



School of Social Science

**The Impact of Coronavirus on The Rural Households Headed by African Women
“Breadwinners”: Anthropological Case Study Of**

Mkhambathini In Kwa-Zulu Natal.

By

NONTOKOZO FUNDISWA GOQO

Student Number: 216040467

2022

Supervisor

Dr MC Kgari-Masondo

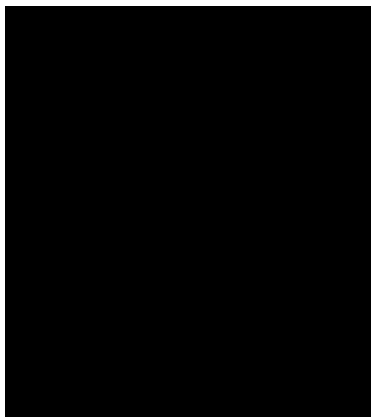
A thesis submitted for the fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Master of Social Science in Anthropology
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I Nontokozo Fundiswa Goqo declare that:

- This dissertation is my original work submitted for the Master's degree of Social Sciences in Anthropology.
- This dissertation is submitted for the first time in this university and has never been submitted to any other university.
- This dissertation contains my work; it does not have other persons' data unless otherwise the owner is stated specifically.
- The phrases used have been re-written, sources used are cited and the credited information has been referenced.
- There is no copy and paste in this dissertation taken from the internet without acknowledging specifically the sources taken from.

Candidate signature:



On the4th.....day ofJanuary..... 2023

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I supervised this master's degree in Anthropology Thesis to satisfaction: "The impact of Coronavirus on the rural households headed by African women "breadwinners": Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in KwaZulu Natal".

Student name and number: Nontokozo Fundiswa Goqo (216040467)

Name of Supervisor: Dr Maserole Christina Kgari-Masondo



Signature of the Supervisor

Date: 04/01 /2023

ABSTRACT

The literature surveyed for this study reveals that there is a gap in academia about studies on rural African women breadwinners' experiences during the Coronavirus pandemic. The study was undertaken to investigate and understand the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on rural African women and also to determine the strategies they used to cope during the era of the pandemic. The study employed a qualitative research method and a case study design. Guided by ethical considerations in research, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 30 African women between 20 to 60+ from KwaZulu Natal province, Pietermaritzburg in Mkhambathini municipality that were recruited through the purposive and snowballing sampling and the generated data is analysed thematically. The theoretical framework employed in the study is family systems theory, social capital theory, and coping theory. The symbiotic relationship of these theoretical frameworks revealed the impact of COVID-19 which is nuanced and complex on African women in rural households. Secondly, the study revealed a prevalent Eurocentric analysis of the experiences of rural communities especially rural African women who are homogenized as if their lives are static. Narratives of rural women revealed that they never felt intimidated by being breadwinners in their households. The study also revealed that the impacts were felt differently by diverse women as some experienced more hardships than others but they never gave in to marginalisation due to the impacts of the pandemic. These women worked hard and used their agency to navigate the ramifications of the pandemic by creatively starting businesses to navigate and escape the economic hardships that came with Coronavirus pandemic as many of them lost their jobs or their working hours curtailed. They also used creative financial management of the little money they received from welfare funds, businesses, or pension funds to ensure resilience during this era of the pandemic. Hence the recommendation of the thesis is the decolonisation of anthropological studies by ensuring that studies about women especially the previously colonised and poor experience social justice and are studied from within their own context and are not homogenised. The recommendations propose that economic and welfare policies responses must be immediate and consider the concerns of women.

Keywords: African Women, Anthropology, Breadwinners, COVID-19, Coronavirus, Decolonisation, Rural

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated specifically to every Mkhambathini Municipality household, especially African women in this location.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the participants of this research who provided invaluable insights and made this study possible. Moreover, my deepest appreciation is extended to my supervisor Dr MC Kgari-Masondo, whose constant encouragement and constructive suggestions served as a guiding light throughout the process. I would also like to acknowledge my mom's unconditional support and love. Furthermore, I would like to say a special thanks to all my friends from the University of KwaZulu Natal who encouraged me when I faced challenges during the writing of this thesis. My gratitude also goes to my supportive partner who provided unending moral support and reinforced my faith in myself on difficult days. Without all these incredible people, achieving this lifelong dream of completing a Master's thesis would not have been possible.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Demography, Biography and Background of Participants	47
Table 2: Age range and the areas in Mkhambathini	50
Table 3: Marital Status of Participants	51
Table 4: Means of Survival by African Rural women of Mkhambathini during the Coronavirus era	63

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A map of KwaZulu Natal	34
Figure 2: A map of Mkhambathini Area	34
Figure 3: Graph indicating forms of families in Mkhambathini	53
Figure 4: Graph depicting the number of dependents each interviewed participants has	56

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COVID-19	'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for the virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as the '2019 novel Coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'
CWP	Community Work Programme.
DV	Domestic Violence
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
PMB -	Pietermaritzburg
TLB	Tractor Loader Backhoe.
UKZN	University of KwaZulu Natal.
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
WHO	World Health Organisation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION BY STUDENT.....	i
DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the research problem	1
1.3 Problem Statement	4
1.4 Research problems and objectives: Key questions to be asked	5
1.5 Scope and Location of the study	6
1.6 Significance of the study	7
1.7 Descriptions: Theoretical Framework and the Research Methodology	8
1.8 Structure of the thesis.....	9
1.9 Definition of key concepts	9
1.10 Conclusion.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	12
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 The contribution of Anthropologists in women research.....	13
2.3 Understanding households	15
2.3.1 Conceptualizing households.....	16
2.3.2 African households.....	17
2.3.3 Rural African households.....	18
2.3.4 Management of households in rural areas during COVID-19	18
2.4 Conceptualizing African women and their roles in households during COVID-19	18
2.4.1 Women’s caring responsibilities outside the home.....	19

2.4.2 Women's caring responsibilities at home	20
2.5 Understanding African women	20
2.5.1 African women as mothers.....	21
2.5.2 African women as guardians of the environment.....	21
2.6 Impact of COVID-19 on women.....	23
2.6.1 Economic status of African women during the COVID-19 pandemic.	25
2.6.2 Plight of food security on women-led households in Africa.....	27
2.6.3 Effects of Coronavirus on the Society.....	27
2.6.3.1 Coronavirus on Graduates	27
2.7 The gap that this study is trying to bridge	28
2.8 Principal theories upon which the research project will be constructed (-> research design):	29
2.8.1 The Relevance of Theories to the Study	31
2.9 Summary	32
CHAPTER THREE	33
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN	33
3.1 Introduction	33
3.2 Research methodology	35
3.2.1 The qualitative approach	35
3.2.2 Research Paradigm.....	36
3.2.3 Role of the researcher.....	36
3.3 Research design.....	36
3.3.1 Sampling Technique.....	37
3.3.3 Data analysis	39
3.3.3.1 Application of Steps of Thematic Analysis.....	40
3.4 Ethical considerations	41
3.5 Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability	41
3.6 The study's potential limitations.....	42
3.7 Conclusion.....	42
CHAPTER FOUR.....	43
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION,	43
AND THE DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	43
4.1 Introduction	43

4.2. Demography, Biography and Background of the African women breadwinners in a rural setting and the impact of the Coronavirus.	45
4.2.1.1 Number of children	55
4.2.1.2 Number of dependents	56
4.2.1.3 Status of employment of African rural breadwinners and the impact of Coronavirus	57
4.3 The impact of Coronavirus on rural households headed by African women “breadwinners” of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal.....	60
4.3.1 Being a rural woman African breadwinner during the COVID-19 era.....	60
4.3.2 Means of survival of participants during COVID-19.....	62
4.3.3 Family Support and Mental Well Being	64
4.3.4 Gender-Based Violence, African women breadwinners in Mkhambathini and COVID-19	67
4.3.5 Quality of Healthcare	68
4.3.6 Coping Strategies	69
4.4 Conclusion.....	71
CHAPTER FIVE	72
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	72
5.1 Introduction	72
5.2 Limitations of the present study	73
5.3 Key Findings: Summary from the Participants (African rural women breadwinners of Mkhambathini).....	73
5.3.1 Impacts of COVID-19 on rural African breadwinners’ women of Mkhambathini. ...	74
5.3.2 Coronavirus and changes in the lives of Rural Women	75
5.4 Recommendations	76
5.5 Conclusion.....	78
REFERENCES	80
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE.....	89
APPENDIX 2: TRANSLATED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	91
APPENDIX 3: INFORMANT CONSENT LETTER AND INFORMATION	93
APPENDIX 4: TRANSLATED CONSENT LETTER AND INFORMATION.....	95
APPENDIX 5: GATE KEEPERS LETTER OF CONSENT: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE FIELDWORK IN MKHAMBATHINI	97
APPENDIX 6: TRANSLATED GATEKEEPERS LETTER OF CONSENT: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE FIELDWORK IN MKHAMBATHINI	98

APPENDIX 7: LETTER OF CONSENT: GATEKEEPERS - INDUNA/INKOSI.....	99
APPENDIX 8: LETTER OF CONSENT TRANSLATED: GATEKEEPERS - INDUNA/INKOSI	100
APPENDIX 9: ETHICS LETTER	101

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The emergence of the COVID-19 virus, which was declared a pandemic in March 2020, has exacerbated the pressures placed on women around the world (UN Women, 2020a; UN Women, 2020b; WHO, 2020). Given that women make up 70% of the global health workforce, they have taken on the role of first responders to this health disaster (UN Women, 2020a). Furthermore, women outnumber men in the global informal economy, which is expected to be the most harmed economic sector as a result of the pandemic (Freund & Hamel, 2020). Women are also feeling the strain of unpaid household and care work, as they must care for ailing relatives or children who may be at home due to government lockdowns (OECD, 2020; Paskin, 2020). Importantly, this global epidemic has exposed a harsh reality: women are not safe and secure even at home, given the horrifying rise in domestic violence (DV) levels worldwide, including in South Africa (Bari, 2020a; Graham-Harrison et al., 2020).

This study aims to discover the impacts of COVID-19 on rural women and the above-mentioned seem to be some of the biggest impacts on women. COVID-19 has led to extended lockdown periods being enforced in several nations, which had served to contain the virus's transmission but has also proven to be a catalyst for increasing domestic violence against women (DVAW), as so many women are locked in residential areas with their abusers (Telles et al., 2020). According to the Executive Director of UN Women, "confinement under stay-at-home orders is a "perfect fusion" for violent behaviour inside closed doors since it worsens worries over security, health, and money" (United Nations, 2020b). Increasing the spreading of this virus during this period is exacerbating the economic and social crises already occurring as a result of COVID-19 (Shamla & Borah, 2020). Additionally, research has demonstrated that the economic implications for rural women are enormous since they have to also pay for healthcare resulting in lower productivity growth and missed revenue for women and their families as they farm and sell their products (Shamla & Borah, 2020; Duvvury et al., 2013). This chapter outlines the introduction, background of the research problem, addresses study objectives and questions, scope of the study, significance of the study in anthropology, objectives of this work, key research questions, research site, keywords definition, structure of the thesis and conclusion of this Chapter.

1.2 Background of the research problem

This qualitative research is interested in the current issues of COVID-19 particularly pertaining to social and economic features that affect African women breadwinners in rural areas. COVID-19 brought social instability among other effects and that can have detrimental ramifications on efforts to meet the economic needs of many families and households. The study is influenced by Economic and Social Anthropology. Economic anthropology is the study

of how human cultures offer tangible commodities and services that allow people to live. Individuals engage with one another in ways that convey power and meaning during the material provisioning and ultimate consuming processes (Hann, 2018). COVID-19 brought health concerns around, but it has also posed severe social frustration. The health-threatening COVID-19 virus announced a year ago, has occasioned many social and economic changes. This has been demonstrated by rising unemployment in South Africa to above 30% thus increasing the poverty rate (Han et al., 2020). The COVID-19 social restrictions have contributed to the shutting down of many companies. These broader indicators share some of the challenges affecting all communities in both rural and urban areas. However, in South Africa, the prospect of social and economic inequality is not a contemporary issue which emerges during the COVID-19 times.

The history of apartheid produced stratifications including gender, economic and social hierarchies. This involves the majority of black African females' exclusion from the realms of economic hardship, and I can never disagree that women have been marginalized before, women have never been treated equally to men. When looking at African households it is a norm that a man is the head of the family even if he is deceased, they will say the head died instead of recognizing the woman as the current head. Inequality has always been there before COVID-19; therefore, COVID-19 has forced many changes thus drawing my interest to this anthropological discourse about the impact of COVID-19 on women breadwinners in the rural area of Mkhambathini in KwaZulu-Natal. The venture to investigate the interplaying impacts of COVID-19 on breadwinning women in rural areas seeks to close the literature gap in understanding and finding solutions to the phenomena of poverty and women. The existing literature has endeavoured on the general scope of women while neglecting the rural-based females who face challenges of high unemployment and illiteracy (Mueller et al., 2020). The study may broaden the scope of understanding female-headed households as breadwinners. It might also characterize the socio-economic situation of female breadwinners in rural areas. In this study, I will visit households headed by women and try to understand what impact COVID-19 had on them. The researcher will engage with African women to find out how they are living in the midst of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic is common and can lead to sinus, nose or upper throat infections. The virus has different variants, there is a most common one called SARS-CoV-2 which was identified by the World Health Organisation as a Coronavirus type that is new, this happened after an outbreak in China that came in December 2019 which was severely experienced worldwide in early 2020. The outbreak then spread quickly all over the world (Martin et al., 2020). SARS-CoV-2 is what causes the disease called COVID-19 or Coronavirus (these words are used interchangeably in this thesis) to activate an infection called the respiratory tract. It infects exactly as other Coronaviruses spread which is through contact between two or more people. It makes people ill if not dead. The main symptoms of COVID-19 include breath shortage, breathing trouble, throat that is sore, runny nose, taste or smell loss, Diarrhoea and nausea. An infected person can start to show up in 2 to 14 days as it reacts differently from person to person (UNICEF, 2020). Studies have shown that the impact of COVID-19 has been immersed in all communities. It is thus important for the study to investigate how the pandemic

has affected rural African women who are breadwinners since research has shown that during the global crisis, they are the most affected (The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2020).

Women are faced with discrimination in the workplace and high unemployment. According to Strobel (1982), Ester Boserup who was a pioneer in the field of women's study pointed out the prevalence of female farmers in Africa and their "status loss" under colonial control, and explained African women as the ones who are the backbone of African agricultural production, performing 60 -70 percent of work. Boserup also argued that women in town frequently enter the informal labour market, surviving through petty commerce, selling unlawfully brewed beer, prostitution, or a number of liaisons with boyfriends (Strobel, 1982). It is important therefore to investigate how women breadwinners under study live during this pandemic era. According to April and Soomar (2013), the breadwinner's role is a family role rather than an occupational role. They also argue that being responsible for the financial support of the family is what defines a worker as a breadwinner. Unfortunately, patriarchy, tradition and culture socialised society and limited women's agency by instilling the belief that women are supposed to not work in the formal sector but be homemakers and men are the ones who must find jobs and be breadwinners. Breadwinner households are those in which one person works to earn money while the other stays at home to care for the children. In some cases, a family may have two incomes but only one breadwinner (April & Soomar, 2013) and these women worked hard and used their agency to navigate the ramifications of the pandemic.

Globally studies about marginalised communities and members of society are prevalent. This study also contributes to that field of study from an Anthropological lens by looking at rural households of Mkhambathini with African women and investigating how COVID-19 has impacted them. The pandemic of COVID-19 caused an economic shock that is massive in all nations, this was due to the interruptions in businesses and the countries' shutdowns for measures of social distancing and curbing the virus spread. This affected rural households very negatively in a way that lots of rural areas lost their jobs and in workplaces, they were only allowing about 70% of the staff members to work and this resulted in some employees losing their jobs permanently (Martin et al., 2020). This pandemic affects all communities including rural societies in every aspect. When there is someone who got infected by the virus that means the person is not allowed to go to work as the government is trying to limit human contact so the spreading will be limited.

According to UNICEF (2020), around two-thirds of members of households lost their working wages because of the measures that were implemented during the lockdown. Most of these workers are the ones who were hired to work every day. The members' households having their businesses and those in jobs that are private constituted 26% each (UNICEF, 2020). This really affected the rural households' income, some members of the rural communities had businesses to run that were making their income but ended up not getting any as they were supposed to close down all their businesses and they were left in hunger. These impacts may be medium, and some be long-term impacts (Martin et al., 2020). Women are always treated less than men even in workplaces.

Most women today are providing for their families by working outside the home and still earning less than men. Historically, women in Africa have always been allocated the traditional duty of family caregiver (Marecek & Ballou, 1981). The discoveries by Meisenbach (2010) are that many female breadwinners felt considerable shame and resentment because they sensed that they are making their partners feel less of men as they mostly believe it is men's work to provide financially for the family. According to Hofstede and Bond (1984), shame and guilt are associated with cultural characteristics such as "masculinity vs. femininity." Women from the households that are most marginalised and households with low income found themselves having a huge loss of income and job opportunities because of the lockdown. Their resources related to income were reported to be only useful for a period of less than a month (Hofstede & Bond, 1984).

Women have been discriminated against and COVID-19 has brought other burdens on women. Studies on COVID-19 have focused more on men losing their jobs in different firms but they missed the impact it has on women, especially women breadwinners (UN Women, 2020). This study will try to close the gap that is existing in the literature. According to Mueller et al., (2020), there is not enough information on rural households and the impact of COVID-19. He proposed that more studies should be conducted in this area so rural households will also feel noticed. Therefore, this study will try to close that gap by investigating how COVID-19 has impacted rural households with African women. This study will help with new information on society on COVID-19 and its impact on rural women and it will help even the government, policymakers, anthropologists, economists, and gender activists to understand how women continue to be impacted by social ills including pandemics and how such ramifications can be alleviated in future (Mueller et al., 2020).

1.3 Problem Statement

Households in rural areas are characterised by poverty generally. Their livelihood and agricultural activities have been affected by this. Most rural households' lives depend on their crops, the COVID-19 pandemic came with a variety of challenges to the rural households as there was a time when the country was on lockdown and households could not go into their gardens for cropping with other women, the reason being that they will spread the COVID-19 to everyone which the government is trying possible to limit the spread. Financial capital that is inadequate has been a major factor that has contributed to the households falling back into poverty as they did not have the means to buy food that they used to get in their gardens as most women breadwinners of Mkhambathini lost their jobs in this pandemic because of reduction of hours and of staff members in the working environment. As a result, poverty is worsened by COVID-19 protocols due to the loss of jobs and reduction of working hours. It is therefore the objective of this study to discover how COVID-19 affected the African women's households in Mkhambathini.

Rural communities also confront continuous healthcare capacity concerns, such as personnel shortfalls and facility closures (Brown et al., 2011; Cecil, 2020). As a result, older persons living in remote locations may suffer to get the care they require during the pandemic, both for COVID-19 for other emergency and chronic health issues. In light of the COVID-19 epidemic,

this viewpoint recognizes the issues faced by low healthcare capacity for rural older individuals.

The COVID-19 pandemic is wreaking havoc on women's health, social and economic well-being around the entire globe. First and foremost, women are leading the health response: women account for nearly 70% of the healthcare workforce, putting them at a higher risk of infection. At the same time, due to school and childcare facility cutbacks, as well as historical gender inequities in unpaid work, women are shouldering much of the load at home. During times of crisis and quarantine, women suffer heightened risks of employment and income loss, as well as increased dangers of assault, death, exploitation and abuse, or harassment (UN Women, 2020a).

1.4 Research problems and objectives: Key questions to be asked

The main objective is to anthropologically record the perspectives of African rural women breadwinners of Mkhambathini about the impacts that came with COVID- 19 into their 'households and their coping strategies thereof'.

The secondary objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the socio-economic standard of the households of Mkhambathini before COVID-19.
- To record the economic, environmental, and social COVID-19 impact on rural households with African women breadwinners' of Mkhambathini.
- To explore the perspectives of rural African women breadwinners' on how their households coped with the impacts of COVID-19.

Key questions to be asked:

This proposed study aims to discover the COVID-19 impact on rural African women breadwinners and to find out how they will cope with all the challenges they experienced. In order to address the main objective, this study will try to answer the questions that follow:

Main question:

What are the perspectives of African women breadwinners of Mkhambathini about the impact of COVID-19 on their households and how do they cope with such ramifications? Other questions are as follows:

- How was the socio-economic standard of the Mkhambathini's households before COVID-19?
- What are the economic, environmental, and social impacts of COVID-19 on rural households with African women breadwinners' of Mkhambathini?

- What are the perspectives of African breadwinners in rural areas of Mkhambathini about how they cope with their households with the impacts of COVID-19?

1.5 Scope and Location of the study

This study is bounded by the impacts of COVID-19 on rural African breadwinners' women of Mkhambathini municipality focusing on their way of living, and their experiences with COVID-19 impacts. Furthermore, the study looked at their coping strategies for COVID-19 impacts.

This study investigates, analyses, asserts, records, and establishes the experiences of how COVID-19 affected the African women breadwinners living in rural households of Mkhambathini, Pietermaritzburg KZN province. The research was undertaken at KZN Province, in Pietermaritzburg city at the Mkhambathini location. This place falls under rural settlements. The area has diverse kinds of people in terms of personality, standard of living, languages (there are people who speak different languages which include IsiZulu, English and IsiXhosa), family types (single-parent families, nuclear families and extended families) and sizes (per household they are different in numbers). The community is traditional and mostly practices African religions. Most of the households work in firms in Pietermaritzburg. While the majority of members of the community are employed as cleaners on the roads as Zibambebe workers (Zibambebe Road Maintenance Programme), halls, schools, roads and ranks as Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and Community Work Programmes (CWP). The community also has well-educated members who are teachers, nurses and so forth. Other members have businesses such as spaza shops, Tractor-Loader-Backhoe (TLBs), trucks and tractors. According to Njeru (2015), a group of people with common characteristics living in the same area is called a community as such this study will be conducted with the Mkhambathini community. This is a place where people are still ploughing to get their food, where people still live in big families, and where families still have domestic animals as part of their wealth.

Stats South Africa (2022:02) explained the statistics about the community of Mkhambathini, which stated that it has an overall population of about 63 142 people, 80% of whom live in traditional areas. Youth (0-14) 31.7%, Working age 63.5%, Elderly (64+) 4.8%, Dependency ratio 57.6%, Sex ratio 92.1%, Growth ratio 0.67, Population density 71 people per km², unemployment rate 26.8%, youth unemployment rate 34.1% No formal education 18.6% 20+, higher education 5% 20+, matriculation 20.6% 20+ The number of households is 14, 964, and

the number of agricultural households is 5067. Average household size 3.7, female-headed households 45.5, formal dwellings 48.9%, housing owed or paid off 26.5%, flushed toilets connected to sewerage 8.9%, weekly refuse collection 5.5%, piped water inside dwellings 14.5%, and electricity lighting 65.2%.

1.6 Significance of the study

Anthropology is interested in studying humans and their environment. In the context of this study that may involve issues and situations that affect individuals and their households. Understanding households offer a diverse perspective to anthropologists as they secure empirical data that gives details. This factor can produce solutions that may be useful to decision-makers like resolutions to the government on how to help those that have been affected by COVID-19 as I believe this pandemic impacted households differently. The study is crucial because people in rural areas remain excluded from many studies about the impact of COVID-19 (Muellera, 2020). The understanding of households in relation to COVID-19 in South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, needs investigation in line with the previous author's suggestion. Therefore, to better understand this pandemic, more information is needed from the households especially those in rural contexts with African women breadwinners because females comprise the marginalised groups in society. The significance of this study is to discover information from the rural households with African women breadwinners so individuals living in rural areas narratives can be recorded as essential because the study will be trying to investigate the impacts that came into being due to COVID-19 in their lives and households they lead. This research might provide new information on how COVID-19 impacted rural households, especially those headed by women, and how they dealt with the challenges they faced.

