systems of oppression and discrimination that hinder their functioning.

Amendments to the Employment Act

The United Nations (2015) calls policies that accommodate work-family balance, but the findings of the study indicate that the Government of Botswana is lagging behind in its effort to improve the quality of life of working parents. Botswana’s Employment Act Revised Act of 2010 only amended section 23 that dealt with conditions of employment and

termination of job contracts that were in the Botswana Employment Act of 1982 (Government of Botswana, 1982). The revision failed to consider amendment of Part XII that reinforce and perpetuate cultural practices and beliefs that denote women as primary parents. In not allowing for paternity leave, the act does not enhance social justice as it maintains stereotypical, gender stratified practices, and social injustice in the work place and at family (Sallee, 2008; Muasya, 2014). The evidence from the study indicates that women do not want to carry the burden of parenting alone, and that there is an intersection of gender and legislation in promoting gendered and negative parenting practices. Taking into consideration the intersectionality principles to enforce gender equality and promote social justice, I would re-consider the use of the word confinement (used in Botswana's Employment Act of 1982 and the same revised act of 2010) as it is culturally associated with the seclusion of women after birth and enforcement of women as care givers. Some of the women who participated in this study, commented on the Employment Act and called for its revision as it disadvantaged both men and women in the care of children. They suggested the creation of opportunities to balance parenting and work, and to promote gender equality at work and family level. I recommend that the Government of Botswana, must incorporate the following in the Employment Act:

- Introduction of paternity leave

Paternity leave will offer men and women equal opportunities to engage in child care and socialize men into appreciating their roles in childcare from the beginning, and deconstruct the notion of men as providers and women as nurturers.

- Increase feeding hours

Employment policies must make allowance for increased length of feeding hours that will give parents control over their feeding practices. Working mothers must be protected by law, and have opportunities to breastfeed without being concerned about job losses.

- Increase length of parental leave

The policy should revise the length of the current maternity leave to ease the burden of care and work for parents, and expand leave to include fathers. Given the findings of the study I think Botswana should adopt the recommendation by ILO (2014) to increase parental leave to a minimum of 18 weeks. The non-gendered approach to the provision of parental leave in some of the Nordic countries can be examined, and adapted to the contextual realities of Botswana.

- Provision of supplementary allowances for working parents on parental leave

The supplementary allowances for parents on parental leave is an important issue because some of the employees lose some financial benefits during their absence from work such as overtime allowances, that supplement family income. The introduction of social security for families in the form of a child grant would successfully cover some of the financial losses that parents encounter when they are absent from work for legitimate reasons.

Provision of child support grants

The introduction of child support grants can address relative poverty and enhance positive parenting practices. The findings of the study indicate that the educational status of women limited their opportunities to employment and high paying jobs, which exacerbated financial limitations and resulted in women not being able to exercise their desired mandatory and supportive parenting practices. I recommend that the Government of Botswana provide social security in the form of financial grants to families with children to address issues of poverty and financial limitations at family level. This will be in line with the United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council endorsements to provide social protection at family levels (United Nations, 2015). Families in Botswana need non-reactive but deliberate and substantive family policies, programs and interventions that stimulate positive parenting practices by addressing socio-structural factors that intersect with gender to constrain parenting practices (Torjman, 2005). The South African Child Grant (CSG) was established in 1998 as way for the government of South Africa to meet its mandatory role to

protect and fulfill children's rights as well as to help parents and families to provide material needs for children (Pendlebury, Lake, & Smith, 2009). The CSG used to be means tested and excluded a lot of children from the benefit but it has since been ratified as a result of advocacy and litigation to enable children under the age of 15 year to benefit without any means test (Pendlebury, Lake & Smith, 2009). CSG has been upheld by South Africa's Department of Welfare for its ability to respond to international demands to improve the rights and welfare of children. South Africa's CSG had positive impact on children and families as it improved food security, health and academic performance outcomes (Pendlebury, Lake, & Smith, 2009). Introduction of child grants will reduce the number of families living below the PDL in Botswana. A child support grant similar to South Africa should be adopted by Botswana government, with some modifications.

