

**THE EFFECTS OF WOMEN'S LABOUR MIGRATION ON THE FAMILY:**  
**Perceptions of the Labour Migrant**

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## DECLARATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters, in the Graduate Programme in Social Work, University of KwaZulu-Natal,

Durban, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters in Social Work in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.



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Date

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**TO ALL STRONG, INSPIRED AND INSPIRING WOMEN WITHOUT WHOSE UNWAVERING SUPPORT I WOULD NEVER HAVE STARTED MY MASTER'S DEGREE - LET ALONE COMPLETE IT: MY GRANDMA NKHONO 'MAKUENA, 'M'E 'MABOTSOA, PROFESSOR KASIRAM, RAKHALI 'MAMPOKO AND MODY (THE PRETTIEST AND SWEETEST LITTLE SISTER ANYONE COULD EVER ASK FOR). TO THE GOOD MEN IN MY LIFE TOO: MY GRAND DAD GL, MY GREAT DAD NTATE BOI, AND MY TWO GREAT BROTHERS SLIE & BOOM.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research was carried out between June and July 2008 among migrant labour women who work in the clothes manufacturing industries of Lesotho. It aimed at uncovering the effects that women's absence in families has on their families, basing itself on the assumption that women employees of manufacturing industries of Maseru are migrants from rural areas whose families remain in the rural areas.

The three main findings in the research are that; men do not remain in rural areas but migrate and work in the manufacturing industries in Maseru as well, while children remain behind in the care of either maternal or paternal extended family. Secondly, this set up (men migrating with their wives) has enhanced marital relationships of migrant labour women, while children of migrant labour women have been affected negatively by being separated from their mothers.

A third finding that emerged in this study is that women indulge in extramarital affairs even when they live and stay in the same place with their husbands.

Finally, this paper recommends strategies that may ensure that mothers and children maintain a healthy relationship and it makes suggestions pertaining to the spread of HIV in the manufacturing industries.

## **Outline of the Study**

### **1.0.0 Introduction to the Chapter**

This chapter provides an outline of the entire research document. It will do this by listing the aims and objectives of the study and questions that the study asked in the effort to achieve its objectives as well as summarise its layout. Secondly the chapter will discuss women's labour migration as a social dynamic and explain its importance to the study of social life i.e. demonstrate significance of the study topic. Lastly, research methodologies will be discussed briefly.

The report itself is a presentation of the results of a study that was undertaken among migrant labour women in the manufacturing industries of Ha-Thetsane, Lesotho between June and July 2008. The aim of the study was to explore the effects of the women's absence on their families i.e. their children, spouses, significant others and themselves as perceived by the women.

#### **1.1.1 Objectives of the Study**

Specific objectives pertinent to the study were:

- Explore the effects of women's labour migration on: their relationships with their partners; the women migrant labourers themselves; their children; and their significant others<sup>1</sup>
- Understand how the women maintain their relationships with their spouses; their children and significant others in spite of working and staying away from home
- Understand supports and obstacles to women's migration

#### **1.1.2 Key Questions that were Asked**

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<sup>1</sup> Here and in the entire document, the phrase significant others will be used to refer to those people who are left in the care of the migrant laborer's children where children remain in the migrant laborer's place of origin.

Key questions that were asked to reach the objectives were:

- How are the women and their family members affected when women leave home to work?
- How is the marital relationship affected and maintained in view of the woman's migratory labour?
- How is the migrant woman's relationship with her children affected and maintained in view of the woman's migratory labour?
- What supports and challenges are experienced by the women in working away from home?

### 1.1.3 List of Chapters in the Report

This report will be divided into five chapters as thus:

1. Outline of the study. This chapter will provide an introduction to the entire research report and it will discuss the research problem, its social relevance, its aims and objectives, as well as highlight briefly the research methods employed in the study. Finally chapter 1 will point out the limitations and problems encountered during the implementation of the study and ethical standards observed
2. Literature Review. This second chapter will focus on review of relevant literature and it will include theoretical underpinning of the study
3. Research Methodology. Thirdly, research methodology that was used to arrive at the findings of this study will be discussed in detail
4. Research findings. Fourth, research results will be presented and discussed
5. Conclusions and recommendations. It will end with concluding remarks and recommendations

## **1.2.0 Significance of the study**

### **1.2.1 Significance to Social Policy**

Social policy aims to provide a framework for remedial and preventive measures against social ills by laying a foundation for legal statutes and regulations of governments and administrations. This study has the potential of adding to the knowledge base for effective policy aimed at families engaged in labour migration in Lesotho by highlighting the different ways in which dismantling of the family that results from labour migration among other things, impacts on families. It highlights the need for all sectors concerned in economic planning of the country like the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Local Government, and Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for example, to consider the preservation of the families of all workers and in particular migrant workers in strategic planning efforts. It can also assist in promulgating laws that force employers to protect the families of their employees through instigating enabling working conditions.

### **1.2.2 Significance to Social Work Practice and other Social Service Provision**

This paper could benefit employment assistance program officers (EAPOs) or industrial social work officers (ISWOs) in understanding the situation of migrant labourers especially women and their families to help them (EAPOs and ISWOs) to design effective and appropriate programmes in their work. Secondly, it could help family therapists, social workers and counsellors to better understand the dynamics that may be at play in families of women migrant labourers. In the same way this study can assist teachers to understand the behaviour and reciprocal impact on academic performance which women's labour migration can have on children.

### **1.2.3 Significance to Social Science Research**

This study points out that social science research has, to a large extent, ignored family dynamics in families of woman migrant labourers especially as woman labour migration relates to deterioration of the quality of marriage and development of children. The researcher hopes that this study will incite scholars in social work to carry out more

research in these subjects. This research has also identified the gap in the documentation of best practices relating to the preservation of families of labour migrants and hopefully other social work practitioners, social work students and academicians will see the need for such research endeavours.

### 1.3.0 Research Problem

Historically, Lesotho men migrated into the Republic of South Africa to work in the mines up until recently in the wake of massive retrenchments that resulted from the rapid devaluation of gold on the international markets. Consequently, influx of Lesotho men into the Republic of South Africa has declined due to a drop in their demand as manual workers in the South African mines. This, coupled with the decline in animal farming, has forced women to seek employment outside the home in order to make up for husband's lost income, in some cases as migrant labourers, leaving their children with spouses and/or extended family (Macdonald *et al*, 2000).

An almost parallel event to the devaluation of the gold, was the influx of East-Asian investors in the late 1980s (Textiles Africa, 2007) and early 1990s (Gibbon, 2003) in Lesotho. These investors brought industries such as cloth manufacturing and clothes-making to Lesotho. These industries are concentrated in the urban areas of Lesotho, viz. Maseru and Maputsoe (Textiles Africa, 2007).

Consequently, women have migrated into the towns of Lesotho in search of employment in the manufacturing industries. The tendency for it to be women more than men who migrate into the towns of Lesotho to work in the manufacturing industries seems to be a result of the andocentric ideologies of patriarchy which are held by Asians investors. Women are said to be willing to work in spite of poor returns; willing to comply with monotonous repetitive tasks, and highly exhausting work, and they possess docility which discourages organising efforts by union leaders (Dyer, 2001). Also, industry workers are mostly women in the Far East (Baylies and Wright, 1993).

Thus it can be argued that there are more employment opportunities for women who have only basic education in Lesotho than there are at the moment for men of the same educational level. According to Textiles Africa (2007) 45, 000 women work in the textile industries of Lesotho. This is a total of 2.5% of the 1, 8 million (Textiles Africa, 2007) total population of the country. Secondly, the human resource component of manufacturing industries is made up of 80% women. This set of statistical data is intended to demonstrate that the number of working women in jobs that require minimal education is higher than that of men. It is common knowledge that Lesotho is not an industrialised country and opportunities for manual labour are few. As a result it has become a common feature for women to work while men stay at home.

The void that is left by women in families due the migratory nature of their employment is considered a social anomaly by the researcher and its impacts potentially drastic, thus the need for this study.

#### **1.4.0 Rationale` for Choosing Thetsane as Locale` of the Study**

Thetsane Industrial Area settlement was chosen as the locale` for the study because it houses the largest number of migrant labourers in one place in Maseru as it is located within the Thetsane Industrial Site.

#### **1.5.0 Context and Motivation for the Study**

Here, the researcher takes the opportunity to point out that, even in her very mature years she still derives strength to endure, support, love and motivation from her mother; the main reason for her scholarly interest in the enormous capacity of women to be devoted mothers and renowned professionals at the same time, all with a smile ready to provide comfort and a hand ready to sooth and still be able to satisfy career demands: 'M'e 'Mabotsoa for one.

This part of the research report aims at demonstrating academic value and the possible problems that can be caused by labour migration of women, on the family. It will depict

these problems with emphasis on their relevance to social science research and to social life.

### 1.5.1 Academic Environment

Firstly, little literature is available on women's migration in Lesotho. That which is available is andocentric, concentrating on the out-migration of men to the Republic of South Africa, who oscillated to and from the Republic of South Africa to work in the mines as unskilled labour, in many cases leaving their families in Lesotho (Kimane and Ntimo-Makara, 1997). Where mention was made of the women it was usually in relation to the dilemma of being left at home to take care of the family in the wake of poor, irregular, and inconsistent returns from their migrant labour husbands (Dyer, 2001; Murray, 1981) or when they were accompanying their husband migrant labourers (Dyer, 2001; Kimane and Ntimo-Makara, 1997).

Secondly, limited research was found by the researcher on the socio-emotional relationship of the working woman with her husband and her children especially the woman that works and stays away from home for long periods. Nothing was found by the researcher on the effect that labour migration of women in particular has on the psycho-social development of children. Literature that the researcher came across on the subjects of interpersonal relations of working women and their family members seemed to discuss the plight of women who work and return home at the end of a working day to the exclusion of migrant labour women, thus andocentrically underplaying labour migration of women in families and in the society.

The andocentricity of this scenario is more striking in the case of Lesotho because Lesotho has a peculiar characteristic among its African peers of a comparatively higher literacy rate of women as compared to men (UNESCO, 2006), thereby suggesting more mobility of women and less dependence on men. This has led to a vast gap in migration literature particularly pertaining to the aspect of family life in Lesotho. Thus there exists insufficient information to guide policy, infrastructure and social service provision for the purpose of either migrants themselves or their families. This study is a step in the

direction of filling the information gap that exists on the effects of labour migration of women on families.

### 1.5.2 Social Environment

In as far as gender theoretical perspectives are concerned, numerous factors come into play when a woman (not the man) is the bread winner, and these need to be investigated. Firstly, power relations within the home are affected (Mapetla and Schlyter, 1997). Secondly a significant feature of the employment of women (and the ensuing power conflict in households) seems to be the unsupportive attitude of spouses who regard working women as a threat to their male domination and often resort to domestic violence to reclaim it (Dyer, 2001; Mapetla and Shlyter, 1997). Needless to say this strategy as a method of control has inherent problems. Domestic violence threatens the mental and physical health of all members of the family and it places the marriage at risk of disintegration. Thus labour migration of women can be seen as a source of tension within the family which can potentially lead to disintegration of the family unit.

In the first place she (the working woman) expects to be provided for by her spouse and is consequently unable to cope with the reversal in responsibilities i.e. being the one who is providing instead of the man. It becomes more of a calamity if an unemployed man is also abusive. Secondly, a woman who can support herself is not inclined to tolerate abuse by a spouse, and might choose to leave the man rather than be brutalised into submission because she does not need a husband for financial support anymore. Moreover, a possible consequence of working women is the breakdown of the marriage through being deserted by the man who might prefer this rather than have his authority undermined by a working and consequently "insolent" woman (Dyer, 2001). This research provides a closer look at these family dynamics.

In the event that gender contracts seem not to be in favour of men from a gender schema perspective, like in the case of financial dependence on women, men tend to motivate their power as heads of households with their sex and not with their

contribution as breadwinners. In the event of male unemployment, men tend to retreat to essentialist male identity behaviour which is not always beneficial to the survival of the household in an effort to nurse their bruised egos (1997:13). Male essentialism is a strategy that is used by both men and women to maintain a façade of male superiority in society.

A façade of male superiority is essential to prevent men from retreating to male essentialism, thereby protecting the woman's position in the man's life and preserving a healthy homeostasis within the family. From a gender schema perspective, married women occupy a recognised position in society as compared to their never married and divorced counterparts hence the need for women to defend their married status even in the event of male essentialism. An example of male essentialism is polygamy. Polygamy is an instrument that ensures the subordination of women to men by rendering women as mere *baby-making/physical pleasure machines* for men; that do not have direct access to any form of resources except through their husbands and sons (Women and the Law in Southern Africa, 1998). Polygamy also has the effect of compromising the self-identity, self-reliance, and self-esteem of women and thus making them easy targets for the use, abuse and manipulation of and by men. This hypothetical risk to the family requires a close examination and this research will endeavour to achieve a closer examination of the phenomena of the reciprocal effect of woman's migrant labour and male essentialism.

Another dimension of male essentialism is to thwart and/or frown upon any potential of female advancement or display of physical strength, and/or strength of character like pursuit of financial independence. As demonstrated above, women are expected to derive their claim to a place in society through their male counterparts. Working women (especially in the instance where men are unemployed) therefore pose a *gender schema predicament* for men whereby male superiority is threatened. Thus, rather than provide support and/or encouragement to their working spouses, men are reported to discourage their industrial worker women from continuing with employment. They either pretend not to see the problems that the women face at work or they do not take them

seriously (Dyer, 2001). Those who do not openly discourage women from working may do it in a subtle manner such as not taking on some of the responsibilities that the women is unable to do due to work (Etaugh and Bridges, 2007; United Nations, 2005). Employment of women in an andocentric society that does not positively regard the empowerment of women thus needs a close review from an academic point hence it warrants a contextualisation and synthesis of this study.

### 1.5.3 Danger of Marital Disharmony and Breakdown in Families of Migrant Labour Women

Marital disharmony and consequently divorce are other dynamics in families which can result from labour migration as published in Philliber and Vannoy's study (1992). Findings of Philliber and Vannoy (1992) carried out among dual-earner couples from various levels of the labour force in Ohio revealed that it can be difficult for a man to adjust to the situation of a working woman. They go on to postulate that results of studies by McCullough (1981 in Philliber and Vannoy, 1992) and Philliber and Hiller (1983 in Philliber and Vannoy, 1992) suggested that there are more problems in marriages where women's achievements are higher than those of men and even more where women occupy positions that were traditionally the domain of men (Philliber and Vannoy, 1992). And as it will be discussed further in the review of literature, men in Lesotho have been found by Dyer (2001) to choose to end marriage due to injured egos resulting from a higher achievement of women compared to men. The researcher views the threat of divorce to be higher in the case of a woman migrant labourer than in the case of a woman who stays at home and aims to validate or discredit this viewpoint by this research.

### 1.5.4 Risk of Estrangement in Parent-Child Relationship

The mother-child relationship which is hailed as the most important family subsystem by sociologists (Smit, 2001), and the most important relationship in the establishment of healthy future relationships (Berk, 2000; Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002), is affected negatively by women's labour migration when children are left behind, regardless of age, with extended family (Smith *et al*, 2004). Firstly, the extended family members with

whom a child or children are left by the migrant worker may have children of their own. Thus, leaving an extra child or two with the extended family member will have the effect of increasing the burden of responsibility of child care on him or her. A result of the increase in responsibility of child care will be a decrease in the quality of care for all children concerned. The situation can be the same even when children are left with their fathers in the absence of their mothers because this also poses an increase in the responsibility of the running of the household for the man. Poor quality of child care may be in the form of inadequate love and affection, and a failure to identify and address the special needs of each child. Children in this situation are most at risk of vying for attention through antisocial behaviour like delinquency and even early onset and uninformed sexual activity.

Compounded with a relationship breakdown with a mother, where a mother is a migrant, a child could also face parental discord and eventually separation of parents. Little effort is often made to shield the infidelity of parents from children especially where (like in the case of an absent spouse) a promiscuous spouse feels that infidelity is justified. This can lead to further confusion in children. In fact, younger children could even possibly be sucked into their father's extra-marital affair. The absence of the migrant labourer wife of the husband can leave room for the free interaction of a father's lover with his children. Smith (in Wallace and Wolf, 1995), in her *standpoint theory* pronounces that: "realities of women's nature, needs, role and place in society are systems of ideas constructed in past interactions and sustained by present ongoing interactions... [with and within society]" Wallace and Wolf (1995:270) supports the above suppositions. The scenario of a spouse of a migrant labour woman taking on a lover will result in the lover-woman taking on the role of the migrant labour woman in her family. This means, a migrant labour woman possibly leaves a gap in her family that, according to the standpoint theory, can only be filled by another woman (a lover) to the detriment of all in the family and the family entity itself. The reality of these notions will be examined in this research.

### 1.5.5 Possibility of Homeostatic Imbalance in Families of Women Labour Migrants

In as far as a systemic view of the family is concerned; any source of homeostasis change in the family is likely to cause distress to the family. The occurrence of a mother working is an alien phenomenon in many traditional cultures (Mahabeer, 1994) and is frowned upon even in the developed world (Birns and ben-Ner, 1988). Working mothers are thus generally viewed as an anomaly in families and even when they do it out of necessity. Its sudden introduction into the family can upset family homeostasis. The effects of such homeostatic movement requires better understanding.

To cite Sandra Bem's (in Wharton, 2005) Gender Schemas hypothesis, gender perspectives acquired in childhood prevail even in adulthood. Etaugh and Bridges assert that it is still a widely expected societal norm that men earn a living to support their families, whether or not their wives are employed. It is also expected that they [should] earn more than their spouses [in a socially acceptable setting]. Failure to meet this standard no doubt poses a threat to the schema that males are [and have to remain] superior, thereby destabilising the homeostasis of the family (2007).

### 1.5.6 Possibility of Role Conflict

Over and above the distress that labour migration can cause in the family of a migrant labourer, it can be a source of stress to the labour migrant herself. According to Birns and ben-Ner (1988) both educated parents and uneducated ones have been influenced to believe that full-time parenting is the best method of parenting. Failure to meet with this high standard can result in women doubting their own motives and consequently suffering from loss of self esteem, stress and depression (Brooks, 1981). The situation for migrant labour mothers is worse because they also lack social support mechanisms in their host environments to alleviate their despair (United Nations, 2005).

Moreover, low wages which characterise factory employment renders it difficult for migrant women to travel to their homes and keep ties with their children, sometimes leaving children for long periods under the care of no one. For example domestic workers in South Africa are reported to leave older (around 10 years old) children with

others (Elder and Phurutse, 1997). This places children at risk of abuse of all forms by opportunists and it also places the children at risk of going astray. While this is an obvious risk for the safety of the children, this also causes enormous anxiety on the part of mothers who have to choose between providing for their children materially or taking care of them. Thus a review of the possible role-conflict that could be faced by migrant labour women needs to take place.

#### 1.5.7 HIV/AIDS

From another standpoint, the Demographic Health Survey of Lesotho postulates that all men who were interviewed in the study admitted to having had unprotected sex with a person other than their “regular partner” in the past year (Lesotho Government, 2004:67). Promiscuity is alarmingly high among Lesotho men and women and migrant labour can exacerbate an already bad situation. In the presence of promiscuity, HIV becomes a secondary threat to the family. Social factors create a special risk of HIV for woman labour migrants from the rural areas (United Nations, 2005). For example, a sudden removal of cultural controls to the expression of women, in the absence of the necessary social skills by the women, can place timid rural women, at risk of being taken advantage of sexually, by men. This can even lead to impregnation by persons other than one’s spouse. Much as the socio-economic consequences of infidelity on a marriage are well known, a review of this possible mishap as it relates to labour migration is warranted. This research study is expected to uncover some of the ways in which labour migrants may be made vulnerable to HIV.