This study will assist the Mkhambathini community to be fully aware of this pandemic and its ramifications on the households that are headed by African women and strategies they can follow to navigate the challenges they face around the area. The government will also benefit above all, as this study will provide data that will make it easy for the government to provide suitable services to rural households knowing exactly how they were affected. Looking at the limitations of the existing studies by different authors that show gaps that still need attention, this study will try to bridge the gap in response to Mueller et al., (2020) proposal that there should be more studies conducted on rural studies such as America, and African countries but not only the space where the COVID-19 started. In addition, Mueller et al., (2020) suggested that COVID-19 research in rural households is needed as such this study will focus on rural

households with African women breadwinners. The shortage of publicly accessible and fine-grained information on these rural areas would shed some light on decision-makers. For instance, even though unemployment statistics from the government are available in rural areas, there are many standard errors and information most of the time suppressed or rejected, making it challenging to ask different questions that can be answered reliably (Mueller et al., 2020). According to UNICEF (2020), there should be a study that will accommodate everyone in rural households, not only those who own certain types of phones or those that use certain types of networks only as COVID-19 affects everyone regardless of what phone a person owns. This notion proves that the information available on rural households and the impact of COVID-19 is insufficient hence this study is important. This study aims to fill this gap by collecting data on one of the rural areas in one country, which is South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, Mkhambathini. This research is fundamental as it will provide more information on how COVID-19 has impacted rural households with African women breadwinners using Anthropological lenses. It is envisaged that the findings of this study will help the government and non-governmental organisations to find solutions easily for rural households' challenges to COVID-19 focusing on the case study of African women breadwinners in Mkhambathini.

1.7 Descriptions: Theoretical Framework and the Research Methodology

The increasing levels and the impact of COVID-19 among Mkhambathini households, especially women, are a concern worldwide as Coronavirus is a virus affecting anyone. An in-depth understanding of this phenomenon is, however, limited. Exploring the COVID-19 impact on affecting the Mkhambathini community is the main aim of this dissertation. Theories that will be used include Social Capital theory, Family systems theory and Coping theory. Family systems theory tells us that there is no way an individual can be understood in isolation from others but that an individual can be understood as part of their family as Haefner (2014) argues that a family is a unit that is emotional. Therefore, this study was looking at the impact of Coronavirus on women's breadwinners that also touches on their families. The Social Capital theory looks at the understanding of both capital and social factors in the development of the economy (Lin & Burt, 2001). This theory looked at the impact of COVID-19 on the social and economic factors that came with the pandemic and how Mkhambathini women are dealing with them. The theory of Coping as a process emphasizes at least two primary coping functions: problem-focused and emotion-focused (Livneh & Martz, 2007). The theory guided the process of explaining the adaptive and coping mechanisms against major socioeconomic challenges caused by Coronavirus.

In terms of methodology, this study uses a qualitative case study research methodology. Data was collected from 30 Mkhambathini Women using semi-structured interviews, each participant was interviewed solely trying to gather all the important information that responded to the objectives of this study. To analyse data thematic analysis was used. A qualitative case study research design was employed. Additionally, it was preferred because it allows participants not to be treated as objects that are controlled by technical procedures (Ibid). This study is a case study of Mkhambathini women-headed households, non-probability sampling technique was used which is based on purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The research paradigm adopted in the study is interpretive because the aim of the thesis is to understand how women-headed household breadwinners coped with the challenges of COVID-19 in the rural area of Mkhambathini.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

Chapter One: This Chapter will concentrate on offering an introduction which will include the background of the research problem, the Significance of the study, a statement of the problem, study objectives, key questions to be asked, justification of the study, scope of study, definition of key concepts, research site and structure of the thesis. Chapter Two: This Chapter will provide a literature review. A literature review will show existing studies in the same context as this study and those that are relevant to the study. The theoretical framework will be provided in this Chapter. It will give theoretical approaches that will be used, explain them broadly then give their relevance to this study. Chapter Three: Research methods, methodologies, and sampling techniques will be discussed in this Chapter explaining how they are relevant to this study and how they will be used for information gathering. Chapter Four: Data presentation, analysis and discussion will be presented in this Chapter relating to the literature review and data presented and analysed in Chapter Two. Chapter Five: The conclusion of this study will be presented in this Chapter by giving a summary, recommendations, and conclusion for the whole study.

1.9 Definition of key concepts

The following are concepts that give an idea of what to expect in this dissertation.

African women – These are women who are indigenous to Africa per the Population Registration Act of 1950 endorsed that every South African classified according to their racial features as part of the system of apartheid that is whites, coloureds', Indians, Africans and others. Africans are the indigenous people of South Africa like the Khoisan, Nguni, Sotho-

Tswana, Shangaan-Tsonga and Venda groups. Therefore, women in such groups are African. The culture, evolution and history of African women are related to the evolution and history of the African continent itself. Literature on conceptualising African women states that they are perceived differently by communities as mothers, girls, wives, grandmothers and aunts (Utkina & Kovalevich, 2018).

Breadwinners - Individuals who earn money to take care of their families. In most cases, it is one person per family. The word breadwinner refers to single-income households in which one person works to earn income while the other remains at home to care for the children (April & Soomar, 2013).

community- is a group of people who use the same territory as their base of operations for daily activities. Members of the community are aware of their distinct and separate identities as a group. It is now clear that a community is more than just a village, as we can have both a village and an urban community (Njeru, 2015).

COVID-19 - Coronaviruses (CoV) fall under a large virus family that causes illnesses ranging from the cold that is common to illnesses that are more severe (UNICEF, 2020).

Decolonisation - is the practice of undoing colonialism, which is the process by which imperial powers establish and dominate foreign territories, such as Africa. Some decolonisation scholars are especially interested in colonial independence movements and the disintegration of worldwide colonial empires. Other scholars expand the definition to include eradicating the economic, cultural, and psychological aspects of colonial life among the previously colonised (Raymond, 2012).

Family - A family household encompasses members who are connected by blood, while a non-family household comprises individuals not related by blood but sharing a home (Wilk et al., 2020).

Households - According to Wilk & Netting (2020), a household is made up of one or more people who share a house and food. It might also be a single family or another group of individuals.

Pandemic - (of a disease) prevalent over a whole world or the country (Schaefer et al., 2021).

Rural Areas - A rural area is an open swath of land with few households or other structures and few people. The density of population in a rural location is very low (Oppong, 2020).

Virus - an agent that is infective that consists typically of a nucleic acid molecule in a protein coat, light microscopy cannot see it as it is too small to be seen, and it can only multiply within cells of a host that is living "the hepatitis B virus" (Daszak & Lipkin, 2011).

Women - A human being that is adult and female (Utkina & Kovalevich, 2018).

1.10 Conclusion

This Chapter introduced this study; an inclusive overview of this research was provided by disclosing the core of this dissertation. It gave the reason behind this study. It specifically included this study's background, problem statement, the relevance of the problem, rationale and the significance of the study, objectives of this study, key research questions, research site, keywords definition, the structure of the thesis and conclusion of this Chapter. The next Chapter focuses on the literature review of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In order to properly engage with a research topic, a literature review is a critical technique for analysing and evaluating current bodies of work (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey, 2011; Ridley, 2012). A literature review may be used to characterize both a product and a process. A literature review is a detailed analysis of both unpublished and published scholarly material relating to a researcher's area as a product (Efron & Ravid, 2019; Ridley, 2012). The literature review focuses on a critical analysis of relevant studies on the phenomenon under research. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016), the literature review's main purpose is to look at the writing in an area that has covered what a researcher is studying. It is made in a way that provides thorough data on the topic being studied. COVID-19 came with many impacts on people's lives and these impacts need to be examined. Literature has exposed COVID-19 to be a large virus which impacts the family and may cause illnesses in humans and animals. It is known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the cold that is common to more severe diseases (Martin et al., 2020). This Chapter contextualizes the impacts of COVID-19 on rural women breadwinners which include people having to stay at home to avoid the spreading of the virus, households losing their jobs, losing their lives and more households being affected by hunger. It contains different definitions of literature review and existing literature that is related to what this study is trying to discover on the impact of COVID-19 on rural women's household breadwinners.

The literature review, as a procedure in a research proposal, dissertation, or thesis, is the portion where a particular reference is made to research that is connected to the researcher's field of study. This approach of the literature review is known as an "embedded" review because it contextualizes the study by relating the research to previous investigations. As a result, the literature review for this study is embedded in nature, as this Chapter connects a sense of women breadwinners to the impact of COVID-19 as an area of research. It also helps to unearth what scholars or authors have written on the proposed study, as it also helps in the discussion and analysis stage of the study to understand what the researcher has discovered that has also been revealed before by other scholars. Therefore, this study will review the existing literature related to the impact of Coronavirus on women this data will be used to form the literature review for this study and also to compare when the researcher is at the stage of discussing and

analysing data to understand what is already written in literature and discovered about the impact of COVID-19 on African women breadwinners' households. In addition, after making links between lengthy texts and the researcher's own study, a literature review develops the researcher's positionality (Ridley, 2012). Researchers do literature reviews for different reasons. Conducting a literature review will allow the researcher to be able to contextualise the study within the field of female breadwinners residing in rural households who experienced different impacts in their lives due to COVID-19. Furthermore, the literature review helps to uncover under-researched areas within the topic being researched, indicating a need for the information that a recent study would supply (Efron & Ravid, 2019; Jesson et al., 2011).

Among the several aims of a literature review, Jesson et al., (2011) states that it is not a checklist or a simple summary of various sources, but rather a critical examination of relevant materials. As a result, for the sake of this study, I decided to conduct both a traditional and a conceptual review. A traditional review engages with prior works using a critical perspective. The conceptual review will be used when engaging with literature surrounding explanations and definitions of women breadwinners in rural households impacted by COVID-19. This type of literature review aims at understanding and exploring conceptual knowledge, which will complement the qualitative approach of this study. The literature review for this study will be organised thematically. The first theme will be Anthropological Research followed by the nature of households of which under this theme Western households, African households and rural African households will be discussed, the third theme will be conceptualizing women and their roles in households, while the fourth theme focuses on understanding African women, theme five discusses the Impact of Coronavirus under the Environment, Economy, and Society. Lastly, the literature review focuses on the Impact of COVID-19 on rural women. The chapter will further discuss theoretical frameworks that are guiding the study.

2.2 The contribution of Anthropologists in women research

Anthropological research deals with aspects that are qualitative and concentrate on making and meaning transmission. Through action and language, meaning is mediated and the best way of understanding this is through engagement and observation which is not easy. Anthropologists use observations as one of the ethnographic methods of collecting data. This is where the researcher collects the data while in the same place as the participants, the researcher gets to know or experience everything that different societies do. In Anthropological research, Anthropologists are participative in research whereas observations are sometimes not enough

to collect qualitative information or to understand information that is deep. Researchers in participant observations join the studied societies which in this study will be women households who are breadwinners and who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers involve themselves in everyday activities that the community they are studying does which can include eating the same food, sleeping with them and living with them (Konopinski, 2013). Tambiah (2013) maintains that certainly, anthropologists derive public recognition from mastery of a particular body of knowledge: by using the data they collect in the world, they categorize and compare kinship systems, human conceptions, and forms of ritual authority. They analyse myths, dietary prohibitions, and plant taxonomy, and attempt to understand the underlying principles of magical exchange, hierarchy, or causation. Descola (2005) states that these items were handed to anthropology by default when Europeans were confronted overseas by perplexing practices and peculiar institutions that no other science was willing to include in its own, already well-defined, realm throughout the process of colonial expansion. Then description methods had to be improved, typological standards had to be created, and disparate facts had to be arranged into categories that gave them the impression of oneness (Descola, 2005).

At a recent panel convened by the Association of Social Anthropologists, researchers from the Firoz Lalji Centre for Africa (FLCA) discussed issues related to COVID-19 and other humanitarian interventions. Through three presentations based on current fieldwork in northern Uganda, researchers explored how populations navigate individualistic public health interventions within the socioeconomic worlds of obligation in which they are imbricated. It was especially interesting to see how ethnographic inquiry can make legible relationships between risk concepts, abstracted clinical interventions, and ever-changing familial and communal connections. "As ethnographers, we were interested in what we could learn about epidemic responses in the various contexts where people go about their daily lives" (Isiko, 2020). Anthropologists (ethnographers) during this pandemic are those who are travelling internationally and researching people about COVID-19 in their lives through a process of sustained observation and participation (Isiko, 2020).

Medical anthropologists have made significant contributions to understanding the effects of epidemics and pandemics which include COVID-19 on social and economic life, as well as the toll they take on health services and health workers. We have discussed HIV in monographs and articles in recent years, as well as how people drew on historical imagery of the plague, and how fear of infection fed social exclusion and discrimination (Briggs, 2005; Parker, 2001;

Schoepf, 2001). More recently, they studied the spread, global efforts, and impact of SARS (Mason, 2012), H1N1 influenza (swine flu) (Atlani-Duault and Kendall, 2009; Leach and Tadros, 2014), Ebola (Benton, 2017; Moran, 2017), and Zika (Gray & Mishtal, 2019; Stellmach et al., 2018). The current COVID-19 pandemic is notable not for its size, but for the response of nation-states to the viral spread.

2.3 Understanding households

The understanding of households by different authors varies as households are not the same. This could depend on the standard of living (Epple and Platt 1998), and the location of the household (Carey, et al., 2014) whether in rural or urban areas and rich or poor households. Some authors focus on the size of families when defining households (Silbaugh, 2016). It is significant to highlight that while some families are prominent, while some are struggling. This feature is demonstrated by looking at the number of people living in one household. Other authors refer to the cultural context to explain Western and African households (Silbaugh, 2016). According to Wilk et al., (2020), a household comprises one or more people who share a house and food. It might also be a single family or another group of individuals. The home is the fundamental unit of study in many social, microeconomic, and political systems, and it is crucial in economics and genetics (Wilk et al., 2020).

The Western 'home' cannot be assumed normal; instead, it must be viewed as a culturally specialized and distinctive institution. In a nutshell, it is an environment that houses dependent offspring and frail elderly parents, but it will quickly revert to a couple when the offspring reach adulthood, or the parents pass away. Nevertheless, to put it bluntly, in the West, the terms "household" and "family" are interchangeable (Russell, 2008). People who live together in the West are more likely to be members of a married nuclear family at some point in their household cycle (Russell, 2008). They may be newlyweds who have never had children, and they may be a couple of seniors whose grown children have established their own independent houses, in most cases, this is not the case in African households or, to be specific, at Mkhambathini, there are a lot more households with unmarried couples but stays together. Some individuals, primarily women, still stay at their parents' houses with their children. This brings to the fore the other cultural lenses for understanding households which are African based.

Comparatively, Davis et al., (2017) indicate that rural African households depend primarily on agriculture, similar to the community of Mkhambathini. The community has gardens in almost

every household. Many of the households have larger vegetable gardens located outside households. This might mean that many community households depend on subsistence farming (Dodd et al., 2020). There are more community gardens in most rural areas than in many parts of the developing world. This could be because many rural African households get around two-thirds of overall earnings from land use (agriculture and subsistence farming); instead of one-third (on average) in those other emerging economies (Ndulo, 2021). There are significant differences between people living in rural households, such as the majority benefiting from off-farm earnings. Therefore, since women are the ones who are guardians of the environment, they get affected by ecological context (Kgari-Masondo, 2015), including epidemics like COVID-19. Nonetheless, culturally, men are breadwinners, but this is slowly becoming the past as women transform into becoming breadwinners (Chesley, 2011).

2.3.1 Conceptualizing households

A household is made up of one or more people who share a house and share food (Wilk et al., 2020). It might also be a single family or another group of individuals. The home is the fundamental unit of study in many social, microeconomic, and political systems, and it is crucial in economics and genetics. A household denotes the social unity of individuals that stay under the same roof. For instance, people living separately cannot say they are one household as they will not be living under one roof, sharing food and a house (Ellickson, 2010). These are people who share resources despite relations, as they possess common interests. A family household encompasses members who are connected by blood, while a non-family household comprises individuals not related by blood but sharing a home. Households and families are basic units of analysis in demography which is what has motivated this research because this study will also work with every household that is willing to participate regardless of whether blood-related or not. To explain further these two words are not the same concepts; they differ. A household is made up of one or more people who live in one house or apartment (Wilk et al., 2020). They could or might not be blood connected. A family consists of two or more people who reside in the same house and are connected by birth, marriage, or adoption (Wilk et al., 2020). In recent years, social historians and anthropologists have argued that households are an important unit in the description, comparison, and study of human societies (Rathje, 1981). The household is the most widespread and fundamental socio-economic unit in society (Rathje, 1981).

Some states have performed better than others in their efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. We discover an intriguing set of correlations when we investigate the various policies and strategies used, as well as the underlying socioeconomic factors: On a wide range of dimensions related to the global health crisis, countries led by women fared significantly better than countries led by men (see Manderson & Levine, 2020). Most women-led governments were quicker to enforce restrictive measures in the early stages of the epidemic, putting public health ahead of economic concerns, and were more successful in eliciting population cooperation. Second, most women-led countries place a greater emphasis on social equality, people's needs, and generosity. These societies are more open to political agendas that prioritize social and environmental health in governmental policy decisions (Manderson & Levine, 2020).

2.3.2 African households

According to Makiwane et al (2017), there is a disaggregation of families with young adults being heads of smaller families, while ageing parents are in charge of large multi-generational families. The role of the extended family has been diminished, and new forms of support such as churches and neighbours' networks have become more important. African households are organised differently, there are single-parent households, nuclear family households and also extended family households (Davis et al., (2017). Usually, a father or a male person is used to be the head and also a breadwinner of the household but during COVID-19 times a lot seems to change as fathers lose their jobs as most were working for firms in the cities and women tend to become the new breadwinners as they have gardens at home so they now depend on food from their garden to fight hunger and selling to make money to buy more needed staff. According to Davis et al., (2017), in both affluent and poor countries in Africa, inequality is considerable. Surprisingly, considering the enormous disparity, both the affluent and the poor spend a large proportion of their income on food, even in richer nations, indicating a relatively weak Engel curve.

This shows that, when it comes to price shocks, particularly domestic ones, family spending habits may not be as diverse as inequality would imply. Richer families in African households are more exposed to externally induced price shocks, but since they have more assets and greater access to financial services, they could be able to withstand the surprises better (Hertel et al., 2010). Looking at Mkhambathini households, most households have domestic animals that they sell whenever they want more money or slaughter when they want food (meat). South

African households are organised in a way that men are always taken as the head of every household and women as the new breadwinners since many men lost their jobs due to COVID-19 regulations. In countries in Africa healthcare providers are weak, with low health budgets and they rely on foreign medical services. They also have a serious lack of medical staff, particularly critical care nurses and anaesthesiologists (Hourel, et al., 2020).

2.3.3 Rural African households

Davis et al., (2017), indicate that rural African households depend mostly on agriculture when looking at Mkhambathini they have gardens almost in every household and bigger gardens outside their households as they depend on subsistence farming (Dodd et al., 2020). There are more community gardens compared with other parts of the developing countries since rural African households get around two-thirds of overall earnings from on-farm agriculture, as opposed to one-third (on average) in those other emerging economies (Ndulo, 2021). When disparities in the degree of development in Africa are considered (as measured by GDP per capita), Africa stays on a common functional pattern as the rest of the world. There are a few significant differences: the majority of off-farm earnings in Africa derive their income from informal self-employment, with rural families being more active in nonfarm home business (often closely tied to agriculture) than wage work (non-agricultural and agricultural), which is more prevalent in other emerging areas. Improved agricultural performance is required for inclusive growth, but understanding the linkages between spatial concerns (agricultural potential and pull factors from small and big urban centres) and family assets and incentives is crucial for successful government policy (Moock, 2019). People in rural areas farm to benefit from their farms as they sell their products for their survival. In almost every household there is a garden and they also trade what they have in their gardens with other households.

2.3.4 Management of households in rural areas during COVID-19

During COVID-19 households are managed by both parents as they are all at home. They work together to try to get through the hunger and other impacts that came with COVID-19 (Roos et al., 2021). Some are managed by women as men mostly lose their jobs and have nothing to do at home so women are the only ones trying during this time (Farre et al., 2021).

2.4 Conceptualizing African women and their roles in households during COVID-19

Literature on conceptualizing African women state that communities perceive them differently in terms of their roles in society as mothers, girls, wives, grandmothers, and aunts (Utkina &

Kovalevich, 2018), race (Office on the Status of Women, 2012) and ecological role (Kgari-Masondo, 2015). According to Utkiana and Kovalevich (2018), numerous proverbs illuminate various perceptions of the function of African women's roles. Essentially, they are viewed as life providers which mean they are the ones who bring babies into the world. They carry children for nine months in their wombs and give birth to them, and their function of motherhood (Utkina & Kovalevich, 2018). There is a link between characteristics and traits which are acceptable for the status of a mother. Certain proverbs portray a mother as particularly vital and fundamental to a family. There is also no doubt about their role as a mother as a haven (Whiting, 2013). She is a source of support and shelter for children and a source of warmth and security in the household (Whiting, 2013). However, another conceptualization used by the Office on the Status of Women (2012) uses race and geographical location to identify African women. For example, African women in this study refer to the indigenous women of South Africa who were previously colonised and termed by the South African Population Registration Act of 1950 as Africans, the Khoisan, Sotho-Tswana, Nguni, Tsonga, Venda, Shangaan, Nguni group indigenous people of South Africa. These women are highly marginalised in society and many live-in poverty (Heffernan et al., 2016). Kgari-Masondo (2015) argues that African women also play another important role which is an ecological role as guardians of the environment as they are primarily engaged in food production. Therefore, it is essential to explore how rural women breadwinners experienced life under the pandemic and how they coped with such challenges.

2.4.1 Women's caring responsibilities outside the home

The healthcare response to COVID-19 was in crisis, and women were inundated with the responsibility of playing the critical role of being caregivers (Boniol et al., 2019). Women account for roughly two-thirds of the global health workforce, and while they are under-represented among physicians, dentists, and pharmacists, they account for approximately 85% of nurses and midwives in the 104 countries where data is available (Boniol et al., 2019). OECD countries now have nearly half of their doctors who are female (OECD, 2019). Women also constitute the vast majority of the long-term care (LTC) workforce in OECD countries, accounting for slightly more than 90% on average. Despite the fact that women constitute the majority of the healthcare workforce, they hold only a small proportion of senior or leadership positions (Downs et al., 2014; Boniol et al., 2019). Indigenous medicines were used to navigate symptoms of the pandemic and many traditional healers who were women were also at work to help communities with traditional herbs to steam and drink (Downs et al., 2014). As such,

African women became very important because they were able to help heal the virus that western medicine struggled with which was a great breakthrough (Downs et al., 2014).

2.4.2 Women's caring responsibilities at home

Women not only dominate the care sector, but they also perform the majority of unpaid work at home. Women spend about two hours more per day on unpaid work than men, a little more than four hours per day (OECD Gender Data Portal, 2020). Where traditional gender roles prevail, gender disparities in unpaid work are greatest. Even in countries with strong and progressive attitudes toward gender equality, gender gaps in unpaid work still amount to about one hour per day. In developing and emerging economies, gender disparities in unpaid work are frequently greater. Childcare takes up a significant portion of women's unpaid work time. Women spend slightly more than 35 minutes per day on childcare activities in OECD countries, which is more than double the time spent by men (15 minutes) (OECD Time Use Database, 2020). Many women provide care for adult relatives, particularly parents, even when they are working. COVID-19 increased the unpaid labour burden on women (Farre et al., 2021). School and childcare facility closures, for example, not only increase the amount of time parents must spend on childcare and child supervision, but also force many to supervise or lead home-schooling (Farre et al., 2021).