9.3.6 A multi-sectorial approach to dissemination of information and implementation of family legislation and policies

A multi sectorial approach can be used by social workers in collaboration with other sectors to teach the public about the effects of negative parenting practices such as CP, positive parenting practices and children's rights. A multi sectorial approach has long standing recognition in Botswana as it has proven to be a successful in the containment of HIV/ AIDS under the direction of the National AIDS Coordination Agency (Republic of Botswana, 2013). Since the recommendation is specifically intended for social workers, the Department of Child Protection should spearhead the information dissemination exercises. Some of the women in the study suggested that information on Botswana Children's Act 2009 and Children's Rights could be disseminated through "kgotla" and PTA meetings, house to house campaigns, and targeting parents at government institutions such as clinics and hospitals. Their suggestions blend well with the multi-sectorial approach because the institutions they mentioned can be used to reach diverse populations. In addition, the Government of Botswana needs to support the expansion of Village Development Committees (VDC's) beyond infrastructure development to include family advancement so that they also take an active part in promoting gender equality and positive parenting.

Currently there are several organizations advocating for male participation in various activities that are traditionally regarded as women's tasks. This is an indication that society is gradually making changes on some of the traditionally gendered roles hence, and it is a sign

that transforming gendered roles at the family level is also attainable. The government of Botswana should financially, and in other ways support existing men's forums, such as the Men's Sector and Men and Boys Botswana, in their mandate to encourage male participation in various roles, including parenting. Morrell (2006) recommends the need to support and create a platform to enhance father participation in the care of children. The incorporation of men's movements should be done with caution as some of them are not combating gender discrimination, but producing another form of male dominance. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner (1994, p.204) warned:

“The mythopoeic men's movements may be seen as facilitating reconstruction of a new form of hegemonic masculinity that is less self-destructive, that has revalued and reconstructed men's emotional bonds with each other and that has learned to feel good about its own Zeus power.”

Zeus power is male authority accepted for the good of the community (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Messner, 1994). The use of the multi-sectorial approach as a way to disseminate information and empower families and parents should be done with caution so that it does not re-affirm dominant structures that perpetuate gender disparities.

9.3.7 Research Prospects

The research study on the factors that influence parenting practices among women in different family structures was the first of its kind in terms of environmental context, subject and theoretical framework. This study raised more questions than answers concerning some of the challenges related to families and parenting practices in Botswana. As a result of scarce literature and research in the area of parenting and parenting practice in Botswana, further refined research is necessary to examine men and women's experiences of parenting in different contexts as well as the effects of different structural systems on parenting practices. The literature (Maudeni, 2009) has cited Botswana's educational institutions overreliance on texts based on the experiences of first world countries. Local research will develop availability of literature on parenting practices, and boost the training curriculum. It has been noted earlier that practice informed by research has the potential to promote the credibility of social work profession (Howard, McMillian & Polio, 2003).

Research on the level of awareness and understanding of legislation targeting children's rights

UNICEF (2013) reported that the existence of Botswana Children's Act of 2009 has not decreased child abuse as the country continues to experience escalated cases of child abuse as a result of implementation challenges. One reason that could be attached to that is limited public knowledge about the Act and parental responsibilities, as the results of the study indicated. Lucas (2017) alluded to the responsibilities of social workers in Botswana as inclusive of dissemination of information about children's rights and welfare services. In contrast to that, the findings from my study indicated that the majority (21) women have not heard about the Children's Act and only a few (eight) women accessed the services of social workers when they were having challenges at individual and family levels. Without disregard of Lucas's (2017) claim that social work in Botswana is budding, given the nature and scope of social practice in the country, the findings of the study questions the proactivity of social workers in reaching out to families and communities to educate them about legislative issues regarding children's rights.

It is important to undertake a national study to assess the level of awareness and understanding of the public about the revised Botswana Children's Act of 2009 as it is a major document discussing children's rights and parents' roles in the country. The study can adopt both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The exercise is likely to identify gaps in implementation and appreciation of the law by the public. The recommendation had been motivated by the women's general limited knowledge and understanding of the core business of the law and issues regarding children's rights as well as dissatisfaction of some of the women about the services they got from the social workers.

Future research on parenting practices

The women's outcry about the limited support they got from fathers and partners stressed the need to conduct research on the parenting practices of fathers in contemporary Botswana. A recent study in Botswana related to fathers' parenting practices focused on adolescents' perception of father presence and support (Republic of Botswana, 2016). The voice of the fathers in this field is necessary to inform family policy. Given the different socio-structural factors that intersected with women's parenting practices, it is necessary to

engage in qualitative research to examine the modalities of father support and participation in child care from the perspective of fathers to clear some of the misconceptions about fathers' participation in the care of children. Such research will help clarify public interpretations about father's contribution in child care and parenting, as well as provide practitioners, researchers and policy makers with information about the lived experiences of fathers in relation to child care. Future research studies should also examine the nature of parenting practices in other forms of family structures such as in situations where both parents are unemployed. In that way social structures that preclude women's and men's cooperation in the care of children could be exposed and policies and legislation modeled on the principles of social justice could be adopted to encourage gender balanced participation in child care.

Situational Analysis of the competency of existing structures in addressing domestic violence and gender based violence

The results of the study confirmed the existence of power imbalances between men and women in the families. This imbalance often translates into domestic violence, and poor family functioning, which interfere with positive parenting practices. There are efforts to prevent and stop domestic violence through various legislations such as Marriage Amendment Act 2001, Abolition of Marital Powers Act of 2004, Domestic Violence Act 2008 and the National Policy on Gender and Development (UNDP, 2014) and community based programs (such as Women Against Rape and Kagisano Women's Shelter Project). Research reflects that women and child abuse, that is rooted in male assumptions of superiority, still prevail quite extensively and some men use violence as a form of control of women (United Nations, 2015). The persistence of gender based violence indicates a gap in interventions for gender violence. The question that arises was whether the interventions and programs are addressing the core structural factors that cause and perpetuate gender violence at the micro and macro levels of society or not.

Although a few women talked about parent abuse, it provides groundwork for researchers in Botswana to conduct qualitative research informed by critical theory to investigate the extent to which children abuse their parents, the causes and possible interventions to resolve them matter. Research in the area could highlight the nature and prevalence of the problem in the country, and make recommendations to deal with the same.

9.4 Summary

The recommendations to address core human rights issues, and to use relevant social structures to strengthen family life and parent-child relationships, resonate with the views of Mullaly and Mullaly (2014), Ntini and Sewpaul (2017), and Sewpaul (2013) about the need to address structural issues in family policy and parenting interventions. Without appreciation of the intersection of gender and other structural factors that women and men grapple with at individual, family and societal levels and their impact on parenting practices, parents are likely to fail in the adoption of some of the positive parenting models such as proactive parenting (Griffin et al., 2000) and supportive parenting (McNeely & Barber, 2010) that demonstrate inclination to positive parenting practices. The recommendations discussed reverberate social work's goal to promote social change and development, social cohesion and the empowerment and liberation of people (IASSW, 2014). Sewpaul et al (2015) underscored some of the vital components of empowerment as all-encompassing, skills development, capacity building, and heightening consciousness at individual and societal levels to examine and undo external sources of oppression and/or privilege. With the integration of critical theory and social justice models in social work training, practice and research we would be able to critically examine and dismantle dominant oppressive and exclusionary structural factors that influence policies, programs and interventions. Positive policies and interventions that are gender neutral, and that promote gender equality are necessary to improve the wellbeing of families and children.

Lastly at a personal level, as a social worker, learner, educator, woman, wife and a parent, situating the use of critical social work theory, more especially intersectionality in my study enhanced critical self-reflection. The research process amplified self-awareness, especially on how I had internalized dominant cultural and gender ideologies, so much so that I did not question the concealed discriminations of everyday experience, that are salient to the theoretical and epistemological understandings of parenting practices. This has been a journey of personal awakening and transformation, as much as it has been an academic one.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Semi- Structured Interview Guide (English Version)

The following areas will be explored in regard to how they support or hinder women's parenting practices through informal interviews (conversational style), genograms and eco-maps without any specific order:

1. Biographical data of family members
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Religion
 - d. Tribal group
 - e. Marital status of women and adult family members
 - f. Length of time living in Selebi Phikwe
 - g. Location where the family lives
 - h. Length of stay in the location
 - i. Educational background of women, child/ children and other family members
 - j. Employment status of women and other family members
 - i. Type of employment and conditions of work such as night shifts.
 - ii. Length of employment
2. Women's income and combined family income
3. Responsibilities and commitments in and outside the home
4. Women's relationship with tribal group, religion, partner(s), neighborhood, social networks, and community
5. Full details of each child and how they are handled inclusive of:
 - a. school performance & coping
 - b. household chores, interests, hobbies, etc.
 - c. demands, expectations, and emotional needs
 - d. successes, accomplishments and failures
 - e. relationships
6. Parent's values and beliefs about parenting
7. Handling influences from peers, social media, TV & Internet
8. Providing safety such as permission, monitoring, identifying child/children's problems, and teaching self-protection (e.g. dealing with peer pressure).
9. Providing guidance and support such as:
 - a. Involvement with school activities, payment of school fees