On top of HIV as it relates to the migrant labour woman and her spouse, labour migration which has the effect of compromising the quality of care for the labour migrant’s children poses a risk of HIV to unsupervised children who might enter into uninformed sexual activity as a result of the absence of supervision. Mturi and Nzimande (2006) mention the fact that labour migration is one of the incidences that can render children as head of households in the absence of alternative carers. As a result, children are likely to enter into risky social behaviour like loitering, truancy, and running errands for older people in the community in return for money. This behaviour

increases children's chances of being sexually exploited by adults and consequently their exposure to HIV. Lack of or poor supervision of children and crime are also said to be positively related (Smit, 2001; McAuley and Young, 2006). The resulting risk of incarceration of children who are in conflict with the law, increases the potential of children of contracting HIV while in police custody and in juvenile delinquent centres.

Lesotho government's strategy to attract investors has been to sell Lesotho as a pool of cheap labour. Consequently, wages are at a minimum in the industries of Lesotho as per policy (Baylies and Wright, 1993) and the fact that women are the main employees in the factories further contributes to keeping salaries low (Dyer, 2001). Also the patriarchal mindset can get away with treating women anyhow. Thus an inherent characteristic of industry work in Lesotho is its low paying nature (Dyer, 2001). In light of the high and rising cost of life especially in cities, unrealistically low wages for women can force them to resort to prostitution as a means to supplement their income. The relationship of prostitution to the spread of HIV is well known and the magnitude of the problem when compounded by low-paying migratory labour needs to be established.

Similarly, being cut off from one's social sphere and loved ones due to labour migration can lead to social isolation and loneliness. In addition, social and leisure activities in cities differ from those in the rural areas and this can make it difficult for migrant labour women to engage in healthy recreation. As a result women can search for men other than their spouses for affection leading to exposure to HIV. This scenario can be exacerbated by a lack of access to health care in host areas. Access to health care can be compromised by an apparent lack of sensitivity of health services to culture by rural folk, un-affordability as well as working conditions that are not accommodating to such needs of workers (United Nations, 2005). Exposure to HIV by a migrant spouse raises the risk of contacting HIV for the stay-at-home spouse posing another dimension of threat to the family which needs a thorough understanding by social scientists.

It is noteworthy at this point that, this context analysis uses several older publications, a plethora of which seems to have emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, at the

height of social and academic interest in women's liberation. However, there seems to be scanty literature on woman's studies in the period between the mid 90s and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> decade, which again seems to be filling up of late. Presumably this is the result of the loss of interest in women's emancipation studies at the end of the past decade and beginning of this decade, which seems to have re-awakened now, as a result of various social dynamics like HIV/AIDS, as well as increased political and economic participation of women in society.

#### **1.6.0 Research Assumptions**

The preference for women as factory workers in Lesotho, in the face of declining opportunities for employment for men in the Republic of South Africa, where they traditionally worked, suggests that families are left in the care of men, and sometimes parents of migrant labours. The researcher feels that this leaves a void in the bringing up of children with potentially drastic psycho-social consequences in children.

Secondly she feels that the wife-husband relationship of the woman migrant worker with her spouse is impacted negatively by her leaving home to work.

#### **1.7.0 Definition of Concepts as they apply to the Study**

##### Family

In this research, family will be used to describe members of one household. A household is a unit in which all members' efforts are directed at the wellbeing of the whole (Posel, 2002).

##### Migrant Labourer

A migrant labourer in this study will be one who falls within Posel's definition of a migrant worker i.e. "someone who is absent from home for more than a month each year to work or to seek work" (2002:18).

### **1.8.0 Overall Research Methodology**

This section will briefly outline what was done in conducting the study. Details of the research method and process are outlined in chapter 3.

Qualitative strategies were used in the implementation of this study. Qualitative research methods seek to study social life and the meaning that people attach to their experience of everyday life (Fouche and Delport in de Vos *et al* 2005). The main concern [of qualitative research] is to understand social action in terms of its specific context, rather than attempting to generalise..." Babbie and Mouton (2001:271).

Furthermore, in the words of Holliday, qualitative studies "look deeply into behaviour within specific social settings rather than at broad populations" (2007:5). This piece of work is going to examine a small village population within its own setting and delve into how it is handling a radical social change both in action and in attitude.

Within the qualitative paradigm, the researcher employed both exploratory and descriptive research designs. The reason for this being that, exploratory and descriptive research designs are used where little is known of the research phenomenon (Grinnel and Williams, 1990). Many scholars agree that the issue of women's labour migration is a dark area in terms of research, especially regarding its impact on the family (Posel, 2002; Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002; Smith *et al*, 2004).

#### **1.8.1 Sampling**

Non- probability sampling was utilised in this study because of the study's fact-finding nature. Snowballing as described by Babbie and Mouton (2001:166) was used. According to Sarantakos (2005) snowballing is appropriate in situations whereby the researcher does not have readily available data on his target population. The Thetsane slum area where the data was collected is occupied by both old permanent dwellers and recent temporary migrant workers from various employment sectors of Maseru. It was thus necessary to employ snowballing as a sampling strategy in order to locate the

required characteristics of the sample because migrants would be able to link the researcher to other migrants.

Firstly, the researcher approached one of the migrant labour women known to her who is a migrant from the rural areas and works at the Thetsane Industrial site. She was then linked to other women of the same calibre. The index person was not interviewed. From there, snowballing as described by Grinnell and Williams (1990), Sarantakos (2005) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) was used to find the rest of the sample. From each in-depth interview, all of which took an hour to an hour and a half each, interviewees were asked to suggest other potential participants for the study and the links were followed by the researcher. Some suggested participants declined to be interviewed citing the fact that they were otherwise engaged with chores like laundry or hair grooming in preparation for the week ahead and could not spare the time for an interview. Altogether (30) labour migrant women were interviewed.

#### 1.8.2 Data Capturing and Instruments

Individual interviews with thirty migrant labourer women were carried out using a structured interview schedule.

#### 1.8.3 Contingency Arrangements

Upon piloting the data collection tool, the researcher found that it did not elicit rich qualitative data. For example, participants in the pilot study responded that “their lives had not changed” due to labour migration and even the lives of their children had not changed.

The researcher consequently had to revise her data collection tool to include some prompts. For example prompts such as *political, social and emotional* were added to a question such as “how has your life changed since you started working at Ha Thetsane?”.

Since the participants in the study work during the day, on weekdays, the data collection had to be carried out on Saturdays and Sundays only. Even then work had to start at mid-day on Saturdays due to the shortness of the winter day in July when the data was captured in Lesotho. Data collection ended at mid-afternoon because of the same reason. This made work progress slow.

#### 1.8.4 Limitations of the Study

- This study is a one-sided picture of the effects of labour migration on the entire family. Only the views of women labour migrants were solicited for the purpose of the study due to considerations of accessibility and the time available for the completion of the study. Secondly, this study forms part of the requirement of a coursework Masters Degree which is relatively short in length.
- The size of the sample used in this study is small and in no way representative of the whole population of migrant workers. Moreover snowballing as a sampling strategy can compromise validity of a study because participants may fall only within the closed acquaintance circle of the first informant or participant, thereby limiting diversity of information.
- The selection treatment interaction posed by non-probability sampling outlined above is also recognised as one of the limitations of this study. Selection-treatment interaction is described by Grinnell and Williams (1990) as a threat to external validity and generalisability which results from not being able to select one's sample but rather considering those that come forward as willing to be studied only and in the case of snowballing, these fall within the narrow spectrum of those participants known to the index person.
- Another limitation of this study is its data collection method i.e. interview. The most frequently cited limitation of the interview is the fact that, the presence of the researcher, who is an outsider on the scene, "contaminates the environment" and

“gives rise to a type of interaction that cannot be completely neutral” (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The researcher’s training and experience of a social worker in interpersonal skills became handy to counter this limitation. First she engaged in polite small talk to “*break the ice*”. Then she introduced herself and briefly answered the questions that the interviewees had. These strategies had the effect of making the participants relax and talk more. The researcher insisted on holding the interview at a relatively private location where the interviewee would feel free to talk.

- Further a limitation in data analysis of this report derives from that, qualitative responses of participants of the study were in Sotho and have been translated into English for the purpose of this report. While the use of Sotho was imperative for use with migrant labour women in Lesotho because of their lack of proficiency in English, translation into English might have the effect of compromising the contextual meaning of qualitative responses of women. However, in chapter four of this report care has been taken to contextualise information and foot notes which explain concepts in detail have been provided as deemed necessary.

Chapter three which outlines research methodology in detail will discuss issues of reliability, validity, trustworthiness of the research results, and ethical considerations made in the implementation of this research.

## II

### Literature

#### **2.0.0 Introduction to the Chapter**

This chapter cites two theories that explain the importance of family life and it reviews relevant literature on labour migration as it compromises or enhances family life. The first theory that will be examined is *Systems Theory* of Bertalanffy which was first published in the 1940s (Green, 2003). Systems theory will be employed to demonstrate that a change in the homeostasis of the family i.e./e.g. separation of mothers and children can equally cause distress to mothers and to children. Secondly, Bowlby's (1973; 1982 in Bretherton, 1995) *Attachment Theory* will be discussed to demonstrate the potential perpetuation of distress in a family which can result from labour migration of one who is a woman, wife, and mother.

#### **2.1.1 Systems Theory**

According to Green (2003:37), systems theory focuses on the arrangement of, and relations between the parts. The central tenet of systems theory is that, "families (systems) organise themselves to carry out the daily challenges and tasks of life, as well as to adjust to the developmental needs of the members" (*un-authored*, at [www.family.jrank.org/599/family\\_theory.html](http://www.family.jrank.org/599/family_theory.html).) and itself as a whole. A family according to, Bertalanffy is a system which is made up of interacting individuals in a series of reciprocal activities. Families thrive and survive through the maintenance of a homeostasis or culture.

Homeostasis is the tendency of systems to regulate themselves to maintain a status quo in response to changes in the environment (Green, 2003). In the event that the homeostasis, of the family system is upset, the rules of the family may need to change in an effort to restore homeostasis (*un-authored*, at [www.family.jrank.org/599/family\\_theory.html](http://www.family.jrank.org/599/family_theory.html)). When this is disturbed through the natural order being upset by the mother/woman leaving home to work, self-regulation could be

expressed differently, destructively or even creatively. This study will explore how self-regulation is manifest in the families of labour migrants of Ha Thetsane, Lesotho.

A third tenet of family systems theory which is applicable to this study according to [seepera@uiuc.ed](mailto:seepera@uiuc.ed) at [www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems\\_theory.html](http://www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems_theory.html) ) is the concept of feedback loops. Whitchurch and Constatine (1993:334 in [seepera@uiuc.ed](mailto:seepera@uiuc.ed) at [www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems\\_theory.html](http://www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems_theory.html)) define a feedback loop as “a path along which information can be traced from one point of the system or its environment to another and back to its point of origin”. They are also defined by Green (2003:39) as “the process by which a system gets the information necessary to self correct”. Feedback loops can be either positive or negative.

A negative feedback loop is a pattern of interaction that maintains stability or constancy while minimising change thereby maintaining a homeostasis. A positive feedback loop on the other hand helps to facilitate change or movement toward either growth or dissolution [seepera@uiuc.ed](mailto:seepera@uiuc.ed) (at [www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems\\_theory.html](http://www.geocites.com/alonelyOus.publications.systems_theory.html)). This study seeks to establish information giving and receiving pathways in families and how these played out in families where women left the home to work and how changes resulting from the women’s migratory labour were processed and acted on is also what this study aimed to uncover.

To further understand the concept of a family as a system, theorists have compared the family to a cake. Like the cake, which is not just the egg, the butter or the milk, the family is not the people that comprise it but their interconnectedness. This is to imply therefore that, like the cake whose quality would be compromised by an error in the ratio of the ingredients, the family may encounter problems or difficulties if its composition is altered or like the cake, the family would be ruined by inadequate temperature or a sudden decline in temperature that is required for its optimal outcome (*un-authored* at [www.family.jrank.org/599/family\\_theory.html](http://www.family.jrank.org/599/family_theory.html) ).

It becomes a question therefore whether a family where one member is an absentee member like in the case of migrant labourer, can operate effectively to foster a degree of wellness for development. Literature on the subject suggests the contrary. This research will establish adjustment to the change in homeostatic balance induced through absence of women and mothers and uses the concepts discussed to underpin findings and results in this study.

### 2.1.2 Attachment Theory

There are several theories that explain the loss and trauma that entail separation of mothers and children of all ages. It was suggested by Sigmund Freud that the child's emotional tie to the mother provides the foundation for all subsequent relationships. Today, John Bowlby's ethological theory of attachment takes precedence in describing children's emotional ties to their caregivers (Berk, 2000:421-422).

John Bowlby (1958 in Bretherton, 1995) in his paper entitled "*the nature of the child's tie to its mother*", scrutinizes and discards Freud's association of the child's libido and its relationship with its mother. Bowlby (in Bretherton, 1995) indicated that, the attachment of a one year old to its mother is a product of the child's instinctual strategies and mother's instinctual responses that culminate into a mutual bond. These strategies by the child, Bowlby (in Bretherton, 1995) listed as including but not limited to crying, cooing, following (by eye-movement sometimes), clinging, sucking, and smiling. In response a mother would, to foster a healthy attachment, smile at and comfort the child (Bretherton, 1995).

Robertson and Bowlby (1952 in Bretherton, 1995) went on to deliberate that, (psychoanalytic) theory of the time did not adequately account for the dramatic acts of children upon separation or perceived separation with parents or attachment figures. They (Robertson and Bowlby, 1952) propounded three phases of separation response viz, protest, despair, and denial or detachment (Bretherton, 1995:55). In the same piece of work Bowlby discussed the concept of separation anxiety which he pronounced as the feeling evoked when the need for an attachment figure arises but the attachment figure is not available (Bretherton, 1995). This study examines how children may be affected when the objects of their attachment (mothers) are unavailable, as perceived by their mothers.

To deliberate more on the three phases of separation response, as alluded to by Robertson and Bowlby (1952), protest can be seen in the wailing of children and dramatic display of distaste upon separation or perceived separation with their mothers,

and is usually followed by a decline in activity level and interest in external stimuli equivalent to a depressed mood in adults (despair). Thirdly according to Bowlby's suppositions denial or detachment would be seen in a child who would (in contrast with ordinary behaviour) not show pleasure at the return of its mother but would instead carry on with other activity in typically sulking behaviour.

In conclusion, Bowlby (in Bretherton, 1995) asserts that a balance needs to be maintained between attachment and separation by asserting that in order that a child may develop a perception of self as valued and self-reliant the attachment figure has to "acknowledge the infants needs for comfort and protection while simultaneously respecting the infants need for independent exploration of the environment" (Bretherton, 1995: 66). It would be interesting to discover whether and how absent mothers provided for fulfilling this need for themselves and their children when leaving home to work.

John Bowlby (in Bretherton, 1995) went on to suggest that the quality of attachment to the caregiver determines the child's security about itself and others and ability to create trusting relationships. He went on even further to declare that the reciprocal strategies and responses of children and mothers over time turn into an affectional relationship (Berk, 2000). Bowlby (1973 in Bretherton, 1995) purports that disruption in these affectional bonds can have adverse psychological and developmental repercussions in children. Attachment figures cannot be fully replaced but attachment can happen to more than one person and in order to avoid distress in children, it is important to maintain proximity to an attachment figure. Children experience grief at loss of the attachment figure (Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). The attachment figure is usually the child's mother and/or its carer.

Moreover, Bowlby (1982 in Bretherton, 1995 ) indicates that attachment behaviour happens within the first year of life and is usually more manageable by the age of three. Manageability of attachment at separation with a mother is enhanced by the familiarity of the substitute carer, their knowledge of their mothers' whereabouts and the knowledge that she will return. The quality of care that children receive in their mother's

absence and the relationship of the child with its mother are also important in how the child copes with separation from its mother (Smith *et al*, 2004). Views of mothers on the adequacy of substitute carers will be sought to establish effect of absence and substitution.

Bowlby's attachment theory and its other tenets received criticism from scholars in the field of psychology and psychiatry. For instance it was attacked on the grounds that it focuses on external behavioural patterns to the exclusion of psychological aspects of the mother-child attachment behaviour (Bretherton, 1995).

Important to this study however is that this theory predicts that the effects of a mother's labour migration in children can be stress and trauma. However, Suarez-Orozco *et al* (2002) warn against the euro-centric nature of the theory. Its applicability in African cultures where there is extended family support and where care of children by extended family is a norm even without other interfering circumstances, is said to be doubtful. The point is to note whether indeed extended family support is a guarantee for all children whose mothers are migrant labourers. This research will work towards uncovering the effects of the rupture in mother-child affectionate bonds for both the mother and the child resulting from migrant labour of mothers.

## **2.2.0 Literature Pertaining to the Study**

### **2.2.1 Introduction to labour migration in Lesotho**

This part provides an overview of female labour migration and the effects that it has on families, with particular reference to Lesotho. Examples from other parts of Africa will be discussed.

#### **2.2.1 Overview**

According to Gugler there are more women than men involved in rural urban migration, than previously world-wide (1997:83). For instance in Latin America, the Philippines and Thailand women in rural-urban migration are more than men (Gugler, 1997). In Lesotho, 80% of the 45, 000 workers in the textile industries of Lesotho are women migrants from the rural areas of the same country (Gibbon, 2003; Textiles Africa, 2007). Despite government influx controls in South Africa and Zimbabwe in the 1980s and early 90s, black rural women continued to work in the cities as domestic servants (Elder and Phurutsel, 1997).

Of particular concern is the fact that, effects of labour migration on family relations have hardly been documented anywhere, (Smith *et al*, 2004; Suarez-Oroszco *et al*, 2002; le Roux, 1997:248). Even now, little pertinent data is available. The neglect is all the more striking as the participation of men and women in rural-urban migration and in families varies remarkably across countries and entire regions (Gugler, 1997). Consequently, there remains a large information gap in this regard (Suarez-Oroszco *et al*, 2002; Smith *et al*, 2004; Gugler, 1997).

#### **2.2.2 Nature of Labour Migration in Lesotho**

A large majority of women migrant labourers of Lesotho were found to be married or once married; in their child bearing ages (87% were between the ages of twenty and thirty years); very few had gone beyond primary education; and they reported not to have had work experience before they were married .“Often the respondents’ husbands

had been oscillating migrant mine labourers between Lesotho and South Africa, but had been retrenched” (Kimane and Ntimo-Makara, 1997:109; Gibbon, 2003).

Historically, up to 50% of Lesotho adult male labour worked in the Republic of South Africa, predominantly in the mines (Macdonald *et al*, 2000). This refers to less literate men to completely non-literate ones. Currently however, labour migration in Lesotho is primarily internal and appears to be towards the towns, with very little back to the rural areas, as was indicated by the participants in Kimane and Ntimo’s Makara’s research. This is in direct contrast to the historic oscillatory international migration of Lesotho men (1997).