Women are likely to bear a disproportionate share of this additional burden. Similarly, any increase in time spent at home as a result of confinement is likely to result in increased routine housework, such as cooking and cleaning. Many parents will struggle to meet these demands, especially those who are required to continue working. Many women due to COVID-19 are inundated with the duties of being caregivers because there were times when hospitals were in crisis because of high numbers of infections. Therefore, rural African women suffer more because of the lack of infrastructure like running water, electricity, nearby clinics, hospitals, reliable transportation and tarred roads.

2.5 Understanding African women

Literature on conceptualising African women states that they are perceived differently by communities as mothers, girls, wives, grandmothers and aunts (Utkina & Kovalevich, 2018). Women have a life cycle that they must follow in order to become fully functional members of society, unlike men who are born and raised so they will be the head of the family. From their teen years, they are taught that they should love themselves and protect their pride so they will get married (Brandth et al., 2016). From birth until adolescence, the girl is treated as the

family's small daughter or sister, to be raised and groomed for her future tasks. Her puberty is seen as an indication of a shift in her function; of being a wife. She will play the caring and training duties as a wife and mother. As she ages within the setting of her family, she reaches the final stage of her life, when she takes on the role of being a grandmother. As a result, each stage of a woman's life assigns her a distinct function to play, and her life history may be viewed as a whole sequence of familial duties (Utkina & Kovalevich, 2018). This study will look at the stage of life the woman (breadwinner) is in currently, whether is she still a girl or an aunt, wife or mother or the last stage of which is a grandparent (McGoldrick, 1989) and then look at how did she deal with the impacts of COVID-19, who was helping if there was someone (Husband or family as a unit) and on how they took care of their households in the time of the pandemic of COVID-19.

2.5.1 African women as mothers

According to Utkina and Kovalevich (2018), motherhood is unquestionably valued more than any other female function. A woman's most important contribution to society is through her offspring. Her position as a wife is overshadowed by her motherhood to the extent that if she cannot have children so many bad things can be said about her and not look at the men's side because it can happen that the one with the problem of having children is him. It is believed that her principal responsibility as a wife is to ensure the continuance of her husband's lineage (Izugbara and Ezech, 2010) even economically. This implies that women are expected to be breadwinners in essence. The belief that motherhood represents the conclusion of a woman's ambitions, goals, and aspirations is a worldwide cultural idealization (Izugbara & Ezech, 2010). Mothers have full-time jobs which are to take care of their children and be breadwinners at the same time since they are caregivers and when the situation is tough in the household they must provide for the needs of the children. COVID-19 also came with more challenges to these women as it came with lockdown and people losing their jobs and having to come home and try something that will help bring food to the table while at the same time, she needs to take care of the house and children, (Baumgarten, 2013). This present study also documents challenges that African rural women breadwinners experienced in their households due to the ramifications of COVID-19 in their households.

2.5.2 African women as guardians of the environment

The environment is very important for Africans and literature depicts that women are perceived as key in environmental issues (Ruether, 2000). In the study by Kgari-Masondo (2015) African

women are perceived as very important in guarding, preserving and conserving the environment. The community of Ga-Rankuwa were displaced from Lady Selborne in Pretoria, the area with fertile lands and relocated to infertile soils in Ga-Rankuwa. This move and the resettlement disrupted them as African women as they left the very fertile farms of Lady Selborne and then were transferred to regions with soils unsuitable for agricultural activities, such as Ga-Rankuwa. As guardians of the environment, the infertile soils never deterred women from looking after the environment. They tried everything they could to restore their soils by using manure and vegetable pills to fertilize their relocation area, Ga-Rankuwa. Some women retained their duty as environmental stewards by inventing ways to interact with their surroundings, such as generating manure to fertilize the soils and cultivating areas in their yards for growing fruits and vegetables. This tells us that situations cannot separate African women from the environment even if the environment is infertile women will make means to make it fertile so they can continue with their farming (Ranger, 2003). Mkhambathini households are also farmers and I believe that not every household has a fertile yard but because women like farming and taking care of the environment they make sure that they water their plants every day and some use cows' dung to make manure for their farm to be fertile, some also use wet waste such as tomato tops, onion peels and potato skins in a bowl to make manure by chopping all these "waste" materials into small pieces and adding water and the waste into a mixer grinder (Barrett & Bevis, 2015).

Females from all over the globe are being assigned a more significant role in the fight against climate change, owing to the United Nations Development Programmes' efforts (UNDP) (DeLoughrey et al., 2011) and this assists in contributing to women's role of being ecologists. Women's expertise and management abilities are being incorporated into plans to reverse adverse climatic conditions; farmers in specific, are taught to play a crucial role in introducing farming methods that are more environmentally friendly and can assist minimize waste of harmful gases that are going to accelerate global warming. Women, particularly rural women, frequently serve as the family's backbone, ensuring household food security, health, and well-being while also contributing to economies through agricultural and livestock production and other kinds of revenue (DeLoughrey et al., 2011). They are frequently environmental stewards, particularly in indigenous and local communities (DeLoughrey et al., 2011). Women were also regarded as ecologists due to their importance in the production of rain. Women, as rainmakers, acted as environmental nurturers (Phiri cited in Ranger 2003: 76). Rain-making rituals are always distinct from others in that they address environmental and communal concerns. Queens

(such as Queen Mojaji of the Lovedu tribe) were thought to be important in obtaining rain, and their popularity reflected this.

2.5.3 African women as breadwinners

The role of women as breadwinners is contested by different scholars. Kelly (2002) argues that in the study, she conducted in Zimbabwe with Shona women who were interviewed in the focus groups, they did not mention the potential that their job may cause their husbands who saw themselves as less or inferior men because their wives were breadwinners. Such women were content to be breadwinners while their husbands were not working. On the other hand, Kelly (2002) revealed a different slant of the narrative of women as breadwinners, for some women she interviewed, felt disgraced to be breadwinners because of the stereotypes of society only accepting men as breadwinners in households. Such women heed the fact that they are the ones who are breadwinners. She mentioned that they spoke about their partners as farm owners and when asked what sort of farming they would consistently respond, "my husband has a cattle and sheep farm" or "he is in dairy production" (Kelly, 2002). Women head about 38 percent of South African homes. As breadwinners, they provide the majority if not the entire financial support for the household. This translates to approximately 6.1 million households where women are the principal breadwinners (Warren, 2007), although this large number of female-headed families in general remains understudied. As a result, it is assumed that their experiences as primary breadwinners are similar to those of male primary heads of households while it is not, as women are worried that their status as women who are heads of households threatened the traditionally male role of caregiver (Warren, 2007). Hence Boushey (2009) argued that males in South Africa normally were struggling with changing masculine identities, it was hard for them to accept that women can be the ones providing for them, they were in denial that since they lost their jobs and since women also go to work these days they can do whatever they were doing as men in their households, that they can take their role which is to be heads of families or breadwinners. Although being the main caregivers in the household, the vast majority of women were also in charge of all household and parenting duties. This made it difficult for them to combine their professional obligations with their personal lives (Boushey, 2009).

2.6 Impact of COVID-19 on women

The great bulk of studies on the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic has excluded rural populations. As a result, the evidence-based knowledge of the epidemic is insufficient and rural

recovery plans risk being influenced by anecdotal or urban-centric data. Studies begin to fill in the blanks by monitoring and analysing the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on rural well-being in different countries. The findings indicate different results which include considerable implications on the health-related and economic components of well-being, and that these consequences are shared across gender, age, ethnicity, and education (Laborde, 2021). The great bulk of studies on the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic have excluded rural populations. As a result, the evidence-based knowledge of the epidemic is insufficient and rural recovery plans risk being influenced by anecdotal or urban-centric data. Studies begin to fill in the blanks by monitoring and analysing the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on rural well-being in different countries (Phillipson et al., 2020, Roesch et al., 2020 and Fuchs-Schundeln et al., 2020). The findings indicate different results which include considerable implications on the health-related and economic components of well-being, and that these consequences are shared across gender, age, ethnicity, and education (Laborde, 2021). Studies have indicated that COVID-19 impacted women negatively especially older ones because they are at a higher risk of illness as they are less likely to be able to sustain themselves in isolation due to the fact that they are caregivers, food producers, and have ensured the upkeep of their families (Power, 2020). For example, Phillipson et al., (2020), mentioned that COVID-19 poses special concerns to older individuals especially women in rural areas of the United States especially those who live alone, with mobility issues, requiring assistance in acquiring food, medicines, and other necessities, as well as in cleaning.

Literature expounds on the fact that COVID-19 increased Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women as most businesses were closed and they were forced to retrench some of the staff and they had to live at home (Roesch et al., 2020). Some women found it difficult to live with their spouses since it was something they were not used to, they discovered that they are too controlling and they end up being emotionally and physically abused by their retrenched spouses which resulted in more divorces filed (Roesch et al., 2020). The study by Roesch et al., (2020) expounds that, a police agency in rural areas of Jianli County, Hubei Province, China, reported a doubling of GBV and domestic violence crimes in February 2020 compared to February 2019, with 90 percent attributed to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the United Kingdom, according to an organization that tracks violence against women, deaths from domestic abuse more than doubled (to 16 fatalities) between March 23 and April 12 compared to the previous ten-year average rate. In South Africa, it has been discovered that the risk of Common mental disorders (CMDs) was nearly three times higher among women who had

experienced psychological or sexual abuse. The study discovered that 15% of women had suffered psychological abuse and fewer than 2% had suffered sexual abuse. Malan et al., (2018) also discovered that more than 40% of perinatal women had experienced psychological abuse and 25% had suffered sexual violence. Looking at Mkhambathini there were also women who seem to be abused so it is, therefore, significant to explore this at Mkhambathini as GBV can affect women breadwinners mentally in a case where they are always shouted on or being sexually and physically abused if they are beaten as this can prevent them from going to work because of bruises and pain.

In Germany, childcare facilities and schools were closed from one day to the next in mid-March. This closure impacted approximately 8.8 million children under the age of 12 and over 4 million working parents, mostly women (Müller et al., 2020). In terms of affected working volume, this equates to a loss of 8% of all normally worked hours which resulted in women losing more income to support their families since their husbands also lost their jobs (Fuchs-Schündeln et al., 2020). Furthermore, in order to reduce infection rates and, in particular, to protect the elderly, the population was encouraged to maintain "social distance," discouraging neighbours, friends, and, in particular, grandparents from supporting informal childcare which resulted in more women forced to stay at home to take care of their children (Alon et al., 2020). Because established institutional care arrangements and informal caregivers were no longer available, women faced new challenges such as losing their jobs.

2.6.1 Economic status of African women during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking at COVID-19's effects on household economic status and well-being, Mahmud and Riley (2020) begin by estimating the impact of the lockdown on household income as their income is what determines their well-being and standard of living which for many households changed during lockdown to the worst. Lower agricultural sales, company earnings, and labour income discovered that all these factors contribute to a significant drop in income (Kanu, 2020). The study by Kanu (2020) concluded that households can manage these financial losses by cutting back on spending, expanding credit, boosting labour supply, or selling assets. Mahmud and Riley (2020) also revealed a significant decrease in food expenditure and an increase in reported hunger as a result, this is even true generally as if a person is having financial losses there will be insufficient money to spend on food so the hunger starts.

According to Phillipson et al., (2020), the COVID-19 impact is experienced in different ways between genders. Many of the people who were more impacted by COVID-19 were women

which are the reason why this study focuses on women (Malik & Naeem, 2020). The virus disproportionately impacts teachers and nurses and many nurses and teachers are females (Phillipson et al., 2020). Women are the ones predominantly responsible for childcare, argues the European Union (EU) and the teaching of learners at home is mostly done by women (Malik & Naeem, 2020). Entrepreneurs in rural areas are females and women who have taken on-farm initiatives on diversification often done so to fit around their caring and other childcare responsibilities (Phillipson et al., 2020). Doing all these while they still need to undertake COVID-19 caring roles may be adding challenges that this study is trying to discover. Disaggregated sex data for COVID-19 reveal no difference in the number of cases of women and men, the sex difference is spotted in mortality and vulnerability to this pandemic of COVID-19 (Lancet, 2020). Evidence that is emerging suggests that fewer women than men are killed by COVID-19, based on sex immunological or differences in gender which includes smoking patterns and prevalence, also in families, there were changes in gender hierarchies most men lost their jobs so as a result, they came back home full time then women became the household breadwinners as they were the ones who continued to provide for the families and taking care of the children (Smith, 2019).

COVID-19 poses special concerns to older individuals in rural areas of the United States (Phillipson et al., 2020) and other rural areas as this study reveals. Rural communities are on average, but they have fewer economic resources with more underlying health issues whereas in urban areas the impact is above average. For example, looking at Mkhambathini at Inkanyezini, Maqongqo, Intweka and Mbungwini Locations there is no operating clinic; they only wait for mobile clinics which come only on Tuesdays or Thursdays. Access to technology and Internet connections is more limited in rural areas, same as access to health facilities (Phillipson et al., 2020). Overall, this puts rural persons in danger of not just contracting only viruses but also of not being able to receive enough basic health care required.

The impact of COVID-19 increased extremely high due to poor infrastructure, for example, under-developed roads, and low bridges (Oppong, 2020). Also, the environment has a huge impact since some of the people in rural areas do not have proper housing, they squirt in one room without clean water (Oppong, 2020). COVID-19 has also increased GBV against women as most businesses were closed and they were forced to retrench some of the staff (Roesch et al., 2020). Some women found it difficult to live with their spouses since it was something they were not used to, they discovered that they are too controlling and they ended up being emotionally and physically abused by their retrenched spouses which resulted in more divorces

filed (Roesch et al., 2020). A police agency in rural areas of Jianli County, Hubei Province, China, reported a doubling of gender-based domestic violence crimes in February 2020 compared to February 2019, with 90 percent attributed to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the United Kingdom, according to an organization that tracks violence against women, deaths from domestic abuse more than doubled (to 16 fatalities) between March 23 and April 12 compared to the previous ten-year average rate. Violence against women is one of the most common and devastating violations of human rights, with more than one in every three women worldwide being physically or sexually violated at some point in their lives (UN, 2019; WHO, 2021). Furthermore, violence perpetrated by an intimate partner is the most common type of VAW, affecting about 614 million women globally (WHO, 2021) rising due to the pandemic.

2.6.2 Plight of food security on women-led households in Africa

The impact of the Coronavirus in general led to households' food security being very low during the period of lockdown (Adebayo and Oluwamayowa, 2021) and this affected mainly women-led households. When looking at the intake of food, members of households reported the eating patterns to be not regular as households had little money to buy food which can be the result of jobs people lost during the lockdown and the staff reduction which resulted in the salary cut as the working days were reduced as well. They further mentioned that the majority of their participants have ended up using violence to get food for example, at Mkhambathini there was an increase in housebreaking. Outrageous instability in their powerlessness to get food because of shortages of food and the failure to profit from the palliatives of the government has been found to trigger episodes of contention and lack of healthy sustenance in households (Devereux et al., 2020).

2.6.3 Effects of Coronavirus on the Society

The effect of COVID-19 on society is huge and differs in every society depending on the residents and how their standard of living, their well-being (Sibley et al., 2020), and location whether it is rural or urban areas (Bibby et al., 2020), and whether they are rich or poor (Bibby et al., 2020). The literature review will be done on the impact on gender, COVID-19 on graduates and the Impact of COVID-19 on Rural Women.

2.6.3.1 Coronavirus on Graduates

Schools, colleges and universities closed in many countries with the aim of limiting people's contact and saving their lives (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). According to Burgess & Sievertsen

(2020), it will be hard for graduates to find jobs and they will start working for lower-paying companies as they might expect as a result of the downturn in companies. Luo et al., (2020), said that there are students in rural households who have fallen into poverty or fallen back into poverty while they have escaped poverty. This was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that was found at the end of 2019. Luo et al (2020), stated that in China about 23.0% of 161 poverty graduates reported falling back into poverty due to the pandemic of COVID-19 but between provinces there were variations.

The percentage was the highest at Hubei as they got 33.3%. In Sichuan about one-quarter of which is 25.0% and 25.8% at Jiangxi, at Guangdong they have about one-fifth, Shaanxi 22.2% and Zhejiang 22.2%. The difference is less than 10% in Liaoning (9.1% and Hebei (8.3%). Their study also shows that 19.3% of poverty graduates were not sure if they will fall back into poverty or not and this was the highest in Hebei. (26.7%) then followed by 25.8% in Jiangxi and 22.2% in Zhejiang in turn. In the five provinces, it ranges from 8.3% (Hebei) to 18.2% in Liaoning, the left 58% of poverty graduates reported impossible for them to fall back into poverty; this was the lowest 40% in Hubei followed by 48.5% in Jiangxi and 55.6% in Zhejiang in turn. In the five countries, it ranges from Sichuan (65.0%) and Hebei (83.3%) (Luo et al, 2020).

In African countries COVID-19 contributed more to poverty as more graduates were the ones supporting their families with their bursaries, the pandemic came with restrictions, students cannot go to the university offices everything is done online and looking at this there are disadvantaged students who reside in very rural areas where there is no electricity, some have electricity but do not have the means to apply like smartphones and laptops, this results in them not being able to apply for bursaries so they end up not getting bursaries they used to provide at home then hunger begins (Luo et al., 2020). This study will not look at different provinces, but it will only focus on one province which is KwaZulu-Natal, also in KwaZulu-Natal, it will specifically focus on one Municipality which is Mkhambathini Local.

2.7 The gap that this study is trying to bridge

Looking at the limitations of the existing studies by different authors that show gaps that still need attention, this study will try to bridge the gap in response to Mueller et. al. (2020) proposal that there should be more studies conducted on rural studies such as America, and African countries but not only the space where the COVID-19 started. In addition, Mueller et al., (2020) suggested that COVID-19 research in rural households is needed. According to Phillipson et

al., (2020), the Coronavirus impact is experienced in a different way between genders. The gap that exists in the body of literature does not represent anthropological views and experiences of women heading households at Mkhambathini. Research findings will thus be contributed to broaden the discussion and to shape women policies and interventions in pandemic times, as such this study will focus on rural households with African women breadwinners.

The shortage of publicly accessible and fine-grained information on these rural areas would shed some light on decision-makers. For instance, even though unemployment statistics from the government are available in rural areas, there are many standard errors and information most of the time suppressed or rejected, making it challenging to ask different questions that can be answered reliably (Mueller et al., 2020). According to UNICEF (2020), there should be a study that will accommodate everyone in rural households, not only those who own certain types of phones or those that use certain types of networks only as COVID-19 affects everyone regardless of what phone a person owns. This notion proves that the information available on rural households and the impact of COVID-19 is insufficient hence this study is important. This study aims to fill this gap by collecting data on one of the rural areas in one country, which is South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, Mkhambathini. This research is fundamental as it will provide more information on how COVID-19 has impacted rural households with African women breadwinners using Anthropological lenses. It is envisaged that the findings of this study will help the government and non-governmental organisations to find solutions easily for rural households' challenges to COVID-19 focusing on the case study of African women breadwinners in Mkhambathini.

2.8 Principal theories upon which the research project will be constructed (-> research design):

This study will use three theories, the theories chosen for this study were chosen because the researcher believes that they are the ones which define everything that this study is trying to discover, which is to discover the impact of COVID-19 on African women breadwinners in rural households. Theories that will be used include Family systems theory, Marginalization theory and Social Capital theory.

Family systems theory (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) is a human behaviour theory that defines the family unit as a complex social system in which members interact with one another to influence one another's behaviour. Family systems theory is a way of understanding human functioning that focuses on interactions between family members as well as interactions between the family

and the context(s) in which it exists. Family systems theory has been applied in a variety of settings, including general psychotherapy and family therapy in particular (working from a systems framework with emotional, behavioural, or relational symptoms in individuals, couples, and families); education systems; and society difficulties. Family systems theory emerged during the late 1950s (a time ripe for theoretical advances in psychology) and staked its unique claim by suggesting that psychopathology is caused by a disrupted system of family relations rather than the individual (Crossno, 2011).

According to Bourdieu (1985), social capital theory (SCT) is "the aggregate of actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized mutual acquaintance or recognition relationships." Social relationships, according to social capital theory, can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital. For example, a stable family environment can promote educational attainment as well as the development of highly valued and rewarded skills and credentials. Social capital, in evolutionary terms, is any aspect of a social relationship that provides reproductive benefits.

It is also referred to as social exclusion, and it refers to being pushed to the periphery of society due to a lack of access to rights, resources, and opportunities. It is a major source of vulnerability, which refers to being exposed to a wide range of potential harms and being unable to deal with them adequately. People who are marginalized lack an active voice, identity or place in society. Individuals and groups can be marginalized for a variety of reasons, such as race, gender or gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, sexuality, age, and/or religion. Some people identify with multiple marginalized groups, which can lead further to marginalization. Marginalization can be either subtle or overt.

In sum the three theories are relevant to the study in that, family systems theory tells us that there is no way an individual can be understood in isolation from others but that an individual can be understood as part of their family, as the family is a unit that is emotional (Brown, 1999). Families are understood or viewed as a solidarity entity built on individual connections based on relations that can never be understood in isolation from the system (Brown, 1999). This theory will help to look at how women breadwinners work together with their families, and how they treat and help each other as a family. It will only look at the family as a unit and the impact of COVID-19 on the family socially, economically, environmentally, and educationally using the lens of a woman who is a breadwinner. In social capital theory, researchers have accepted the role played by social capital in unsustainable development and the progress of

economics (Lin & Burt, 2001). It examines the understanding of both capital and social factors in economic development.

Nonetheless, its distinctiveness is centred on social values and its refusal to create reliance on emerging values as potential determinants of economic outcomes (Lin & Burt, 2001). This theory will examine the social, capital, and economic factors that came with COVID-19, as well as how Mkhambathini households dealt with them as a unit. The theory of marginalization examines the economic and developmental dynamics. The perspective is organized along the contours of capitalism's ongoing stabilization, both locally and globally. This is represented in our society's urban economy by the formal and informal sectors. Nonetheless, it is widely used as a tool for observing the structure of relationships between those who are dominant and those who are integrated (Gerry, 1978). It also considers widely dispersed patterns of production, exchange, and distribution. This theory will be very useful because women were mostly marginalized, so it will look at how they were ignored and how they are living their lives in this modern world, which neither of the previous two theories could cover.

2.8.1 The Relevance of Theories to the Study

This study will use the family systems theory, social capital theory and marginalization theory. Firstly, family systems theory is a theory of human behaviour, the researcher found this theory suitable for this study as this theory is of human behaviour which is what Anthropology is based on, it defines the family unit as a complex social system in which members interact to influence each other's behaviour, it will assist in investigating on whether the relationship in the family changed when other family members came back home to quarantine or did they support each other or there were issues which came with the pandemic and them staying together full time as a family. Family members interconnect, making it appropriate to view the system as a whole rather than as individual elements. Family systems theory will also help to explain household relationships which affect income generation when considering the number of members and how they generally support each other as a family, their effort to bring income for living as much as there is someone called their breadwinner but what are others contributing or how are they helping the breadwinner. Marginalisation theory will help explain rural deprivation especially for women and the infrastructure needed to create opportunities, their way of living and to generally benefit them as households. Marginalization theory does not go beyond the lenses of economic exclusion and social deprivation. This then limits its scope of understanding economic stratification entirely. Many suggestions depict that family systems

theory has often hidden the importance of cultural differences, prejudice, and socio-economic disadvantage with regard to such issues as family goals, rules, boundaries, control, and generational structure. The social capital theory will help to explain the dynamic community network which results in some benefiting from those relationships (chiefs and kings) and all those close to them, this affects decisions economically as some decisions cannot be taken without their approval for instance, as some women breadwinners lost their jobs some would have wanted to start some businesses in the environment but needed to first find a place to grow some food or to build a small room where she will be selling trying to make some money but needed to consult chiefs and kings for the use of that particular place and for them to approve the work she wants to start. Social Capital-Potential disadvantages of social capital include encouraging behaviour that worsens rather than improves economic performance, acting as a barrier to social inclusion and social mobility, dividing rather than uniting communities or societies, and facilitating rather than reducing crime, educational underachievement, and health. The study will try to close this downside at the Mkhambathini location as they will be data collected on women in this area who are breadwinners, the collected data will help to see how the above-mentioned downsides affect these women and their families so it will be easy for the government also to see them and try to intervene.