- b. Time spent with child/children

10. Discipline

- a. Punishment e.g. handling rebellion and conflicts
- b. Rules, limits or boundaries
- c. Giving and getting respect
- d. Negotiations

11. Critical incidents in women's lives such as:

- a. illness and accidents
- b. peer pressure and experimentation, with alcohol, drugs or smoking

12. Parenting of an adolescent

- a. Compare to earlier phases of child

13. Other sources of support and challenges

14. Future aspirations and goals

15. Opinion of ideal mother. Supporting and hindering factors to live up to the ideal.

Appendix 2: Semi- Structured Interview Guide (Setswana Version)

Puisano e taabo e itebagantse le go batlisisa gore ditlhogo/ditsetlana tse di latelang di kgoreletsa kgotsa di aga/rotloetsa Bomme jang mo kgodisong ya bana. Metlhale e faphegileng jaaka ditlhare tsa losika tsa boleng jo bo kwa godimo (genograms and eco-maps) di tlaa dirisiwa mo puisanong magareng ga mmatlisisi le bomme go amogana kitso ka diemo tsa malapa a bone. Puisano e tlaa tsamaya kwa ntleng ga thulaganyo epe fela.

1. Dintlha tse di kayang ba lelwapa (Biographical data)
 - a. Dingwaga
 - b. Bong
 - c. Tumelo
 - d. Morafe (Tribal group)
 - e. Seemo sa lenyalo sa bo mme le bagolo mo lwapeng
 - f. Lebaka le o le ntseng mo Selebi Phikwe
 - g. Kgotla/kgotlana
 - h. Lebaka le o le ntseng mo kgotlaneng
 - i. Dithutego tsa bo mme, ngwana/bana le ba bangwe mo lwapeng
 - j. Mmerekho/Tiro tsa bo mme le ba bangwe mo lwapeng
 - i. Mefuta ya mmerekho le seemo sa pereko jaaka go ya tirong bosigo.
 - ii. Lebaka la pereko
2. Madi a mme a a dirang le a lelwapa ka kakaretso le a dirang
3. Boikarabelo mo lwapeng le kwa ntle ga lelwapa le ditiro tse di tlamang go dirwa tsatsi le letsatsi
4. Kamano le morafe, tumelo, mokapelo, baagisane, makalana a farologaneng, le sechaba ka kakaretso
5. Dintlha tse di tseneletseng ka botshelo jwa ngwana/bana le ka fa di ka laolwang/tsamaisiwang ka teng:
 - a. Tiro ya sekolo , le go emelelana le dikgwetlho tsa sekolo
 - b. Tiro ya lelwapa, dikgatlhego le metshameko.
 - c. Ditsholofelo le go fepa maikutlo
 - d. Tswelelopele le dikgwetlho
 - e. Botsalano le ba bangwe

6. Tumelo ya motsadi ka kgodiso ya ngwana/bana
7. Go itebaganya le thotoetso go tswa mo balekaneng ba ngwana/bana le kitso go tswa mo go tsa boranyane jaaka thelevishini, dimampiri tsa dikgang le tse dingwe.
8. Tshireletso ya ngwana/bana jaaka go fa teseletso ya go dira sengwe, go kakoba kgolo ya ngwana/bana, go lemoga mathata le go ruta ngwana/bana go emeleana le dikgwetlho.
9. Bogakolodi le thotoetso:
 - a. Go tsaya karolo mo ditirong tsa sekolo, dituelo le thokomelo
 - b. Nako ya go iketla le ngwana/bana
10. Kgalemo:
 - a. Kotlhao e dirisiwang fa ngwana/bana ba sa dira sentle jaaka go itebaganya le bogoma le dintwa/diphapang
 - b. Melawana
 - c. Go ha tlotlo le go amogela tlotlo
 - d. Go ipuelela
11. Diemo tse di faphegileng jaaka:
 - a. Bolwetse le dikotsi
 - b. Thotloetso ya balekane, go lekeletsa nno tagi le kgogo ya motsoko
12. Kgodiso ya ngwana/bana ba dingwaga tse di lesome le boraro (13) go ya kwa go tse di lesome le borobabongwe (19).
 - a. Tshwantshanya le pele ga dingwaga tse a leng/baleng mo go tsone
13. Dilo tse dingwe tse di thusang le tse di go kgoreletsang mo kgodisong ya ngwana/bana.
14. Dikeletso le ditsholofelo tsa gago ka bokamoso
15. Kao ya mme yo o nonofileng. Dikgoreletsi le dilo tse dingwe tse di ka agang/rotloetsang seemo sa go nna jalo.

Appendix 3. English Consent Form

Dear Participant

My name is Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang. I am a Lecturer at the University of Botswana. However currently, I am pursuing a PhD in Social Work at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. I am undertaking a research study titled: *Factors influencing women's parenting practices: A study of three different family structures in Selebi-Phikwe, Botswana.*

I understand that you are a parent and your participation in the research study would be of value. Therefore I kindly request your participation in the study. However your decision to participate or not to participate will be based on the information that I will provide you regarding the study.

If you decide to participate in the study I will interview you for about 1 to 1 ½ hours. With your permission I might want a follow up interview with you. The interview will be audio-recorded and will be transcribed immediately after the interview. I will be doing the transcription and nobody else will listen to what you share with me. All recordings will be held in a password protected file accessible only by myself and supervisor. The transcripts will not have any identifying information and will be stored in a locked cabinet. After a period of five years, in line with the rules of the University, all paper materials will be disposed by shredding and burning, and all recordings will be deleted. Your name will not be revealed and everything that you share with me will remain confidential. My research supervisor and other research assistants such as translators of information from Setswana to English will sign an agreement that binds them to abide by research ethical standards and to keep all the information confidential.

There are no direct benefits to participate in the study. However, the results of the study add value to research, social work practice and policy formulation in Botswana. For example, the findings are likely to inform child and family welfare services as well as policy formulation in the country. At an individual level, you will also gain an opportunity to reflect on your parenting practices. Findings of the study will also be disseminated through publications, workshops and conferences but will not contain any information that discloses the identity or names of the participants.

Your decision regarding participation will not affect your current or future relationship with the University of KwaZulu-Natal or the researcher. Feel free to ask me any questions about the study please call me at +267 71263461 (Botswana) or +27631069198 (South Africa). Email: mmonadibepn@mopipi.ub.bw or pmmonadibe@yahoo.com. You can also contact my supervisor: Prof V. Sewpaul, +2731260124, College of Humanities, at University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. You may also contact Dr. Shenukah Singh from the University Research Ethics Committee at 0312603587.

Please note that the research has been approved by the Research and Ethics Review Committee at the University of Kwazulu Natal. This study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you will sign a consent. This is not a binding; you are still free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. This will not affect your relationship with the researcher or the University.

DECLARATION

I.....confirm that I understand the content of the document and the nature of the research, and I agree to participate in the research study. I also consent to have the interview recorded.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time if I wish to do so.

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang (Researcher) _____ Date _____

Appendix 4. Setswana Consent Form

Motsayakarolo

Leina lame ke Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang. Ke motlhatlheledi wa dithuto tsa bagolo kwa Mmadikolo (University of Botswana). Mme mo bogompionong ke santse ke ikoketsa dithuto mo go tsa bongaka ke itebagantse le tsa boipelego (Social Work) kwa Univesithing ya KwaZulu-Natale, kwa Afrika Borwa. Ke dira patitisiso ka sethogo se sereng “*Ke eng se e rotloetsang bomme go kgetlha metlhale e ba godisang bana ka yone: Patlisiso ya mefuta e meraro ya malwapa mo Selebi Phikwe, Botswana*”.

Ke thaloganya ha o le motsadi. Ka jalo go tsaya karolo mo patlisisong e go botlhokwa. Ka tsweetswee ke kopa gore o tsee karolo mo patlisisong e. Mme le fa go ntse jalo tshwetso ya gago ya go tsa karolo e tla laolwa ke dintlha tse ke tla buang le wena ka tsone mabapi le patlisiso e.

Fa o tsaya tshwetso ya go tsaya karolo re taa buisana mo sebakeng sa oura le sephato sa oura (1hour to 11/2 hours). Puisano ya rona re ta e gatisa mo sekapa mantsweng ka tseletso ya gago. Morago ga moo, ke tla kwala puisano ya rona. Mekwalo yotlhe ya puisano e, ga ena go nna le maina a gago. Puisano e gatisitsweng le mekwalo yotlhe e dirisiwang ke tla e boloka fa go sireletsegileng, mme e re kwa morago ga lebaka la dingwaga di ka nna tlhano ke tla e phimola kgatiso tsotlhe tsa puisano ya rona, mekwalo yotlhe ke tlaa e kgagola ka mechine e lebaneng. Puisano ya rona ke sephiri, maina a gago ga ana go tswela kwa nte, e bile le maduo a patlisiso e, ga ana go supa maina a gago kana sepe se ka go golaganyang le patlisiso e. Mogolwane wame mo patlisisong e, le botlhe ba ba taa nthusang ba taa baya monwana o ba tlamang le go supa gore ba dumalana le go tsaya patlisiso e, e le sephiri.

Ga gona dikatso tse o ka dibonang mo go tseyeng karolo mo patlisisong e. Mme le fa go ntse jalo, maduo a patlisiso e a tile go sologela molemo maphata a berakang le bana jaaka a Boipelego, le ba dirang melao e itebagantseng le malwapa le bana mo Botswana. Wena ka bo wena, go tsaya karolo ga gago go ka go sologela molemo ka gore o taa nna le sebaka sa go sekaseka ka ha o godisang bana ka teng. Ka jalo o ka kgona go baakanya fa go tshwanetseng. Maduo a patlisiso e a tlaa tswa mo mekwalong ya sechaba le mo dithuto seka dipuisanong, mme a sa supe maina a ba tsa karolo e ne ele bo mang le mekwalo ope fela o ka ba lomaganyang le one.

Tshwetso ya gago mo go tseyeng karolo mo patlisisong e e ka seke e ame tirisanyo ya gago le nna kana le Univesithi ya Kwazulu Natale. O gololesegile go ka botsa dipotso dipe fela mabapi le patlisiso e ko dimomorong tse di latelang: +267 71263461 (Botswana) kana +27631069198 (South Africa). Email: mmonadibepn@mopipi.ub.bw kgotsa pmmmonadibe@yahoo.com. Gape, o ka itshwaraganya le mogolwane wame e bong Prof V. Sewpaul, +2731260124, School of Social Work and Community Development, College of Humanities, at University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, Email: SEWPAUL@ukzn.ac.za, kana **Prof Prem Mohun, HSS Research Office, Govan Bheki Building, Westville Campus, Durban, South Africa, Contact: 0312604557, Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za.**

Patlisiso e rebotse ke ba lephata la Dipatlisiso le Tshireletso ya ba tsa karolo ko Univesithing ya Kwazulu Natale. Jaaka ke tlhalositse go tsaya karolo ga gago ke boitlhaopo. Fa o tsaya tshwetso ya go tsa karolo, ke taa kopa gore o beye monwana e ele sesupo sa gore o itlhaopile. Go baya monwana ga gago, ga se go itama. Jaaka ke buile o gololesegile go togela go tsa karolo mo patlisisong e, nako nngwe le nngwe e o batlang go tlogela, e bile ga o kake wa otlhaelwa go sa tsaya karolo mo patlisisong e.

DECLARATION

Kele _____ ke rurifatsa fa ke tlhalogantse thulaganyo yotlhe ya patlisiso e. Ke dumela go tsaya karolo le gore puisano yame le mmatisisi wa patlisiso e, o ka dirisa sekapa mantswe go gatisa puisano ya rona.

Ke tlhaloganya gore ke gololesegile go fetola tshwetso yame ya go tsaya karolo nako nngwe le nngwe e ke e batlang.

.....

Monwana wa motsaa karolo

.....

Kgwedi

Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang (Mmatisisi)

Kgwedi

Appendix 5: English Recruitment Poster

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

If you are a female residing in Selebi Phikwe and raising a child or children,

You could be eligible for a research study on “**FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN’S PARENTING PRACTICES: A STUDY OF THREE DIFFERENT FAMILY STRUCTURES**”

For more information and to determine if you qualify

Please contact researcher by sms at: 77859005

Email: parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Appendix 6: Setswana Recruitment Poster

BA TSAYA KAROLO MO PATISISONG BA A BATLIWA

Fa o le mosadi e bile o le monni wa Selebi Phikwe mme o godisa ngwana kgotsa bana:

O ka tswa o le maleba go tsaya karolo mo patlisisong ya go itse gore *“Ke eng se se rotloetsang bomme go kgetlha methale e ba godisang bana ka yone mo malwapeng a a farologaneng”*

Fa o batla go itse thata ka patlisiso e, o ka kwalalela molaetsa kwa go:

Mmatlisisi mo nomorong ya 77859005

Email: parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Appendix 7: 'Maitiiso' Newsletter Advert.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

All residents of Selebi Phikwe are informed that female participants are needed for a study on
“FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN’S PARENTING PRACTICES”

Participants should be women and currently raising a child or children. For more information and to determine their eligibility they should sms: Mrs. P. Ntshwarang at 77859005

Email: parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Appendix 8: English Radio Announcement Script

RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPT

All residents of Selebi Phikwe are informed that female participants are needed for a study on
“FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN’S PARENTING PRACTICES”

Participants should be women and currently raising a child or children. For more information and to determine their eligibility they should sms: Mrs. P. Ntshwarang at 77859005

Email: parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Appendix 9: Setswana Radio Announcement Script

KITSISO YA SEROMAMOA

Banni ba Selebi Phikwe ba itsisiwe fa go batiwa batsaya karolo ba bomme e bile e le banni ba Selebi Phikwe ba mo nakong ya gompiono ba godisang ngwana kgotsa bana go tsaya karolo mo patlitsong ya go itse gore ***“Ke eng se se rotloetsang bomme go kgetlha methale e ba godisang bana ka yone mo malwapeng a a farologaneng”***

Botlhe ba ba eletsang go tsaya karolo kana go itse ka patlitiso e, ba ka romela molaetsa kwa go:

Mrs. P. Ntshwarang mo nomorong ya 77859005

Email: parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Appendix 10: Ethical Clearance from University of KwaZulu-Natal



31 August 2015

Mrs PN Ntshwarang 215079115
School of Applied Human Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mrs Ntshwarang

Protocol reference number: HSS/0921/015D
Project title: FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S PARENTING PRACTICES: A STUDY OF THREE DIFFERENT FAMILY STRUCTURES IN SELEBI PHIKWE, BOTSWANA.

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 15 July 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted FULL APPROVAL.


Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenika Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Prof V Sewpaul
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Jean Steyn
Cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenika Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximban@ukzn.ac.za / snymant@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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Appendix 11: Ethical Clearance and Permit from Botswana Government

TELEGRAMS: MERAPE
Telephone: 3658400/3705827
Fax: 3902263/1559/



Ministry of Local Government
& Rural Development
Private Bag 006
Gaborone
BOTSWANA

Ref Number CLG 4/14/3/1 II (73)

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

17 November 2015.

Mrs P N Ntshwarang
Box 502680
Gaborone

Dear Madam

RE: RESEARCH PERMIT

This serves to acknowledge your application for a research permit in order to carry out a study entitled "Factors influencing women's parenting practices: a study of three different family structures in Selebi Phikwe, Botswana".

We are pleased to grant you the permit. This permit is valid for a period of twelve (12) month – commencing on **17 November, 2015 to 31 October 2016** – and it is granted subject to the following conditions;

1. Copies of the final product of the study are to be directly deposited with the Ministry of Local Government, National Archives and Record Services and University of Botswana Library.
2. The permit does not give you authority to enter any premises, private establishment or protected areas. Permission for such entry should be negotiated with those concerned.
3. You conduct your study according to particulars furnished in application you submitted taking into account the above conditions.
4. Failure to comply with any of the above stipulated conditions will result in the immediate cancellation of the permit.

Yours Faithfully,

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
17 NOV 2015
Shepherd Monyeke
/For Permanent Secretary- MLG

cc: PS, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
PS, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs
PS, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture
Director, National Archives and Records Services
Director, National Library Service
Director, Research and Development, University of Botswana

Appendix 12: Newspaper Article -Letter

PO BOX 502680
Gaborone

9th December 2015

The Manager, Avertisements
Botswana Daily News
Gaborone

RE: Newspaper Advert

All residents of Selebi Phikwe are informed that female participants are needed for a study on
"FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S PARENTING PRACTICES"

Participants should be women and currently raising a child or children. For more information
and to determine their eligibility they should contact the researcher through sms at 77859005
or email parentingresearch@yahoo.com

Thank you



Poloko N. Ntshwarang
Senior Lecturer
Department of Social Work
University of Botswana

*Sworn to before me on 9th December 2015
at Borakano Police Station*

Mamiko SGT