### **2.3.0 Effects of Labour Migration on the Family**

#### **2.3.1 Effects on the Spousal Relationship**

Physical distance between partners, which results from spousal migration poses a threat to the marriage relationship. Firstly, Smit cites a marked reduction in the quality of marriage (2001:538) as a significant dynamic that can result from labour migration of a spouse to the exclusion of another spouse. Two other consequences of labour migration are said to be “conjugal breakdown” and desertion (*le Roux*, 1997:244; Smit, 2001). In his description of the lives of migrant men, Mabetoa (1994 in Smit, 2001) asserts that, “unofficial polygamy” is a common feature in the bachelor hostels of migrant labourers in the cities of South Africa. Consequences of infidelity include spousal resentment and can lead to the breakdown of the marital relationship and the marriage itself.

South African wives of migrants are often worried that this will happen to their marriages (unofficial polygamy) and they worry about what will happen if it does. This leads to anxiety on the part of the wife and jealousy towards the husband which can exacerbate tension in the family (Smit, 2001). Such tensions and jealous outbursts are guaranteed to compromise the quality of the marriage further. The situation can be worse where the migrant is a woman and the man feels jealous as well as emasculated.

Hence, a potentially disastrous although common effect of migrant labour can be infidelity. Infidelity results in loss of trust between spouses, anger, and disillusionment of the betrayed spouse. It can lead to divorce thereby causing distress to the couple and to the children. Where infidelity is compounded by exposure to HIV, the effects are even more drastic to all concerned (Lesotho Government, 2004; Smith *et al*, 2004; and le Roux, 1997).

“The migrant labour system may also bring about the experience of a “cultural gap” between the spouses”. The couple becomes strangers because of long periods of separation and the exposure of one to different modes of life and life patterns while the other remains stagnant in another (Smit, 2001: 539). For example exposure to different modes of dress and even body art and explicit interaction of city women and men can lead to the emergence of a culture gap between himself and his timid spouse. In the case of traditional women who are used to aloof spouses, an intimate, concerned, compassionate partner in an extramarital affair can lead to loss of interest in her spouse. Even the grooming of men in the city which is more elaborate than the grooming of rural men can act as a cause of culture-gap between a migrant woman and her spouse.

Moreover, a systems perspective views work- family conflict or role conflict of one member of a couple as having the potential to impact negatively on the family as a whole and in particular the spousal relationship (Hammer and Thompson, 2003). Role conflict is described by Hammer and Thompson (2003:i) as “psychological tension that is aroused by conflicting role pressures.” In traditional families the role of the wife is not only to take care of her children and the physical needs of her husband but to take care of some members of the extended family network as well. A working woman especially one who works away from home may not always be able to nurse an ailing mother-in-law or father-in-law for instance leading to disappointment and sometimes shame to her husband in the face of the extended family. Hence the failure of a working woman to perform some of her traditional roles may lead to quarrels in the spousal relationship. In

cases where the social set-up is conducive, negative spill-over in marriage-work interaction can lead a husband to take on a second wife.

While separation is enough to compromise the quality of marriage (Smit, 2001), an unhappy part of the marriage dyad as a result of role conflict is bound to increase tension in the dyad and consequently result in its drifting apart. In the case of a working woman who is not able to perform the multiplicity of roles expected of her by her spouse, both members of the marriage dyad are likely to be disillusioned by the work of the woman, leading to estrangement of the spouses due to the failure to derive support and comfort from each other.

Moreover, crossing the gender boundaries (transgressing societal expectations) for men has a more negative cultural meaning than it has for women according to Bem (in Wharton, 2005) and is much more socially stigmatised. This adocentricity of gender distinctions in society (Bem, 1993 in Wharton, 2005) can lead men to be embarrassed, humiliated, and emasculated by being financially dependent on women rather than the other way round. Indeed this feeling of inadequacy has the potential of leading men to their male essentialist behaviour, putting a further strain on the spousal relationship.

### HIV/AIDS

Over and above the revelation of the Demographic Health Survey of Lesotho (2004) that all men interviewed attested to having unprotected sexual intercourse with persons other than their regular partners, UNAIDS (2006 as cited in Corno and Walque, 2007), confer that, the main mode of transmission of HIV in Lesotho is multiple concurrent partnerships especially as it takes place in heterosexual relationships. Secondly, according to Coffee, Mark, and Geoff (2007) migrants are said to be at higher risk of being infected with HIV than non-migrants. In reference to oscillatory migration of Lesotho men to South Africa in the past decade, Corno and Walque submit that labour migration can result in a net-work effect that aggravates the spread of HIV. According to them (Corno and Walque, 2007), in addition Lesotho men who may have indulged in unsafe sexual practices in the South African mines (where sex industry is rife), are said

to have exacerbated the spread of HIV in Lesotho. Women remaining behind in turn may have been involved in unsafe sexual encounters in extra-marital affairs in the absence of their husbands, leading to net-work channels through which HIV can easily flow.

In relation to women labour migrants, United Nations (2005), on the other hand points to the social isolation of migrant labour women that can make women vulnerable to contracting HIV while in their host areas. This social isolation is compounded by the poor socio-cultural status of women in Lesotho that can render women unable to negotiate safe sex for instance, while at the same time putting them in a position where they have to provide sexual services to men in order to get favours (Corno and Walque, 2007). Hence women labour migrants can be at a high risk of contracting HIV and consequently place their stay-at home spouses at risk as well. Similarly men may engage in unsafe sex resulting in a net-work effect.

In the case of Lesotho, a historic high prevalence of HIV among migrant labour men (Corno and Walque, 2007), has resulted in HIV being associated with migrant labour. Dano (2006), in her review of intimacy challenges faced by sero-discordant couples, adds that spousal blaming can play a major role in compromising the quality of the relationship of a couple in which there is HIV. Hence, a migrant labour woman can be blamed for bringing HIV into the family. Spousal blaming can lead to mutual resentment of spouses thereby leading to a loss of intimacy and support at a time when these are most needed by both spouses.

Dano goes on to observe that change in physical appearance resulting from physical deterioration and incontinence can result in a partner not feeling attractive and therefore avoiding sexual intercourse altogether. In addition, frequent recurring opportunistic infections can render sexual intercourse a lesser priority compared to the treatment of the afflictions (2006). This can affect the spousal relationship in that it may bring emotional distance between the couple over which both the ailing partner and the one

who is well can feel equally guilty and anxious. HIV can thus cause tension and feelings of inadequacy in a spousal relationship.

According to Dano, a fear to infect a sero-negative partner, to be re-infected and the fear to be infected can also result in compromised intimacy in a relationship where there is HIV, but more so in a sero-discordant one (2006) thereby compromising the giving and receiving of love in a relationship and potentially leading to the collapse of the relationship through either or both spouses seeking love and affection from outside the marriage.

Thus, as it has been shown in the description of the research problem, labour migration has the potential of increasing the risk of HIV in the family (Coffee *et al*, 2007). A family in which HIV is present thus has the potential of a break-up due to spousal blame, disparity in sexual desire, and general tension within the spousal relationship. The situation can be twice as bad where the couple is sero-discordant (Dano, 2006) and even worse where the sero-positive spouse is a migrant labour woman, whereat she can be rejected by the extended family.

### 2.3.2 Effects on Children

Family life can be further disharmonised by the children acting despondent and hostile towards migrant parents who expect children to be appreciative and grateful for the parental sacrifice. Parents on being faced with this attitude become disappointed, dismayed, and confused (Smith *et al*, 2004). A cycle of rejection and counter-rejection ensues (Glasgow and Gouse-Shees, 1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002).

In the same way that labour migration can cause a rift to develop between spouses, the migrant worker is estranged from her children leading to a breakdown of child parental communication, children not being astute verbal communicators (Forman, 1993 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002; Smith *et al*, 2004). Communication is an important tool of socialisation for children. In the wake of HIV, it is deemed extremely important for

parents to be able to discuss issues of sexuality and vulnerability of HIV with children as it will be discussed further under HIV below.

Where the migrant is a mother and wife, the abyss that is left by her absence is deemed to be greater according to youths of both sexes who were interviewed in a study by Smit (2001). Delinquency, crime, depression, anxiety and other clinical conditions have emerged in youth of migrant labour mothers (Smith *et al*, 2004; Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002; Smit, 2001). These can result from the decline in the quality of care of children.

For example, according to McAuley and Young (2006) children in day-care facilities were reported to be five times more likely to have mental problems than those who were brought up by their parents. The authors go on to postulate however that such children are also more likely to come from poor, socially dysfunctional families, and have most likely been neglected and/or abused as well. The relevance of this point may be questionable to the reader as it brings into the picture a variable that may not necessarily prevail in a poor African country like Lesotho i.e. institutional day care. The researcher equates the phenomenon of being taken care of by someone other than one's mother as equivalent to day care. Both are clinical and they both entail a reward of some sort for the carer.

As has been alluded to in passing in the analysis of the problem, labour migration has a high potential of estranging the marital couple. Estrangement of the marital couple impacts negatively on children. According to Cummings and Davies (2002), children are affected more by conflict between their parents than by parental divorce. Conflict in the family can result in conduct problems in children. Conduct problems in children include attention deficit and hyperactivity. Parental conflict according to Cummings and Davies can also lead to the emergence of emotional problems in children like obsessive compulsive disorders, anxiety and depression. Children are also known to sometimes blame themselves for the discord and eventual divorce of their parents. In the event of divorce a child is likely to suffer more distress as a result of the change in parenting

modalities especially if a child has to change domicile as well due to the divorce of parents (Cummings and Davies, 2002).

Moreover Gharaibeh (2008) in her analysis on the emotional effects of children of both sexes of incarcerated fathers of Jordan, pin point loss of self confidence, sadness and loneliness as a result of the absence of their fathers. The children were reported to cry more since their fathers were incarcerated and to require more attention from their remaining parents. Children also showed an increase in aggressive behaviour and bed-wetting. In addition, the children reported to miss their fathers. Gharaibeh postulates that these symptoms in children are typical of losing an important person in one's life and she describes fathers in Jordan as being more important to their children compared to mothers (2008).

Gharaibeh's study also found that the children's school attendance was altered by way of refusing to go to school and consequently children's academic performance declined (2008) subsequent to the incarceration of their fathers.

In addition, separation from parents can result in children feeling abandoned and consequently detaching from the absent parent resulting in difficulty in re-establishing parental bonds (Glasgow and Gouse-Shees, 1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). They may also experience negative emotions like being hurt, angry and resentful at their parents. Older youth might get-even by acting out, Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozcò (2001 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). The saga and confusion for the child does not end with separation but continues even on return of the migrant parent when children may feel torn between the oscillatory parent and the caregiver.

Children are further traumatised by not being allowed to mourn the loss of their parents. This can be exacerbated by the remaining parent finding it difficult to deal with their loss thereby failing to be emotionally available for children. This can potentially lead to protracted responses in the child and consequently chronic reactive symptoms (Doka, 1989 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002).

The traditional perception and interaction with children, that often overlooks important communication with children, further prohibits children from adequately dealing with the loss of their parent because they are not adequately prepared, and thus are unable to make sense of it. Also, feelings of marginalisation in the caregiver home and possibility of being moved from one family to another as circumstances prescribe (Smith *et al*, 2004:109) are common features in parent migratory labour practice.

Suarez-Orozco *et al* (2002) cautions against being totalitarian about the negative impact of woman labour migration on children because there are buffers that can protect children from the drastic effects of their mothers' absence. For instance the support of the extended family can eliminate the negative effects of the absence of the mother. In their study Suarez-Orozco *et al* (2002) encountered a child of a migrant woman who was left in the care of her aunt in the absence of her mother and who considered herself as fortunate for having "two mothers".

This should not be viewed as smooth sailing however, as the child of the migrant worker is at risk of multiple loss. Any circumstance that can lead to separation with the carer can potentially be more traumatic than the loss of a parent through migratory labour. For example permanent re-unification with the parent is magnified by parental insensitivity to this notion (Lashley, 2000 in Smith *et al*, 2004).

However, continuity of quality care, constant contact with children through telephone calls, letters and exchange of memorabilia like photos and gifts, can potentially eliminate the negative psycho-social effects of parent migration on children~(Robertson and Robertson 1971 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002).

Mahabeer also warns against a simplistic negative regard of the effects of maternal employment outside the family on children. Children of working mothers are described by Mahabeer as independent and as having more interpersonal skills than those of unemployed mothers due to the fact that they are required by necessity to interact with

other people outside of the protective atmosphere of their homes (for example in day care) and they are expected to participate more in the daily running of the household (1994).

### HIV

As it has been mentioned earlier, labour migration has the effect of increasing people's vulnerability to HIV (Coffee *et al*, 2007). The direct effect of HIV in families on children is that they are sometimes the carers of the parents during ailing health of parents (Kamya, 2006), and they can eventually become orphans (Mturi and Nzimande, 2006). According to the Lesotho Demographic Health Survey (LDHS) (2004 as cited in Corno and Walque, 2007), there were 100, 000 orphans in 2004 and 40% of all households studied in the LDHS had at least one orphan. Orphan-hood has the potential of decreasing the potential of children for achievement in later life (Kamya, 2006).

It is highlighted also that, decline in the quality of care that results from labour migration of their carer-parents, children being left as head of households (Mturi and Nzimande, 2006), and parents of children being infected with and subsequently deteriorating in health (Dano, 2006; Kamya, 2006), all possibly resulting from labour migration, increase the propensity of children especially adolescents, of contracting HIV. In Lesotho, HIV is reported to be higher among younger women than among younger men and this is attributed to incidence of unprotected sex among adolescents with older men (Corno and Walque, 2007).

#### 2.3.3 Effects on Labour Migrants

The gender-schema theory of Bem (1983 as cited in Wharton, 2005), which suggests that children and ultimately adults measure their own worth against the expectations of society, suggests that women measure their own worth on their parenting efforts and perceived success thereof because that is what society expects from them. The perception that by choosing to be a parent, people (but especially women) should not pursue other interests may cause all working mothers some degree of anxiety, but more

The crux of the impasse is said to be when women do not get the recognition or the fulfilment that they expect to get in the employment world, sometimes because their role as mothers is perceived as disabling to work performance. Women's biology can also act as a deterrent to recognition and advancement at work. The scenario is a catch-22 situation for women who may feel disillusioned because they feel that they are failing in both worlds (Birns and ben-Ner, 1988). Thus Mahabeer (1994) asserts that job dissatisfaction in women, can further add to their feeling of discontentment with their lives even outside work, and may even lead others to decide to stop working (Dyer, 2001).

Thus, a primary source of tension for a working woman can be the conflict between performance of her responsibilities as a mother and as a provider for her children. This can exist if the mother works and stays away from home. Moreover, a study by *le Roux* in the Republic of South Africa (1997) revealed that, migrant women were reported to keep their visits to their families to a minimum due to low income. Hence "their obligation to provide for their children limits their physical contact with these children" (page 249), and their spouses. The disharmony that results from a woman's attempt to perform the roles of mother, wife and breadwinner invokes anxiety and guilt in the woman. This has the effect of compromising health and quality of life in general for the migrant worker.

In the absence of the woman, family evolution and adaptation to her exclusion takes place in the family, making re-integration of the woman with the family difficult (Partida, 1996 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). Parents report having difficulty in re-establishing their control and authority over their children as a result of prolonged periods of separation in this case necessitated by labour migration (Arnold, 1991 in Suarez-Orozco 2002; Boti and Bautisa, 1999 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002; Smit, 2001).

On the positive side, United Nations (2005) submits that, labour migration exposes migrants to new perspectives on lifestyle, rights, opportunities, and getting access to financial and other resources. This is an advantage but it can be a disadvantage for

the woman, it can be a downside in that it can cause difficulties in adaptation for the woman herself to her environment. A further challenge of re-adaptation into one's community of origin no doubt faces a migrant labour woman. For instance, a migrant labour woman might have to maintain two wardrobes: one suitable for her marital home environment in line with cultural expectations and a modern one which is suitable for life in the city. The disparity of infrastructure development between urban and rural areas can cause a migrant labourer to encounter re-adaptation difficulties in returning to her area of origin.

It is important to note that effects of labour migration are not viewed as exclusively negative on families. For instance, more than half the people interviewed in a study by Macdonald *et al* (2000) discovered that migrants from Lesotho; Mozambique; and Zimbabwe into South Africa see migration as having a positive impact on them as persons and on their families. It is significant that some of these women had a positive outlook on the impact of migration.

In the same way as maternal employment can benefit a child, working outside the home can have a positive effect on working mothers as well (Hammer and Thompson, 2003; Mahabeer 1994). For example, Hammer and Thompson (2003) purport that acquisition of new skills for working women can improve their self-reliance, self esteem and self-worth. In support of Hammer and Thompson's (2003) point of view, Dyer (2001) indicates that migrant worker women in Lesotho are reported to be more assertive than their non-working counterparts. Mahabeer on the other hand illustrates that mothers who are employed outside of the home report having more rewarding relationships with their children (1994).

#### 2.3.4 Effects on Significant Others in the Family

According to Mturi and Nzimande (2006), children are often left with grandparents upon going away to look for work. Although sometimes there may be other people in the host families, grandparents are often the sole carers of such families. This implies to the researcher that, grandparents do not retire from the physically and emotionally

exhausting responsibility of taking care of children. For example waking up early in the morning to help children to prepare for school and nursing grandchildren when they are sick. Secondly, the direct impact of this living arrangement is that it can lead to a strain in already inadequate resources like housing and fuel for heating as grandparents may feel inclined to provide heating for young children in their care.

Also, the researcher contends that caring for children can have the effect of depriving grandparents of the opportunity to engage in social activities that potentially enhance the quality of their lives.

#### **2.4.0 Summary**

In conclusion, the fact that female migration has not received serious attention in social science research (Smith *et al*, 2004; Posel, 2002) has left a big gap in information on the subject of migration in general. This review of literature has shown that the abyss which is left by the women in the home on migration is far larger than that which is left by men.

Literature on impacts of labour migration on a family is congruent with the systemic hypothesis that is inherent in this study i.e. a change at any point of the system has the potential of reverberating to other levels of the system (*un-authored*, 2008). To elaborate, labour migration of mothers can have an empowering as well as a disempowering effect on both working women and children (Hammer and Thompson, 2003; Mahabeer, 1994). Women and children can become self-reliant and consequently self-confident because of the women's employment outside the home (Hammer and Thompson, 2003; Dyer, 2001). Adverse effects of women's labour migration on mothers and children include stress, anxiety, as well as mental illness and behavioural problems in children (Birns and ben-Ner, 1998; McAuley and Young, 2006; Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). Children can feel neglected by labour migrant mothers and consequently act despondent and hostile towards migrant labour mothers and communication between migrant mothers and their children can collapse. Labour migration of women can increase the risk of contact with HIV (Coffee *et al*, 2007; Corno

and Walque, 2007; Mturi and Nzimande, 2006) in both spouses as well as adolescent children (Corno and Walque, 2007). In addition dependant men are said to resent their wives' working status and this can endanger the spousal sub-system (Dyer, 2001).

# III

## Research Methodology

### 3.0.0 Introduction the Chapter

This chapter looks into the research design and methods that were selected to implement the study and seeks to explain why this research design and methods were found to be appropriate for the study. On that note, the chapter will examine arguments for the use of qualitative research methods applied i.e. sampling, data capturing, and analysing and demonstrate how they were employed to achieve the research goals. Risks to the validity of the report are highlighted as well as the strategies employed to foster validity of the study results.

#### 3.1.1 Research Design

Fouche (in de Vos *et al*, 2005) defines research design as: suitable formulas used by researchers to achieve their research goal(s). Phenomenology is the design that was used in this study because it was found to be most suitable. According to Fouchè (in de Vos *et al*, 2005) phenomenological research designs use research methods that “aim to interpret the meaning that subjects give to their everyday lives” (Fouchè in de Vos *et al*, 2005:270). Phenomenology uses long interviews in data collection and analysis of phenomenological studies describe experiences of the study participants (Fouchè in de Vos *et al*, 2005).