2.9 Summary

The discussed literature hereby unfolds the unpredictable impacts of COVID-19 on women who are breadwinners in rural households. It looks at how society sees them, their duties at home, and the overall impact of COVID-19 on them. It contained existing literature that is related to what this study is trying to discover. This Chapter also focused on the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study which are family systems theory, social capital and marginalization theory. The following Chapter focuses on the methods and methodologies that this study will use.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The methodology portion of the research helps the reader to objectively examine the study's overall validity and reliability. The strategies used to find, select, process, and analyse information on a topic is a research methodology. The methodology is the justification for using a particular research method. This study uses the qualitative research approach which focuses on phenomena that occur in a natural setting including studying those phenomena in all complexity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). For Okeke and Van Wyk (2015), a qualitative research approach necessitates that the data collected posits a rich report about the phenomenon under study. While on the other hand the research design is perceived as a method of data gathering from the sampling of participants, the procedures of data gathering and the analysis of data to be employed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70).

This study investigates, analyses, asserts, records, and establishes the experiences of how COVID-19 affected the African women breadwinners living in rural households of Mkhambathini, Pietermaritzburg KZN province. The research will be undertaken at KZN Province, in Pietermaritzburg city at the Mkhambathini location. This place falls under rural settlements. The area has diverse kinds of people in terms of personality, standard of living, languages (there are people who speak different languages which include IsiZulu, English and IsiXhosa), family types (single-parent families, nuclear families and extended families) and sizes (per household they are different in numbers). The community is traditional and mostly practices African religions. Most of the households work in firms in Pietermaritzburg. While the majority of members of the community are employed as cleaners on the roads as Zibambele workers (Zibambele Road Maintenance Programme), halls, schools, roads and ranks as Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and Community Work Programmes (CWP). The community also has well-educated members who are teachers, nurses and so forth. Other members have businesses such as spaza shops, Tractor-Loader-Backhoe (TLBs), trucks and tractors. According to Njeru (2015), a group of people with common characteristics living in the same area is called a community as such this study will be conducted with the Mkhambathini community. This is a place where people are still ploughing to get their food,

where people still live in big families, and where families still have domestic animals as part of their wealth.

Research site



Figure 1: A map of KwaZulu Natal (Available at: <https://ofomaps.com>)



Figure 2: A map of Mkhambathini Area (Available at: <https://municipalities.co.za/map/1086/mkhambathini-local-municipality>)

3.2 Research methodology

The practical "how" of any given piece of research, is simply referred to as research methodology. It is specifically about how a researcher designs a study in a systematic manner to ensure valid and reliable results that address the research aims and objectives. For example, how did the researcher decide what data to collect (and what data to ignore), who to collect it from (this is referred to in research as "sampling design")? how to collect it (also known as "data collection methods"), how to analyse it (also known as "data analysis methods") (Sileyew, 2019). This study's data is collected from Mkhambathini women since most studies showed that it is women from rural areas that COVID-19 had more impact on. Many of the people who were immensely impacted by COVID-19 were women which are the reason why this study focuses on them (Malik & Naeem, 2020). I decided to conduct interviews and collect data personally to make sure every assembled information is quality.

3.2.1 The qualitative approach

This study takes both a qualitative and quantitative approach. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:70), six types of research designs are frequently discussed in the research literature: conceptual studies, historical research, action research, and case study research which was used in this study, ethnography was also used as the researcher was visiting women breadwinners in their households and grounded theory. The case study design used was a developmental case study. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:75), case study research can be positivist, interpretive, or critical, depending on the researcher's underlying philosophical assumptions. The study was approached from an interpretive standpoint by the researcher. Nieuwenhuis (2007) mentioned that "the researcher interprets phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them in qualitative research, which describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions". The qualitative approach was chosen by the researcher to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on rural households headed by African women "breadwinners." The qualitative approach was chosen by the researcher because this study is an anthropological study of which in anthropology studies have to be qualitative and because I believe it has the potential to generate respondents' perceptions of which here was of the impact of COVID-19 on rural households headed by African women "breadwinners". Another advantageous use of the qualitative approach is that it allows the researcher to interact closely with participants in their own context.

3.2.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is thought to provide a lens through which a phenomenon can be studied (Gelo, 2012). The paradigm used in this study is interpretivism, which focuses on comprehending the phenomenon under investigation (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The most common paradigm used by qualitative researchers to comprehend the world is interpretivism (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This study's information will be context-specific, subjective, and socially created, adhering to the criteria of qualitative research and the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm, according to Alharahsheh et al., (2020), is a component of the researcher's worldview, fundamental values, beliefs, and methodological framework. The worldview from which the researcher works. Interpretivism's ontology and epistemology are important for this study. They will both help the researcher find the information he or she is looking for about female breadwinners in rural areas. Ontology helps researchers determine how certain they can be about the nature and existence of the things under investigation (Alharahsheh et al., 2020). Epistemology is important because it influences how scholars structure their research in their pursuit of knowledge (Alharahsheh et al., 2020).

3.2.3 Role of the researcher

Qualitative studies accept researcher subjectivity as unavoidable and regard the researcher as a research instrument in the data-gathering process. Immersion of the researcher in the changing real-world situation is critical because the qualitative researcher must record those changes in a real-world context (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The qualitative approach, on the other hand, has several drawbacks that the researcher should consider. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:14-15), the qualitative approach can be time-consuming and demanding because the data obtained is voluminous, more expensive than the quantitative approach, and more prone to human bias and error because the researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon under investigation. To avoid information falsification, the researcher will hold a preliminary session with each participant, during whom she will inform them about the purpose of the study and provide them with a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity, which is also included in their consent forms.

3.3 Research design

The research design employed in this study is a case study because it is more aligned with the qualitative research approach as it focuses on producing rich data about the phenomenon under study (Tracy, 2020: 61). As Leedy and Ormrod (2001) elucidate case studies goal is that of

attaining “more about a little known or poorly understood situation” in this case study the poorly understood situation is the perspectives of African rural women who are breadwinners in the Mkhambathini location, looking at the impact that came with COVID- 19 into their 'households and their coping strategies thereof'. On the other hand, Nieuwenhuis defines a research design as a strategy or plan which moves from the underlying assumptions that are philosophical to specifying the participants, the techniques of data gathering to be used and the analysis of data to be done (2007:70). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:160) a research design is a plan for selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer the research question. The design gives an explanation regarding the choice of a sample population where the respondents are stationed, how they will be involved in the study as well as the circumstances under which they will be studied. It is also a plan that acts as a bridge between the theoretical discussions of the opening Chapter and the subsequent Chapters. This design must cover specific styles of research and specific issues in planning research. For example - sampling, reliability, validity and ethical considerations, planning data collection and data analysis (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2002: 73). As indicated by Nieuwenhuis (2007:70), “the choice of a research design is based on the researcher’s assumptions, research skills and research practices, and influences of the way in which he or she collects the data. There is a difference between a qualitative research design and a quantitative research design”. Qualitative data take the form of words, spoken or written and visual images (observed or creatively produced) as the researcher will be visiting her participants in their homes to make sure that the study is qualitative by having face-to-face interviews. A qualitative research design is associated primarily with strategies of research such as ethnography, phenomenology and grounded theory (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The researcher looked at the problem through the functionalist paradigm with regards to the impact of COVID-19 on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”, the study is Anthropological and it is a case study of the Mkhambathini area in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The research design used by the researcher in this investigation is a qualitative case study strategy.

3.3.1 Sampling Technique

This study used a non-probability sampling technique which included purposive and snowballing sampling. On the one hand, purposive sampling is an intentional selection of informants based on their ability to elucidate a specific phenomenon (Etikan et al., 2015). The sampling helped the researcher to get participants who stay in the location and willing to participate by answering the research questions. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to

find participants using the snowball sampling technique. On the other hand, the snowball sampling technique provides the researcher with unknown participants by being referred to by individuals (Etikan et al., 2015). The first informant was my neighbour that I know who is a breadwinner and she managed to refer me to other participants. The sampling technique allowed data build-up, as the initial participants directed me to others who answered the questions for the research; these were people who were directly or indirectly affected by the impact of COVID-19 specifically women breadwinners' experiences. It focused on those who are the only breadwinners at home during this time of COVID-19. The study sampled research participants between the ages of 25 to 60+ years, this is because at this age most women are already starting to be independent and some are already married and owning their homes with their husbands and children (Glynn, 2012). The recruitment of research participants included women from uMkhambathini and excluded women in neighbouring areas. The sample of 30 which was relatively deemed relevant by Saunders (2012) who suggest that a range of four to 12 participants is likely to be sufficient when chosen from populations considered homogeneous in qualitative research and that 12–30 participants, when chosen from populations, are considered heterogeneous. This sample size produced a nuanced data which categorically informed that uMkhambathini is composed of different families with different living standards.

3.3.2 Data collection methods

The methodology that was used for this dissertation to collect data is based on a qualitative procedure which draws from a case study design and interviews will be employed. Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. This method allows various techniques such as participant observation and face-to-face interviews which will be used in this study (Hennink et al., 2020). As opined by Bernard (2017) data collection methods look at how to gather valuable data. Interviews will be used to collect data for this study, which are defined as qualitative research methods that rely on asking questions to collect data. They involve two or more people, one of whom is the interviewer who asks the questions and the other is the interviewee who answers them. There are various types of interviews, which are often distinguished by their level of structure which is unstructured, semi-structured, and structured interviews (Benard, 2007). The types of interviews that are used in this study are semi-structured because they help in making the coding of data to be uncomplicated. The interviews took about 30-45 minutes per participant for the duration of 2 months of fieldwork. A gatekeeper's letter was obtained from an *Induna* of Mkhambathini (See Appendix 7 & 8)

because it is needed when using this method to act as a mediator between the researcher and the participants (Jegede, 2015). The gatekeeper is the induna of the community and the researcher also received the UKZN research ethics letter (Appendix 9) that permitted the researcher to undertake interviews.

3.3.3 Data analysis

Researchers employ various methods to acquire, create, and analyse data to reach debatable findings in qualitative studies (Bernard, 2017). In this study thematic analysis was used as a method for data analysis. The thematic analysis is predominantly used in Anthropology (Albana, 2015: 02). Anthropologists use thematic analysis because it helps to analyse only the data needed for the study. The thematic analysis allows the researcher to analyse data using six steps: Data familiarization, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and producing the report or manuscript (Kiger & Varpio 2020). Thematic analysis is significant in a qualitative study because it is able to reduce data to a manageable usable size to fit the phenomenon under study and the objectives of the study.

In this study thematic analysis was used as a method for data analysis. This data analysis method is generally used in anthropology. As indicated by Albala (2015: 2-3), anthropologists mainly utilise six steps of analysing themes to distinguish examples of significance over a dataset that gives a response to the exploration of the question being addressed and examples are recognized through a thorough procedure of data familiarization, data coding, and subject improvement and update and one of the upsides of (our rendition of) anthropological thematic examinations is that it is hypothetically adaptable.

Thematic analysis, like grounded theory and the development of cultural models, necessitates more involvement and interpretation from the researcher, who interacts with the participants more. This made it much easier to analyse the data. Thematic analyses go beyond counting explicit words or phrases to identify and describe both implicit and explicit ideas within data organized into themes. The identified themes were then typically represented by codes, which were then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis (Guest et al, 2014). Birks & Mills (2015) define theoretical sampling as an iterative process with constant data comparison, highlighting when more information is needed to achieve theoretical saturation. The researcher attempted to interact with the data more and to comprehend every piece of information provided without bias or judgment.

3.3.3.1 Application of Steps of Thematic Analysis

In analysing data, the six steps were applied on data analysis as follows. In the first step: is the familiarisation of the researcher with the data - this step is where I tried to get used to the data collected. As argued by Kiger & Varpio (2020) familiarising yourself with the entirety of the data set first provides a valuable orientation to the raw data and is foundational for all subsequent steps. Once the data was collected, the researcher re-listened to the phone recordings, and went back and read the notes she made during face-to-face interviews with those who did not want to be recorded to make sure that the familiarity is enhanced. The researcher also made sure that she is very familiar with the collected data by reading it repeatedly and by listening to the recordings repeatedly to make sure that she understood the data collected for this study. The audio data was first transcribed from isiZulu to English in writing to make sure that the researcher is familiar with every data collected then, the second step was followed whereby initial codes were generated. According to Boyatzis (1998: 63), a code is 'the segment that is the most basic or element of the information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon' as the first truly analytic step in the process, coding helps to organize data at a granular, specific level. After stepping one's familiarization work, the researcher started taking notes looking for potential data that is of interest to the study, questions, links between data collected, and other data that came up during research interviews. The researcher also set the information to the codes that are relevant and also started linking it to the theoretical framework.

Thereafter I followed step three which focuses on searching for themes. According to Varpio et al., (2017) themes do not just come from the collected information; rather, they are made by the researcher by combining, analysing, comparing, and even graphically mapping how codes relate to one another. In inductive analysis, researchers derive themes expressly from the coded data, so the themes identified will be more closely linked to the original data and reflective of the entire data set (Braun & Clarke 2006). The researcher started discovering themes that link with the study. The themes were firstly generated using objectives, key questions to be asked and data collection instrument questions then more came from the data collected.

The fourth step focuses on reviewing themes. The researcher reviewed all the themes and also named them to make things easier when analysing data. While the fifth step focused on defining and naming themes. In this step, the researcher finalized the themes and reworded the final themes. In the last theme, which is the final step, the researcher was analysing and discussing all the findings. In this step, the researcher provided an analytic narrative based on the data that

was collected from the participants (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Thus, the first step of familiarization with the data allowed me to read the data almost three times, and repeated the process when writing the analysed themes and content so that I can reference the data related to the themes that were recurring in the interviews. Thereafter codes were generated so that I can identify the participant and reference them appropriately. I used thematic analysis in generating initial codes. Rereading the interviews helped in constructing and searching for themes. In addition, the same process also assisted in revisiting themes and reviewing them. This ensured that after all data was reviewed, I then finalised the defining, and naming of themes. Steps one to six aided me to ensure a coherent narrative about the phenomenon of this study. I, therefore, managed to construct a detailed constructive and coherent report on data collected under themes and that gave me the opportunity to analyse the data against the literature reviewed in Chapter Two to produce the detailed report of this study about: *‘The impact of Coronavirus on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal’*.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The UKZN prescribes the study’s ethical considerations that academic researchers must observe. Therefore, before undertaking fieldwork for this study, I first requested ethical clearance from the UKZN Ethics Committee. A gatekeeper clearance was approved and provided by *Induna* of the location (Mkhambathini). Informed consent forms (Appendix 3) were hand-delivered to the participants to read and sign, I later collected them before the interviews. The consent letter detailing the description of the study and assuring them of the confidentiality of their identity and answers was provided to each interviewee. The names of participants are coded, and their actual names are not used. In line with ethical issues, the names of the participants must be hidden, and pseudonyms must be used to protect the interviewees’ identities. The information gathered was transcribed and analysed carefully to avoid being biased in any way. The information collected will be presented as it is and not falsified. The research data will be secured by the supervisor in both soft and hard copies in the lockable cabinet in the supervisor’s office. The data will be disposed of after five years by the supervisor.

3.5 Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability

To demonstrate the research's trustworthiness, the reliability and validity of the research must be evaluated (Bloomberg & Volpe 2019). The data analysis was done precisely, consistently, and thoroughly as advised by Nowell et al., (2017). To enhance the analysis's reliability, the

researcher asked two more checkers to double-check the codes in accordance with the coding scheme and draw separate inferences to see whether they produce the same results (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). And this process was implemented because it is critical to examine credibility at each stage of the study. This rigorous approach was followed by the researcher to verify the study's reliability and validity.

3.6 The study's potential limitations

COVID-19 poses research hurdles, necessitating the use of novel approaches. Challenges with people not allowing the researcher inside their houses were considered. The researcher also looked for people's phone numbers from her contacts so she will be able to contact them for participation requests and to ask for other people who may be interested in participating in the study before going to every household. This strategy assisted a lot when undertaking fieldwork because I managed to reach the number of participants required for the study and the interviewees were cordial - while some refused me to enter their homes others allowed me in their households.

3.7 Conclusion

Research methods and methodology are crucial in every research project. Hence this Chapter explained about the research methods and methodologies. It named and explained more about all the methods that were used to collect and analyse data for this study. The research method chosen was qualitative and the case study design. The study employed an interpretivism paradigm and the objective of this research was to anthropologically record the perspectives of African rural women breadwinners of Mkhambathini about the impacts that came with Coronavirus into their 'households and their coping strategies thereof'. Semi-structured interviews of 30 participants were conducted face-to-face to collect data on: *The impact of Coronavirus on rural households headed by African women "breadwinners" of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal.*

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND THE DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses primarily the data collected for the study titled, “The impact of Coronavirus on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal”. Individual interviews were used to gather data which were conducted using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with Mkhambathini Municipality women who are breadwinners. To analyse the gathered data, thematic analysis was used. To develop the important themes that relate to this study’s objectives, the researcher went through the theories, literature and transcription of the collected data repeatedly. The themes created were characterized by focusing on the repeated and similar perceptions and opinions of the participants during the process of the interview, which were formed into patterns that better clarify the themes. It did not showcase only options that are similar to Mkhambathini’s impacts of COVID-19 on women that are breadwinners only but it also showed links between the existing literature reviewed and the findings of the present study. The researcher utilised fictitious names in relation to each participant’s responses. The names are coded as participant 1 to Participant 30. As per ethical observance of conducting research at UKZN.

The data collected from 30 African breadwinners of Mkhambathini revealed the different biography of African women breadwinners residing in Mkhambathini ranging from age 20 to 60+. Likewise, by utilizing Kiger and Varpio’s (2020: 59) version of the analysis of data which is the thematic analysis the study was able to unearth rich information from participants by following their six steps of analysing data which are data familiarization, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and producing the report or manuscript. Themes that emerged and tally with the literature reviewed and relate with the questions that helped participants to be able to answer the critical queries of this study which are: What are the perspectives of African women breadwinners of Mkhambathini about the impact of COVID-19 on their households and how do they cope with such ramifications? How was the socio-economic standard of the Mkhambathini’s households before COVID-19?

What are the economic, environmental, and social impacts of COVID-19 on rural households with African women breadwinners' of Mkhambathini? What are the perspectives of African breadwinners in rural areas of Mkhambathini about how they cope with their households with the impacts of COVID-19?

The themes that emerged are as follows: The first theme is the Demography, Biography and Background of the African women breadwinners in a rural setting and the impact of the Coronavirus. The theme includes sub-themes on the Forms the family participants come from drawing from the number of children and dependents, the employment of the participants (self or formal) and the ramifications of COVID-19. The second theme presents and analyses data and literature on the impact of Coronavirus on rural households headed by African women “breadwinners” of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal. This theme also focuses on the concept of an African woman breadwinner during COVID-19 times in a rural area context it also looks at rural African women breadwinners during the Coronavirus pandemic by looking at their Means of survival which include family support, mental well-being, gender-based violence and quality healthcare system and the last is coping strategies. These themes will be discussed respectively, and the last part of the Chapter will be the concluding remarks.

The themes emerged by following the diverse questions that assisted in the construction of final themes that were asked during interviews with participants. They are as follows:

Section A: Personal Information of the participant

- How old are you (Age)?
- Marital status

Section B: Specific questions relating to the key questions

1. Is your family nuclear, extended or is a single parent headed?
2. Do you have children? If yes, how many?
3. How many dependents do you have? (Specify number of males and females)
4. How do you feel about being a breadwinner as a woman during the COVID-19 pandemic?
5. As a breadwinner what role do you play in your household members? Are you a mother, sister, aunt, grandmother or other?

6. What are your experiences as a female breadwinner during COVID-19?
7. What are the impacts of COVID-19 on your life? Explain under the following headings
 - (a). Social impacts
 - (b). Economically
8. As the breadwinner was there any support from the family or other organisations? Explain
9. What did you do to cope with the impact of COVID-19 in your household?

4.2. Demography, Biography and Background of the African women breadwinners in a rural setting and the impact of the Coronavirus.

The demographic, biographical and background illustration of the study findings reveals that many of the participants which were women were affected by COVID-19. This supports the findings of the work of Malik and Naeem (2020) which revealed that the majority of people who were affected by the impacts of Coronavirus were women. These African women are dominant in Inkanyezini, Intweka, Maqongqo and Mbungwini. The highest number interviewed is from Intweka followed by Inkanyezini then Maqongqo and lastly Mbungwini. These demographics approve contributions of COVID-19 to African rural communities, and this is detected mainly when using the family systems theory employed in this study. The theory states that there is no way an individual can be understood in isolation from others but that an individual can be understood as part of their family, as the family is a unit that is emotional (Brown, 1999).

This argument concurs with the findings of this study as the participants were living with their families which were their support systems and to analyse their experiences through them as the number of family members also meant congruence with the family system theory. The data further confirms that COVID-19 impacts affected African rural women breadwinners together with their households as they are not living alone. This available data corroborates critical deliberations discussed in Chapters One, Two and Three that stem from the family systems theory, Social Capital theory, and marginalisation theory of family systems theory is based on human behaviour. The researcher found this theory suitable for this study as this theory is of human behaviour which is what Anthropology is based on, it defines the family unit as a complex social system in which members interact to influence each other's behaviour (Kerr and Bowen, 1988), it will assist in investigating on whether the relationship in the family

changed when other family members came back home to quarantine or did they support each other or there were issues which came with the pandemic and them staying together full time as a family. The marginalisation theory will help explain rural deprivation especially for women and the infrastructure needed to create opportunities, their way of living and to generally benefit them as households (Howitt, 1993) and the social capital theory will help to explain the dynamic community network (Bourdieu 1985), which results in some benefiting from those relationships (Chiefs & kings) and all those close to them, this affects decisions economically as some decisions cannot be taken without their approval. The literature review Chapter has outlined that the impact of Coronavirus on African women is based mainly on their loss of income, food security and gender-based violence (See Roesch et al., 2020, Fuchs-Schundeln et al., 2020 & Farre et al., 2021). These findings tally well with the discoveries from the interviews conducted for this thesis in this Chapter (Four) as indicated in the theme on – biography, demographic and background outline of the participants interviewed for this study about the severe ramifications African rural women experienced due to the Coronavirus lockdown period which led to losses of jobs and reduction of hours of work for themselves and family members (Interview: Participant 5 and 9). Participants stated that, since they lost their jobs because of COVID-19 lockdown which did not allow 100% of the staff to work. This resulted in them consulting Induna for a portion of land to start their gardens. Another hurdle highlighted was the domestic violence from their partners as they were staying with them full time.

Davis et al., (2017) and Moock (2019) also indicate that rural African households depend mostly on agriculture. People in rural areas farm to benefit from their farms as they sell their products for their survival. In almost every household there is a garden, and they also trade what they have in their gardens with other households. While the present information depicts economic problems experienced by rural African women breadwinners, the study reveals that some participants have tenable economic opportunities themselves in the informal economic division to help their children (Interview: Participants 11). What is also critical to note from the analysed data is that most participants are self-employed. They make a living through bricklaying, spaza shop ownership, and shop assistants, while others are employed as general workers, mechanics, and salespeople, among many professions (See: Table 1, 2, and 3).

Coding of participants	Area in Mkhlabathini	Marital status	Age	No. of children	No. of dependents	Employment status before COVID-19	Employment status during/ created during COVID-19
Participant 1	Inkanyezini	Married	20-29	3	3	Shop assistant	Garden
Participant 2	Inkanyezini	Single	30-39	4	4	Nurse assistant	Nurse and Plowing business (tractor).
Participant 3	Inkanyezini	Single	30-39	1	4	salesperson	Garden
Participant 4	Inkanyezini	Married	40-49	4	4	Business Women	Business women (Tuck shops)
Participant 5	Inkanyezini	Single	40-49	2	4	Street vendor	Social relief grant
Participant 6	Inkanyezini	Married	50-59	5	5	teacher	teacher
Participant 7	Inkanyezini	Married	50-59	5	5	unemployed	Selling fruit and vegetables.
Participant 8	Inkanyezini	Single	50-59	1	7	unemployed	Social relief grant
Participant 9	Intweka	single	20-29	prefer not to say	4	Shop assistant	Social relief grant

Participant 10	Intweka	Single	30-39	Prefer not to say	3	Street vendor	Selling airtime
Participant 11	Intweka	Married	30-39	2	2	teacher	teacher
Participant 12	Intweka	Single	40-49	3	3	Pipe	Social relief grant
Participant 13	Intweka	Married	40-49	Prefer not to say	7	Selling fruit and vegetables at schools	Selling fruit and vegetables at home
Participant 14	Intweka	Divorced	50-59	1	7	teacher	Online tutor
Participant 15	Intweka	Widowed	50-59	None	2	EPWP	none
Participant 16	Intweka	widowed	50-59	1	7	EPWP	none
Participant 17	Intweka	Married	60+	1	4	School Cleaner	unemployed, social relief grant
Participant 18	Maqongqo	widowed	20-29	2	2	nurse	nurse
Participant 19	Maqongqo	Married	20-29	2	2	Driver	driver
Participant 20	Maqongqo	widowed	20-29	3	3	unemployed	unemployed

Participant 21	Maqongqo	Married	30-39	4	4	Cogta worker	Cogta worker
Participant 22	Maqongqo	Divorced	30-39	4	4	School kids transport	none
Participant 23	Maqongqo	Married	40-49	2	2	Social worker	Social worker
Participant 24	Maqongqo	Widowed	50-59	None	4	General worker	unemployed
Participant 25	Maqongqo	Married	60+	2	2	nurse	nurse
Participant 26	Mbungwini	Widowed	30-39	5	5	Self employed	Self-employed, social relief
Participant 27	Mbungwini	Widowed	40-49	None	7	cleaner	Home garden
Participant 28	Mbungwini	widowed	40-49	5	5	cleaner	cleaner
Participant 29	Mbungwini	Married	50-59	Prefer not to say	7	mechanic	Mechanic at home
Participant 30	Mbungwini	Widowed	60+	5	5	Business Women	none

Table 1: Demography, Biography and Background of participants

The comparative analysis of the respondents to the interview questions was also visible based on the diverse areas based in Mkhambathini Area. The age of respondents varied from 20 years old to over 60 years old. The 30 respondents were in Maqongqo, Intweka, Inkanyezini, and Mbungwini. The four areas are more like the same in terms of the land. Inkanyezini is a little developed compared to the other 3, it has tap water, a taxi rank, a primary and high school while Maqongqo sometimes struggles to get water in the households. Intweka has only one

primary school and their children are attending high School at Unobhala high school. Imbungwini is also a bit developed; they have both primary and high schools near them and tap water running in their households.

Age	Inkanyezini	Intweka	Maqongqo	Mbungwini
20-29	1	1	3	0
30-39	2	2	2	1
40-49	2	2	1	2
50-59	3	3	1	1
60+	0	1	1	1

Table: 2 Age range and the areas in Mkhambathini

At the Inkanyezini location, there were 2 participants interviewed at the age between 20- 29, 2 at the age between 30-39, 1 at the age of 40-49 and 4 at the age of 50-59 and none was interviewed at the age of 60 and above. At the Maqongqo location there were 3 participants interviewed at the age between 20- 29, 3 at the age between 30-39, 1 at the age between 40-49 and 1 at the age between 50-59 and 1 was interviewed at the age of 60 and above. At the Intweka location there was 1 participant interviewed at the age between 20- 29, 2 at the age between 30-39, 2 at the age between 40-49 and 3 at the age between 50-59 and none was interviewed at the age 60 and above. At the Mbungwini location there were no participants interviewed at the age between 20- 30, 2 at the age between 30-39, 3 at the age between 40-49 and 1 at the age between 50-59 and 1 was interviewed at the age of 60 and above.

Marital status moreover played a major role in expounding the ramifications of Coronavirus on African rural women of Mkhambathini. Figure 3 clearly states that many of the women in the area were heads of household relying on their own economic income as they were not married about 18 while 12 were married. This asserts the fact that many African rural breadwinners residing in Mkhambathini were hit hard by the pandemic as attested by Participants 1, 5, 6, and 9. Also, Baumgarten (2013) mentioned that mothers have a full-time

job which is to take care of their children and when a mother is also a breadwinner life may get tough as she is supposed to look after her children and provide everything they may need. Therefore, COVID-19 also brought additional challenges to these women as it came with lockdown and people losing their jobs and having to come home and try to navigate around the rural ecology to fend for food and at the same time take care of the house and children. Some of the women interviewed for this study mentioned that they permanently lost their jobs and they are now busy looking for new employment from other places, this took their lives back into fighting poverty (Participants 5, 6, and 9)

Mothers have a full-time job which is to take care of their children and when a mother is also a breadwinner life may get tough as she is supposed to look after her children and provide everything they may need. COVID-19 also came with more challenges to these women as it came with lockdown and people losing their jobs and having to come home and try something that will help bring food at home and also to take care of the house and children (Baumgarten, 2013).

Age	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
20-29	3	1	0	0
30-39	1	3	0	2
40-49	2	2	1	3
50-59	1	4	1	2
60+	0	2	0	2

Table 3: Marital Status

At Mkhambathini Area there were 3 participants interviewed that were single and at the age of 20- 29, 1 at the age between 30-39, 2 at the age between 40-49 and 1 at the age between 50-59 and none was interviewed at the age 60 and above. Married participants were 1 participant interviewed at the age between 25- 30, 3 at the age between 30-39, 2 at the age between 40-49

and 5 at the age between 50-59 and 2 interviewed at the age 60 and above. Divorced, non-participants were interviewed at the age of 25- 30, none at the age between 30-39, 1 at the age between 40-49 and 1 at the age of 50-59 and none was interviewed at the age of 60 and above. Widowed, no participants were interviewed at the age between 25- 30, 2 at the age between 30-39, 3 at the age of 40-49 and 2 at the age of 50-59 and 2 were interviewed at the age of 60 and above. There were no participants that were in separation.

4.2.1 The Forms of Family participants come from and the impact of the Coronavirus

The literature reviewed depicts that in African families there are mostly three forms of families which include nuclear, extended and single-parent households (Goodman, 2006: 889). The biography, demography and background of the participants interviewed reveal that many families in rural African homes of Mkhambathini are from extended families which form 50% of single-parent families forming 23.3% and nuclear comprising 26.6%. This explicitly indicates that such homes were severely affected by the pandemic as many of the women did not have partners to assist since jobs were lost and some families' hours of work were reduced implying that their salaries were cut. This is confirmed in the words of Participants 3 and 29 respectively who were interviewed for this study mentioned that: they are a family of 7 and the other says they are 10 people in their household, this made their life as breadwinners hard as they were supposed to take care of many people with reduced salaries, to buy food when there was lack of food security, prices going up and not being able to go and look around as there were restrictions.

We were a family of four, myself, my husband and our two children, yes prices were high, and salaries were cut but we continued to manage with the help of my husband as we are a small family of which we still continued to manage to survive as we were surviving before COVID (Interview: Participant 29).

Besibane emndenini, umnyeni wami kanye nezingane zami, yebo amanani abephezulu, kanti umholo bewunciphisiwe kodwa sikwazile ukuqhubeka siphile njengoba besiphila ingakabi bikho i- COVID-19 ngisizwa nangumkhwenyana wami (Participant 29).

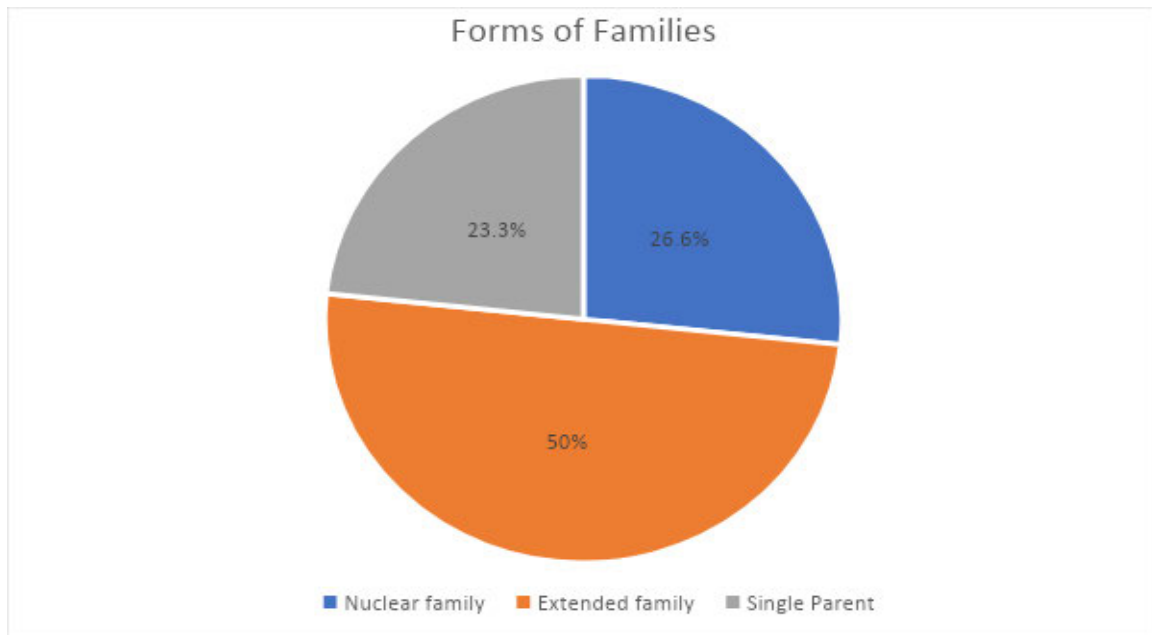


Figure 3: Graph indicating forms of families in Mkhambathini

Therefore, of the 30 (100%) participants who were interviewed, eight were from the nuclear family, fifteen were from the extended family and seven were single parents. This indicates that women breadwinners in rural areas were affected differently as each breadwinner was supporting a different number of people, some with helping hands and some with no help since there were also single parents in the list of interviewed participants. This is explicitly elaborated by the interviewees below: For example, Participant 12: she was a breadwinner in an extended family living with her mother who is on pension and spends most of her time in the garden, her sister who is working, the aunt who is selling snacks during break time in schools around their home and their three children. She mentioned that,

The aunt during the lockdown as the schools were closed was at home taking care of the children, helping mom in the garden and looking after her when she is not feeling better as she is over 60 years.

UMamncane ngesikhathi izwe lisavaliwe nezikole zivaliwe ubesebhaya enakekela izingane, esiza umama engadini ephinde emnakekele uma engekho kahle empilweni njengoba esengumuntu eseneminyaka engaphezu kwengamashumi ayisithupha.

Other participants also mentioned that,

We were a family of four, me, my husband and our two children. Yes, prices were high, and salaries were cut, but we continued to manage with the help of my husband as we

are a small family of which we continued to manage to survive as we were surviving before COVID (Interview: Participant 29).

Besibane emndenini, umnyeni wami kanye nezingane zami, yebo amanani abephezulu, kanti umholo bewunciphisiwe kodwa sikwazile ukuqhubeka siphile njengoba besiphila ingakabi bikho i COVID-19 ngisizwa nangumkhwenyana wami (Participant 29).

I am a single parent as I lost my husband in 2018 which was before COVID-19. I have been trying life with the help of my children as one of them is grown up. Therefore, she can help us with what we are short of. COVID-19 made things tough as her work hours were reduced which resulted in her salary being cut which made things worse for us as she did not have more money to help me in times of struggle (Interview: Participant 3).

Ngingumzali okhulisa abantwana yedwa njengoba ngashonelwa ngumyeni ngonyaka wezi-2018 okuyinto eyenzeka ngaphambi kokuba kube khona i-COVID-19. Bengizama ngisizwa nangabantwana njengoba omunye wabo esekhulile. Ubekwazi ukuthi asisize ngalokhu esishoda ngakho. I-COVID-19 yenza izinto zaba nzima njengoba undodakazi wancishiselwa amahora awasebenzayo osukwini okwaholela ekutheni kunciphe nomholo wakhe okwenza izinto zaba nzima njengoba wayengasakwazi ukungisiza ngezikhathi zokweswela (Participant 3).

Breadwinners in extended families did not experience more COVID-19 impacts since they had support at home regarding harvesting food in gardens, taking care of the ill family members and looking after the children by helping with homework and more. Looking at the households headed by single parents it was bad as they were the only breadwinners in the households as some lost their husbands and some never got married so they had to try and do all the house chores while also needing to look after children since the schools were closed moreover some have lost their jobs which means no or less income. Women breadwinners in nuclear families did not suffer that badly since they had their husbands supporting them and their families even though some reported to have had some conflicts in the house as they were now living together the whole time and some partners with the anger of losing their jobs (Interviews: Participants 11 and 26). For example, Participant 11 mentioned that she lives with her husband, and they are both having their own business (tuck-shops) which means enough support with food and taking care of the children. On the other hand, Participant 26 articulated that,

Although I was the only breadwinner at home, during COVID-19 my grown cousins were helping with the children at home while schools were closed as they were stopped from going to work.

Bekuyimi ngedwa osebenzayo ekhaya, ngesikhathi se-COVID-19 umzala wami osekhubile ubengisiza engibhekela izingane njengoba bezivaliwe izikole naye esamisiwe emsebenzini.

4.2.1.1 Number of children

Participants 1, 5, 12 and 20 reported having 3 children, Participants 2, 4, 21 and 22 testified that she has 4 children, and Participants 5, 11, 18, 19, 23 and 25 conveyed that they have 2 children. In addition, Participants 6, 7, 26, 28 and 30 reported having 5 children. Also, Participants 3, 8, 14, 16 and 17 stated having only 1 child, while Participants 15, 24 and 27 reported having no child. Whereas, Participants 9, 10, 13 and 29 preferred not to mention the number of their children. This means different impacts on every participant since they are having different numbers of children which means different problems and household work for women breadwinners. Breadwinners with more children found the COVID-19 period harder compared to those with fewer children or no children since more children need extra money, more food, energy and time keeping in mind that some did not even have support.

My working hours were reduced, and I had 5, I struggled to keep up as I used to, I needed more money which I did not have. I had no support. I had to trade some of my vegetables with my neighbour for what I needed (Interview: Participant 7).

Amahora engiwasebenzayo anciphiswa, nginabantwana abayisihlanu, bekunzima ukuqhubeka ngendlela ejwayelekile, bengidinga imali eningi ebengingenayo. kwafanele ngishintshanise amaveji nomakhelwane anginike lokhu ebengikudinga.

4.2.1.2 Number of dependents

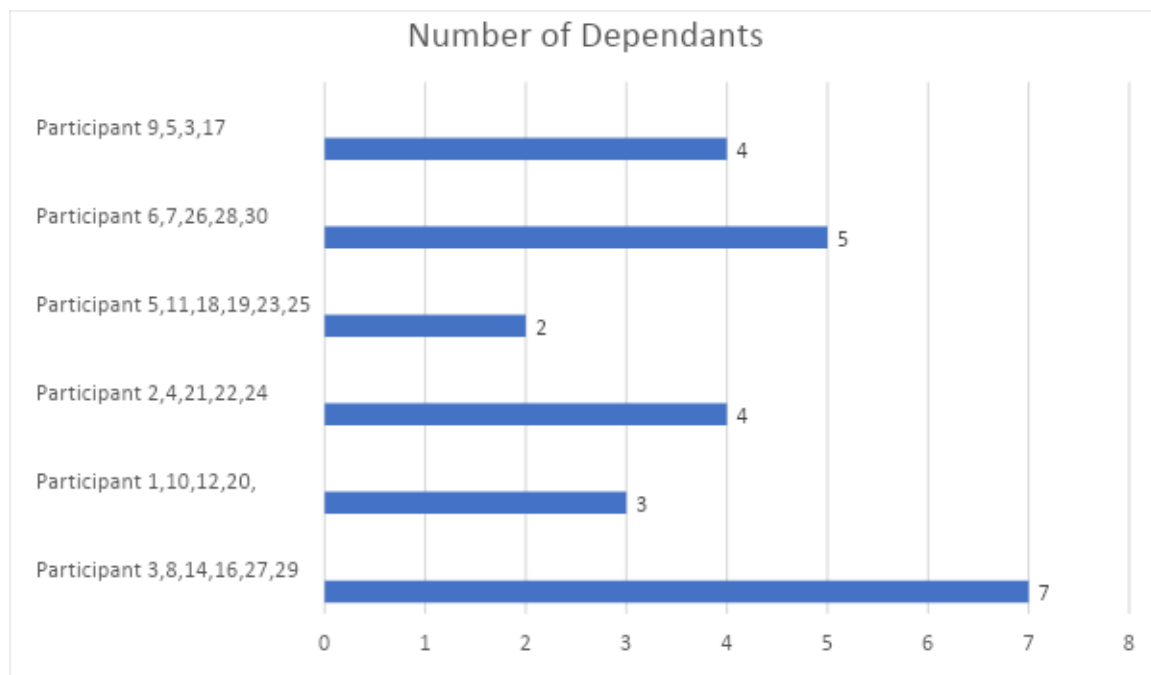


Figure 4: Depicting the number of dependents each interviewed Participant has

In the interviews with Participants 9, 5, 13 and 17 they stated that they have 4 dependents, Participants 3, 8, 14, 16 and 29 have 7 dependents, and Participants 15 and 27 have 6 dependents. Similarly, Participants 1, 10, 12 and 20 reported having 3 children, Participants 2, 4, 20, 21 and 22 have 4 children, Participants 5, 11, 18, 19, 23 and 25 having 2 children, and Participants 6, 7, 26, 28 and 30 have 5 dependents. The breadwinner's highest dependent number is 7 and the lowest is 2 dependents. This means different impacts on every participant since they are having different numbers of dependents which means different problems and household work. More dependents can mean more money needed to satisfy basic needs since data reveals that many breadwinners had more dependents, and some had no economic support from other family members. This is explicitly illustrated in the below interviews:

In my household, we are a family of 7 and as the only breadwinner; it was hard for me to cope as the food prices rose and other people who were supporting me with some things at home lost their jobs. We could not manage to buy full groceries as we did before COVID-19 (Interview: Participant 3).

Emdenini wami besiyisikhombisa njengoba bekuyimi kuphela obebheke zonke izinto ekhaya bekunzima ukuphila ngezinga ebesiphila ngalo njengoba amanani ezimpahla ezitolo akhuphuka kwaphinde kwathi labo ebengisiza ekhaya balahlekelwa imisebenzi. Saqala sihluleka ukuthenga ukudla okwanele ekhaya (Participant 3).

I had only two dependents, which were my children. Things did not change that much. I still could manage to buy groceries and all my kids' needs since we were only three (Interview: Participant 5).

Benginabantu ababili engibondlayo obekuyizingane zami. Izinto azizange zishintshe kakhulu ekhaya. Ngaqhubeka ngakwazi ukuthenga ukudla nokufeza zonke izidingo zabantwana bami (Participant 5).

4.2.1.3 Status of employment of African rural breadwinners and the impact of Coronavirus

Women breadwinners of the Mkhambathini Area who were interviewed for this study have ages ranging from 20 to 60 and above. It was found that most participants rely on more than one source of income. Most participants 70% (21) have two types of paid income sources and 30% (9) participants reported having three income sources which include relying on agriculture such as ploughing with tractors for neighbours and selling vegetables from their gardens to make more income (Interviews: Participants 6 and 14). This is also corroborated by Kgari-Masondo (2015) and Ruether (2000) who argued that the environment is very important for Africans and also mentioned that women are perceived as key in environmental issues. In the study by Kgari-Masondo (2015) African women are perceived as very important in guarding, preserving and conserving the environment. As opined by informants in the interviews conducted for this study:

I am a teacher at Inkanyezini Primary School. During weekends I would work in the garden and plant vegetables. When they are ripe I sell them to the community of Mkhambathini and to my neighbours with my children (Interview: Participant 6).

Nginguthisha esikole eNkanyezini. Ngezimpelasonto bengisebenza engadini ngitshala imifino mase zivuthiwe bengizivuna bese ngiyazidayisa emphakathini wangakithi nabantwana bami (Participant 6).

I have a tractor that I use for ploughing our neighbours' gardens and they pay me money which I use to buy some of the things we are short of. My professional job is a nurse (Interview: Participant 2).

Benginogandaganda ebengiwisebenzisela ukulimela omakhelwane izingadi, bebengikhokhela imali ubengiyisebenzisela ukuthenga izinto ebesishoda ngazo ekhaya. Bengisebenza njengomsizi wezempilo (Participant 2).

Likewise, some Participants also mentioned that they are professional and employed as nurses, teachers, cleaners, securities and in addition, they have gardens for their families to source food from as they are reliant on agriculture, such as ploughing vegetables. The later Participants 2, 3 and 6 the interviews all indicated how united, joyous and happy their families are due to COVID-19 lockdowns. that forced them to be at home as families. The cordial relations in their households show characteristics of unity, and they love spending time in their homes.

COVID-19 brought joyous and unity in my household as we were not used to being together before the pandemic and it came with lockdown and we had to spend time together as we were forced to stay at home and not go to work (Interview: Participant 6).

I- COVID-19 yasifikela nenjabulo kanye nobumbano emndenini wami njengiba besingajwayele ukuba ndawonye ngaphambi kokufika kwalolubhubhane eyafika nokuvalwa kwezwe okubangela ukuba siphokeleke ukuba sihlale emekhaya singayi nasemsebenzini (Participant 6)

But other participants revealed that due to COVID-19 GBV became rife, as mentioned by Participant 1 and 30 who mentioned that:

“During lockdown my partner started forcing himself on me when I told him that I am tired of all the duties I have been doing the whole day with him not helping me with anything”.

“Ngesikhathi sokuvalwa kwezwe umlingani wami waqala waziphoka kumina ngesikhathi ngimazisa ukuthi ngikhathele njengoba kade ngimatasa usuku lonke ngemisebenzi yasekhaya naye ekhona engangisizi ngalutho”.

The work by Roesch et al., (2020), also attests to the fact that GBV expounds on the fact that COVID-19 increased GBV against women as most businesses were closed and they were forced to retrench some of the staff, and they had to live at home.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two indicated that due to Coronavirus economically people were affected negatively. Almost all the respondents mentioned that their income has been negatively impacted since the COVID-19 outbreak. Analysis of the biography, demography

and background of participants indicate that 95% (28.5) of them were the primary earners in their household; some were the sole earners in the household. Lower-income, unemployment followed by less demand for fruits and vegetables and rising prices of basic goods were the most noted perceived impacts experienced by women breadwinners of Mkhambathini. This was also confirmed by Martin et al., (2020), who argued that the pandemic of COVID-19 caused an economic shock that is massive in all nations; this was due to the interruptions in businesses and the countries' shutdowns for measures of social distancing and curbing the spread of the virus. This affected rural households very negatively in a way that lots of rural communities lost their jobs and in workplaces they were only allowing about 70% of the staff members to work and this resulted in some employees losing their jobs permanently. This is validated by Participants (5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 17 and 29) who argued that: "Since the outbreak of COVID-19 things have been hard for them as it came with unemployment, rising prices and less demand for the fruits and vegetables they were selling".