As this chapter will elaborate, phenomenology was found to be appropriate for the study because the researcher wanted to understand the meaning that people place on their own circumstances i.e. the meaning that family life has on participants and how, if at all, it may be affected by labour migration, with the use of long interview schedules. A qualitative description and analysis of the experiences of the participants in the study will be used and it appears in chapter IV, which follows.

### 3.1.2 Research Methods

As it has already been mentioned, this research applied qualitative strategies in its implementation. Qualitative research methods seek to study social life and the meaning that people attach to their experience of everyday life (Fouchè and Delport in de Vos *et al*, 2005).

“The qualitative research paradigm in its broadest sense refers to research that elicits participant’s accounts of meaning, experience or perceptions. It also produces descriptive data in the participant’s own written or spoken words. It thus involves identifying the participant’s beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena [in question]. The qualitative researcher is therefore concerned with understanding rather than explanation [my emphasis]; naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement; and the subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider...as such a qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods, and small samples ...” (Fouchè and Delport in de Vos *et al* 2005:74).

Furthermore, in the words of Holliday, qualitative studies “look deeply into behaviour within specific social settings rather than at broad populations” (2007:5). This research examined a small sample of labour migrants in the manufacturing industries of Maseru in an endeavour to delve into how it is handling a radical social change i.e. participation of women in the labour market, both in action and in attitude.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:271) echo the same sentiments as Holliday (2007) on qualitative research studies and they also go on to say that, “the main concern [of quantitative research] is to understand social action in terms of its specific context, rather than attempting to generalise...” In addition, Mashall and Rossman 1999:46 (in Fouchè and Delport in de Vos *et al* 2005) point out that, the qualitative approach is suitable where experiments cannot logistically and ethically be applied and where experiments are not relevant.

The following points are promulgated by Sarantakos as being in support of qualitative research paradigms in comparison to quantitative methods.

- Where knowledge in the area of the research subject is inadequate to identify all variables necessary for the study
- Where there is need to study reality from the inside, that is, to understand it from the point of view of the subject (2005:134).

This research could not identify, in its planning phase, all variables that are at play in the families of migrant labour women like different aspects of health of family members, issues of role conflict, and dynamics that are at play in host areas of labour migrants. Secondly, it was important to study the effects of labour migration as perceived by labour migrants themselves. A review of effects of labour migration as felt by other family members in the family of labour would have added value to the research as well. However, it was not logistically possible to gain access to family members of labour migrants due to the time factor and it is important to note that, the inability to gain the perspectives of families of labour migrants remain an inherent limitation of this study.

In the pursuit of qualitative study methods, Sarantakos (2005) suggests the exploratory approach. The researcher thus used explorative methods in this research study. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) exploration is used to study new phenomena. Exploratory research is done by studying people who have practical experience of the topic being studied through the use of in-depth interviews using unstructured interviews. Data acquired in exploration is not usually replicable. Data acquired in exploratory study is “presented as it is” (Sarantakos, 2005:134).

The new phenomenon that is of concern to the researcher in this instance is that of the change in paradigms: from men being the breadwinners to women taking over the role, while men take care of the family on their own or with extended family support. The researcher, by use of the structured interview schedule, studied these phenomena as perceived by the concerned labourers. On top of the phenomenological perspective, the

researcher found it interesting to explore how interaction is affected by the shift in paradigms in household politics. The pilot study described under 4.1.1, will justify why a structured interview schedule was used rather than an unstructured one as suggested by Babbie and Mouton (2001).

Hence, in pursuit of a deeper understanding of the participants' accounts and meaning placed on behaviour (Holliday, 2007; Fouchè and Delpont in de Vos *et al*, 2005; Babbie and Mouton, 2001). In line with phenomenological research designs, quantitative research approach and in particular exploration, using a structured interview schedule, the research sought a description of events from participants and their interpretation of those events. Long (minimum of an hour each) interviews were carried out by the researcher in which life events of participants that relate to their labour migration were described and interpreted. For instance participants would describe the behaviour of their children and/or spouses and interpret it themselves.

The following is an example of how phenomena were viewed and interpreted by participants in this research.

<b>Event relating to labour migration as as experienced by Interviewee</b>	<b>Interpretation of event by Interviewee</b>
"My siblings tell me that, when I am at home my child becomes weepy and sulks easily, which he doesn't do when I'm here at work."	In my presence my child feels that I can give him affection and spoil him, and in my absence he feels that this is lacking. He is crying out for my affection"
Before I started working, my husband always took my advice on how to use his salary. Now I stay here in Maseru with him and I work in the factories part time jobs and stays here in Maseru with me and he shouts at me when I enquire about how he	He is scared that I now want to take control because I am exposed to cheeky city women.

spends money. He says I now want to be like city women.	
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### **3.2.0 Implementation Strategies**

#### **3.2.1 Study Population**

The target of this research was migrant labour women from the Thetsane Manufacturing Industries. These were found to be living in a squatter settlement behind the factory yards.

#### **3.2.2 Pilot Study**

According to Strydom and Delport (in de Vos *et al*, 2005) a pilot study is a smaller replica study of the main investigation. Participants in the pilot study possess the same characteristics as the main study. A pilot study is done to test the questions in the interview schedule and to determine whether they will bring out information that is relevant to the study purpose, to enable the researcher to make necessary modifications to the research tool.

For the purpose of pilot study, the researcher interviewed three women of the same calibre as those in the main study. An unstructured interview schedule as mentioned in the proposal for the study was used for the pilot. The pilot study took place on one afternoon and in one case the interview took about twenty minutes because the responses were short and did not provide descriptive data.

The pilot study revealed to the researcher the fact that open ended questions in the unstructured questions were not adequate to elicit qualitative information from participants. For example, two out of three subjects in the pilot study said that their lives and that of their children had not changed due to labour migration. The researcher attributed this narrow description of concepts to the open-endedness of the questions and she reasoned that this made the questions to be vague. Secondly, the researcher

viewed the education levels (the highest level of education attained by respondents was COSC) of the subjects of the study as possibly another reason why they described concepts in a narrow fashion.

Consequently the researcher structured and re-phrased some of the questions in the questionnaire to enable them to produce qualitative accounts of the lives of participants. For example the following open-ended question was modified to add categories in which respondents could base their responses “*How has your life changed since you started working away from home?*”. Categories that were added under the question to stimulate qualitative responses are the following: *politically, economically, and socially*. These categories proved to be useful in eliciting broader and richer qualitative accounts of the lives of participants before they migrated and subsequent to migration.

### 3.2.3 Sampling

“Sampling enables the researcher to study a relatively small part of the population, and yet obtain data that are representative of the whole” (Sarantakos, 2005:152). In addition, sampling saves time and money and ensures that the whole unit of study can be reached and studied before other parts can experience change to the exclusion of the rest of the sample (Sarantakos, 2005).

There are several modalities and procedures of sampling. This research used non-probability sampling (snowballing) as its sampling procedure. Sarantakos provides the following guidelines as justification for employing non-probability sampling in research:

- For qualitative research
- For small studies
- Where statistical processes are not used to arrive at the sample number
- Where respondents are people
- Where few variables [though they may not all be known to the researcher at the inception of the research] are studied (2005:155)

An account of the sampling procedure used in this research appears in chapter one of this report.

It is significant to point out that, while the research had initially planned to employ purposive sampling by selecting a sample from a list provided by either the chief or community councillor, this could not be done because of the following two reasons:

- The area where labour migrants of Ha-Thetsane have settled is a squatter settlement and thus has no chief or other observed local authority
- On approaching the community council office of Maseru South West under which Thetsane is supposed to fall, the office referred the researcher to the chief of reserve, whose office the researcher knows from experience in working in Maseru that it does not have an up to date data base of its population. Hence the researcher was unable to find a database of the target research population or sampling frame.

#### 3.2.4 Data Capturing and Instruments

As indicated in 4.1.1 above, a structured interview schedule was used as the data collection tool. In as much as possible, the interview schedule contained open-ended questions, but was also structured to a certain point to prompt for qualitative responses as discussed above. Questions were written and asked in the vernacular. Both the English and Sesotho questionnaires are attached at the end of this document and marked annexure I and annexure II respectively. The English version was designed for the purpose of being attached to the research report while the Sesotho version was used for data collection.

The efficiency of a structured interview schedule can be enhanced by paying attention to as many alternatives as possible that can be derived from each category of a structured interview schedule (Delpont in de Vos *et al* 2005). Encouraging notations and prompts like “mh”, “aha”, “yes...”, were employed to stimulate as much descriptive data as possible. While the researcher guided the interview, she avoided asking leading questions as these are said to potentially “contaminate information” (Henning, 2004:53).

The researcher spent at least one hour in one interview session. This method of data capturing is in line with the overall design of the research, which aims at capturing context-specific beliefs and values, ideas, emotions and feelings of circumstances from participants which are unique to each participant.

### 3.2.5 Data analysis/evaluation

The two main methods of data analysis will be employed in chapter 4 where relevant and according to the type of data that ensued from the data collection process: content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis “examines *words or phrases*...with the view of tracking links and relationships in the information found. It has the ability of reflecting “even the culture and time in which the text is embedded.” (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 491). The relevance of content analysis as it applies to this research document and to qualitative research methods in general is that, content analysis presents data as perceived by participants (Henning 2004:102). Thus content analysis will be employed to an extent but a more in-depth grounded theory analysis will also be used to deduce relationships of variables where there are any causalities and outcomes of behaviour.

Discourse analysis on the other hand, is described by Slembrouk (2000) in Babbie and Mouton (2001:495) as:

“Concerned with language use beyond the boundaries of a sentence...the interrelationship between language and society and...the interactive or dialogue properties of everyday communication.”

Terre'Blanche and Durrheim (1999 in Babbie and Mouton, 2001) go on to state that, “discourse analysis... is the act of showing how certain discourses are deployed to achieve particular effects in specific contexts”. In discourse analysis, the researcher makes inference to the less obvious. It illuminates notions surrounding power for instance. Discourse analysis was used to demonstrate how women indulge in extramarital affairs to boost their self esteem for instance.

### 3.2.6 Perceived Validity and Reliability of the out come of the intended research methodology discussed above

Grinnell and Williams have come up with two distinctions of validity: internal and external validity. "A research study is said to be internally valid if any changes in the dependant variable resulted only from the introduction of the independent variable" (1990:179). The researcher contends, in line with Grinnell and Williams' definition that all changes that were studied in her research participants resulted mainly from labour migration, although she acknowledges there are some variables in the participants that could have not resulted from labour migration exclusively. External validity on the other hand, is the degree to which the results of a study can be generalised to a population outside the research, while reliability is the extent to which a research methodology can produce similar results when applied under similar circumstances elsewhere (Grinnell and Williams, 1990).

According to Guba and Lincoln (1984) there can be no validity without reliability... [and] a demonstration of the former suffices to establish a presence of the latter (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:278).

Validity of the findings of this research should to be measured according to the validity checks as promulgated by Lincoln and Guba (1985 in de Vos in de Vos *et al* 2005). Thus, the following are going to be used as guidelines to that effect: credibility; transferability; dependability; and confirmability. The four criteria were used by Van Zyl in 1993 to test the findings of her study and she was satisfied with the outcome (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 in de Vos in de Vos, *et al* 2005).

### Credibility

A credible study describes its variables, and their perceived interactions within their setting in relation to available theory, in detail. This can be applied as an alternative to *internal validity* (de Vos in de Vos *et al* 2005:346). To demonstrate expected credibility of this study, it suffices to mention that interaction as perceived by the researcher between the variables being studied was narrated in detail in chapter one of the paper under description of the problem. Definitions of concepts was done in chapter one as well.

Of the thirteen variables that can undermine credibility or internal validity of research findings, in the view of Grinnell and Williams, only the following are perceived by the researcher as pertinent to this research: history, instrumentation, and reactive effects (1990:181-185).

### History

This refers to anything which may affect the dependant variable and consequently study findings but which has not been accounted for in the research design (Grinnell and Williams 1990:181). For instance in the narration of HIV as it affects the spousal relationship of the woman migrant labourer, that appears in review of literature of this research paper, the reader should take into account that, HIV may not necessarily result from labour migration and the risk of contact with the disease does not result from labour migration alone. Unsafe sex practice of both partners accounts for the introduction of HIV into the family unit and may take place both in the presence and absence of labour migration. Labour migration merely increases the chances of unsafe sex practice outside the spousal unit. The interplay of these phenomena has not been accounted for in the groundwork or report of this research.

### Instrumentation

The instrument of research may be unreliable or invalid (Grinnell and Williams, 1990:183). This means that the interview schedule as a tool for the research may not be the most appropriate tool for studying impacts of labour migration on the family in the case of this study. Secondly, the design of the tool and its contents may not be adequate to elicit responses that satisfy the research question(s).

To curtail this effect, the researcher has armed herself with research methodology literature which she regards as sufficient to inform her as to the most reliable and valid instrument for her purpose. This factor has thus been minimised as a threat to the validity of the research. For instance, Fouchè (in de Vos *et al*, 2005:) as well as Babbie and Mouton (2001) recommend the interview as the most appropriate tool for the study of social life. Secondly, the pilot study that was undertaken to enhance the efficiency of the research tool played a role in improving the reliability of the research tool, as it has been shown in the beginning of this chapter. However the reader should take cognisance of the fact that the risk of instrumentation cannot be totally eliminated.

### Reactive Effects

This refers to alteration in behaviour of participants of a study resulting from the knowledge that they are being studied (Grinnell and Williams 1990:185). Babbie and Mouton advise *prolonged engagement, persistent observation and peer- debriefing* as methods of establishing credibility of research findings (2001). As it has already been alluded to, under methodology, the researcher spent up to an hour and half with the subjects of the study in an effort to reach data saturation, and they were offered as much privacy as possible, and this provided a platform for honest and free expression. Research participants had been assured that their views will remain confidential and their names will not appear on the research report thereby decreasing the possibility of reactive affects in the research.

Lastly, the researcher is blessed with being in a research class which has already undertaken to provide peer review for each other, and she relied on the objective criticism and observation of her peers for this purpose.

### Transferability

According to Lincoln and Guba, transferability is an alternative to *external validity* or *generalisability*. Here the responsibility of generalising the findings of the literature beyond the parameters of the research lies solely with the secondary researcher, subsequent to detailed examination of the secondary location in relation to the location of the initial study. It is important to note here that, generalisability of a qualitative study, is also its weakness (de Vos in de Vos *et al* 2005:346). Thus the researcher has not put generalisability as a priority in the implementation of this study.

However, Babbie and Mouton propose *thick description* as promulgated by Guba and Lincoln (1984) as a measure that can increase the transferability of a study (2001:277). In this research, the problem has been described in detail. Also, the presentation of data which follows in the subsequent chapter will describe and analyse the findings of the research in detail.

To ensure, transferability of research results, the researcher must also ensure that: the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn; nothing else happened to the dependent variable that may yield the same results as the introduction of the independent variable under the study, except the introduction of the independent variable resulting from the study process (Grinnell and Williams, 1990:194). The researcher enhanced transferability of this study through carefully ascertaining that all participants in the study fit the description of the study population as described at the beginning of the chapter. The researcher however did not have the power to control or determine other variables that may be at play to impact on the family of labour migrants other than labour migration. Examples of other factors that may result in introduction of HIV to the family are illustrated in chapter 1. Here the researcher acknowledges that some variables may be beyond the research process to detect. For instance, instrument

pre-test may alert subjects of the intended study variables, thereby ensuring that they have predetermined responses at the time of the study. This effect is called the pre-test-treatment effect by Grinnell and Williams (1990:195).

### Dependability

Dependability can be established through an *enquiry audit*, (a process of ensuring dependability). In enquiry audit an auditor examines the running account of the process of the inquiry, through the use of daily journals, and important incident records. The aim of the inquiry audit is to establish the coherence of the research findings in relation to the data, interpretations, and recommendations of the report (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:278).

In the pursuit of dependability, the researcher will maintain and avail her used interview schedules and all material and references used through out the research process in the event of the need for an enquiry audit.

### Confirmability

Here the researcher asks himself whether the findings of the study can be confirmed by another. The researcher tries to remove all bias and prejudice of his own from the research findings, and presents them as objectively as possible (de Vos in de Vos *et al* 2005:347). According to Grinnell and Williams, researcher bias remains one of the greatest threats to confirmability (1990:196). Babbie and Mouton dispense the following advice as promulgated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to counter researcher bias: *the audit trail* (2001:279).

This is to say, when subjected to an audit, the following trail should be accessible to the auditor: raw data like tapes and field notes; data reduction and analysis products like summaries and tally marks; synthesised data like statistics, graphs and charts, fieldwork notes describing events as they took place; plans; and preliminary studies (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

The researcher will avail these documents and pieces of information to the examiner (s) on request and will also document some of the raw data like transcribed interview notes within the research report for emphasis.

In a nutshell, the researcher has taken into cognisance the possible factors that can potentially compromise the credibility of this study, and has demonstrated methods that she employed and those that can be employed by others to minimise their impact on the findings of this study. Hence while the results of the study cannot be totally generalisable, to migrant women workers, they will definitely be credible and trustworthy.

### **3.3.0 Ethical Considerations**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Grinnell and Williams (1990), voluntary participation and informed consent are important aspects of social research. Also participants should be able to withdraw from the study at will (Grinnell and Williams 1ibid). In this study the researcher explained clearly what the research is about and its purpose and gave participants the chance to decide whether they are willing to participate in it. Consent forms stipulating these conditions were signed by all consenting participants.

There was no potential of harm to clients. Anonymity and confidentiality according to Babbie and Mouton (2001) are built into the design of this research. Subjects of the research were assured that their real names will not appear on any part of the research report and that all deliberations that took place for the purpose of the study remain confidential between the researcher and participants.

Ethical clearance for the study was sought from and granted by the University of Kwazulu Natal under whose auspices the study was carried out.

# IV

## **Findings of the Study**

### **4.0.0 Introduction to the Chapter**

This chapter is a presentation and analysis of the outcome of the implementation phase of the research process. The research methods applied in this study are qualitative and thus mainly qualitative research analysis methods will be utilised i.e. actual words and opinions of research participants will be presented. However, some data, in particular description of the study sample, will be presented quantitatively. Further, the researcher will analyse the findings according to the theoretical underpinning used in the literature study i.e. systems theory and attachment theory. Some aspects that came up in the study's implementation literature study will also be analysed on the basis of literature material discussed in chapter 2. Andocentricity which is a concept that emerged constantly during the literature study for this research and during its implementation phase will be employed to contextualise some of the responses that came up in the study.

The objectives of the study which are listed below will be used as subtitles under which responses of participants will be discussed:

- Effects of labour migration on: women labour migrants, their children, their relationship with their partners, and significant others
- How women maintain their relationships with their children, spouses and significant others in spite of working and staying away from home (as it will be shown in this chapter, only 5 women out of 30 in the study group were not living with their husbands in the host areas hence data on how women maintain relationships (which was the one of the initial objectives of this study) will be limited)
- Supports and obstacles to woman's migration

Under the objectives of the study, responses of participants will be discussed in relation to the context and motivation of the study as elaborated in chapter one. Not all subtitles under “context and motivation for the study” (chapter one) will be relevant to all four groups of concern in this research i.e. spouses of migrant labour women, their children, migrant labour women themselves and their significant others, and will be included in discussions below only where relevant.