This tells us that rural women breadwinners were impacted differently by the COVID-19 outbreak as some continued having their jobs which means they did not lose their primary income while others lost their work. This is corroborated by Participant 2 who argued that: *"I was a nurse assistant before the pandemic, and I am still working as a nurse assistant"*. While on the other hand, those who were retrenched found things hard and different since they lost one of their major sources of income. This is corroborated by Participant 17 who said that: She was working as a cleaner in one of the major cleaning companies, during the COVID-19 outbreak the company had to shorten the number of staff which includes cleaners, and she was one of those who were retrenched.

Having to take care of children, ill family members and husbands added more impact as it was challenging since no one was ready for such a burden. Those who were depending on selling vegetables on the street and for neighbours were impacted badly as they lost their source of income which they were using for their survival. The below interviews indicate the impacts of such people who lost their major source of income. Taking care of the children is an unpaid job which needs attention and time which also means some had to leave their jobs as day-cares are closed. While some family helpers got COVID-19 and had to go into quarantine it meant breadwinners had to leave their jobs and take the responsibilities of family helpers. This is explicitly put by Participants 23 and 27 who argued that: Before COVID-19 they used to send their children to day-care, primary and higher education institutions when they are going to work but during COVID-19 in some households the African female breadwinners had to come

back and be full-time at home working on the gardens, taking care of children, looking after the ill family members, and selling vegetables for the survival of their households which normally did not yield sufficient funds for the upkeep of the families.

4.3 The impact of Coronavirus on rural households headed by African women “breadwinners” of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal

COVID-19 is still sweeping the globe, spreading from the developed world to the global South. With rural populations accounting for three-quarters of the world's poor, the pandemic's impact was unavoidably most devastating in developing countries. Fieldwork undertaken in Mkhambathini also corroborates the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the narratives of the negative impacts of Coronavirus on rural African women breadwinners. But another twist of the narratives from data collected in Mkhambathini indicates that some African breadwinners' women experienced positive ramifications alongside the negative ones. This reveals the agency of women that is normally silenced in the literature about African women. As Marecek and Ballou (1981) stated that women have always been allocated the traditional duty of family caregiver. But data collected in this study takes this role of women further by revealing rural women as both caregivers and professional workers like nurses (Participants 2, 18 and 25) and teachers (Participants 6, 11 and 14) and some also as entrepreneurs selling vegetables (Participants 5, 13 and 10) to the community of Mkhambathini. This indicates that there are nuances in the experiences of African women breadwinners during the pandemic in the rural context. They never sat back passively but creatively using their agency to work against the negative ramifications of COVID-19.

4.3.1 Being a rural woman African breadwinner during the COVID-19 era

The data collected from African rural breadwinners of Mkhambathini reveals that they had different experiences but mostly they experienced financial challenges, loss of jobs, poverty, and a sense of low self-esteem as women since they had lost the jobs that assisted them to look after their families as breadwinners (Interviews: Participants 9, 10 and 11). The fieldwork of Mkhambathini does not in any way reveal the women feeling what Hofstede & Bond (1984) stated in their study as shame and guilt which they argue are associated with cultural characteristics such as "masculinity vs. femininity". In this community under study as indicated below women felt frustrated by losing work during the pandemic but pushed hard to be creative to provide for their families. Some never felt what Meisenbach (2010) discovered in her study when women are breadwinners and men do not work, they felt considerable shame and

resentment because they sensed that they are making their partners feel less of men as they mostly believe it is men's work to provide financially for the family. Only Participant 10 mentioned the feeling of shame (pity) herself and sensed it also shame from the husband but no resentment. But the woman breadwinner was excited to fend for her family as a woman and never made any cover-ups like the women in Meisnabach's study that lied and said their partners were working while they were not. Perhaps the culture of human rights and women's rights teachings is rife among such women that they can stand against marginalisation brought forth by community culture. The interviews conducted reveal the contrary -

I lost my job and was forced to make a living since I was the only one working, then I ended up having to make my own garden so we would not go to bed with empty stomachs. I usually take my children to the garden with me (Interview: Participant 9).

Ngalahlekelwa umsebenzi ngasengiphokeleka ukuthi ngizame enye indlela yokuphila njengoba bekuyimi kuphela osebenzayo ekhaya, ngacina sengizenzela ingadi yami ukuze singalali singadlile. Bengijwayele ukuthatha abantwana bami bayongisiza engadini (Participant 9).

I was a street vendor and during COVID-19 there was a shutdown. I had to take all my stuff home and be full time with my husband and children. Hence, I could not continue with my business since more money was wasted buying food as the schools were closed and children were not going to school due to the lockdown which means no food schemes and more groceries to be made at home since my husband was retrenched and I felt shame as I was buying all the food and he is doing nothing, I sensed that make him feel less of a man. This was more of a struggle since the prices went up during the pandemic (Interview: Participant 10).

Bengidayisa emgwaqweni, ngesikhathi se-COVID-19 kwaba khona ukumiswa kwezinto. Kwamele ngithathe zonke izinto zami ngiyohlala ekhaya nomyeni wami kanye nabantwana. Angizange ngisakwazi ukuqhubeka nebhizinisi lami njengoba imali besiyisebenzisela ukuthenga ukudla njengoba izikole bezivaliwe okuchaza ukuthi bekungekho ukuthi izingane zithole ukudla kwesikole, bekufanele kuthengwe ukudla okuningi njengoba nomnyeni wami ebengasasebenza ngenxa yokudilizwa emsebenzini bengimuzwela njengoba besekuyimi othenga ukudla yena angasakwazi ukukuthenga, bengizwa sengathi lokhu kumenza azizwe ungeyona indoda ngokuphelele. bekunzima kakhulu njengoba amanani ezimpahla ezitolo ebese khuphukile (Participant 10).

I was forced to come home during the lockdown. I could not say I struggled because there were changes that came to my life with the cause of COVID-19. I was still getting an income as a teacher while at home even though it was not the same amount of money but coming home helped me with many things. I was able to spend quality time with my family (husband and children), rest and do home chores (Interview: Participant 11).

Ngaphoqeleka ukuba ngibuyele ekhaya ngesikhatha sokuvalwa kwezwe. Angeke ngathi kwangiphazamisa ukufika kwe-COVID-19. Bengisakwazi ukuthola umholo wami ngengomfundisi noma bekungasafani kodwa ukuba sekhaya kwangisiza ngezinto eziningi. Ngakwazi ukuchitha isikhathi esanele nomndeni wami (umnyeni nabantwana), ngakwazi ukuphumula kanye nokwenza imsebenzi yasekhaya (Participant 11).

This tells us that even though COVID-19 impacted others badly as they lost their jobs and everything but to some it had benefits as it forced them to stay and work from home and that has brought the family members together. Being at home forced family members to unite and converse with their families, having meals and games, which is not possible for most families due to work and various responsibilities. In some instances, when one was scheduled to go early and come back during odd hours when children were sleeping, family life was different. As revealed above it is explicit that sometimes some of the children could only spend time with their parents weekly, fortnightly, or monthly due to their parents' business schedules. Hence, the lockdown seems good for family life and social engineering. Working from home, gave employees rest, supported good health and experienced peaceful working. It is believed that good sleep enhances immunity. They save the time of travel to the office to and from that provides extra hours of work which means more efficiency and productivity. Secondly, people save fuel and help in controlling air pollution. Thirdly, there is no stress of traveling which means more efficiency taking into consideration that rural locations are normally far from the workplace.

4.3.2 Means of survival of participants during COVID-19

The literature reviewed for this study attests to the fact that Coronavirus impacted the economy of every community, but it is revealed that rural women were the most hit hard (Farre et al., 2021). The scholars also mention that many women due to COVID-19 are inundated with the duties of being caregivers because there were times when hospitals were in crisis because of high numbers of infections. They suffered more because of the lack of infrastructure like running water, electricity, nearby clinics, hospitals, reliable transportation and tarred roads.

The pandemic left people in a state of poverty, and they had to be creative and get other means of survival and support for their families. The community of Mkhambathini of African rural women who are breadwinners mentions that social grants have been good to them during the COVID-19 times. This was mentioned by Participant 17:

Before COVID-19 I was working as a school cleaner, during these times schools were closed then I had to stop going to work. As a family, we survived with my child's grant, my 20-year-old child's social relief grant and also my mom's pension fund.

Ngaphambi kokufika kwe-COVID-19 bengisiza esikoleni ngihlanza amagumbi okufundela kanye nengceke, ngalesisikhathi izikole zavalwa kwamele ngime ukuya kosebenza. Njengomndeni, besesiphila ngemali yesibonelelo sabantwana, imali yesibonelelo sikhahulumeni sokubhekana nezinkinga ezifike nobhubhane yomntwana wami oneminyaka engamashumi amabili kanye nemali kamama yempesheni yokuguga.

In this study nine breadwinners had children and were receiving their support grants, six were earning salaries or wages, three were getting older people's grants as they have reached their pension age, eight getting COVID-19 grants and others (15) mentioned surviving with agricultural work. This implies that many homes headed by women survived mainly on grants and agricultural work.

Different means of survival	Number of individuals
Child-support grant	9
Salary/Wages	6
Elderly grant	3
COVID-19 social relief grant (350)	8
Fruit and Vegetables	4
Others	11

Table 4: Means of survival by African rural women of Mkhambathini during the Coronavirus era

The above table reveals that during COVID-19 many people survived through subsistence farming (vegetable gardens), selling and eating food they planted, and grants like elderly ones, child support as the government also gave them a R500 increase which they said played a big role in their life and COVID-19 social relief grant (350) for those who were not receiving any income. These grants and entrepreneurial ventures of selling vegetables helped as they augmented their income and managed to buy food. But for those who did not lose their jobs their life did not change much as they were still going to work and earning some money to continue supporting their families.

I am working as an assistant nurse. I did not stop working during lockdown as clinics were operating full force as essential services and they were busy and accommodated many of the residents. Therefore, I did not lose my job and my salary was not cut. I continued supporting my family financially exactly like I used to before the emergence of COVID-19 (Interview: Participant 2).

Ngisebenza njengomsizi wabahlengikazi. Angizange ngiyeke ukusebenza ngesikhathi sokuvalwa kwezwe njengoba imitholampilo beyisebenza ngokujwayelekile bekusetshenzwa kakhulu kubhekwa abantu abaningi bendawo. Angizange ngilahlekelwe ngumsebenzi kanye neholo lami alizange lehle. Ngaqhubeka nokunakekela umndeni wami ngokwemali ngendlela efanayo naleyo yangesikhathi ingakabi bikho i-COVID-19 (Participant 2).

The COVID-19 social relief grant was very helpful to many people who lost their earnings, the jobless, and those who have never received any income as they were not working. Grants money till now in 2022 many South Africans are still benefiting from it, which means it was helpful to the women breadwinners and their families and it is still helping a number of Mkhambathini residents coupled with the agency of businesses selling vegetables to supplement their salaries.

4.3.3 Family Support and Mental Well Being

From the analysis of the biography, demography, and background of the participants 50% (15) had support from their family members as more were from extended families. From this 50% Participants 28 and 16 mentioned that: they were the primary breadwinners, but they were also

getting support from their family members. Some in their families were receiving social relief grants, their moms and dads receiving old pension grants. They were adding all this money as a family and doing what they needed to do. They were working together to fight all the impacts that came with COVID-19. Families were all contributing some money to buy groceries, all working in the gardens for family food. About 15% (5) of participants did not have any support as they were the only breadwinners at home with small kids which cannot provide more help. 25% (8) were the only ones working (Interviews: Participants 6): *“I was the only one working, my kids are still small, and they could not help me. I struggled with everything alone”*. The other 5% are the only women breadwinners working and having parents that have not reached their pension age (Interview: Participants 15).

I am the only breadwinner at home. I stay with my dad who is not in good health. I have to buy his medication together with our groceries as he is not working and has not reached his pension age.

Nginakekela umdeni ngedwa ekhaya. Ngihlala nobaba ongekho kahle empilweni. kumele ngimuthengele imishwanguzo yakhe ngiphinde ngithenge nokudla kwasendlini njengoba ubaba engasebenzi futhi engakafinyeleli eminyakeni yakhe yempesheni.

Moreover, some Participants lost their jobs and wanted to apply for the 350 grants and did not succeed mainly because they did not possess smartphones and laptops and some lacked data or paying for the internet café to apply for the grant. For example, Participant 10 mentioned that, “I lost my job, I wanted to apply for the social relief grant but I could not mainly because I had no smartphone or laptop to process my application”.

And the other participant said:

I lost my job during the COVID-19 uprising. I used my last payment to buy groceries as there were rumours that there would be a time of food scarcity. We went on buying packs of food to make sure we had enough (Interview: Participant 5).

Ngalahlekelwa wumsebenzi ngesikhathi se-COVID-19. ngasebenzisa umholo wami wokugcina ukuthenga ukudla njengoba kwakukhona izinkulumo ezithi kuza izikhathi lapho kuzoshoda khona ukudla. Sahamba sathenga amaqoqo okudla ukwenza isiqiniseko sokuthi sinokudla okwanele endlini (Participant 5).

Literature on the impact of COVID-19 reveals that it affected women with stress looking at the mental well-being of the Participants, 95% of Mkhambathini women that are breadwinners feel stressed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Major reasons are the loss of their jobs (75%), fear of contracting COVID-19 (60%), uncertainty about professional life due to COVID-19 (35%), being away from family (40%), the spread of infection to co-workers (56%) and have lost some of their income. 6.67% of women in this study have reported domestic violence and intimate partner violence. These findings are in congruent with the study by Malan et al., (2018) who discovered that more than 40% of perinatal women had experienced psychological abuse and 25% had suffered sexual violence. This is also supported by a Participant 1 and 30 interviewed for this study. She mentioned that his partner lost his job during COVID-19 and since that time he is aggressive and controlling her, she thinks it is stress driven. She also mentioned that he forces her to have sex with him even when she is tired and says, No! (Interview: Participant 1).

In the words of an entrepreneur who sold vegetables, Participant 13, she mentioned that her stress levels were high due to lack of food, and loss of her job:

I was selling fruits and vegetables in my household which was my only source of income, COVID-19 lockdown came with a bad impact on my life since from that time there was no income I was getting, we only survived because of our garden that I was using for my fruit and veggies.

Bengidayisa izithelo nemifino endaweni yangakithi okwkuyukupela kwenndlela ebengenza ngayo imali, ukuvalwa kwezwe ngenxa yeCOVID-19 kwayithinta kabi impilo yami kusukela lapho angizange ngisaba nemali engenayo, besesiphila ngakudla ebesikutshalile engadini ekhaya ekhaya.

While for Participant 25 a nurse her stress was not GBV, nor loss of a job but grieving as she revealed that her mom passed away because of COVID-19 so she is always in fear that she will lose another member and/or get infected with the pandemic as she was still going to work. Her stress was on uncertainties about her professional job during that time because some people were dying in high numbers on duty due to the pandemic. On the other hand, Participant 30 was mainly stressed by the fact that she contracted the virus and was forced to go into quarantine and had to leave her children and she was scared she was going to die and not return to them.

In sum, it is clear from the data collected from the fieldwork for this study that African women breadwinners from the rural area of Mkhambathini during the Coronavirus most families came from the form of family that is extended and they did not have more negative impacts since family members were assisting. Though if none was not working the ramifications were severe. While those who were from the family of single parents with no income, and had young children, did not have financial and physical support as they did not know how to engage in subsistence farming, they had severe experiences. Similarly, those who stayed with their unemployed parents who are pensioners of old age mentioned that they suffered more as they were supposed to take care of the family while they themselves lost their jobs and are also struggling with money. The internet and technology issues were one of the major impacts as the government provided people with social relief grants and others not getting it because they do not have smartphones, and funds to connect and apply for grants. But narratives reveal nuanced impacts and women who never gave in to the severe impacts of Coronavirus as they used their agency to supplement their wages, drew funds from government social grants, and started businesses.

4.3.4 Gender-Based Violence, African women breadwinners in Mkhambathini and COVID-19

Women were more vulnerable to aggressors at home during the restrictive lockdown, where varying hostile power dynamics prevail, leaving victims with limited opportunity to seek potential help and support due to limited mobility. Literature reviewed in Chapter Two also expounds that GVB became rife during the pandemic. These findings are in congruent with the study by Roesch et al., (2020) who argued that some women found it difficult to live with their spouses since it was something they were not used to, they discovered that they are too controlling, and they end up being emotionally and physically abused by their retrenched spouses which resulted in more divorces filed. The study by Roesch et al., (2020) expounds that, a police agency in rural areas of Jianli County, Hubei Province, China, reported a doubling of GBV and domestic violence crimes in February 2020 compared to February 2019, with 90 percent attributed to the COVID-19 outbreak. UN (2019) and WHO (2021) also argued that violence against women is one of the most common and devastating violations of human rights, with more than one in every three women worldwide being physically or sexually violated at some point in their lives. GBV is also part of the findings from the interviews conducted for this study. For example, Participant 5 mentioned that:

My boyfriend, as I was used to staying at home, he started thinking that I was cheating on him. He then started wanting to see me every time of which I could not do as we were supposed to stay at home to avoid catching and spreading the virus. He then started to hit me as he has all types of accusations against me.

Indoda yami, njengoba besengijwayele ukuhlala ekhaya, waqala wangisola ukuthi ngiyamjolela. Waqala wafuna ukungibona njalo okuyinto engangingeke ngikwazi ukutenza njengoba kwakufanele sihlale emakhaya ukuvimba ukuthola kanye nokuthelelana ngegcwane le-COVID. Waqala wangishaya njengoba ebenezinto eziningi angisolela kuzona.

4.3.5 Quality of Healthcare

Literature mentions that rural areas suffered immensely due to poor healthcare facilities and that this has impacted women because they are the ones who are mainly caregivers (OECD Gender Data Portal, 2020). Literature reviewed also revealed that not only do women predominate in the care sector, but they also do the majority of unpaid work at home. Women spend approximately 2 hours per day more on unpaid work than men at slightly more than four hours per day (OECD Gender Data Portal, 2020). Mothers have a full-time job which is to take care of their children and when a mother is also a breadwinner it impacts heavily on their duties as it gets tough as they are supposed to look after children and provide them with all they may need. COVID-19 also came with more challenges to these women as it came with lockdown and people losing their jobs and having to come home and try something that will help bring food on the table while at the same time the same women needed to take care of the house and children (Baumgarten, 2013) who were mainly sick from the pandemic at times. When assessing healthcare quality, one considers the labour force's capabilities, abilities, information, and conduct, as measured by professional standards and as perceived by clients. Access to health workers cannot be guaranteed in the absence of adequate availability. If they are available and accessible, but not acceptable, health services are unlikely to be used; if the quality of the health labour force is inadequate, improvement in health outcomes will not be achieved or satisfactory. The Participants also exposed the fact that the Mkhambathini health care system is very poor, and it affected women who had to assist their households in looking after the sick. Hence according to Participant 26 testament, she acknowledged that she did not even bother to travel to the clinic because she was not going to get any help because,

...a lot of people were sick. The clinics were receiving many households daily and ended up running out of flu/ medication that they were supplying for COVID-19. I resorted to buying flu packs at a pharmacy with my social relief grant.

...abantu abaningi bebegula. Imitholampilo beyihlala ingcwele ebekudala ukuba igcine seyiphelela imishwanguzo yomkhuhlane ebebeyikhipha ukusiza ukulwa ne-COVID-19. Ngagcina sengizithengela imishwanguzo ngamali yesibonelelo sika hulumeni sokubhekana nezinkinga ezazifike nalolubhubhane esibhekene nalo.

In South Africa, providing quality healthcare is a sacred duty (Stuckler, Basu & Mckee, 2011). Following that, the government implemented several changes and projects to improve health care, proficiency, security, and quality of delivery and access for all clients (Mogashoa and Pelser. 2014), as well as significant changes in health strategy and regulation to ensure consistency in conveying quality considerations (Moyakhe, 2014). But in many rural areas the healthcare system is still a major drawback as participants in this study indicated how it negatively impacted women African breadwinners' households with stress. As indicated by Participant 17 by arguing that: As the community of Mkhambathini in the Intweka area they do not have access to healthcare, they only get healthcare services if it happens that a mobile clinic visits their place. She said that "they rely on other community clinics".

4.3.6 Coping Strategies

Coping under stressful experiences during the Coronavirus era due to GBV, loss of jobs, fear of contracting and losing loved ones through contracting the pandemic, and lack of funds ensured that African women breadwinners in the rural area of Mkhambathini establish coping mechanisms to survive the ramifications of the pandemic. This tells that most African women who were breadwinners in rural settings like Mkhambathini experienced different challenges during COVID-19 and they coped with those challenges differently. Some were exercising which is very good for managing stress (Interview: Participant 2).

For me to cope with COVID-19 impacts I considered waking up at the same time each day, exercising, showering, meditating, journaling, and tidying my home. I made it a must to check up on my loved ones regularly and that kept me going.

Ngokwami ukuthi ngikwazi ukumelana nezimo ezafika ne- COVID-19 ngazijwayeza ukuvuka ngesikhathi esifanayo nsuku zonke, ngizivocavoce, ngigeze ngiphinde

ngihlanze nekhaya lethu. Ngakwenza kwaba yimpoqo ukubheka abantu engibathandayo lokhu kwangenza ngakwazi ukuqhubeka nempilo.

Some participants mentioned that being sick with the Coronavirus pandemic made them occupy themselves by following every medical instruction which assisted them to keep their minds busy with the ideas of fighting the virus so that they can heal instead of being idle and thinking negatively about death.

During level five I was infected with COVID-19, what I did to survive or cope with what was happening was to follow the recommended health guidelines that I got from the clinic. I got vaccinated, frequently washed my hands, wore a mask in public places all the time, practised social distancing, practised respiratory etiquette and cleaned commonly used surfaces in my household. I did all of these, so my family does not get infected too (Interview: Participant 5).

Ngezinga lesihlanu le- COVID-19, engakwenza ukungalitholi leligciwane ngalandela imigomo eyayibekiwe yezempilo emitholampilo. Ngaya kolijovela leli gciwane, ngajwayela ukuhlamba izandla, ngahlala ngigqoke isifonyo ezindaweni zomphakathi, ngaqhelela nabantu emigqeni ngagcina zonke izindawo ezijwayele ukusetshenziswa zihlanzekile ekhaya. Ngenza konke lokhu ukwenza isiqiniseko sokuthi umndeni wami awutheleleki ngaleligciwane (Participant 5).

Another Participant mentioned that she coped with stress by planting vegetables which for her was a very good decision as it helped take her mind off things that disturbed her. She started her own garden to keep herself busy and make a living. She also mentioned that she spends her time with her parents and children. Other coping strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic by African women breadwinners from the rural ecology of Mkhambathini are articulated well by Participants 2 and 5. They said:

Before the pandemic, they did not have a garden in their homes. The lockdown stressed them as they were always at home to take their minds off things that stressed them at that time. They decided to start their own garden.

Ngaphambi kokufika kwalolubhubhane, bebengenayo ingadi ekhaya labo. Ukuvalwa kwezwe kwabenza bakhathazeka njengoba bebehlezi behlezi ezindlini becabanga kungekho okubasizayo ukuba benze ezinye izinto ezizobasiza ukuba bakhohlwa ngezinto ezibakhathazayo. Bakhetha ukuziqalela ingadi yabo.

This is also supported by Ruether (2000), who mentioned that the environment is very important for Africans. Also, the study by Kgari-Masondo (2015) depicts that women are perceived as key in environmental issues and that African women are perceived as very important in guarding, preserving, and conserving the environment.

4.4 Conclusion

By means of thematic analysis in this Chapter, the raw data was presented, interpreted, analysed and discussed with themes that emerged. Using key questions and the questions that were formed for the research interviews the research themes were formulated and discussed.

Using three theories which includes family systems theory, social capital theory, and marginalisation theory the data was presented, analysed and discussed. By doing so the impact of COVID-19 on rural women breadwinners of the Mkhambathini Location were adequately researched which are nuanced and depicts the agency of silenced rural African women in academia during Coronavirus period. This is the area that is the niche that this study tried to close in Economic and Cultural Anthropological studies by discussing two major themes and the sub themes which indicated a complex way that the rural African women of Mkhambathini breadwinners of their households are navigated the ramifications of the pandemic and ensured that they creatively engaged with their environment by ploughing vegetables and sell to their neighbours in order to supplement their salaries. On the other hand, findings are that other women in this case study used government grants to make a living. GBV became a serious impact revealed in the data analysed which concurs with studies undertaken globally that it raised during the Coronavirus era. Despite the stress of loss of jobs, family members, fear of contracting the pandemic and eventually death, participants constructed coping strategies to ensure survival during the era of crisis.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study findings summary, conclusion and recommendations are presented in this Chapter. This study's main objective was to *anthropologically record the perspectives of African rural women breadwinners of Mkhambathini about the impacts that came with Coronavirus into their 'households and their coping strategies thereof'*. This included discovering the socio-economic standard of these households before COVID-19, recording the economic, environmental, and social impact of COVID-19 on rural households with African women breadwinners' of Mkhambathini and exploring the perspectives of rural African women breadwinners' on how their households coped with the impacts of COVID-19.

Therefore, this study used a qualitative approach and a case study design. It also used face to face interviews which were semi- structured because they make the collection and coding of data manageable. The interviews took about 30-45 minutes each. There were only a few problems encountered by the researcher which included some breadwinners not allowing her inside their homes and some not being available in their households. The sample of participants chosen was 30 only African women because they are the ones that the study focuses on. The technique used to sample participants was non-probability sampling technique which included purposive and snowballing sampling. The sampling helped to get participants who stay in the location and willing to participate by answering the research questions. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to find participants using the snowball sampling technique. On the other hand, the snowball sampling technique provided the researcher with unknown participants by referring her to other available breadwinners. For data analysis thematic analysis by Kiger & Varpio (2020) that uses the six steps of analysis of data was employed. The six steps are familiarizing yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes and defining and naming themes producing the report/manuscript.

The Chapter will first focus on the limitations of the study, then the key findings, the impact of Coronavirus on African rural breadwinners of Mkhambathini, thereafter focus will be on COVID-19 and changes in the lives of Rural Women, then the recommendations and concluding remarks.

5.2 Limitations of the present study

Qualitative data collection has its limitations. The limitation was that the present research was extremely difficult to get the gatekeeper's letter from the *induna* because of infights in the area among traditional leaders and that delayed the ethical clearance letter. But I had to work extremely hard to complete the fieldwork on time. I was forced to interview at least three people a day in some instances because I was under pressure. The delay assisted me to complete all my first three chapters on time so that I only focus on the fieldwork, data presentation, analysis and concluding chapters and polish the other preceding ones. Coronavirus pandemic also impacted the smooth running of the fieldwork because it was not easy to get participants that one could visit in their household. But I quickly devised a strategy of calling participants and explained how careful I will be in ensuring that I am virus free and also not cause any spread to them if unknowingly I am infected. As a result, many participants allowed me inside their homes while others preferred outside their households.

5.3 Key Findings: Summary from the Participants (African rural women breadwinners of Mkhambathini)

The data collected for the purpose of this study revealed the nuanced and complex impacts of the Coronavirus and how African women's breadwinners dealt with the ramifications. The participants depicted a picture of hardships, poverty, stress, loss of jobs, and geographical context that lacks a quality healthcare system that has to deal with COVID-19. But what is impressive is that the data defied some of the stereotypical views in the literature that women accept their context of negative impacts because of rural settings, or because of the cultural context (Hofstede & Bond, 1984). According to Mueller et al., (2020), when looking at African households it is a norm that a man is the head of the family even if he is deceased, they will say the head died instead of recognizing the woman as the current head which means inequality has always been there before COVID-19. The participants revealed the agency of fighting for quality life by creatively working on their environment to plant vegetables to make food for their children. Some even built businesses out of such gardens. Some of these women never accepted their lot of poverty but looked for ways of augmenting their salaries and accepted their roles of being breadwinners with pride and proactiveness. As opined by Phillipson et al., (2020) entrepreneurs in rural areas are females and women who have taken on-farm initiatives on modification and have often done so to fit around their caring and other childcare responsibilities.

The gap in literature is dearth in discussions about African rural women as breadwinners during COVID-19. The nature of the pandemic and its ramifications on the households that are headed by African women in rural areas in Africa and strategies they can follow to navigate the challenges they face around the area is missing in a lot of literature. Also, the role of the local government, traditional leaders, war room stakeholders and other communities from my research is globally not recorded on how they assisted rural women during the pandemic. Therefore, to be fully aware of experiences of rural women during the pandemic it is easy for the government to provide suitable services to rural households knowing exactly how they were affected. Therefore, the study is intended to assist the Mkhambathini local government, traditional leaders, war room stakeholders and other communities globally to be fully aware of this pandemic and its ramifications on the households that are headed by African women and strategies they can follow to navigate the challenges they face around the area. The government might also benefit above all, as this study provides data that make it easy for the government to provide suitable services to rural households knowing exactly how they were affected.

5.3.1 Impacts of COVID-19 on rural African breadwinners' women of Mkhambathini.

The study suggests that COVID-19 came with different impacts on the women breadwinners of Mkhambathini location and these women dealt with these impacts differently. And this was most evident during the rapid rise of COVID-19 as many women experienced many fears which included fearing losing their family members, and their incomes (jobs), fear of contracting the pandemic and eventually death, fear of not getting their medication since clinics were piled up experiencing gender-based violence, domestic violence, loss of food security, care burden and experiencing love and unity as they were spending much time with their families during this time. They mentioned coping with these impacts by planting vegetables which was a very good decision as it helped take their minds off things that were stressing that time, mentioned spending time with their families and exercising as their daily routine.

This study discovered that some women experienced GBV as they were forced to have sex during the rapid rise of COVID-19 as their husbands came back home full-time and lost their jobs. Moreover, they had so much time they did not know how to use it as they did not plan to come home. Many women found themselves having no income because of the loss of their incomes, as some were stopped from working, while others permanently lost their incomes and some had their wages cut because of reduced working hours and days. Experiencing domestic violence and care burdens increased as they had to look after children, people who got ill at

home, doing house chores, taking care of and being submissive to their husbands. But data reveals that many of such women never gave in to the abusive and negative impacts of the Coronavirus; they constructed coping strategies to navigate the dire ramifications of the pandemic. This was also attested by Participant 2 who mentioned that:

For me to cope with COVID-19 impacts I considered waking up at the same time each day, exercising, showering, meditating, journaling, and tidying my home. I made it a must to check up on my loved ones regularly and that kept me going.

Ngokwami ukuthi ngikwazi ukumelana nezimo ezafika ne- COVID-19 ngazijwayeza ukuvuka ngesikhathi esifanayo nsuku zonke, ngizivocavoce, ngigeze ngiphinde ngihlanze nekhaya lethu. Ngakwenza kwaba yimpoqo ukubheka abantu engibathandayo lokhu kwangenza ngakwazi ukuqhubeka nempilo.

They mentioned dealing with stress by waking up at the same time every day, exercising, showering, meditating, journaling, tidying up their homes, checking up of their loved ones and also some mentioned getting vaccinated, frequently washing their hands, wore a mask in public places all the time, practised social distancing, practised respiratory etiquette and cleaned commonly used surfaces in the households for the sake of their families to not get infected.

5.3.2 Coronavirus and changes in the lives of Rural Women

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is still being felt and quantified by Mkhambathini Women breadwinners. Households that were already most vulnerable still feel the impact most. During this time, they mentioned that there were changes in the healthcare utilisation and employment in the Mkhambathini location, the population did not have access to family planning and did not have access to condoms which increased unplanned pregnancies. Usually, in this location, there were always job opportunities which included CWP, EPWP, roadworks, and the new water pipes installations as some places are having water scarcity. This was likely due to a combination of factors including stay-at-home orders and the perceived risk of being exposed to COVID-19 in public transport and at health facilities.

At the same time, almost the entire employed population experienced income loss or reduction. As lockdown restrictions were partially lifted, some breadwinners were able to recoup earnings. However, the economic stress caused by job losses caused a setback. It had an impact on children's school attendance and household food security. But it is impressive that women used their agency to navigate the stressful impacts of COVID-19 by becoming entrepreneurs,

having two jobs (formal (nurse/teacher/cleaner), and entrepreneurial jobs (selling vegetables) and others creatively used government grants to make a livelihood for their families.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the findings and the conclusions of this study. The present study primarily focused on *the rural breadwinners' women of Mkhambathini in relation to the impact they experienced during COVID-19*. What is suggested by the researcher is that more studies should be conducted on the impacts of COVID-19 among rural households of Mkhambathini and other Municipalities, looking at both males and females to discover which gender was impacted more. This is because this study only focused on only women and those who are African and are breadwinners.

In addition to every COVID-19 response plan, recovery package, and resource budgeting, the government must address the gender impacts of this pandemic. This includes putting women and women's organizations at the centre of the COVID-19 response; transforming the inequities of unpaid care work into a new, inclusive care economy that works for everyone; and developing socio economic plans with a deliberate focus on the lives and futures of women and girls. Putting women and girls at the centre of economies will fundamentally drive better and more sustainable development outcomes for all, support a faster recovery, and put us back on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

The study also recommends that policy responses to COVID-19 and any future pandemic or crisis affecting women be immediate and consider women's concerns. During the COVID-19 period and beyond, governments should reflect on implementing emergency measures to assist parents in balancing work and caring responsibilities, reinforcing, and expanding income support measures, expanding support for small businesses and the self-employed, and improving measures to assist women who are victims of violence. Fundamentally, all policy responses to the Coronavirus or any future pandemic crisis must incorporate a gender lens and consider women's unique needs, responsibilities, and perspectives.

Support from families in times of need is essential to people; it needs to be emphasised and practiced. Having your loved ones near you can make a situation feel lighter than it is. If this can be normalised more people will be at ease as it will also be easy for them to ask for help from other family members as in every family, we are not the same. Some have everything while some have nothing. This calls for the integration of family values to be integrated into anthropological studies linked with medical, cultural, and economic anthropology. Students as

the future generation will acquire values from different cultures including in isiZulu *Ubuntu* which focuses on empathy, love, care, hospitality, respect, social justice, peace, and human rights and they will be empowered to understand how to lend a helping hand to other people. Another critical recommendation which stems from the study is that counselling from the clinics is pivotal during any pandemic or crisis. This means that healthcare centres must be built in rural areas urgently and they must be of quality with sufficient medicines, quality infrastructure, resources, and a labour force. Households should use the counsellors from the nearby clinics to get counselling they need. This is evidenced by the high stress revealed by participants in the study due to GBV (Interviews: Participant 1, 5 and 30), loss of loved ones, fear of death. The government must try to increase clinic staff that can help with the counselling because sometimes a person go to seek help in their clinics then find a long queue then has to wait until all the people in front get assisted which can take a whole day because most of the time there is one or two people there to counsel everyone in need at that time, then the person who came to consult end up leaving without getting any help as they stop working usually at 16h00. The government must also help with DSD, the provision of satellite offices and the provision of counselling services in war rooms in the community. War rooms which are the stakeholder platforms that were announced under Operation Sukuma Sakhe in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and they are championed by Local Councillors and *amaKhosi ezindawo*.

Economic, clinical, and cultural anthropology has to integrate into its modules sections of dealing with stress like helping communities find hobbies to help society manage stress. As revealed in the study, they dealt with the stress by waking up at the same time every day, exercising, showering, meditating, journaling, tidying up their homes, checking up on their loved ones. Therefore, the study recommends that having one or two hobbies can help to keep people busy and inhibit stress which can help in dealing with COVID-19 and all its other different impacts.

The effective, reachable, awareness programmes need to be readily available for communities in all geographical contexts, even rural ecologies and the poor. The government needs to increase the level of provision of programmes that will keep the rural households aware of different diseases and is newly discovered so that they do not feel disposed (*balahliwe*). This can be done by taking some people in the location to attend some classes then come back to teach the whole community. This is a call for decolonisation of how the state deals with rural areas especially indigenous African ones and women themselves as they are marginalised.

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study discovered that almost 95% of Mkhambathini women breadwinners were severely affected by COVID-19. This study revealed that loss of income and care burden increase are the most dominant ones as almost everyone in this study mentioned them as one of the impacts that came with COVID-19 in their lives. This was also reviewed in the literature by Farre et al., (2021) who mentioned that gender disparities in unpaid work are frequently greater in developing and emerging economies and that women are likely to bear a disproportionate share of this additional burden. Childcare consumes a large portion of women's unpaid work time. The findings of the study are that in other countries like China and India gender-based violence was on the increase (Ozili & Arun, 2023) and in South Africa like in the rural area of Mkhambathini as revealed in this study.

The research exposed also the positive impacts of the pandemic which are normally concealed in literature when discussing rural areas and the impacts of COVID-19 especially since there is a dearth in the literature on the impacts of the pandemic on breadwinners who are African women in rural areas. Data from fieldwork revealed that even though the pandemic came with different negative impacts on households that were headed by African women breadwinners interviewed in this study there was one good reason which was making African women breadwinners have time to bond or spend with their families, getting to communicate, and showing them love (Interview: Participant 30) as indicated below:

COVID-19 brought joyous, unity, and happiness in my household as we were not used to being together before the pandemic and it came with a lockdown and we had to spend time together as we were forced to stay at home and not go to work.

I-COVID-19 yasifikela nenjabulo kanye nobumbano emndenini wami njengiba besingajwayele ukuba ndawonye ngaphambi kokufika kwalolubhubhane eyafika nokuvalwa kwezwe okubangela ukuba siphokeleke ukuba sihlale emekhaya singayi nasemsebenzini.

In addition, COVID-19 contributed to the decolonisation agenda of women's studies in Anthropology because it revealed that some information that has been written has been from a Eurocentric lens and homogenized as universal to all communities and African rural women's culture in this study defies such philosophies. For example, the issue of women is that they are

normally represented as docile, lacking agency and innovation. The findings by Meisenbach (2010) in her study about women revealed that a considerable number of rural female breadwinners felt shame and resentment because they sensed that they are making their partners feel less of men as they mostly believe it is men's work to provide financially for the family. According to Hofstede and Bond (1984), shame and guilt are associated with cultural characteristics such as "masculinity vs. femininity." But findings in this study reveal that women breadwinners felt content about their role as breadwinners to an extent that they even held two jobs at the same time to provide for their families. This indicates that it is pivotal to study communities from within their own context and their culture which is not static and does not impose other epistemologies. In addition, it is a call for transformation in academia especially about rural studies especially in Anthropology as we deal with communities and their cultural practices that decolonization is pivotal if we want to unearth justice in the epistemological, social, cultural and economic representations of the narratives of the previously colonised communities like the case study of Mkhambathini that is under study in this research.

REFERENCES

- Atlani-Duault, L., and Kendall, C., 2009. Influenza, anthropology, and global uncertainties. *Medical anthropology*, 28(3), pp.207-211.
- Alharahsheh, H.H. and Pius, A., 2020. A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS interpretivism. *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(3), pp.39-43.
- April, K. and Soomar, Z., 2013. Female breadwinners: Resultant feelings of guilt and shame. *Effective Executive*, 16(4), pp.32-47.
- Baumgarten, E., 2013. *Mothers and Children*. Princeton University Press.
- Bari, B. S., Rashid, M., Sulaiman, N., PP Abdul Majeed, A., Musa, R.M., Nasir, A.F., and Khatun, S., 2020. Current status, challenges, and possible solutions of EEG-based brain-computer interface: a comprehensive review. *Frontiers in neurorobotics*.
- Barrett, C.B., and Bevis, L.E., 2015. The self-reinforcing feedback between low soil fertility and chronic poverty. *Nature Geoscience*, 8(12), pp.907-912.
- Bernard, H.R., 2017. Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bibby, J., Everest, G. and Abbs, I., 2020. Will COVID-19 be a watershed moment for health inequalities. *The Health Foundation*, 7.
- Boushey, H., 2009. The new breadwinners. *The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything*, pp.158-64.
- Burgess, S. and Sievertsen, H.H. 2020. Schools, skills, and learning: The impact of COVID-19 on education. *VoxEu. org*, 1(2).
- Brandth, B. and Haugen, M.S. 2016., Rural masculinity. In *Routledge international handbook of rural studies* (pp. 442-454). Routledge.
- Briggs, J., 2005. The use of indigenous knowledge in development: problems and challenges. *Progress in development studies*, 5(2), pp.99-114.

Brown, K.W., Ryan, R.M., Loverich, T.M., Biegel, G.M., and West, A.M., 2011. Out of the armchair and into the streets: Measuring mindfulness advances knowledge and improves interventions: Reply to Grossman (2011). *Psychological Assessment* 23(4), pp.1041–1046.

Bryman, A., 2012. *Social Research Methods* 4e. Oxford, UK Oxford University Press.

Carson, J., 2020. Rural Areas with Seasonal Homes Hit Hard by COVID-19. Carsey Sch. Public Policy Sch. Repos.

Carey, R.N., Reid, A., Peters, S. and Fritschi, L., 2014. Do demographic profiles of listed and unlisted households differ? Results of a nationwide telephone survey. *Epidemiology Research International*, pp.1-6

Cecil, R. ed., 2020. *Anthropology of pregnancy loss: Comparative studies in miscarriage, stillbirth and neo-natal death*. Routledge.

Creswell J.W. and Poth, C.N., 2017. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Daszak, P. and Lipkin, W.I., 2011. The search for meaning in virus discovery. *Current opinion in virology*, 1(6), pp.620-623.

Davis, B., Di Giuseppe, S., and Zezza, A., 2017. Are African households (not) leaving agriculture? Patterns of households' income sources in rural Sub-Saharan Africa. *Food policy*, 67, pp.153-174.

DeLoughrey, E.M., DeLoughrey, E. and Handley, G.B. eds., 2011. *Postcolonial ecologies: Literatures of the environment*. OUP USA.

Descola, P., 2005. On anthropological knowledge. *Social Anthropology*, 13(1), pp.65-73.

Devereux, S., Béné, C., and Hoddinott, J., 2020. Conceptualising COVID-19's impacts on household food security. *Food Security*, 12(4), pp.769-772.

Dodd, W., Gomez Cerna, M., Orellena, P., Humphries, S., Sadoine, M.L., Zombre, D., Zinszer, K., Kipp, A., and Cole, D.C., 2020. Factors associated with seasonal food insecurity among small-scale subsistence farming households in rural Honduras. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(3), p.706.

- Duvvury, N., Callan, A., Carney, P. and Raghavendra, S., 2013. Intimate partner violence: Economic costs and implications for growth and development. *Women's voice, Agency, & participation research series 2013(3)*. World Bank Group
- Efron, S. E., Ravid, R., 2019. *Writing the Literature Review A Practical Guide*. ebook. The Guilford Press.
- Ellickson, R.C., 2010. *The Household*. Princeton University Press.
- Epplé, D. and Platt, G.J., 1998. Equilibrium and local redistribution in an urban economy when households differ in both preferences and incomes. *Journal of urban Economics*, 43(1), pp.23-51.
- Etikan, I., Alkassim, R., and Abubakar, S., 2015. Comparison of Snowball Sampling and Sequential Sampling Technique. *Biom Biostat*, 3(1). Available at: DOI:10.15406/bbij.2015.03.00055
- Farré, L., Fawaz, Y., González, L. and Graves, J., 2021. Gender Inequality in Paid and Unpaid Work During Covid-19 Times. *Review of Income and Wealth*.
- Ferragina, E. and Arrigoni, A., 2017. The rise and fall of social capital: requiem for a theory? *Political Studies Review*, 15(3), pp.355-367.
- Freund, C., and Hamel, I., 2020. COVID is hurting women economically, but governments have the tools to offset the pain. *World Bank Private Sector Development Blog*.
- Goodman, P.E., 2006. The relationship between intimate partner violence and other forms of family and societal violence. *Emergency Medicine Clinics*, 24(4), pp.889-903.
- Graham, B.S., 2020. Rapid COVID-19 vaccine development. *Science*, 368(6494), pp.945-946.
- Haefner, J., 2014. An application of Bowen family systems theory. *Issues in mental health nursing*, 35(11), pp.835-841.
- Han, J., Meyer, B.D. and Sullivan, J.X., 2020. *Income and Poverty in the COVID-19 Pandemic* (No. w27729). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Hann, C., 2018. Economic anthropology. *The international encyclopaedia of anthropology*, pp.1-16.

- Hartley, M., Tomlinson, M., Greco, E., Comulada, W.S., Stewart, J., Le Roux, I., Mbewu, N., and Rotheram-Borus, M.J., 2011. Depressed mood in pregnancy: prevalence and correlates in two Cape Town peri-urban settlements. *Reproductive health*, 8, pp.1-7.
- Haefner, J., 2014. An application of Bowen family systems theory. *Issues in mental health nursing*, 35(11), pp.835-841.
- Heffernan, A., Nieftagodien, N., Ndlovu, S.M. and Peterson, B. eds., 2016. *Students must rise: Youth struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto'76*. NYU Press.
- Hennink, M., Hutter, I. and Bailey, A., 2020. *Qualitative research methods*. Sage.
- Hertel, T.W., Burke, M.B. and Lobell, D.B., 2010. The poverty implications of climate-induced crop yield changes by 2030. *Global Environmental Change*, 20(4), pp.577-585.
- Humphreys, S.C., 2013. *Anthropology and the Greeks* (Vol. 6). Routledge.
- Hofstede, G. and Bond, M., 1984. The need for synergy among cross-cultural studies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 15(4), pp.417-33.
- Hourelid, K., Lewis, D., McNeill, R. and Granado, S., 2020. Virus exposes gaping holes in Africa's health systems. London, UK: Reuters.
- Howitt, R., ed., 1993. Marginalisation in Theory and Practice: a brief conceptual introduction. In *Theory and Practice*, pp.1-10.
- Isiko, A.P., 2020. Religious construction of disease: An exploratory appraisal of religious responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Uganda. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 12(3), pp.77-96.
- Izugbara, C.O. and Ezech, A.C., 2010. Women and high fertility in Islamic northern Nigeria. *Studies in family planning*, 41(3), pp.193-204.
- Jegade, A.S., 2015. From Gateway to Gatekeeper: Anthropology: Yesterday, today and tomorrow. *The Anthropology of Africa: Challenges for the 21st Century*, 2, p.3.
- Jesson, J.K., Matheson, L. and Lacey, F.M., 2011. *Doing Your Literature Review. Traditional and Systematic Techniques*. London: Sage.

Kanu, I.A., 2020. COVID-19 and the economy: an African perspective. *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*, 3(2).

Kgari-Masondo, M.C., 2015. Women as guardians of the environment in the midst of forced removals: From Lady Selborne to Ga-Rankuwa. *Alternation*, 1(14), pp.77-105.

Kgari-Masondo, MC and Masondo, ST., 2019. "For peace sake". African languages and Xenophobia in South Africa. *Journal of African Foreign Affairs (JOAFA)*, 6(3): 87-1102

Konopinski, N. ed., 2013. *Doing anthropological research: a practical guide*. Routledge.

Kivunja, C. and Kuyini, A.B., 2017. Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5), p.26.

Laborde, D., Martin, W. and Vos, R., 2021. Impacts of COVID-19 on global poverty, food security, and diets: Insights from global model scenario analysis. *Agricultural Economics*.

Lancet, T., 2020. The gendered dimensions of COVID-19. *Lancet (London, England)*, 395(10231), p.1168.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E., 2016. Practical research: planning and design. 11. *JW Johnston (ed.), Planning and Design*.