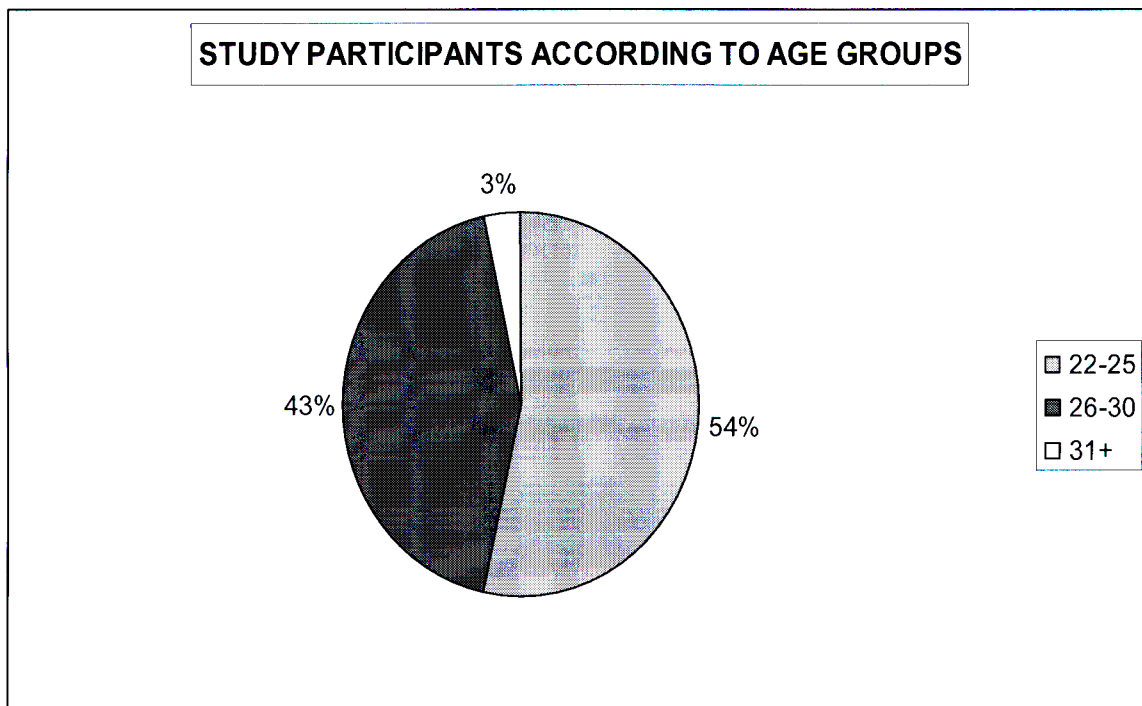
#### **4.1.0 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population**

As it has been mentioned in chapter 3, women labour migrants employed in the manufacturing industries of Ha Thetsane at the time of the study made up the target population for the study, from which a sample was drawn. The sample of the study was made up of thirty women, 28 of whom were married, 1 single and 3 deserted.

#### **4.1.1 Ages of Participants of the Study**

The participants' ages varied from 22 to 40 years old. The pie chart below summarises the distribution of the women's ages. As it is shown, more than ½ of the women were aged between 22 and 30 while those in the age group of 31 to 40 made up the smallest category of about 3%

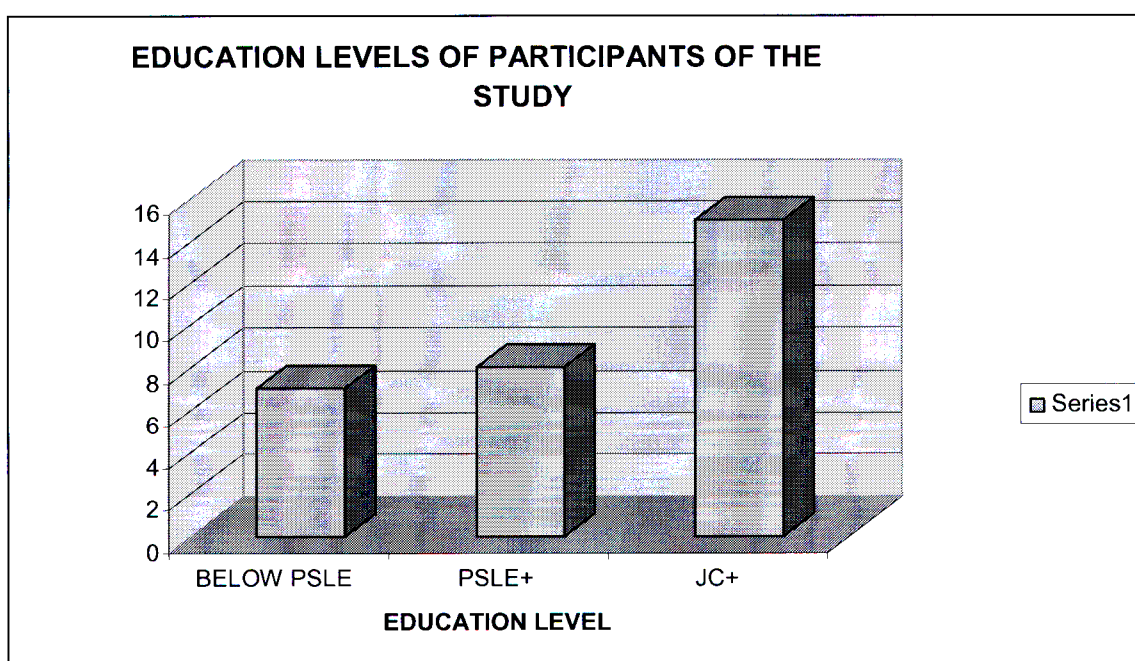
**Chart No. 1**



#### 4.1.2 Education Levels of Participants of the Study

On the other hand, participant's education levels ranged from below primary education to Cambridge Ordinary School Certificate (COSC) in this manner: 7 or 23.3% of the women had attended school to the level of between class 5 and class 6, 8 or 26.7% had gone to beyond class 7 but below Junior Certificate (JC) while 15 or 50% had attained between JC and COSC. Contrary to Kimane and Ntimo-Makara (1997)'s assertion that many migrant workers in Maseru have attained a maximum of Junior Certificate, participants in this study had attained COSC. Many of them postulated that they could not continue with their education beyond COSC because of lack of financial resources, or because they got married. The range and frequency of participants' educational level will be depicted in the bar chart below.

**Chart No.2**

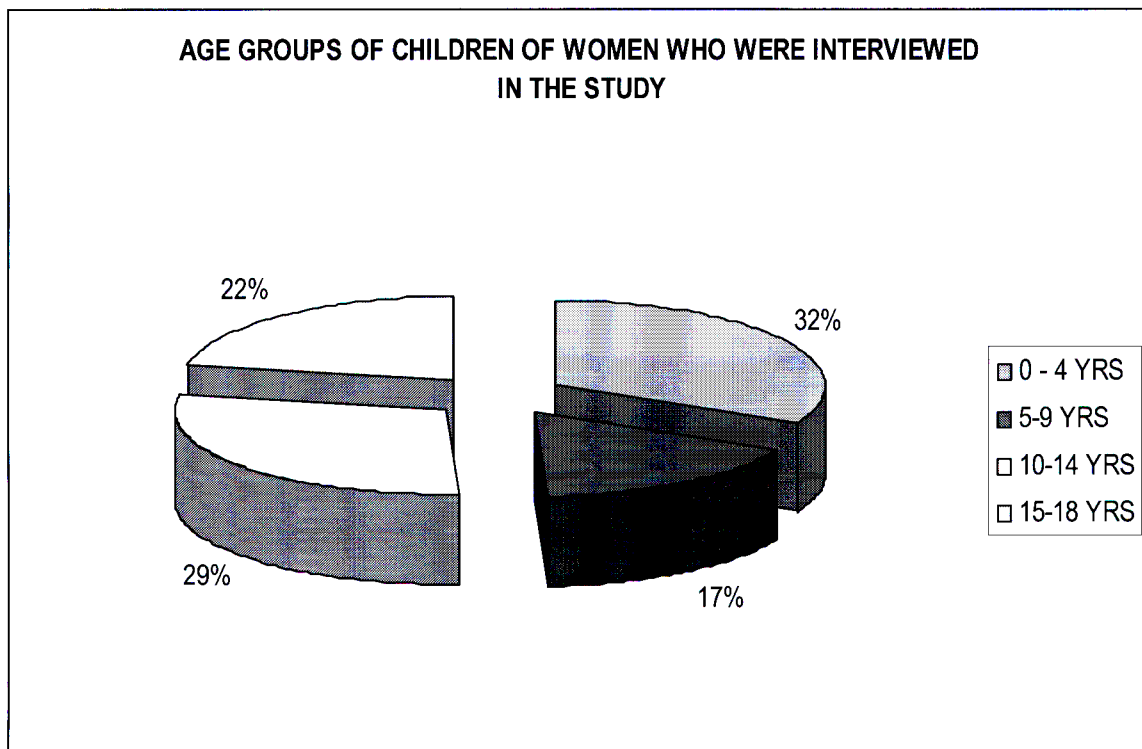


In the chart above, PSLE stands for Primary School Leaving Education

### 4.1.3 Age Groups of Participants' Children

This is an important variable to this study because as it will be shown, children of participants of the study seemed to have been adversely affected by being separated from their mothers due to migrant labour in an age specific way. Children below the age of 4 had almost similar symptoms while those between the ages of 5 and 14 also had the same symptoms which could be linked to being separated from their mothers. The biggest group of children was that in the 0 – 4 years which totalled 49% of all children of women in the study put together, while 38.7% and 13.3% of children of women participants were in the age groups 5 – 9 and 10 – 14 respectively. None of the women had children above the age of 14. The following pie chart shows the comparative proportions of ages of women's children.

**Chart No. 3**



## **4.2.0 EFFECTS OF LABOUR MIGRATION ON THE FAMILIES OF WOMEN LABOUR MIGRANTS**

### **4.2.1(a) Effects on the Spousal Relationship**

The first and most important effect of labour migration on the spousal relationship of labour migrant women and their husbands is said to be the possibility of infidelity on the part of both spouses (Coffee *et al*, 2007; Corno and Walque, 2007). Firstly, the husband of a migrant labour woman can become promiscuous as a manifestation of male essentialism (a concept discussed at the beginning of this report) in an attempt to reclaim his diminished social status caused by being dependent on his working wife (Dyer, 2001; Mapetla and Shlyter, 1997). Also, social isolation of migrant labour women in host areas can increase women's propensity to infidelity (United Nations, 2005). Secondly, power struggles can also prevail in families of migrant labour women especially where men remain behind (Mapetla and Schlyter, 1997). All these factors are said to compromise quality of marriage and can potentially lead to total collapse of marriage through divorce or general disgruntlement about one's self and marriage.

However, it was found in this study that out of the 30 women studied, all migrant labour women participants of the study who were still married to their husbands (1 was single and 3 deserted), 21 were living with their spouses in host areas. 5 out of the 26 spouses of married women participants were labour migrants themselves, working in different trades in the Republic of South Africa like driving taxies and working in food production industries. Possibly as a result of this arrangement (both spouses migrating to and working at the same place at the same time), power issues were found not to cause problems in families of migrant labour women. However, infidelity as well as marital disharmony prevailed in these families as illustrated below.

The reason for the women to have migrated to Maseru following their husbands was cited as, among others, the preference of women as labourers in the manufacturing industries of Maseru as illustrated by Dyer (2001). It may have become apparent to families that there are work opportunities for semi-literate women as well as males in Maseru, leading families to decide to migrate together. The second motivation for families to migrate together seems to have been to keep the family intact. Thirdly, one woman aged 25 mentioned also that it was difficult to leave on her husband's income alone especially because they had to support her husband's four siblings; two of whom have one child each, as well parents-in-law, all with her husband's meagre salary. So an additional income was clearly essential to sustain living in this case. Thus, the research revealed that both men and women of most of the families of interviewed women work in the manufacturing industries of Maseru, although more women work in all industries put together than men (Textiles Africa, 2007).

What is not clear to the researcher however is whether the incidence of one spouse working in the industries plays a role in increasing the chances of the other spouse finding employment in the same industry. A possibility which was not explored or confirmed by this research is that of either of the employed spouses using his or her position in the industries to secure employment for the other. The reader should note at this point that Dyer (2001) has argued that, in all manufacturing industries in Maseru which he studied, men held more senior posts than women and their chances of being promoted were higher, hence this could put employed in the position of increasing their spouses' chances of employment.

A situation whereby men take up leadership roles even in the midst of more women than themselves is a clear case of androcentricity at play. Dyer (2001)'s study actually revealed that, according to one of the industry owners, the reason for this is that women are more willing to listen to male supervisors than to female supervisors and hence men "automatically" assume leadership.

### Power Issues in Families of Migrant Labour Women

Male essentialism other than alcohol abuse was not found as an important feature in the families of migrant labour women possibly due to the notion that, their spouses are also employed and men have no tangible reason to feel emasculated. On the same note, power struggles did not seem to be excessive in families of migrant labour women, although they were found to prevail in some cases, manifested in methods such as men dictating what women should wear. These dynamics can result from the point that superiority of men is not significantly challenged when both partners earn a living. In fact, the incidence of both partners working in the same place seemed to improve cohesion of the marriage partners and to enhance marital harmony, an interesting adjunct of androcentricity especially for families where financial status is a key marital and family satisfaction index.

Most importantly, women said that they could talk openly with their spouses without interference from extended family members and they are better able to plan their families with their husbands in the absence of extended family interference. They said that they are at liberty to act as they wish while in Maseru, and they have more control over their own lives. Women said that they decide what to do with their combined income together with their husbands and where spouse's wishes and priorities are incongruent, they compromise. The following words of participants bear testimony to that effect:

*"We both work here in the industries. We are close to each other [geographically] and we plan together [financially] for our family. I know exactly how much my husband earns each month so he cannot misuse his salary before he brings it home."*

together except in a few instances, thereby strengthening the marriage. Couples according to women saw things eye to eye to a large extent when working and living together. Men seem to forcefully cling to power and control; it can be concluded that it is because of uncertainty brought about by rapid change. In this instance, change from being an entity that is easily permeated by external forces (which could bring about a sense of security for men, i.e. guaranteeing that their individual boundary is not shifted, considering that men sometimes seem not want to get too close to women) to being an independent, self regulating entity that is difficult to permeate.

### HIV/AIDS

An interesting point that came out in the study is that, proximity of migrant labour women to their husbands has no direct relationship to whether or not migrant labour women chose to indulge in extramarital affairs. Thus the reasoning by Coffee *et al* (2007), that the risk of HIV infection among migrant labour women is high was proven by this study to be true even when migrants live with their spouses. To illustrate point, the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) of Lesotho revealed that, all men in that study had had unprotected sex with partners other than their “regular” partners in the year preceding the DHS (2004). According to the researcher of this study, it is safe to conclude therefore that where men engage in promiscuity, there are promiscuous women as well. In fact women in this study admitted to promiscuous behaviour that also involved unprotected sex, which increases the risk of HIV. In addition, this study confirmed the analysis by United Nations (2005) that says that, the low status of women can encumber women from negotiating safe sex. Similarly, this study has validated United Nations (2005) that loneliness and absence of social control structures increases anti – social behaviour of labour migrants.

To that end, eight out of the thirty women said that they had at one point or another of their migrant labour lives indulged in extramarital affairs. One said that her extramarital affair only ended when she feared that her husband might find

out. Other equally intriguing responses that are testimony to the fact that women may engage in extramarital affairs even when living with their husbands included the following:

*“Sometimes I feel that my husband does not love me [so I have an extra marital affair...].”*

*“I once had an affair with a male friend of my work colleague. It just happened, and besides, my husband would not find out because I was discrete.”*

*“When I am angry with my husband, I can easily go astray by way of having an extramarital relationship in order to punish him.”*

A salient point in all the responses of women is that none of them alluded to entering a sexual relationship with a man other than her spouse for the purpose of gaining monetary or other forms of rewards, as Corno and Walque (2007) cited in chapter 2 have suggested. All seemed to do it either to enhance their self esteem, or because they are lonely. Loneliness in migrant labour women can still prevail even when they are accompanied by their spouses because other social ties like friendships in the women’s places of origin have been severed. Again, the relational systemic effects of any variable in the marital and family system may produce multiple responses that may not always nurture or strengthen the home. As one woman postulated,

*“I cannot trust the women [with whom I work] because they are strangers”.*

A consequence of loneliness for women labour migrants as postulated by United Nations (2005) was found to be indulgence in extramarital affairs, which effectively increases the risk of HIV for the migrant labour woman and her spouse. And, as it can be deduced from some of their responses, extramarital affairs do not necessarily involve protected sex. To further explain, women

whose husbands are migrant labourers in South Africa said their risk of HIV increases doubly because in their words:

*“Both my husband and I can bring HIV into the family...in addition here [in squatter settlements] there is a lot of infidelity.”<sup>2</sup>*

*“We may both be tempted to have extra-marital affairs [because we seldom see each other].”*

*“We are compelled to find [partners] because we stay here for long periods without our husbands”<sup>3</sup>*

The following statements however, came from women who were living and working with their husbands at Ha Thetsane:

*“We work with many men and this increases one’s chances of being unfaithful, and thus ending up with HIV.”*

*“Sometimes men refuse to use condoms because they say condoms are for use with prostitutes and loose women.”*

*“We are in danger [of contracting the virus] because we do not know the status of the men whom we meet.”*

It is worth noting that, the two women cited immediately above were referring to sex and condom use outside of their families.

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<sup>2</sup> The contextual meaning of this quote was found to be difficult to translate. To quote the woman, in her language this is what she said: *“Nka tla le eona le eena a ka tla le eona, joale mona ebile phelisano e ngata.”*

<sup>3</sup> Another quote whose meaning in context was difficult to place: *“Re iphumana re tlameha ho fumana batho hobane re geta nako e telele re sa teane le balekane ba rona”.*

Interestingly two single women (one deserted and one never married) who were interviewed in the study said:

*"I do not have the time to have relationships with men here in Maseru because I'm too busy at work" and "men...in Maseru... have superficial love...all they are after is sex."*

*"Luckily I'm so busy at work I have no time to maintain love affairs, which I think is what will help me to avoid contracting HIV, if I do find myself in a [love] relationship I will have to be careful because my child is still young."*

This therefore, goes to show that, women choose to or not to engage in extramarital affairs for different reasons. Therefore it can be argued that labour migration cannot necessarily cause HIV, although it can increase the risk of contracting it. In this study, infidelity and inability to negotiate safe sex were found to be major factors that can introduce HIV into the spousal relationship. This contradicts the synopsis by Coffee *et al* (2007) that labour migrants engage in extramarital affairs because of the disruption in the relationship with regular partners. A relevant hypothesis to this study though is that which is promulgated by Corno and Walque (2007)- labour migration alone does not cause spread of HIV, but rather it aggravates it. In fact as a participant who seemed to be apathetic said, "A person can get HIV whether or not they have moved from their place of origin."

#### Incidence of Marital Disharmony and Breakdown in families of Migrant Labour Women

In chapter two of this research, Smith (2004:538) and *le Roux* (1997) are both cited as stating that labour migration can result in marital disharmony and breakdown, particularly where the other spouse remains at home. However, despite that out of a total of 30 migrant labour women who participated in the study, 21 were staying with their spouses in the host area of Maseru, marital

disharmony was still found to be a prominent feature in the lives of migrant labour women. Marital disharmony seemed to result from jealousy deriving from apparent liberation of migrant labour women. Jealousy was found to result from mistrust between spouses who were migrants in separate places as well as between those who were staying and working in the same place. For instance, one migrant woman whose husband is a labour migrant in The Republic of South Africa declared that:

*“We quarrel a lot with my husband these days because there is a lot of mistrust between us and I think he also thinks that I may be having affairs here in Maseru.”*

While a young woman staying and working with his husband of just over a year in Maseru postulated,

*“Of late my husband forbids me to wear trousers even though I used to wear trousers at his home to go to the fields and my mother-in law never complained. What my husband does not realise is that a person can get up to mischief regardless of clothes that they are wearing.”*

Another one lamented,

*“[My husband] used to take my advice on how to utilise his income, now he gets cross when I ask about his money saying that I want to be cheeky like city women.”*

While a third one added,

*“Since I started working here in Maseru, my husband has become ‘unusually jealous’. If it happens that I arrive home later than him, I find him sulking and he will not even eat the food that I prepare for him that night.”*

Lastly, working conditions were found to be sources of a reduction in the quality of marriage because women asserted that they could not spend quality time with their husbands because they 'work from dawn till dusk', and on weekends they clean their clothes and apartments thus they have no time to relax with their husbands. Systems theory supports the notion of multiple systemic effects that negatively influence communication and relationships. A systems analysis therefore would show that both spousal jealousy and lack of leisure time negatively affects the spousal relationship. A woman whose husband works in the Republic of South Africa said:

*"Sometimes my husband works even during Christmas holidays, which is the time when I'm on break, so we can't see each other even during Christmas holidays."*

On top of jealousy and rigid working conditions that can compromise the quality of marriage for women labour migrants, it emerged that, incidences of marital discord between migrant labour women and their husbands are uncontrolled because of lack of social support structures that would ordinarily provide mentorship and guidance to stray spouses (both women and men). The reader should note that traditionally in Lesotho, marital conflicts were [and to a large extend still are] resolved by elders from the family of the husband which is considered to be the common family of both marital partners (WILSA, 1998). A woman who was having problems with her husband because of alcohol abuse indicated that,

*"If we were still at home, I would report him to my parents-in-law who do not tolerate any nonsense especially his father. His father would deal with him. In fact ever since we came to Maseru, he even buys expensive clothes and he buys clothes almost every month and I wonder whether we will be able to have a house of own because of this [extravagance of his]."*

While one who felt that she had no one to share her miseries with, said that,

*“When we quarrel with my husband, I have no one to turn to here in Maseru. I just end up crying and I have no one to talk to. I cannot trust [the women with whom I work]... because they are strangers.”*

While power issues were not found to be a big issue in the marital relationships of migrant labour women interviewed for the purpose of this study, marital disharmony was found to prevail and to manifest through spousal jealousy and insecurity in the marriages of migrant labour women. Contrary to literature material reviewed in this study, which suggested that labour migrants may engage in unsafe extramarital sex because of being separated from their partners (Coffee *et al*, 2007; Corno and Walque, 2007; United Nation, 2005) which, from a systems perspective, is possibly too linear. Rather, women interviewed admitted to having unsafe extramarital sex even when their husbands were accompanying them. It was instead revealed that infidelity can result from social isolation and lack of self esteem rather than separation from husbands *per se* as United Nations (2005) has been cited as suggesting in Chapter 2. To emphasise this point, a quotation that appears above will be repeated here:

*“Sometimes I feel that my husband does not love me [so I have an extra marital affair...].”*

Social isolation was found to derive from lack of familiar recreation activities and lack of social networks for women as it will be shown under effects of labour migration on women. Thus in the absence of social networks and support, women were found to indulge in extramarital affairs in the event that their husbands were not available to spend time with them. Thus, using a systems framework, it is clear that social isolation of migrant labour women in host areas

compounds with the removal of ordinarily relied upon social support systems and can have negative impacts on the spousal relationship of migrant labour women like alcohol abuse by men and extramarital affairs by migrant labour women and consequently, rise in the risk of HIV.

From a system's theory perspective (Green, 2003; un-authored, 2008) homeostasis in families of migrant labour women does not change significantly when both spouses migrate to the same place and when they both earn a living. Another angle of analysis that can be deduced from systems theory is that, male essentialism is a means of the spousal dyadic system to regulate itself by seeking a homeostasis when a negative feedback of female emancipation is introduced into the system i.e. maintain male superiority. Hence in families of migrant labour women in this study, male essentialist behaviour in the form of power struggles (example quarrels over use of money) is rare, although it still prevails in the form of alcohol abuse.

In fact to invoke a structural analysis (Green, 2003) of the spousal system, women working with their husbands (putting distance between spousal system and the extended family system) have strengthened the spousal boundary, and the executive system functioning, thereby enabling the couple to tackle extended family inference in union. Firstly, the couple are free to plan and make decisions affecting their family together and can rely on each other's support in the event of undue extended family interference. An example of a woman whose family had previously been permeated by the extended family which also appears above will be used below for emphasis:

*“When I first got married to my husband about four years ago, I had to consult with my mother in law each time my husband sent me money, now I can do what is best for my family and my husband is here to support me in case my mother-in law raises an objection.”*

Thus, the spousal system has been strengthened by labour migration of both spouses and been turned into a force that can stand ground against the extended family when necessary.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the family's homeostasis has been none the less altered by migration and work of women outside the home thus introducing a negative feedback loop into the system. As a result, self regulation emerged in the form of men forcibly maintaining a superior position. Men did this through asserting their authority over women and dictating women's dress and time of arriving home from work, demonstrating andocentricism. Another manner in which homeostasis has been affected is through the removal of familiar social control structures i.e. extended family elders who perform disciplinary and support functions to new young families. As a result men's drinking habits are unchecked while women indulged in extramarital affairs at will. These developments have systemic relational effects for family preservation and need to be included when planning future therapeutic and preventive programmes in social work and at policy level.

#### 4.2.1(b) How Women Labour Migrants maintain their relationships with their Spouses

As it has been mentioned earlier, only 5 of the married women in the study were separated from their husbands. However even for those who were living with their husbands in host areas, marital discord seemed to ensue from migration. Women however mentioned the following strategies as ones that they employ to maintain their relationships with their husbands. A woman who was living with her husband in the host area said:

*"I respect him like a woman should and I obey his wishes."*

Another one said:

*“Nothing has changed...I still perform my responsibilities like a woman...cooking, laundering his clothes, and keeping the house tidy.”*

Women whose husbands were migrants in the Republic of South Africa, mentioned the following as strategies for maintaining their relationships with their husbands:

- Husbands visit Maseru at least monthly
- The couple talks on the phone at least once a week

#### 4.2.2(a) Effects on Children

There are two aspects in relation to which children of migrant labour women seemed to have changed, according to their mothers. Firstly children themselves have changed since their mothers started working away from home and secondly, children’s relationships with their mothers changed. The reader should note at this point that, from a systems perspective, it is likely that children’s relationships with their fathers have been affected as well especially in view of that fathers were also separated from their children through labour migration either to Maseru or elsewhere. However, this phenomenon has not been accounted for in this study because the study’s focus is effects of labour migration of women.

Firstly effects on children themselves will be discussed then effects on the mother child relationship of children and their migrant labour mothers. Effects on the relationship of mothers and their children were perceived by mothers as age-specific and will be illustrated accordingly below.

#### Children Themselves

Out of the thirty participants of this study, 3 women were living with their children in Maseru and these said that this puts their children at an advantage of living a

“town life” and benefiting from better facilities of Maseru like schools. In their words, the women said:

*“Both my children attend school here in Maseru, which are better equipped than rural schools. The younger one even goes to a nursery school. There are no nursery schools in Leribe. Children here in Maseru perform better in primary school because they already know English from nursery school”.*

*“My child has adopted the town way of dressing. She is beautiful and civilised although she still respects me and respects our culture”.*

*“My child will grow up to be a civilised person compared to when he was in Thaba Putsoa (Leribe)<sup>4</sup>, where children only learn to take care of animals. Here in Maseru children lean to speak English and they are exposed to a better life style.”*

Labour migrant women whose children remained in their places of origin on the other hand said that their children were disadvantaged by remaining in rural areas because they are still living an “*uncivilised*” life and will grow up to be *uncivilised* people. Also, the women said that the distance between them and their children denied women the opportunity to bring up their children in a way that the women choose. Hence, the effect of separation of migrant labour mothers from their children was seen as a compromise in the quality of child care for children of migrant labour women, firstly and the incidence of ‘culture gap’ as promulgated by Suarez-Orosco *et al* (2002) between parents and children.

A mother of a five year old said:

*“My child hangs around herd boys and I don’t like it. They [herd boys] teach him foul language. He will grow up to be an ‘unpolished’ person like people from the*

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<sup>4</sup> Thaba Putsoa is a remote area in the district of Leribe

*rural areas. If I were at home I would make sure that he doesn't hang around herd boys but now there is nothing I can do about it. He swears a lot lately."*

While another mother whose child was also aged below 9 propounded:

*"[As] you know grand parents can spoil children terribly and I don't like it that my children has to be brought up by their grand parents. [Me] I would teach them to be better behaved and respectful. These days they even refuse to as they are told – and when I am around I beat them"*

Women indicated that their children would be better off if they were in Maseru with their mothers although women pointed out that it would be financially difficult for them to bring children to town because they would have to pay for day care while at the same time providing for extended family members remaining in places of origin. For example two women said:

*"I cannot buy toys and healthy food for them in the way that I would like ...because the family is too big and I would not afford to [comfortably] feed all of it... and other children play with and destroy my children's toys."*

*"My boy has become sickly these days and he would get better if he were here in town where there are many doctors."*

In fact, about five women mentioned that their children had become sickly since women started working in town. Out of 30 women participants of the study, 16 said the most outstanding effect of their migration to town in their children is that their children had become 'weepy and sullen'. They said their children had become more 'introverted' and this they attributed to 'longing' for their mothers and having no one 'who truly cares' in the absence of their migrant labour mothers. These findings are analogical to the findings of Gharaibeh (2008) which carried out in the Jordan and Glasgow and Gouse-Shees (1995 in Suarez-

Orozco *et al*, 2002) which took place in the United States. Gharaibeh (2008) postulated that children whose fathers were incarcerated were found to cry more and to require more attention in terms of care from their mothers. Glasgow and Gouse-Shees (1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002) on the other hand stipulate that children may feel abandoned when their parents leave for work and may experience negative feelings. For example, women said:

*"[My child] is lonely and withdrawn since I left him with my mother. He does not enjoy playing with others any more."*

*"My child cries uncontrollably and...withdraws from others after my departure."*

Furthermore, nineteen participants also alluded to the financial benefit that their children get when their mothers work. They specifically pointed out for example that their children's diet has improved. They said that they are able to pay for school trips and buy decent school uniform for their children thereby making their children's studies pleasant and potentially enhancing their children's chances of performing well at school.

### Parent Child Relationship

**All** mothers whose children were left behind said that migration had affected their relationship with their children. As it has already been alluded to, changes in mother child relationships will be discussed in relation to age since this is how they were perceived by mothers. In particular mothers said that children aged 4 and below seemed to have "forgotten their mothers" because they "carried on as if nothing has happened" while their mothers were home. They said that their young children seem to have become closer to their carers compared to their mothers. Those between the ages of 5 and 14 on the other hand were reported to "act out" in the presence of their labour migrant mothers while some mothers of children of the same age group said that a rift had developed between

themselves and their children which in some instances had culminated into complete communication breakdown between mothers and children.

### Children 0 – 4 years

As it has been indicated, mothers said that they find that their children who are in this age group do not acknowledge migrant mothers' presence leading mothers to conclude that their children did not know their mothers and that they had forgotten them.

*"I am not sure whether my small child knows that I am her mother. I came here when she was only 1 year old."* One woman said sadly.

While a mother of a three year old child said hopelessly:

*"He has forgotten me. Even when I am around he follows my mother wherever she goes and when my mother leaves the room he cries."*

Two other women indicated that they could well be strangers to their young children and this seemed to make mothers hopeless.

*"My younger child does not seem to care whether I come or go".*

*"The first time I visited home after starting work, my child who was about one year looked at me for a long time as if saying "who is this?". It has been like that for all the four years that I have left him with my sister in law.*

Response to separation from attachment figures viz. protest, despair and detachment (Bretherton, 1995) as promulgated by attachment theorists is evident in children of labour migrant mothers, implying that labour migration of women negatively affects attachment in children below the age of 4. For instance, the following two women as quoted above described behaviour in their young

children which is typical of both *protest and despair* resulting from removal of an attachment object of a child.

*“My child cries uncontrollably and...withdraws from others after my departure.”*

*“My boy has become sickly these days...”*

In addition, one woman postulated,

*“[My child] is lonely and withdrawn since I left him with my mother. He does not enjoy playing with others any more.”<sup>5</sup>*

Thus, it can be deduced that, separation of mothers and children below the age of 4 can result in attachment difficulties in children.

Moreover, almost all children in this age group seemed to have *detached* from their migrant labour mothers and to have identified alternative objects of attachment like their grandmothers. This notion can be evidenced in behaviour patterns mentioned by labour migrants. For example a woman pointed out that, her child follows its grandmother wherever the grandmother goes and cries when its grandmother leaves (even in the presence of its mother). Secondly, another child who can be said to have detached from its mother, is one who was said ‘not to care whether its mother comes or goes’.

In addition, while Bowlby (1973 in Bretherton, 1995) had suggested that, attachment objects cannot be replaced, it seems as if children of migrant labours interviewed in this research have replaced their mothers by their grandmothers as attachments objects.

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<sup>5</sup> These quotations are repeated here to demonstrate relevance of theory.

These types of reactions in children caused mothers immense distress and some seemed to have lost hope of regaining a relationship with their children. Thus a systems analysis, of this scenario can be evoked to promulgate that, separation of mothers from their children causes both mothers and their children distress. A detailed analysis of separation anxiety in labour migrant mothers follows under discussion of effects of labour migration on labour migrants.

#### Children 5 – 14 years

Findings of this research suggest that labour migration of women causes a rift to develop between mothers and children as pinpointed by Forman (1993 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002) and Smith *et al*, (2004) mentioned in chapter 2 of this study. Children seemed to regard their mothers as strangers and they seemed to be made uncomfortable by the presence of their mothers. The following responses from participants proved this notion:

*“My child has become shy when he is around me...he does not relate as freely to me as he did before I started working in town.”*

*“They are more quite and withdrawn from me [compared to my mother].”*

*“She doesn’t even laugh when I am around.”*

*“On many occasions my child [boy of 10] actually left the room when I entered and when I asked he said he was already on his way out although I doubt this.”*

A total of five women said that their children spoke **only** when their mothers spoke to them and this is what some of them said:

*“My elder child has changed. He has withdrawn from me and he talks to me only if I talk to him first.”*

*“Whenever I try to make conversations with [my child] he answers only in monosyllables like yes or no or I do not know.”*

Hence, systems theory précis of self-regulation (Green, 2003) is evident in children in this age group who withdraw completely from their mothers, through either refusing to, or being unable to talk to mothers to the extent of leaving the room when mothers enter. Instead of reacting happily at the sight of their mothers (and then be hurt all over again when mothers return to work) children 5 to 14 seem to merely refuse to acknowledge the presence of their mothers. Firstly this can be an effort for the child to protect itself from being hurt, or an effort to hurt its mother for “abandoning it”, a possibility suggested by Glasgow and Gouse-Shees (1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002).. Glasgow and Gouse-Shees suggest that labour migration of mothers can make children resentful towards mothers for leaving them behind (1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002).

Another manner in which many children were affected is that they portrayed signs of attention seeking behaviour which is characterised in sulking, unusual crying and generally uncharacteristic behaviour as depicted in the responses of mothers below.

*“When I reprimand him he sulks.”*

*“When I reprimand him he cries.”*

*“He is discourteous and rude to others especially when I am around.”*

*“He is clingy and does not want to get me out of his sight.”*

*“When I am around he refuses to eat...so I beat him.”*

Children seem to “act out” their frustration when their mothers are present, they seem to revel in the presence of an entity whose absence cause them great distress, and seem to expect their mothers’ presence, albeit brief, to compensate for previous absence. For example, they do not expect their mothers to reprimand them and they try to make their mothers feel remorse for reprimanding them by crying and sulking (attention seeking). Some even refuse to eat to attract their mothers’ undivided attention. They further attract their mother’s attention by being rude, either to make their mothers say something or to find reason to seek their mothers’ protection or intervention if they happen to be reprimanded for being rude.

**Only two** women said their children still related well with them. The first child was 8 years old and the other around 11. This is what they said in respective order.

*“My child can hardly wait for me to sit down before she can narrate everything that happened in my absence.”*

*“Whenever there is time, we sit together with my child to talk. She asks me things about town life and my work and where I stay. I would bring her down to visit if it weren’t for the exorbitant cost of transport [also] we stay in a one-roomed house with her father so this would pose problems.”*

A mother of an eight year old girl who seemed to be hurt at the mention of her relationship with her child said:

*“When I arrive my child becomes excited like a mad person and tells everyone (even those walking past the house) that “my mother is here”. This makes me so sad that sometimes I cry when she says this [because I’m only going to be around for a short time].”*

While a mother who said that her child still recognises their special relationship and that its mother can protect the child said that:

*“When I am around he runs to me whenever he gets involved in a fight with others.”*

Lastly, a woman whose children have accompanied her to Maseru reported to be happy with her relationship with her children although she said they are ‘spoilt’ compared to when they were in the care of her mother. In her words:

*“My children and I have a close relationship but they have become very spoilt since I removed them from my mothers place.”*

#### 4.2.2(b) How Women Labour Migrants maintain their Relationship with their Children

The above illustration of the effects of labour migration of mothers on children themselves and on the mother-child relationships implies a need for special effort on the part of labour migrant mothers to maintain relationships with their children.

However, almost all women whose children were left behind said that, they do not have enough time to spend with children because of demanding work conditions and the cost of travelling home to be with their children which they could not meet as often as they would like. They stated however that they acknowledge the importance of maintaining their relationship with their children and these are some of the things which they mentioned as efforts to maintain relationships with their children.

- Visit home regularly
- Talk regularly on the phone
- Purchase nice clothes and snacks for children to take home during visits
- Purchase toys for children to take home during visits

- Children visit their mothers in Maseru during school holidays

These strategies that are employed by women labour migrants are hailed by Robertson and Robertson (1971 cited in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002) as having the potential to mitigate the effects of parental separation with children. In this study however, more children seem not to benefit from mitigating strategies by women than those who do, which is revealed by the high incidence of children of all ages who withdraw from their parents, than those who still relate comfortably to their mothers.

#### 4.2.3 Effects on the Labour Migrant

In discussing effects of labour migration on women, maternal anxiety will be discussed separately. As it had already been demonstrated, women's labour migration has improved their relationships with their spouses. Secondly, one of the common consequences which women mentioned as an effect of labour migration is loneliness and social isolation in host areas, a notion promulgated by United Nations (2005). United Nations (2005) declares that, migrant labour women can be lonely in their host areas because of various reasons like lack of familiar recreational activities and social networks. This study confirmed United Nations (2005)'s prognosis.

However, migrant labour women remained largely positive about their situation. For instance, **almost all** women talked of the financial freedom that they command as a result of labour migration. They said their style of dress has become more "civilised", as they now buy clothes, food, and furniture of their choice with money which they earn. Women did however indicate that, the comforts that they are able to procure because of work are costly because the cost of living is rising faster than their income. One woman said that to counter her inadequate salary, she has joined a money club whereby women pool money together as a form of investment. Some of their direct responses were:

*"I am able to provide for my children financially...they dress neatly now [because I work]"*

*"One has to be better groomed here in town...I now take better care of my appearance ...although this can cost money sometimes."*

*"Although the money is so little, it plays a role in improving the quality of my life and that of my family"*

Other women mentioned that labour migration had exposed them to a new culture and lifestyle of Maseru while at the same time introducing them to a people totally different from them i.e. Asians. Some women said that labour migration has given them the opportunity to meet other Lesotho natives from other parts of the country. In relation to lifestyle, two participants said that, their lives had improved from using firewood as fuel to using gas. On top of that, woman said that they have learnt how to sew using sewing machines. Although none of the women participants of this study had had the opportunity to learn an Asian language, the study revealed that some labour migrants are taught Japanese and Korean for instance in order to be able to communicate with their employers.

Moreover, the women themselves said that they have changed; their priorities, ambitions, and attitude towards life have changed. In their words:

*"While I would previously be content to build a stone house...I now realise that it (a stone house) can collapse anytime, and cause me to start all over again...I think that when I do build my own house, it will be a brick house."*

*"[Back home] we used to sit and talk about useless things and gossip...here there is no time for that, we talk about our work and our families."*

*"I have nothing in common with girls of my age back home anymore... they keep making babies... and they don't want to improve the way that they look...they look old...they drink traditional brew and sniff tobacco..."*

Hence, it can be said that, women have gained financial independence, they have been introduced to a different lifestyle and their perception of life and of themselves has changed. They said that they want better things in life and they can now achieve and be "something". Thus, women's perception of themselves had changed for the better. However, working long hours and working during weekends prevents women from engaging in recreation and extra mural activities. Women are also unable to attend funerals, which causes them anxiety. The latter concern may have negative systemic effects and counter the gains of employment since communal grieving and expressing support is often an important indicator of belonging to a community (Kasiram and Partab, 2002) According to Kasiram and Partab, a death in the community is a community loss and all members have a role to play either to support the family of the deceased or to pay respect to the deceased for the last time and funerals can bring people together (2002).

On a positive note, almost all participants in the study mentioned the fact that, their lives had improved economically. They said that, are able to buy clothes for their children, their diet, that of their children as well as the diet of those people who take care of their children have improved. As one woman elaborated:

*"I am now able to add spices and cooking oil to my food."*

Conversely, women mentioned the difference in recreation which is available in Maseru as compared to their places of origin as a factor that prevents them from partaking in recreation. For example in their places of origin they participated in cultural activities like traditional dances and ceremonies that mark boys' successful completion of initiation-school - both activities are not practiced widely

in towns. The only non work activity that women reported to engage in is attending church. However, many women said that they are unable to go to church either because it is too far, or because they use Sundays to rest and get ready for the week. Those that do attend church said they could not participate fully in church activities outside sermon or mass; like participate in church choirs and concerts; both of which are activities which they engaged in for recreation in their places of origin, for lack of time. In their words, women said:

*“When I do not go to work...I just sit and wait for night time...at home I would go to the sports fields [with friends] on Saturday afternoon...here I get very very lonely when I am not working.”*

*“My participation in church has declined because of lack of time. Church is the one thing that used to give me peace of mind because I used to go on trips with the church choir and attend choir practice in the evenings.”*

*“I am a church loving person and this aspect of my life has been impacted on...My attendance and participation in church have declined because sometimes I work even during weekends. On Sundays I do house chores and I am consequently too tired to go to church where I can relax and enjoy myself as well as draw strength in preparation of work hassles that lay in the coming week.”*

*“All I have time for is church and work. I don't have time to do anything else. ”*

One woman who remained positive about her church participation said:

*“My church life has not changed, church adds value to my life...and I go every Sunday except on a few exceptions when I am unable to.”*

With regards to social isolation and closed social networks that prevail in towns, women said:

*"I don't feel like I am part of a community...I do not attend 'pitsos' ('imbizo' or open outdoor meetings)...as a result I do not know what is going on around me and I cannot participate in community activities...It is a very unusual life."*

*"There are no women's groups that do traditional dances here so there is no arena where a person can engage in these."*

Another common dissatisfaction which was voiced by many women was the lack of community oriented activities in host areas. Perhaps, this is indicative of urban living which is often cited as de-personalising and business driven. For instance, four women said that they are unable to participate actively in politics because they are in an alien place and politics are for rich people. In the words of two:

*"I am not able to participate in political rallies, so when the time comes for elections, I just go and cast my vote without being completely certain whether I am electing the right person [who will represent my interests]."*

*"The political atmosphere here is different from the atmosphere at home...here, only rich people who drive cars attend political rallies...not people like us."*

In addition, a woman voiced her frustration about completely different approaches in town and in her place of origin to health services. She bemoaned the fact that health care staff in town is "cold and curt" i.e. they do not even look one in the face or smile. She said that, nurses do not take time to listen to one's problems or to explain diagnoses and treatment plans thoroughly. This was said to discourage women from seeking health services from the town clinics. Not surprisingly then, women said that they would rather wait until they go to their places of origin to access health services there. This opinion echoes United Nations (2005) view that, migrants may find health services in town as 'culturally insensitive'.

Moreover, almost all women who were interviewed portrayed characteristics of maternal anxiety and feelings of inadequacy as mothers. And as Brooks (1981) has articulated, women who suffer maternal anxiety tend to over – compensate for their separation with their children by either being too autocratic or too liberal in their approach to children. As it will demonstrated below, the findings of this study proved this précis.

### Maternal Anxiety

Birns and ben-Ner (1988) as cited in chapter 2 postulate that maternal anxiety can surface in migrant labour women and it manifests through the belief that no person other than a child’s mother can care for a child adequately. Women who suffer maternal anxiety regard their children’s potential of physical and intellectual development as being compromised by women’s absence. Lastly, responses of women who participated in this study suggested that they feel guilt for leaving children in order to pursue employment. Women in the study demonstrated this kind of anxiety saying:

*“As you know no one can take care of someone else’s child in exactly the same way that a mother can...I know my sister in law cares very much for my child by my child needs me sometimes.”*

*“I cannot enjoy the comforts that I now have access to because my children are still at home...I want them both to join me here in Maseru because the elder one is performing badly at school.”* (This woman’s 8 year old had failed a class).

*“My child is so lonely that he has lost weight since I started working here”.*

*“She started talking very late... [that is because]...no one was making the effort to help her to talk.”*

Two women commented that their children have become sickly since the children were left with extended family members. One said:

*“She gets common cold regularly...because they do not give her Scott’s Emulsion (a vitamin C suspension commonly given to children) and when I ask they say they do give her even though I will find that the bottle is still full.”*

Some of the effects of maternal anxiety on women were reflected by the following participants’ words:

*“There is nothing as painful as being told that your child is ill back where you come from and not being able to do anything about it...if it is a Monday or a Tuesday when I get this news, I will not sleep for the entire week (until I can finally be with my child).”*

*“My children are in good hands with my sister in law...but...I worry about them [my children] day and night.”*

*“In the mornings when I walk on the morning dew to go to work, I wonder where my child is and what he is wearing.”*

In addition women said that they miss their children and they worry about their children’s welfare. Some even said that their sleep is sometimes disturbed by thoughts of the safety and protection of children in their (women’s) absence.

A notion that comes out clearly in the responses of migrant women is the circular effect of labour migration on themselves and their children. Mothers see children as being affected negatively and at the same time mothers themselves are negatively affected. However, bearing the concept of maternal anxiety in mind, it is not clear whether perceived changes in children do in fact prevail or whether mothers merely **think** that changes prevail. These systemic relational effects

frame the research findings that clearly demonstrate reciprocity and feedback within an underpinning of attachment theory and systems theory.

#### 4.2.4(a) Effects on Extended Family Members

Mturi and Nzimande (2006) mention that children are left with grandparents when parents go to look for work. According to them, grandparents do not 'retire'. At a time when they are frail and need to be cared for, grandparents are tasked with the physically challenging task of taking care of children. In this study, 14 out of 30 women left children with grandparents (either maternal or paternal), 12 left theirs with aunts and uncles (maternal or paternal) and 3 were accompanied by their children to Maseru. Only 1 out of 30 women did not have children at all.

The effect that was mentioned by many of the women participants is the financial benefit that extended family members derive when women work. Women said that they (together with their husbands) assist their families financially and this eases the burden of living expenses for families. However, there seemed to be a lack of sensitivity if not complete insolence in the responses of some women, who pointed out that, family members cannot complain because they depend on labour migrants for financial assistance. In addition respondents said they sometimes provide money to purchase agricultural inputs for produce that will benefit the whole family. In their words they said:

*"[My family cannot complain because] I give them money, and help them in a lot of different ways."*

*"[Even if I have inconvenienced them by leaving my children behind] it is for the benefit of all of us."*

Some did mention though, that their families have been inconvenienced by taking care of migrant's children.

*“My mother is unable to perform other duties like agricultural work [because wherever she goes, she has to take my children with her].”*

*“My sister is very young and she might want to go on dates with her boyfriends but she cannot because no one will look after my children in her absence.”*

In the same way as labour migration of women seem to have affected children and their mothers, extended family members in whose care children are left, seem to be just as affected, revealing a systemic picture of the effects of labour migration on families.

#### 4.2.4 (b) How Women Labour Migrants maintain their Relationship with extended family Members

However, women said that the way that they maintain their relationship with extended family members is by providing for them financially, and spending time at home during holidays. They said that, when they are home, they relieve extended family members from responsibilities of child care by doing things like laundry for children and bathing younger children.

#### 4.3.0 Supports and Obstacles to Women’s Migration

Some of the supports and obstacles to migration have already been alluded to in previous sections. For instance, women said that they get support from their husbands, both as protection from extended family invasion and as sympathetic listeners to problems that women face at work. Importantly also, women said they derive support from their mothers and mothers-in-law who take care of children, without complaining and who give children of migrant labour mothers love and guidance. Grandparents love and care for children was evidenced in the way that children relate to grandparents.

In relation to obstacles, women mentioned separation from their children as the most significant obstacle to working away from home. Separation from children

was followed in significance by separation from parents and parents-in-law. Some respondents said that, their parents and parents in-law are sickly and being away from them results in anxiety on the part of migrant women about issues related to health of parents. Elderly parents and parents-in-law sometimes get ill and respondents are not in a position to intervene because they are away.

Women also lamented the fact that they have been removed from familiar people and environment and that, they were living in an alien place. An important aspect about being removed from a familiar place was the removal of social support structures that could keep husbands' (and women's) irresponsible behaviour in check for instance. Since women had migrated to town with their spouses some said that their property was left unattended or that people who were left in its care were showing negligence in caring for it. Other women said that they could not play an active role in agricultural matters in places of origin and sometimes people whom they entrusted with the responsibility of ploughing, planting and hoeing did not do it diligently in the absence of supervision from migrant labour women. Lastly, women could not participate in politics and funerals in their host communities.

Thus, while women can rely on the support of their parents and husbands, being away from home in itself is an obstacle that causes women anxiety which had repercussions on their performance at work.

# V

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.0.0. Introduction to the Chapter**

This research has, with the use of relevant literature and actual words of a sample target group sought to demonstrate the systemic nature of the effects of labour migration on the families of migrant labour women of Ha Thetsane Lesotho. This chapter highlights important points that emerged from this study by way of conclusions and makes suggestions for further course of action by promulgating recommendations. Both conclusions and recommendations will be linked to systems theory and attachment theory, which are two theories underpinning this study.

This research employed qualitative research methods as explained by Fouche and Delport (in de Vos *et al*, 2005), Babbie and Mouton (2001), Holliday (2007), and Sarantakos (2005).

The motivation for selecting labour migration of women as the researcher's study focus were many and varied, but can be summarised as thus:

- desire to fill (if only in part) the information gap that exists in studies that pertain to employment of women outside the home (Smith *et al* 2004; Posel, 2002);
- working women being a relatively new phenomena among semi-literate women in Lesotho, according to Kimane and Ntimo-Makara, (1997) and Dyer, (2001);
- interest and curiosity to discover and share discoveries on when the nodal point of the family- woman, mother and wife- is away from home for a long time.

In that pursuit, the researcher firstly piloted the research tool – interview schedule - to enhance its reliability. This strategy enabled the researcher to refine and strengthen her research tool and research approach in an effort to maximise the study's outcome.

In line with qualitative research approaches, snowballing was applied as a sampling procedure as described by Babbie and Mouton (2001) to locate a sample of 30 migrant labour women. The sample consisted of married migrant labour women between the ages of 22 and 40. Out of the 30, only 1 was never married and 1 was deserted. Of the remaining 28, all were living with their husbands in Maseru except for 5, whose husbands were labour migrants in the Republic of South Africa. All women had children except for one and their education ranged from below primary leaving certificate to Cambridge Overseas School Certificate. Children of 3 women were residing with their mothers in Maseru while the rest remained in women's places of origin in the care of extended family members.

The interview schedule was designed in a manner to elicit qualitative descriptive data from participants, through the use of prompts. Data collection took place over weekends because target participants of the study were otherwise at work. Each interview was carried out over a minimum period of an hour to a maximum period of an hour and a half and data collection took twelve days in June and July 2008. Though some inconveniences that required immediate contingency arrangements (illustrated in chapter one) were encountered in the data collection of the study, there were no major problems in the implementation of this study.

Finally, analysis of data derived in this study was presented in as much as possible exactly as it was presented by participants, in a phenomenological approach [a concept described by Sarantakos, (2005)], and discourse analysis as described by Babbie and Mouton (2001) was employed as the main method of data analysis. The following objectives which represent a systemic picture of the family and the study have been used as headings under which findings are discussed:

- Effects of labour migration on: women labour migrants, their children, their partners, and significant others
- How women maintain their relationships with their children, and spouses in spite of working and staying away from home

- Supports and obstacles to woman's migration

### **5.1.0 Findings**

#### **5.1.1(a) Effects on the Spousal Relationship of the Migrant Labour Woman and Her Spouse**

This study revealed that, labour migration enhanced the marital relationship of migrant labour women because women were residing in the same place with their husbands. From a systems perspective, the spousal boundary and consequently subsystem were strengthened, enabling both partners to plan and resist permeation of intruders as a unit. However, even this positive note was found not to be adequate to protect women from social isolation in town where they declared that social networks are closed and recreation activities are different from those to which they are familiar therefore they are unable to take part in recreational activities in Maseru. This finding is similar to that of United Nations (2005). A result of this social isolation compounded with the removal of social control structures of rural areas, led women to indulge in extramarital affairs whereby they practiced unsafe sex. Thus a drastic effect of labour migration that emerged in this study is the increase in the risk of HIV infection, a finding that has far reaching consequences for future planning by service providers and policy makers.

#### **5.1.1(b) How Women Labour Migrants maintain their Relationship with their Spouses**

As it has been mentioned, marital discord manifested in the form of jealousy was evident both in the instance where women stayed and worked in the same place with their spouses and where husbands were migrants in South Africa. Women employed the following strategies to maintain harmony in their relationships with their spouses:

- Respect their husbands and obey their wishes
- Maintain frequent contact with their labour migrant spouses

#### **5.1.2(a) Effects on Children**

Effects of women's labour migration that emerged from this study were different for children who were accompanying their parents to Maseru and those who remained in women's places of origin and seemed to be both general and age specific.

#### Children Accompanying their Parents

Migrating to Maseru with their parents was said to place children at an advantage of accessing better resourced pre- schools and primary schools, enabling children to learn English faster than those who remain in rural areas. In addition mothers said children in this category learn and adopt "civilised" ways of life rather than those who remain behind who "only learn to take care of animals".

#### Children Remaining in Women's Places of Origin

This research revealed the incidence of 'culture gap' between parents and children in this category. Mothers said children who remain in rural areas are disadvantaged because they lead an "uncivilised" life. For instance a mother of a five year old said that her child had started swearing because he is exposed to herd boys, which she could prevent if she were the one taking care of her child. Some said children are not exposed to the 'comforts' of town like easily accessible transport and 'modern' food.

#### Children aged 0-4 years

The most prominent effect of labour migration that came out in this study is the *protest, despair, and denial or detachment* response of children in this age group, which seemed to result from labour migration of mothers as stated by Bretherton (1995) in relation to rupture in attachment bonds of children and their mothers (primary attachment figures). Many children in this age group seemed to have completely *detached* from their migrant labour mothers, a situation that caused despair and hopelessness in mothers of children in this age group.

Prior to complete detachment, children were reported to cry uncontrollably (a symptom of *protest*), then withdraw from others by not reacting to external stimuli (a symptom of

despair) and ultimately fail to acknowledge the presence of their mothers (a symptom of *detachment*).

#### Children 5 – 14 years

In the same way, children in this age group reacted negatively to their mothers' absence. Many women said that their children had become 'sickly', rude, weepy and sullen. All of which are symptoms of attention seeking behaviour, which could be used by children to indicate that they are unhappy about their mothers' prolonged absence. Furthermore, this study revealed a complete communication breakdown between children and migrant labour mothers. One child even went to the extent of leaving the room when his mother entered.

These results are analogical to the findings of Smith *et al* (2004) and Glasgow and Gouse-Sheed, (1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002) which was carried out among Caribbean and other immigrants in the United States, who found that children may be hostile towards their migrant labour parents leading to rejection and counter-rejection between parents and children. Children of migrant labour parents who are left behind are also at high risk of depression, anxiety and other clinical conditions according to Glasgow and Gouse-Sheed, (1995 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002). It is possible that some of the children in this age group, especially those that either refuse to or are unable to communicate with their mothers are depressed or the brief association with their parents causes them anxiety, which leads children to choose not to interact with their mothers.

Forman (1993 in Suarez-Orozco *et al*, 2002) and Smith *et al* (2004) also promulgated that parent child communication breakdown can ensue from prolonged absence of either parent resulting from labour migration as evidenced in the findings of this research. It is important to note also that, since this study was done among women labour migrants alone, some of the views that are expressed about children's behaviour could be a manifestation of maternal anxiety.

### 5.1.2(b) How Women Labour Migrants maintain their Relationships with their Children

All women interviewed in the study said that they do not have enough time to spend with their children which could be the major reason for the apparent estrangement between mothers and children. They however mentioned that they visit their children as often as they can, they buy nice clothes and treats for their children to take home when they go and some of the children are able to visit their parents in Maseru during school holidays.

### 5.1.3 Effects on the Labour Migrant

The most important effect that seemed to have resulted for labour migration of women is that their relationships with their husbands improved. This can be said to demonstrate a systemic influence of the importance of being a couple being together geographically. However, women complained of social isolation for which fulfilling marital relationships could not compensate. The reader should note that, a common characteristic of couple life in Lesotho is that women and men do not spend a lot of time together possibly due to exclusive socialisation that still takes place in Lesotho. This could be said to be the reason why women feel somewhat lonely even when their husbands are close by. As a norm, women are found in the companionship of other women while men will be found in the companion of other men. Therefore, a situation whereby a woman does not have friends close by can render her lonely.

As an adjunct of loneliness and social isolation in Maseru, women indicated that they are unable to participate in any form of recreation, in church or even political activities. More importantly, women voiced dissatisfaction with health services in town, and in particular the attitude of health professionals. They said that what they see as 'impersonal' health services force them to go to health centres in their places of origin when they are there. This finding causes concern to the researcher because migrant labourers in Maseru originate from places as far as Thaba Tseka<sup>6</sup>. A situation whereby

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<sup>6</sup> Thaba Tseka is a district in the mountain areas of Lesotho, as far as 600 km from Maseru, with areas as remote as 800 km away from Maseru.

a woman has to travel to a remote area of Thaba Tseka to receive medical attention is indeed a cause for concern and in fact it defeats the purpose why health facilities have been established in migrant host areas.

In addition, a major finding of this research is that women suffer maternal anxiety because of being separated from their children. As has been alluded, maternal anxiety manifests in the belief that no other person can take care of a child in the way that its mother can. Women in this study articulated this form of insecurity by postulating for instance that their children had lost weight since mothers left for work. According to women, their children's age appropriate development like starting to talk was compromised and children had become sickly since their mothers started working. Another appendage of maternal anxiety that came up in this study is that women voiced that those left in the care of their children neglected to provide their children with adequate care. This anxiety leads to constant negative thoughts and worry for women. Actually, to the researcher, women seemed to suffer from panic attacks and illusions pertaining to their children's care and welfare. Panic attacks and illusions are a sign of disturbed mental health, another cause of great concern.

On a positive note, almost all women talked of the financial freedom which results from employment. They said that being employed has enabled them to procure clothing, food and furniture of their choice with the money they earn. They have adopted improved methods of living like using gas instead of firewood to prepare food and they have learned new skills like sewing. They said also that they have been introduced to groups of people and to lifestyles different from the ones that they used to lead and as a result they have become more "modern" than women of their age in rural areas. Another important point that was raised by women is that they are better groomed since they moved to town.

Lastly, women said that being exposed to improved lifestyle have made them more ambitious to achieve better things in life for themselves and their families.

One can argue that, women's self esteem has improved as a result of being employed in town, and their outlook to life has changed for the better.

#### 5.1.3(a) Effects on Extended Family Members

There are two major aspects which were identified by women as ways in which extended family members have been affected by labour migration of women. Firstly, extended family members derive material benefit from working women and their partners. Extended family members however, were said to be inconvenienced by taking care of migrant women's children. An example is a young woman who was taking care of a migrant woman's children and was said to be unable to go on dates with friends because of the responsibility of taking care of children.

#### 5.1.3(b) How Women maintain their Relationship with Extended family members

Women said that they provide for extended family members financially and relieve extended family members of child care responsibilities during holidays.

#### 5.1.4 Supports and obstacles to Women's Migration

The main support system for women labour migrants was identified as spouses of migrants, while the main obstacle was said to be inability to participate in family activities in places of origin as well as the high cost of travel incurred to travel home and participate in family activities.

## **5.2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.2.1 Pertaining to the Spousal Relationship**

- In line with a systems theory notions of feedback loops and homeostatic balance, effort should be made to help keep the marital system intact in order not to introduce a negative feedback loop into the family that may put the marital unit at risk. This can be done through encouraging both men and women to work close by to enable sharing of a home and living expenses. While the study revealed that this does not necessarily stop women from indulging in extra marital affairs [and does not stop the spread of HIV as suggested by Cornor and Walque (2007)], it was found to be valuable in strengthening the spousal relationship of migrant labour women. However, an important point which was revealed by this study is that marital discord still prevails in the families of migrant labour women as a result of the apparent emancipation of women that derives from labour migration and lack of trust between spouses. Even more importantly though, was the revelation that, marital discord between migrant partners is unchecked because of the absence of social control structures like extended family elders in host areas.
- Second, it is important for manufacturing industries in Lesotho to employ social workers to be able to mediate in instances of marital discord and to provide education on habits of healthy families to both male and female workers. This suggestion is made in view of exclusive socialisation that still takes place between men and women and can perhaps act as a barrier of communication and consequently healthy family life for married couples in Lesotho.

Males too need to take responsibility for a healthy marital and family life. From a systems perspective, conjoint teaming in home making would enhance the chances of improved family life, rather than when only one person is taking this responsibility. They should be socialized to

communicate openly both in respect to their own feelings and those of their family members. Their masculinity should not be threatened when they are seen to be attending to their women or their children. This change in socialization should commence at school level and infiltrate all aspects of living and work, being supported and sanctioned institutions such as schools, the church and the media. The South African initiative of “bring a girl child to work” could well set the example for similar initiatives in Lesotho.

### 5.2.2 Pertaining to Children of Migrant Labour Women

- Firstly, serious damage seems to have taken place regarding children of migrant labourers who remain at home. This scenario has far reaching implications with regards to children’s mental health. It can impact negatively on the self esteem of children as well as their academic performance and behaviour in general. On that note, there is need for social workers, preferably those who are trained in family therapy and play therapy to be employed with the view to providing therapy to both mothers and children whose mental health and maternal relationships are affected by labour migration. A possible way to approach this matter would be for social workers to establish an NGO whose mandate is to counter the psychosocial effects of mother child separation which results from labour migration. Further, group work may be provided for these children to enable them to come to terms with being separated from their mothers, creatively problem solve how best to manage the situation to ensure their optimal health and well being.
- For those children who are not yet affected, there is need to put in place measures that can counter negative results of labour migration on children before they emerge. Firstly, there is need for day care centres in host areas of migrant labour women. This may be accomplished through lobbying by women and their families with help from social workers who

could mobilize for this development. In view of the statistics provided by Gibbon (2003), which suggest that around 36, 000 women work in the manufacturing industries of Lesotho, many below the age of 35 (Textiles Africa, 2007), it is a reality that these women are forced to choose between employment and raising their children. Therefore these centres, when in operation, need to design structured activities to constructively engage children while preventing the development of anti-social and delinquent behaviour.

Secondly, there is need for creative strategies that can assist migrant mothers and children to make the best of the short time that they spend together, in the absence of day care centres and in cases where children cannot move to Maseru to be with their migrant mothers. For instance, migrant mothers can be trained in filial therapy or encouraged to play games with their children when mothers visit home. This too may be an empowerment programme offered by social work agencies.

### 5.2.3 Pertaining to Women

- Firstly, physical planners, NGOs or employers should ensure that there are appropriate recreational facilities in host areas of migrant labour women. Secondly, NGOs should mobilize women to partake in sports and recreation of their choice. An example of a feasible recreational activity that was cited by many women in this study is traditional dances. Lesotho traditional dance entails vigorous body movement and is hence effective exercise. During dance, women sing, and singing is an effective stress relief strategy. According to Roberg (no year) the benefits of exercise on both the body and the mind are numerous and include stress reduction and improved personal health. It improves emotional and psychological wellbeing. Most importantly, "it provides opportunities for people to interact socially, fulfilling the human need to feel connected... and provides ...the opportunity to develop relationships and find meaningful connections

outside of the workplace...which is...vital to life satisfaction” (Roberg, no year: 1). Lastly, according to Roberg, recreation has the effect of preventing isolation and loneliness. In addition, recreation enhances self esteem and meaningfully occupies and stimulates the mind outside of work.

The value of Roberg’s findings to this report is that this research established that loneliness and isolation are the major problems of migrant labour women and has far reaching implications like women choosing to engage in extra marital affairs and putting them and their spouses at risk of HIV. Low self esteem also seemed to lead women to extramarital affairs.

Moreover, women in this study postulated that they often have negative thoughts about the health and wellbeing of their children. The researcher contends therefore that, appropriate recreational facilities would be of use to women to impede negative thoughts that may compromise productivity at work. To this end, ALAFA- an NGO that provides HIV/AIDS education in the manufacturing industries of Lesotho could consider including the provision of recreational facilities and mobilizing both women and men to participate in traditional songs and dance.

In as far as maternal anxiety is concerned, which can also impact negatively on the mental and physical health of women, affordable accommodation facilities and infrastructural support for migrant labour women are necessary to ensure that children and parents live together. To this end, government department of physical planning has to focus on the construction of low cost housing in the vicinity of manufacturing industries, and perhaps even provide migrant women with the option of renting-to-buy.

- Furthermore, a serious allegation was raised in respect of health services provided in host areas of migrant labour women, with regards to attitude of health care staff. It is recommended that this allegation be investigated by the Ministry of Health, Lesotho and structures set up to address the problem.

### HIV/AIDS

- Two important findings concerning HIV/AIDS that came up in this study are that women engage in unsafe sex even though they are aware of the risk of HIV involved, and that they do not engage in sex to gain favours from men. They however seemed to abandon condom use due to men's insistence, suggesting the need for assertiveness for women. Thus it is recommended that one of the programmes that ALAFA should consider in its HIV prevention strategies is assertiveness training and negotiation skills training for workers of manufacturing industries in Lesotho.
- In as far as men are concerned there is a need for intensification of social marketing of condom use which dispels the notion that condoms should be used with 'loose' women only. Condom use can instead be associated with a wealthy healthy and happy future – the reason why men have migrated to Maseru in the first place. An example of such marketing strategy is the old marketing strategies that used to be used to market cigarette and alcohol. Hence condom use should be marketed as one of the strategies by which men can retain and display wealth (through avoidance of health service fees), as well as maintain health and happiness for themselves and their families by avoiding HIV.

#### 5.2.4 General Recommendations

- Education and training

Firstly, there is a need for training social scientists such as psychologists and social workers in family dynamics and therapy. They would also need

to examine culture specific strategies that work for the people themselves such as dance, music and art.

Secondly, parents themselves should be equipped with parenting skills. This can be done as part of pre-marriage counselling by pastoral counsellors, social workers or psychologists or as life skills training in higher education for both boys and girls.

Group encounters offer the opportunity to train together, learn from each other and to problem solve creatively in a group. Further it is economical from a human resource perspective. This format should not be overlooked.

- Future Research

With the increased changes to family life and make up, there is need for more research using a larger sample with quantitative methodologies to explore best parenting practices and methods. Comparative analyses across cultures and geographic locations would also prove valuable in determining best practices that promote the employment of women whilst also ensuring healthy living for their children.

This study focused on only women. Further research, using children, fathers/men and significant others would offer a comprehensive picture of the research study area.

Experiences of therapists and social workers in such families also need to be documented to provide a resource base of experiences that can be utilised to equip other professionals with practical knowledge.

### 5.3.0 Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, it is evident that the spousal relationship of the migrant labour woman is secured by working and staying in the same place at the same time with her husband. However, her psychological wellbeing of her as a mother and that of her child is compromised because of separation of the two, posing a catch 22 situation for the woman as to whether to be a carer or a provider for her children. This is not an easy question to answer, and it calls for policy makers, employers and social workers to be creative in finding a balance between sustaining the family and sustaining the economy of the country.

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**ANNEXURE I**  
**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE IN SESOTHO**

Liphetoho Tse Bakoang Ke Ho Sebetisa Hole Le Hae  
Interview Schedule ea Basali ba Sebetasang Hole le Hae

1. BOITHLALOSO

Lebitso la motho ea arabang: ----- Nomoro ea Mohala-----

---

Haeno -----Lilemo----- Thuto-----

Palo ea bana ba hao-----

Lilemo tsa bana ba hao

0 – 4	
5- 10	
10 –	
14	

O na le molekane? ----- Molekane oa hao o hokae? -----

O na le motsoalle e motona moo Maseru? -----

-----

Motho<sup>1</sup> ea setseng le bana hae -----

O qalile neng ho sebeta hole le hae? -----

O etela hae haka ka selemo? -----

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LIPHETOHO

1. Bophelo ba hao bo fetohile joang kamora hore o sebetse hole le hae?-----  
 -----  
 -----

Politically	Bophelo ba hao ka ntle ho lelapa? Mohlala kereke	
Economically	Chelete	
Socially/Lifestyle	Boithabiso le metsoalle (mekete, lipapali le menate e meng)	
Psychologically	Na o jeoa ke bolutu, o hlorela molekane le bana ba hao le bophelo ba hae ka kakaretso? Oa hlobaela bosiu o ntse o touta ka molekane kapa bana ba hao? O 'ne o nahane ke hore na ke mang ea ntseng a thiba	

	'ngoana oa hao ho bapalla liloming/ hore a seke a bapala ka liaparo tsa hae tsa sekolo le lintho tsohle tse amang ngoana ea holing?	
HIV	O iphumana o hloka motho ea o tlosang bolutu ea o theolang maikutlo joalo ka motsoalle e motona?	

2. Bophelo ba batho baa ba latelang bona bo fetohile joang kamora hore o sebetse hole le hae?

Batho		Likarabo
Bana ba hao	Socially	O utloa hose hona le litlitlebo ka tse ngata ka boits'oaro ngoana/bana ba hao, mohlala ho utsoa, ho topola, ho hana ho hoja?  Ngoana oa hao o se a kula hangata haesale o qala ho sebetse hole le hae?  Ngoana oa hao o se a ee a bonahale a tsoafa ho

		ea sekolong kamora hore o qale ho sebetsa hole le hae?	
	Economically		
	Psychologica lly	Ba shebahala ba hlirile, ba tefa-tefa (ho tlibiila), kapa bas a batle ho tloha pela hao ha o le teng?	
Molekane oa hao kapa motsoalle oa hao e motona ea setseng hae	Socially	Karohano ea hao le molekane kapa motsoalle oa hao e motona , e thefutse leratano la lona joang?	
	Economically		
	Psychologica lly/Self esteem	Boemo ba hore ke oena ea sebeletsang lelapa ho na le hore ebe ke monna ea sebetsang, (joalo ka tloaelo) bo thefutse sebete kapa bonna ba molekane kapa motsoalle oa hao joang?	
Batho bao o siileng	Socially	Na ho sala le bana ba hao ha oena o le	

bana bona	le	<p>mosebetsing moo ha ho sitise batho baa ho phetha mabaka a bona ka mokhoa ofe kapa ofe? Mohlala ho tsamaea bosiu?</p> <p>Ho sala le ngoana ke boikarabello bo amang bo bona hore ngoana o jele, o apere ha a kule, na boikarabello boo ha boa imetsa batho ba setseng la bana ba hao ka tsela e feng kapa efe?</p> <p>Ba santse bana le matla a ho hlokomela bana?</p> <p>Bona ha bana bana ba bona?</p>	
	Economically		
	Psychologically	Ho touta ka bophelo ba bana ba hao	

3. Likamano tsa hao le batho baa ba latelang li fetohile joang kamora hore qale ho sebetsa hole le hae?

Batho ba amehileng	Tsela eo e kabang ba amehile ka eona	Likarabo
1. Oena le bana ba hao	Ho qoqa	<p>Bana ba hao ba ntse ba phuthulohile ho qoqa ke moo ba ratang le oena?</p> <p>Le Qoqa ka lietsahala le mathata eo ba kopanang le ona sekolong?</p> <p>Le qoqa ka mathata eo ba kopanang le ona likamanong tsa bona le bahlankana kapa baroetsana ba bang?</p>
	Boithabiso/Ho phutholoha	<p>Ke nako e kae ea boithabiso (kapa ea ho phuthuloha) eo o e qetang le bana ba hao?</p>
	Khalemo	<p>Na o ntse o khona ho khalema bana ba hao 'me ba o mamele joalo ka 'maa bona?</p>



batho ba setseng le bana ba hao		saletseng le bana ha o le moo mosebetsing?	
---------------------------------	--	--	--

4. Ke lintho life tseo o li etsang ho **boloka likamano** tsa hao le batho baa ba latelang li le monate?

Motho ea amehang	Likarabo
Bana ba hao	
Molekane oa hao	
Batho ba setseng le bana ba hao	

MATHATA A BAKOANG KE HO SEBETSA HOLE LE HAE

5. Ke lintho life tsa bohlokoa tseo o sitoang ho bapala karolo ho tsona joalo ka motsoali/setho sa lelapa bophelong ba letsatsi le letsatsi ka lebaka la hoba hole le hae? Mohlala ho oka bana kapa le batsoali le ho phetha lintho tsa meetlo? -----  
 -----  
 -----

MELEMO EA HO SEBETSA HOLE LE HAE

6. Ke efe melemo ea ho sebetsa hole le hae?

Economically		
Socially	O ithutile eng ka hoba hole le hae? (E.G. Ho phela le mehlobo e meng? Le batho ba tsoang libakeng tse ling?)	

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TSEHETSO

7. Ke mang, ke eng kapa ke sefe se o fang ts'ehetso mathateng ao o kopanang le ona mabapi le ho sebetso hole le hae?-----  
-----  
-----

MAIKUTLO

9. Ka chebo ea hao ke eng se ka etsoang ho bebofatsa mathata ao o kopanang le ona mosebetsing oa hao le bophelong ba hao ka kakaretso mabapi le ho sebetso hole lehae?-----  
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<sup>11</sup> Mona ho bojeleoa batho bohle ba setseng le bana hae

**ANNEXURE II**  
**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE IN ENGLISH**

**Effects of migrant labor on the family:**  
**Interview Schedule For Migrant Laborer Women**

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

Name of Respondent: ----- Contact: -----  
Place of Origin: ----- Age: ----- Education level: -----

No. of children: -----

Ages of children:

0 – 4	
5- 10	
10 – 14	
15- 18	

Marital Status: ----- Do you live with or apart from your spouse: -----

Who takes care of the children<sup>1</sup> while you are here working? -----

How long have you worked away from home? -----

On average how often do you visit home? -----

---

IMPACT

1. How has your life changed since you started working in the factories of Maseru? (**Prompt with examples from social, political and**

**psychological aspects of life e.g. church activities & entertainment patterns)**-----

-----

-----

-----

2. In your view how has your working away from home affected the following people?

**1. Your child**

Sulking	
Refusing to eat	
Refusing to go to school	
Weepy behavior	
Unusual behavior when you are around. Explain	
Change in sleeping pattern	
Decline in performance in school	
Getting ill often	
Stealing	
Changing friends	
Suspected to be using drugs	
<b>2. Your spouse</b>	
Sulking	
Complaining	

Shouting at you or at the kids	
Using drugs	
Change in self care patterns	
Refusing to participate in family or household related matters	
Change in usual company and/or usual activities	
<b>Your significant others<sup>2</sup></b>	
They are no longer able to pursue other things because of the responsibility of the care of your children	
Other	

3. How has your working away from home **affected the relationship** between the following pairs of people **AND** in the following respects?

Pair of People	Description of how they have been affected	Insert all relevant responses in this column
1. Yourself and your Children	Communication Do you enjoy an open communication relationship with your	

		child?	
		Do you discuss school work/problems?	
		Do you discuss relationships/problems?	
		How much leisure time do you spend with your children?	
	Leisure time	Do you feel that you are still able to correct/reprimand your child & get positive feedback?	
	Discipline measures	Please mention any other way in which you feel your relationship with your child has been affected since you started working away from home.	
	Other respects		

4. What measures do you take to **maintain your relationship** with the following people despite the distance that results from your working away from home?

Person	<b>Insert all relevant responses in this column</b>
Children	
Spouse	
Significant other	

PROBLEMS OF WORKING AWAY FROM HOME

5. What are the important things that you are unable to take part in as a member of your family or a parent as a result of your being away from home (e.g. cultural rituals, take part in your children's upbringing)?-----

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BENEFITS OF WORKING AWAY FROM HOME

6. What do you see as the **benefits** of working away from home?-----

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SUPPORT SYSTEM

7. **WHAT AND WHO** supports your working away from home?-----  
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9. In conclusion please mention what you view as the measures that would make your working away from a pleasant experience (can be taken by government, your spouse, significant others or anyone else).-----  
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<sup>1</sup> In all cases consider, the word child to mean children where there is more than one child

<sup>2</sup> In the entire questionnaire, significant other refers to those people with whom children of the migrant woman are left