Leddy, A.M., Weiser, S.D., Palar, K. and Seligman, H., 2020. A conceptual model for understanding the rapid COVID-19–related increase in food insecurity and its impact on health and healthcare. *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 112(5), pp.1162-1169.

Lin, N., 2001. Building a network theory of social capital. In: Lin, N., Cook, K., and Burt, R.S. (eds.) *Social Capital: Theory and Research*.

Livneh, H. and Martz, E. 2007., An introduction to coping theory and research. *Coping with chronic illness and disability: Theoretical, empirical, and clinical aspects*, pp.3-27.

Luo, R.F., Liu, C.F., Gao, J.J., Wang, T.Y., Zhi, H.Y., Shi, P.F. and Huang, J.K., 2020. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural poverty and policy responses in China. *Journal of Integrative Agriculture*, 19(12), pp.2946-2964.

Mason, W.M. ed., 2012. *Cohort analysis in social research: Beyond the identification problem*. Springer Science & Business Media.

- Malik, S. and Naeem, K., 2020. Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Women: Health, livelihoods & domestic violence.
- Makiwane, M., Gumede, N.A., Makoe, M. and Vawda, M., 2017. Family in a changing South Africa: structures, functions and the welfare of members. *South African Review of Sociology*, 48(2), pp.49-69.
- Marecek, J., and Ballou, D.J., 1981. Family roles and women's mental health. *Professional Psychology*, 12(1), pp.39-46.
- Martin, A., Markhvida, M., Hallegatte, S. *et al.* Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 on Household Consumption and Poverty., 2020. *Economics of disasters and climate change*, 4(3), pp.453–479. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41885-020-00070-3>
- Meisenbach, R.J., 2010. Stigma management communication: A theory and agenda for applied research on how individuals manage moments of stigmatized identity. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 38(3), pp.268-292.
- McGoldrick, M., 1989. Women through the family life cycle. *Women in families: A framework for family therapy*, pp.200-226
- Mieder, W., 1993. *Proverbs are never out of season: Popular Wisdom in the Modern Age*. New York: Oxford Press.
- Moock, J.L. 2019. *Understanding Africa's rural households and farming systems*. Routledge.
- Mueller, J.T., McConnell, K., Burow, P.B., Pofahl, K., Merdjanoff, A.A. and Farrell, J., 2021. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural America. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(1).
- Njeru, L.W., 2015. *The impact of alcohol abuse on the welfare of rural households: a case study of Mbeti-north Ward, Embu County* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Oppong, J.R., 2020. The African COVID-19 anomaly. *African Geographical Review*, 39(3), pp.282-288.
- Orbuch, T.L., and Custer, L., 1995. The social context of married women's work and its impact on Black husbands and White husbands. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, pp.333-345.

Ozili, P.K. and Arun, T., 2023. Spillover of COVID-19: impact on the Global Economy. In *Managing Inflation and Supply Chain Disruptions in the Global Economy* (pp. 41-61). IGI Global.

Parker, A.R. and Lawrence, C.R., 2001. Water capture by a desert beetle. *Nature*, 414(6859), pp.33-34.

Paskins, Z., Crawford-Manning, F., Bullock, L. and Jinks, C., 2020. Identifying and managing osteoporosis before and after COVID-19: rise of the remote consultation? *Osteoporosis International*, 31, pp.1629-1632.

Phillipson, J.; Bennett, K.; Lowe, P.; and Raley, M., 2004. Adaptive responses and asset strategies: The experience of rural micro-firms and Foot and Mouth Disease. *Journal of Rural Studies*., 20, pp.227–243.

Phillipson, J., Gorton, M., Turner, R., Shucksmith, M., Aitken-McDermott, K., Areal, F., Cowie, P., Hubbard, C., Maioli, S., McAreavey, R. and Monteiro, D.S., 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and its implications for rural economies. *Sustainability*, 12(10), p.3973.

Ranger, T., 2003. Women & Environment in African Religion: The Case of Zimbabwe. In McGregor, J. and W. Beinart (eds.): *Social History and African Environments*. Oxford: James Currey.

Rathje, William., 1981. Quoted in From Tikal to Tucson, Today's Garbage Is Tomorrow's Artifact (interview). *Anthropology Newsletter* 22 (3), p.6.

Raymond F. B., 2012. Decolonization: A brief history of the word. Beyond Empire and Nation. 1930s-1970s. *Brill*. pp. 23–38.

Ridley, D., 2012. *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students (2ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Roesch, E., Amin, A., Gupta, J. and Garcia-Moreno, C., 2020. Violence against women during COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Available at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/369/bmj.m1712.full.pdf>

Roos, L.E., Salisbury, M., Penner-Goeke, L., Cameron, E.E., Protudjer, J.L., Giuliano, R., Afifi, T.O., and Reynolds, K., 2021. Supporting families to protect child health: Parenting quality and household needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Plos one*, 16(5). e0251720

Ruether, R.R., 2000. *Women healing Earth: Third world women on ecology, feminism, and religion*. Orbis Books.

Rutz, C., Loretto, M.C., Bates, A.E., Davidson, S.C., Duarte, C.M., Jetz, W., Johnson, M., Kato, A., Kays, R., Mueller, T. and Primack, R.B., 2020. COVID-19 lockdown allows researchers to quantify the effects of human activity on wildlife. *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 4(9), pp.1156-1159.

Schaefer, M.B., Abrams, S.S., Kurpis, M., Abrams, C. and Abrams, M., 2021. Pandemic meaning making: messing toward motet. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*.

Schoepf, B.G., 2001. International AIDS research in anthropology: taking a critical perspective on the crisis. *Annual review of anthropology*, 30(1), pp.335-361.

Sharma, A. and Borah, S.B. (2020). COVID-19 and Domestic Violence: an Indirect Path to Social and Economic Crisis. *Journal of Family Violence*.

Sibley, C.G., Greaves, L.M., Satherley, N., Wilson, M.S., Overall, N.C., Lee, C.H., Milojev, P., Bulbulia, J., Osborne, D., Milfont, T.L. and Houkamau, C.A., 2020. Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide lockdown on trust, attitudes toward government, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, p.618

Silverman, D. ed., 2020. *Qualitative research*. Sage Publications Limited.

Sileyew, K.J., 2019. *Research design and methodology* (pp. 1-12). Rijeka: Intech Open.

Smith, J., 2019. Overcoming the “tyranny of the urgent”: integrating gender into disease outbreak preparedness and response. *Gender Development*.

Statistics South Africa (STATS SA)., 2022. *Report on agricultural production from Statistics South Africa..* Available at: www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-11-02-01/CoCA%202017%20Fact%20Sheets.pdf (Accessed 20 February 2022).

Strobel, M., 1982. African women. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 8(1), pp.109-131.

Shortall, S.; Sutherland, L.; McKee, A.; and Hopkins, J., 2017. *Women in Farming and the Agriculture Sector*. Scottish Government: Edinburgh, Scotland.

Telles, L.E., Valenca, A.M., Barros, A.J. and da Silva, A.G., 2020. Domestic violence in the COVID-19 pandemic: a forensic psychiatric perspective. *Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry*, 43, pp.233-234

Turner, A.N., 1982. Consulting is more than giving advice. *Harvard business review*, 60(5), pp.120-129.

Tambiah, S.J., 2013. The galactic polity in Southeast Asia. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 3(3), pp.503-534.

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)., 2020. Effects of COVID-19 on livelihood, employment, and financial resources. Available at: https://knowledgecommons.popcouncil.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2151&context=departments_sbsr-pgy

Utkina, L.N. and Kovalevich, D.S., 2018. Concept “time” in English proverbs and sayings. *Language and Text*, 5(2), pp.82-90.

Verma, A. and Prakash, S., 2020. Impact of COVID-19 on environment and society. *Journal of Global Biosciences*, 9(5), pp.7352-7363.

Verlegh, P.W., Verkerk, C., Tuk, M.A. and Smidts, A., 2004. Customers or sellers? The role of persuasion knowledge in customer referral. *ACR North American Advances*.

Warren, T., 2007. Conceptualizing breadwinning work. *Work, employment and society*, 21(2), pp.317-336.

Whiting, B.J., 2013. *Proverbs, sentences, and proverbial phrases from English writings mainly before 1500*. Harvard University Press.

Wilk, R.R. and Netting, R.M., 2020. Households: Changing Forms and Functions. In *Households* (pp. 1-28). University of California Press.

Woody, C.A., Ferrari, A.J., Siskind, D.J., Whiteford, H.A. and Harris, M.G., 2017. A systematic review and meta-regression of the prevalence and incidence of perinatal depression. *Journal of affective disorders*, 219, pp.86-92.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

Semi-Structured interview Questions

Section A: Personal Information

How old are you (Age)?

20-29	
30-39	
40-49	
50-59	
60+	

Marital Status:

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Separated	
Other	
Prefer not to say	

Section B

1. Is your family nuclear, extended or is a single parent headed?
2. Do you have children? If yes, how many?
3. How many dependents do you have? (specify the number of males and females)
4. How do you feel about being a breadwinner as a woman during the COVID-19 pandemic?
5. As a breadwinner what role do you play to your household members? Are you a mother, sister, aunt, grandma or other?
6. What are your experiences as a female breadwinner during COVID-19?
7. What are the impacts of COVID-19 in your life? Explain under the following headings
 - (a). Social impacts
 - (b). Economically
 - (c). Environmental
 - (d). Food security
8. As the breadwinner was there any support from the family or other organisation?
Explain
9. What did you do to cope with the impact of COVID-19 in your household?

APPENDIX 2: TRANSLATED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

ISIGABA SOKUQALA

Imininingwane yakho ngqo

Uneminyaka emingaki?

20-29	
30-39	
40-49	
50-59	
60+	

Ngabe ushadile/ushadelwe:

Single	
Ngishadile	
Ngihlukanisile	
Ngashonelwa umlingani	
Saqhelelana	
Okunye	
Ngicela ukungazivezi	

ISIGABA SESIBILI

1. Ngabe umndeni wakho ungowabantu abashadile nabantwana, unamanye amalunga aseceleni noma unomzali oyedwa?
2. Ngabe unabo abantwana? uma bekhona bangaki?
3. Ngabe bangaki abantu ababhekelelwa nguwe? Veza isibalo sabesifazane kanye nesabesilisa.
4. Uzizwa kanjani ngokuba wumsizi ekhaya ngesikhathi se COVID-19?
5. Ikuphi okufundile ngokuba umsizi ekhaya ngesikhathi se COVID-19?
6. Ifike namuphi umthelela empilweni yakho iCOVID-19
7. Njengomsizi ekhaya ngabe lukhona usizo owaluthola emndenini?
 - (a). Ngokwempilo nje
 - (b). Ngokwemali
 - (c). Ngokwendawo
 - (d). Mayelana nokudla
8. Ukuphi owakwenza ukumelana neCOVID-19 empilweni yakho kanye neyomndeni wakho?
9. Njengomsizi ekhaya ngabe abantu obanakekelayo ngokwezezimli/ ngokwemilo ungumama, usisi, ubabekazi, ugogo noma okunye okungabaliwe?

APPENDIX 3: INFORMANT CONSENT LETTER AND INFORMATION

MASTERS IN ANTROPOLOGY

Researcher: Nontokozo Goqo

Student Number: 216040467

Telephone number: 063 854 9616

Email address: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Lecturer: Dr. Kgari-Masondo

Email address: kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za

Ethics committee information: brec@ukzn.co.za

Dear Respondent

Information Sheet

I, Goqo Nontokozo Fundiswa an Anthropology Masters Degree student, in the School of Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, invite you to participate in my research project entitled; *The impact of Coronavirus disease on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. The aim of this study is to investigate and record the impact of COVID-19 on African rural breadwinners’ women of Mkhambathini and to explore how they are coping with the ramifications thereof.

Through your participation, I hope to know the effects of COVID-19 on you and your household and how you cope with that impact. The results from the interviews are intended to contribute to further understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 and possibly implement ways to help those households who want help to overcome issues they faced due to the pandemic. The participation in this project is voluntary. The participant may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study anytime. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this study. The identities of the participants will not be disclosed in any way.

If there are questions or concerns about participating in this study, participants are allowed to contact the researcher, my supervisor, or the university’s ethics committee the contact details are given above. All the interviews will take about 20 to 30 minutes. I hope you will take your time to participate.

Yours Sincerely,
Nontokozo F. Goqo

Signature of Researcher

Date

Place

INFORMANTS INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT

Researcher: Nontokozo Goqo

Student Number: 216040467

Telephone number: 063 854 9616

Email address: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Lecturer: Dr. Kgari-Masondo

Email address: kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za

Ikomidi elibhekelela ukulandelwa kwemigomo: brec@ukzn.co.za

CONSENT

I _____ (full names of participant) have been informed about the study entitled *The impact of Coronavirus disease on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. I understand the purpose and procedures of the study as I have been given an opportunity to participate in this study. I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw any time from the study without getting any penalties.

I have been informed that there will not be any available compensation to me by participating in the study. If I have any further questions, concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I can contact the researcher at (email address: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za/bhengunonto11@gmail.com, cell: 0638549616), the supervisor Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za or the UKZN ethics committee brec@ukzn.co.za

Additional consent

I hereby provide consent for the interview to take place by:

taking notes of my responses to the questions asked	YES / NO
recording of my answers	YES / NO

_____	_____	_____
Signature of Participant	Date	Place
_____	_____	_____
Signature of Researcher	Date	Place
_____	_____	_____
Signature of Witness (Where applicable)	Date	Place

APPENDIX 4: TRANSLATED CONSENT LETTER AND INFORMATION

Umcwaningi: Nontokozo Goqo
Inombolo Yomfundi: 216040467
Inombolo Yocingo: 0638549616
Ikheli lomfundi: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za
Umfundisi: Dr. Kgari-Masondo
Ikheli lomfundisi: Kgari-masondo@ukzn.ac.za
Ethics committee information: brec@ukzn.co.za

Mina, Goqo Nontokozo Fundiswa umfundi we Anthropology masters eskoleni sakwa- *Social Science* eNyuvesi YaKwaZulu Natal, Ekhemphasini YaseMgungundlovu nginesicelo sokuba usebenzisane nami ocwaningweni olisihloko sithi *The impact of Coronavirus disease on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. Inhloso yalesifundo ukuthola umthelela we COVID-19 kubantu besifazane abahlala ezindaweni ezisemakhaya, ekuyibona abanakekela imideni yabo kanye nokuthi iziphi izinto abazenzile ukumelana ne COVID-19.

Ngokuzinikela kwakho kulolucwaningo, ngifisa ukuthola izinto ezikwehlele empilweni yakho kanye nomndeneni wakho ngenxa yokufika kwe COVID-19 kanye nokuthi yikuphi enithe nakwenza ukumelana nalezi zinkinga ezifike neCOVID-19.

Imiphumela eyotholakala kuma- inthavyu ihlose ukulekelela ekuqondeni kahle ukuze kuqhamukwe nezindlela ezingalekelela ekusizeni abantu besifazane basezindaweni ezisemakhaya abadinga usizo ekulwisaneni nezinkinga ezahluahlukene ezifike ne COVID-19 ezimpilweni zabo.

Ukusebenza kulesi sifundo akuphoqelekile. Umnikeli wolwazi anganqaba noma futhi aphume nanoma inini uma esefisa ukuphuma kulesi sifundo. Akekho ozohlomula ngokwemali kulesi sifundo. Amagama alabo engizosebenzisana nabo angeke aze adalulwe nanoma ingayiphi indlela.

Uma kunemibuzo mayelana nokusebenza kulesi sifundo ungaxhumana nami noma no suphavayiza wami. Izindlela zokuxhumana zinikeziwe ngaphezulu. Wonke ama- inthavyu azothatha isikhathi esingangemizuzu engama-20 kuya kwengama-30. Ngyathemba nizokwazi ukuthatha isikhathi senu ekusebenzisaneni nami kulesi sifundo.

Ozithobayo
Nontokozo F. Goqo

Indawo yokusayinda

Usuku

Indawo

**TRANSLATED INFORMANT
INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT**

Umcwaningi: Nontokozo Goqo
Inombolo Yomfundi: 216040467
Inombolo Yocingo: 0638549616
Ikheli lomfundi: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za
Umfundisi: Dr. Kgari-Masondo
Ikheli lomfundisi: Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za
Ethics Committee: brec@ukzn.co.za

Mina, _____ (amagama aphelele omsizi) ngazisiwe ngesifundo esisihloko sithi *The impact of Coronavirus disease on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. Ngiyayiqonda inhloso kanye nendlela yalesi sifundo njengoba nginikezwe ithuba lokuba ngomanye walabo ekuzosetshenziswana nabo. Ngiyavuma ukuba kulesi sifundo ngingene ngokungempopo yamuntu kanye nokuthi ngingaphuma kulesi sifundo nanoma inini ngaphandle kokubhekana nezinkinga.

Ngazisiwe ngakho konke okumayelana nesinxephezelo noma nosizo lwezempilo uma kungaba khona ukulimala okwenzekalayo kimina okumayelana nokuba khona kwami kulesi sifundo. Uma kukhona imibuzo enginayo eqondene nalesi sifundo ngiyaqonda ukuthi ngingakwazi ukuxhumana nomcwaningi walesi sifundo ngisebenzisa lemininingwane elandelayo (ikheli lomfundi: 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za/ bhengunonto11@gmail.com, inombolo yocingo: 0638549616), umfundisi: Kgarimasondo@ukzn.co.za/ Ethics committee: brec@ukzn.co.za Uma ngingaba nemibuzo mayelana namalungelo ami kulesi sifundo noma kungaba khona noma yini engifisa ukuyazi eqondene nalesi sifundo ngingaxhumana:

Umfundisi: Dr. Kgari-Masondo
Inombolo yasehhovisi: 031 260 2059
Ikheli lomfundisi: Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za

EMINYE IMINININGWANE MAYELANA NEMVUME YOKUBAMBA IQHAZA

Ngiyavuma ukuthi:

Ukwenza inhlolekhono ngokubhala phansi
Ukwenza inhlolekhono ngokuqopha

YEBO/ CHA
YEBO/ CHA

Ukusayinda komsizi

Usuku

Indawo

Ukusayinda komcwaningi

Usuku

Indawo

APPENDIX 5: GATE KEEPERS LETTER OF CONSENT: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE FIELDWORK IN MKHAMBATHINI

30 January 2022

To: Induna/Inkosi Mkhambathini
College of Humanities

Dear Induna Mr ...

SINCERE REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE AREA OF MKHAMBATHINI

As a UKZN Masters student in Anthropology, I am researching *The impact of Coronavirus disease on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. This is a request letter to collect information in the Mkhambathini area. The research study is grounded on focusing on rural African women breadwinners’ perspectives about the impact of COVID-19 and their coping strategies. It will record the economic, environmental and social impact of COVID-19 on rural households with African women breadwinners’ of Mkhambathini.

I would like to request permission to conduct semi-structured interviews with 30 African women breadwinners concerning their experiences and perspective on the impact of COVID-19 in their households. For more information and details concerning the research you can contact me (Goqo Nontokozo Fundiswa), Contact details: 0638549616/ bhengunonto11@gmail.com or 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za or you can contact my supervisor Dr. Kgari-Masondo 031 260 2059/ or email Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za or the UKZN Ethics committee at brec@ukzn.co.za Your support is highly valued and appreciated.

Kind Regards

Nontokozo Fundiswa Goqo (Miss)

.....

Masters in Anthropology Candidate

APPENDIX 6: TRANSLATED GATEKEEPERS LETTER OF CONSENT: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE FIELDWORK IN MKHAMBATHINI

30 KuMasingana 2022

Induna/Inkosi Mkhambathini, College of Humanities

Induna/ Inkosi Mnumzane _____

ISICELO SOKUTHOLA ULWAZI EMPHAKATHINI WASE MKHAMBATHINI

Njengomfundi wase UKZN owenza i Anthropology, Ngenza isifundo esihlokwini esithi *The impact of COVID-19 on the rural households headed by African women “breadwinners”: An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. Lencwadi eyesicelo sokuqoqa ulwazi endaweni yaseMkhambathini esifundazweni saKwaZulu- Natal. Lesisifundo sizobe sibheke kakhulu kubantu besifazane abangabondli emakhaya endaweni esemakhaya sibheka imiphumela yeCOVID-19 nezindlela yokumelana nayo ezahlukeni. Sizogqoqa konke okuthi kwathinteka noma kwaba noshintsho ezimpilweni zabantu besifazane abangabondli endaweni yaseMkhambathini kubangelwa ukuba khona kwe- COVID-19.

Bengicela imvume yokuba ngikwazi ukuhlalana nabantu besifazane abangabondli abangamashumi amathathu ngibabuza imibuzo mayelana nolwazi abalutholile ngokufika kwe-COVID-19 emindenini yabo. Mayelana nolwazi olugcwele ungathintana nami kulenombolo: 0638549616 noma ubhalele kuleli kheli 216040467@stu.ukzn.ac.za noma uthintane no Dr. Kgari- Masondo kulenombolo: 031 260 2059/ ubhalele Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za. Usizo lwakho ngiyolithokozela kakhulu.

Ozithobayo

u- Nontokozo Fundiswa Gogo (Nkosazana)

.....

UMFUNDI WE- ANTHROPOLOGY MASITAZI

APPENDIX 7: LETTER OF CONSENT: GATEKEEPERS - INDUNA/INKOSI

MAPHUMULO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

TABLE MOUNTAIN
MBAMBANGALO
BOX 1286, CUMBERWOOD 3235
CELL: 082 863 6149/072 186 0263
E-mail: chiefmaphumulo@gmail.com

10 August 2022

To whom it may concern:

I Mtshengiseni Ndawonde, an Induna/Inkosi of Mkhambathini community I hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project by entitled *The impact of Coronavirus on the rural households headed by African women "breadwinners": An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. I hereby consent to the participation of 30 African women in Mkhambathini in this project in the form of semi structured interviews. I also consent to the researcher, Nontokozi Fundiswa Goqo using the name of the location Mkhambathini in her research and publications.

Induna/Inkosi: M. Ndawonde

Signature [REDACTED] Date 10/08/2022



**APPENDIX 8: LETTER OF CONSENT TRANSLATED: GATEKEEPERS -
INDUNA/INKOSI**

MAPHUMULO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

TABLE MOUNTAIN
MBAMBANGALO
BOX 1286, CUMBERWOOD 3235
CELL: 082 863 6149/072 186 0263
E-mail: chiefmaphumulo@gmail.com

10 kuNcwaba 2022

Kulabo abathintekayo

Mina, Mshengweni Ndawonde, Induna/Inkosi yomphakathi wase Mkhambathini, Ngiyakuqonda okubhaliwe kulamaphepha kanye nenhloso yalesisifundo esisihloko sithi *The impact of Coronavirus on the rural households headed by African women "breadwinners": An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal*. Ngiyavuma ukuba ungabamba imihlangano nabantu besifazane abangabondli emindenini yabo abangamashumi amathathu ubabuza imibuzo ezobanika ithuba lokuphendula ngokufisa kwabo. Ngiyaphinda ngiyavuma ukunika wena Nontokozo Fundiswa Goqo invume yokusebenzisa igama lendawo yase Mkhambathini esifundweni sakho kanye nasekuthumelelweni kwaso.

Induna/Inkosi M. Ndawonde

Ukusayinda [REDACTED] Usuku 10/08/2022



APPENDIX 9: ETHICS LETTER



17 August 2022

Nontokozo Fundiswa Goqo (216040467)
School Of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear NF Goqo,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00004246/2022

Project title: The impact of corona virus disease on the rural households headed by African women "breadwinners": An Anthropological case study of Mkhambathini in Kwa-Zulu Natal

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 24 May 2022 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has 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.

This approval is valid until 17 August 2023.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS