

**FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE AMONG
MALE EMPLOYEES AT ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY**

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**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Commerce (Industrial Relations)**

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Year: 2012

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God for the wisdom, strength and guidance He offered me throughout my studies. I also would like to acknowledge the help of everybody who contributed to this work. I owe a debt of gratitude to many people, including my colleagues. I extend special thanks to my supervisor Ashika Maharaj, who went beyond her supervision task and coached me on how to contextualise the various components of the dissertation. My sincere thanks to my partner for her tremendous support that contributed to the completion of this study.

I am also indebted to Deanne Collins, who found time in her busy schedule to edit the study and provide extensive comments.

Most importantly, this study is dedicated to my family, who are always grateful to witness my success.

Abstract

Family responsibility arrangements are an important driver of retention strategies at a global level. Both the data and anecdotal evidence confirm that hours of work are increasing. Globally, 57 percent of people work more than 40 hours a week. This is making it more difficult for working mothers and fathers to maintain a work-life balance. Furthermore, female labour force participation in South Africa rose from 38 percent in 1995 to 51.2 percent in 2008 (Stats SA, 2008). At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of people in need of care, especially young children needing early childhood care. A poor work-life balance, reflected in poor or inadequate family responsibility arrangements, not only results in higher medical claims but also an increase in employee turnover and absenteeism. In contrast, companies that help employees achieve a work-life balance by putting worker-friendly family arrangements in place often witness a significant decline in these 'markers', especially absenteeism and employee turnover.

eThekweni Municipality is not immune to these challenges. Like any other workplace; the Municipality needs to promote family-friendly working arrangements. These would include human resource policies which encourage male employees to utilise the family responsibility leave provided by the Municipality. This study analyses the take up of family responsibility leave and paternity leave among male employees at eThekweni Municipality.

The paucity of literature in this area of study motivated the current study, which measures how family responsibility leave is promoted and used in eThekweni Municipality and how it contributes to a family-friendly working environment, which will, in turn, be a strategic tool in 'talent management'.

This study revealed that eThekweni Municipality offers family responsibility leave over and above the provisions of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. However, most male employees do not make use of family responsibility leave even though they believe it is important to do so. It is also evident from this study that getting the work-family or family-work balance right is not only vital to improve the welfare of female employees; but that it also has a positive impact on gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women by

reducing the disturbance of careers that are often lost to women due to their caring responsibilities.

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List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BCA	Bargaining Council Agreement
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
DCEP	Department of Consumer and Employment Protection
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
EEA	Employment Equity Act
EU	European Union
FFWE	Family-Friendly Working Environment
FIW	Family Interference with Work
FR	Family Responsibility
FRL	Family Responsibility Leave
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ILO	International Labour Organisation
SA	South Africa
Stats-SA	Statistics South Africa
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WIF	Work Interference with Family

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study analyses the provisions governing employees' rights to family responsibility leave and paternity leave at the eThekweni Municipality and explores the extent to which a selected sample of male employees from the Municipality's Electricity Unit make use of this leave.

The background, motivation, problem statement and purpose of the study as addressed herein are outlined in this chapter. It also sets out the research questions that the study is seeking to address and the hypotheses tested. Finally, the methodological approaches used in the collection and analyses of the data are discussed.

1.2 Background of the Study

There is a traditional misconception that care giving is a female rather than a male responsibility. This has resulted in many studies on the role of females in care giving; studies of provisions for family responsibilities at the workplace have also focused on females. It is argued here that, this is the result of the influx of female employees in the labour market; female labour force participation in South Africa has risen "from 38 percent in 1995 to 51.2 percent in 2008" (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009: 221).

Many studies have therefore focused on the care giving problems that may arise as more women entered the labour market. The role that males play in care giving, how they are affected by their working arrangements, and hence the understanding of the correlation between work and family development and work-family conflict focused on male employees has been neglected.

A study conducted by the HSC Foundation (2008) reveals that care giving is still regarded as a female domain. It is further noted by the HSC Foundation (2008) that most existing research focuses on mothers, with fathers viewed as distant figures in

care giving. Little is known about fathers as caregivers, especially employed men. The research conducted by the HSC Foundation (2008: 3) reveals that, the term ‘care giving’ is a “label imposed from the outside; most fathers who care for special needs children do not refer to themselves as ‘caregivers,’ they rather think of themselves simply as ‘father’ or ‘dad’, and view caring for their children as being a normal part of that role”.

It is emphasised that men provide just below 50 percent of the nations’ unpaid care work, and more than 55 percent of men are involved in long distance care giving (Thompson, 2007). “Like their female counterparts, most male caregivers experience some disruption in their lives, particularly in terms of ‘work’, social activities, and ‘financial well-being’” (Thompson, 2007: 58).

Recognising the need to support families, South Africa introduced family responsibility leave which is set out in section 27 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997 (BCEA). This can be viewed as a positive response on the part of the government to the large numbers of women entering the labour market, resulting in tremendous demographic changes. These changes had the potential to cause widespread work-family conflict among the working class; however the legislative provisions have perpetuated gender inequality (Mokomane, 2009). Family responsibilities and care giving should not be based on gender. As suggested by Razak, Ormar and Yunus (2010), men should also play their part in care-giving and family responsibilities.

While the BCEA provides for maternity leave for women, it says little or nothing about men who are willing to be part of care giving in the family. South African labour law does not contain specific provisions regarding paternity leave. The closest the legislation comes to paternity leave for fathers is the family responsibility leave provided for in section 27 of the BCEA. In terms of this section, if a biological or adoptive father chooses to take the three days paid family responsibility leave provided for in the Act at the time when his child is born, he would have used up all his family responsibility leave for the current cycle.

Furthermore, the BCEA attaches certain conditions to the granting of family responsibility leave. Employees (irrespective of gender) must have been employed by an employer for the period of longer than four months and work for such employer at least four days a week in order to claim paid family responsibility leave (Section 27 (1) [a] and [b] of the BCEA).

The research study is therefore motivated by the abovementioned factors pertaining to family responsibility and paternity. The fatherhood project undertaken by Alan Hosking (2006) of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) confirmed that the South African workplace is not caring or sympathetic to the responsibilities of working fathers. According to Hosking (2006), home-care and childcare have been construed mainly as female responsibilities and the concept of the father has been largely restricted to providing for the economic well being of the family. In most cases, working fathers have been expected to suppress their parental instincts.

1.3 Motivation for the Study

The study is motivated by the facts discussed in the background to the study and the fact that previous studies have revealed a lack of research regarding male uptake of family leave provisions in South Africa and internationally. While many studies have been undertaken on family-friendly working arrangements, men as care-givers have been tremendously neglected. According to Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, and Pruitt (2002) family care is regarded as a female domain, as the sphere of paid work is perceived as a man's domain. This has undermined the fact that care giving plays a key role in the whole spectrum of the normative framework.

Hosking (2006) argues further that working fathers have been disregarded for a long time, thus restricting their right to family care-giving and the raising and nurturing of their children. They have not been given an opportunity to build and sustain a happy family and take an equal part in raising their own children. The current workplace environment has made things even more difficult by not providing sufficient support for working fathers.

Furthermore, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had severe, adverse effects on the South African workplace. One of the strategies to address such adverse effects is family-friendly working arrangements. These could be achieved through initiatives that will assist families in the provision of care (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009).

However, while policies might be in place to promote family care giving; males are still reluctant to use their family responsibility leave to assist in care giving at home. This is perhaps due to traditions that view mothers as care givers, with fathers as distant figures. According to Thompson, (2007: 52), “male caregivers do not talk about their feelings as willingly as women; as a result, their burdens are not known to those who can offer help”. Most male caregivers are embarrassed about helping their partners with daily activities, including care giving.

A study conducted by Grzywacs and Marks (2000) revealed that younger male employees tended to have a more positive attitude towards male care giving compared to older male employees. In contrast, Madsen, John and Miller (2005) argue that age is not a strong predictor in matters relating to family responsibility. They further argue that the scourge of HIV and AIDS is not given sufficient consideration when dealing with policy relating to family responsibility leave (Madsen *et al*, 2005). This being the case, there is a need for multifaceted and broader analysis that acknowledges the involvement of fathers in parenting, especially in the context of the HIV and AIDS crisis.

This study is therefore motivated by the recognition of the above-mentioned factors. There is a lack of studies focusing on males’ ‘take-up’ of parental leave provisions; and there is an international agenda to get more fathers involved in parenting, especially in the era of HIV/AIDS. The purpose of this research study is to analyse the provisions governing employees’ rights to family responsibility leave and paternity leave at the eThekweni Municipality and the extent to which a selected sample of male employees from the eThekweni Municipality’s Electricity Unit makes use of this leave.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to understand how family responsibility leave and paternity leave is promoted at eThekweni Municipality and how it can contribute to a family-friendly working environment, which in turn can be a strategic tool for a ‘talent management’. The following sub-objectives were developed:

- 1.4.1 To assess the extent to which family responsibility and paternity leave offerings are accessed at eThekweni Municipality;
- 1.4.2 To analyse the extent to which male employees at the eThekweni Municipality make use of family responsibility leave and paternity leave, if offered;
- 1.4.3 To analyse the relationships between work-family facilitation (work-to-family and family-to-work) and individual health (mental, emotional and physical).

1.5 Research Questions

The main study question is whether male employees at eThekweni Municipality make use of family responsibility leave and paternity leave. This will be achieved by answering the following questions:

- 1.5.1 Does the municipality provide family responsibility leave and paternity leave beyond that prescribed in the BCEA?
- 1.5.2 Do male employees at eThekweni Municipality make use of family responsibility leave or paternity leave, if offered?
- 1.5.3 What are employees’ perceptions of family responsibility leave and paternity leave as a measure to assist with fatherhood?

1.5.4 What are the perceived relationships between work-family facilitation and individual health?

1.6 Problem Statement

The bulk of the research on care giving focuses on females, with males viewed as distant figures. As a result, little is known about fathers as caregivers, especially those that are economically active. The lack of research on males as caregivers undermines the fact that care giving plays a key role in the whole spectrum of the family framework; this obscures the aspects of an organisation's 'talent management' capabilities which can take the form of family-friendly work arrangements that support employees' mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

1.7 Hypotheses

H₁: eThekweni Municipality provides family responsibility leave and paternity leave beyond that prescribed in the BCEA.

H₂: Overall health, mental-emotional health, and physical health will be positively related to perceived (a) work-to-family development, (b) work-to-family efficiency, (c) family-to-work development, and (d) family-to-work efficiency.

H₃: The male employees at eThekweni Municipality will not make use of family responsibility leave or paternity leave even if it is offered.

H₄: There is a correlation between perceptions that male employees have about 'fatherhood' and the actual 'take-up' of family responsibility leave.

In addition to these proposed hypotheses, the study will also explore the various relationships in each of the study variables (family responsibility leave and male employees).

1.8 Significance of the Study

The literature has shown that working fathers have been disregarded in terms of supportive structures that are necessary to help them build and sustain happy and healthy families and to have equal responsibility in raising their children (Hosking, 2006). This leads to a lack of confidence and power amongst male employees in an organisation. According to Madondo (2008), lack of confidence in one's self leads to various kinds of behaviour. These include low worker morale, an increased absenteeism rate, high labour turn over and unpleasant workplace relationships. Having considered the behaviours that working fathers are likely to experience if their problems are not addressed timeously, the actions that are outlined below are envisaged to have certain benefits:

- ❖ As the critical aspect of this study, the human resource issues that need attention will be addressed in accordance with the findings of the study and recommendations made in this regard. Recommendations will be made as part of human resource development to encourage male employees to make use of family responsibility leave whenever applicable.
- ❖ It will also be recommended that the results of this research study are used as an indication of the confidence and fears that male employees may have regarding the use of family responsibility leave;
- ❖ The results of the study will allow for recommendations to be made on the guidelines that need to be followed by the municipality to encourage male employees to make use of family responsibility leave.
- ❖ Human resource training will also be recommended as it will help to enhance the understanding of the use of family responsibility leave for its specific purpose.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and theory on family responsibility leave and paternity leave in the South African workplace.

1.9 Theoretical Grounding and Conceptual Model

A study conducted in Nairobi, Kenya by Odingi, Ratemo and Kebaso (2008) revealed that the concept of fatherhood had not been successfully absorbed in the workplace because fathers are not necessarily perceived as playing a central role in parenting. Indeed, 77 percent of Odingi *et al*'s study respondents reported that their parents had taught them not to take up women's roles as this was against their moral principles.

O'Brien and Moss's (2008) study of family services in Britain reveals that "fathers are not generally perceived to be in the mainstream of parenting" (Odingi, *et al*, 2008:1). Lamb (1997) concurs with the above statement and adds that over the years, men have lacked good role models in terms of parental involvement.

The study by Odingi *et al*, (2008) cites the reasons why men would not take up their role as fathers as opposed to working hard to provide for their families. These reasons will therefore be compared with those that this study is seeking to establish. This will help to separate the reasons that are perceived to be intrinsic to the male population and those that are personalised or individualised.

The role of fathers has become more flexible in recent decades in that it has been anticipated that working fathers will broaden their fatherhood roles beyond the "old perceived conventional bread-winners' roles, whereby men are only perceived as a source of financial provision" (Smit, 2006: 21). Men should not only define their role in the family as being the main source of income, as has traditionally been believed; but move towards an egalitarian marital relationship by helping with household duties.

According to Smit (2006), developing a more democratic marital relationship involves more than equal power regarding household affairs. It also assumes a similar allocation of household responsibilities. Gerson (1993), Benokraitis (1996) and Wilkje, Feree and Ratcliff (1998) hold the view that, regardless of the fact that mothers still bear the bulk of the burden of household chores, including nurturing children, fathers have begun to acknowledge the importance of more egalitarian family relations. However, this raises the challenge of how working fathers will

juggle their family responsibilities and their traditional role of providing for the family.

The conception of fatherhood has undergone a tremendous change over the past years. “Fathers were perceived as financial providers, authority figures and protectors during the pre-colonial times and the hierarchical systems of that time put fathers at the top in the ranking order” (Smit, 2006: 24). Smit (2006) notes that, in this system’s power hierarchy, fathers were at the apex, followed by the eldest son and other male relatives; women and children came last and they had no influence in decision-making. Odingi *et al* (2008) further argue that fathers represent the symbol of ultimate authority and responsibility within society.

The idea of a father as having ultimate authority and responsibility was central to determining the role of men in the family and society; this resulted in patriarchy (Smit, 2006). While this seems like a structural arrangement, it is important to consider and encourage questions about its repercussions, including the emotional destruction it has caused and how women were silenced in the process (Lamb, 1997). This would reveal which customs are sustained and those that are undermined by the system. Women are predominantly responsible for household duties, with fathers’ roles are restricted to gaining employment to generate income for the family (Odingi *et al*, 2008).

The patriarchal system that became the norm in African cultures oppressed women and placed men at the peak of many things; hence the system is notorious for the way it discriminates against women (Masenya, 2004). However, fundamental changes have occurred and the meaning of fatherhood is being redefined. The “phenomena of women’s increased participation in the labour market and smaller families have been observed in many parts of the world” (Brown and Barker, 2004: 3).

Women’s participation in the labour market has created some changes in women’s responsibilities by dividing paid and domestic labour. However, women retain the burden of children’s care as many organisations around the world have not created a working environment that would allow men to take on household responsibilities. In many parts of the world, men continue to work inflexible and long hours (Lamb,

1997), with the result that women continue to carry the burden of child care and other household responsibilities.

Such responsibilities limit women's ability to participate in paid work. Having said that, there has been some recognition of the needs of women, especially those relating to child care; family responsibility and paternity leave have been developed as part of the policy to give leverage to fathers who are willing to embrace parenting as part of their livelihoods. The family responsibility leave provided for in South Africa's BCEA 75 of 1997 is an example.

Dancaster and Cohen (2009: 45) held the view that long entrenched "societal practices and cultural norms are responsible for reinforcing assumptions about the role of women as primary caregivers and the importance of family and good parenting". At the same time, society prioritises paid work over the unpaid work of carers and in doing so, prejudices employees that attempt to juggle these two social ideals. Williams and Segal (2003) view gender assumptions that pit employees with family responsibilities against the norm of the ideal worker as the mechanisms that influence gender-biased promotion, retention and appointment decisions. Organisations need to create a family-friendly environment by providing childcare facilities. Employees regard "family responsibility policies as organisational care and positively influence employees' psychological attachment to their organisations" (Van Dyk and Coetzee, 2012: 3).

It is further argued that "gender distribution in organisations also influences mobility; for example women who work in male-dominated occupations have more difficulty moving up the hierarchy, presumably because of gender bias" (Van Dyk and Coetzee, 2012: 3). They may have fewer prospects for career development and mentoring in male dominated organisations and this may reduce their commitment to such organisations.

Gender stereotyping can take three forms: prescriptive stereotyping where an "employer makes assumptions about how a woman employee should behave by insisting on her adherence to traditional gender roles; descriptive stereotyping or cognitive bias where an employer's perception is influenced by stereotypical

assumptions regarding a female employee's needs and wants; and competence assumptions in terms of which motherhood is regarded by an employer as rendering an employee less capable of performing effectively" (Williams and Segal, 2003: 4). The notion of the special accommodation of women in the workplace serves to reinforce the perception of the ideal worker as normative, as employees seeking flexibility are regarded as deviating from this ideal.

An employee's request for flexibility is hampered by many employers' assumption that flexible working arrangements are costly and unfeasible; an assumption that has been rejected as unfounded in light of the overwhelming benefits associated with a family-friendly workplace. Williams and Segal (2003) argue that the benefits associated with a happier workforce, such as reduced attrition and absenteeism, increased productivity and loyalty, outweigh the increased administration costs required to facilitate this flexibility.

According to Dancaster and Cohen (2010), the scourge of HIV/AIDS has had a significant impact on the need for care-giving; South Africa is at the epicentre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The country is home to 35 percent of all persons living with HIV and 32 percent of AIDS deaths on a global scale (UNAIDS, 2007).

The impact of HIV/AIDS has placed a tremendous care-giving burden on families. This burden is accompanied by an increase in female labour force participation which has risen from "38 percent in 1995 to 51 percent in 2008" (Stats SA, 2008). According to Smit (2006), the increased participation of women in the labour market is deemed to have been the major factor contributing to the changing role of the father; and this has led to an increased number of dual-earner families.

This has upset the balance on which traditional work-care regimes were premised. Traditionally, women were assigned to the unpaid labour of caring and domestic work; the ideal worker was assumed to be full time and male (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). The majority of employers appear to have been slow to respond to employee demands for workplace flexibility, with the result that mothers are often pushed out of the labour market, "either temporarily or altogether with adverse long term effects on

family income, retirement security and the utilisation of human resource capacity” (Smit, 2006: 22).

It is evident therefore that the current economic climate has shaped the way in which families are viewed today. Extensive studies on the family have considered new fatherhood as the central issue in the debate regarding father-involvement in child care. The concept of father “gives a meaning to a man who on the one hand acts very nurturing towards his children and who is on the other hand becoming involved in the daily child care responsibilities” (Lewis and O’Brien, 1987: 286). Ritner (1992) emphasises that this kind of fatherhood role can be referred to as active fatherhood, since the father’s roles reflect the needs of children in an age where the role of mothers is changing.

Globally, 57 percent of employees work more than 40 hours per week. Long working hours create a poor work-life balance (Van Dyk and Coetzee, 2012), evident not only in increased medical claims but also through increased turnover and absenteeism. Organisations that are succeeding in helping employees achieve a work-life balance have worker-friendly family arrangements in place, which often result in declining absenteeism rates and labour turnover.

EThekwini Municipality is not immune to absenteeism and high labour turnover and, like any other organisation it needs to have family-friendly working arrangements in place. To achieve this, the municipality’s human resource policy should, amongst other things, encourage male employees to take up their family responsibility leave when necessary.

1.10 Overview of eThekwini Municipality (Electricity Department)

EThekwini Electricity Unit is part of the eThekwini Municipality and is the licensed electricity distributor in the whole area of the Municipality and is located on the east coast of South Africa. It dispenses 30 percent of its total energy to residential sectors, and the remaining 70 percent is sold to industrial customers. The organisation operates under the Electricity Regulation Act of 2006 and its policies are determined by the Municipality and the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA).

The Unit is envisioned to be a leader in electricity distribution, providing energy for the future. It has a mission to provide electricity, public lighting and other energy services that satisfy its customers and the community whilst maintaining sound business principles (eThekweni Electricity, 2010/2011).

1.10.1 Policy Framework Regarding Family Responsibility Leave at eThekweni Municipality

Differing slightly from the provisions of the BCEA, eThekweni Municipality allows its employees four days family responsibility leave in each 12 month cycle. This provision applies to all employees who have been employed for longer than four months and who work for the Municipality at least four days a week. Family responsibility leave expires at the end of each annual cycle. This means that an employee cannot claim family responsibility leave that was not used during the previous cycle; this is not accumulative leave. In terms of eThekweni Municipality City Manager's Circular No 06/2004), family responsibility leave can be taken under the following four circumstances:

- ❖ When the employee's child is born
- ❖ When the employee's child is sick
- ❖ When the employee's spouse or life partner is sick
- ❖ In the event of death of the employee's spouse or life partner, the employee's parents, adoptive parents, grandparent, child, adopted child, grandchild or sibling.

There are seven (7) clusters in eThekweni Municipality. The human settlement and infrastructure cluster (HIS) has a total of nine units, one of which is the Electricity Unit. This unit has the largest workforce (just below 2 000) in the cluster and is male-dominated. Therefore, this was an appropriate unit for this study as it is envisaged to yield results that are representative of the whole municipality.

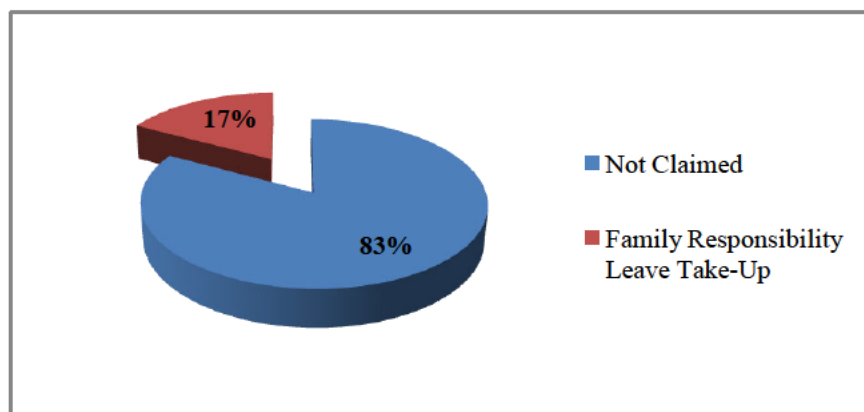
1.10.2 The Workforce of the eThekweni Municipality Electricity Unit

The eThekweni Municipality Electricity Unit has a total of 1 996 permanent employees; female employees makes up 19 percent of the total workforce and male employees represent 81 percent (eThekweni Electricity, 2010/2011).

1.10.3 The Current Status of the Take-up of the Family Responsibility Leave

According to the August 2010 leave statistics, a total of 334 male employees made use of their family responsibility leave from January to August 2010. This constitutes 17 percent of the total male workforce at eThekweni Electricity (HR Leave Stats, 2010).

Figure 1.1: Take up of FRL from January to August 2010 at eThekweni Electricity



eThekweni Electricity Human Resource Employee Database (2010)

1.11 Limitations of the Study

There are some foreseeable limitations that can emerge in a study of this nature. The study sample is drawn from one unit within eThekweni Municipality; therefore the results may not be considered representative of the municipality as a whole. Structured questionnaires are the sole method of data collection used in this study; therefore respondents only responded to the listed questions without expressing their views further.

1.12 Chapter outline

Chapter One

This chapter provides an introduction to the study, the motivation for the study, the research objectives, formulated hypotheses, limitations and a broad overview of the proposed study.

Chapter Two

This chapter provides the following conceptual background to the study:

- ❖ Understanding of family responsibility and paternity leave.
- ❖ The BCEA and the constitutional framework for family responsibility and paternity leave.
- ❖ The legal background, rationale, and critique of family responsibility and paternity leave in South Africa.
- ❖ Background to family responsibility leave in EThekweni Municipality.
- ❖ A brief international comparison.

Chapter Three

This chapter discusses the methods used to gather data and outlines the methods and statistical analysis considered to be reliable and valid in this study. The sampling techniques, data collection methods and the techniques used to analyse the results of the study are also discussed. Validity and reliability as the cornerstone of research are also assessed in chapter three, as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter Four

In this chapter the results of the study are presented in the form of tables and bar graphs.

Chapter Five

Chapter five discusses the findings of the study. This chapter contains the overall discussion of the results presented in the previous chapter.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the study by introducing the study; its motivation and purpose; and the problem statement. The formulated hypotheses, significance of the study and a brief theoretical background have also been presented in this chapter. An overview of eThekweni Municipality, the limitations of the study and finally, an overview of each chapter, have also been provided.

CHAPTER TWO

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the most recent literature on family responsibility and paternity leave. Labour legislation, including the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) and the constitutional framework for family responsibility and paternity leave are discussed in this chapter. The focus of analysis is South Africa's promulgation of pieces of legislation in an attempt to create better working conditions. The chapter will also focus on the legal background, rationale, and the critique of family responsibility and paternity leave in South Africa.

International benchmarks on family responsibility leave and the global understanding of work-family development and work-family conflict are discussed in detail, as they are perceived to be the determinants for the male take-up of family responsibility leave. The shortcomings of the BCEA and gender assumptions, as well as possible solutions as noted in the literature, are also discussed in this chapter.

2.2 The Underlying Characteristics of the Work-Family Impact

The concern surrounding child care has placed work-family arrangements in the spotlight; this requires that organisations focus on the need to care for children and the consequent demands placed on employees. There is no denying the pressure that working parents experience as they try to juggle their time between work and their family. According to Hosking (2006), businesses are beginning to count the cost of lost productivity and talent due to stress caused by the conflicts and challenges faced by working fathers, especially when trying to maintain balance between work and family demands. Fathers' performance in the workplace is therefore distorted.

Studies conducted by Frone, Russel and Barnes (1996), Stoddard and Madsen, (2007), Major, Klein and Ehrhart (2002), and Madsen, John and Miller (2005) have found a relationship between the lack of family responsibility development programmes and

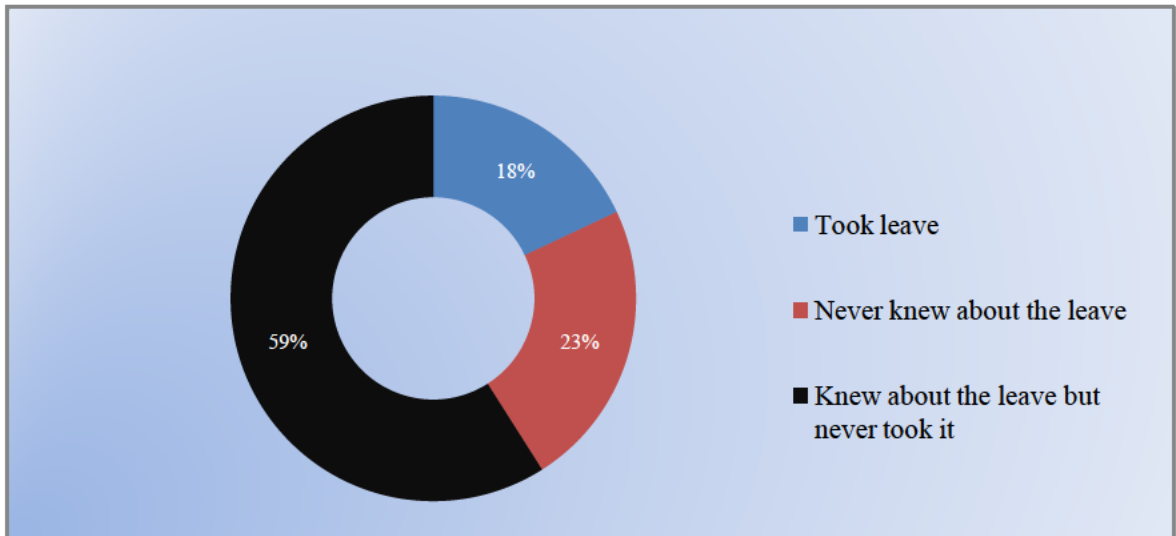
adverse health outcomes. It is suggested that the absence of family responsibility programmes equates with a decline in the physical and mental health of working fathers. Frone, Russel and Barnes (1996) reported that this conflict is related to increased levels of depression, poor physical health, hypertension and heavy alcohol consumption.

Major, Klein and Ehrhart (2002) found a significant correlation between the lack of family responsibility provisions and somatic complaints and depression. Furthermore, they noted a significant relationship between higher employee perceptions of family integration programmes and their own perceptions of their personal mental and physical health. These studies present persuasive evidence that family responsibility policies and/or programmes are related either favourably or unfavourably to individual health.

The study conducted by Odingi *et al*(2008) in Kenya found that men spend considerably less time with their families than women. Many men leave their families in the rural areas to seek work in the urban areas; they are unable to see their family as and when they want. Regardless of whether a man is a manager or cleaner, both are spending less time with their families. “Managers have meetings and a lot of work which they sometimes finish very late and sometimes start very early; and other people who in most cases live far away from their work-places, spend most of their time on travel, therefore leaving their houses very early and returning back home very late” (Odingi *et al*, 2008: 3).

The assertions made by Odingi *et al* (2008) compare very well with what the Population Council (an international, non-profit and non-governmental organisation that conducts biomedical, social science, and public health research and helps build research capacities in developing countries) found in 2000 (Population Council, 2000). The council found that in most parts of the world, men spend considerably less time with their children and on child care activities than women. Figure 2.1 below demonstrates the take up of paternity leave by employees in Nairobi, Kenya.

Figure 2.1: Taking Paternity Leave

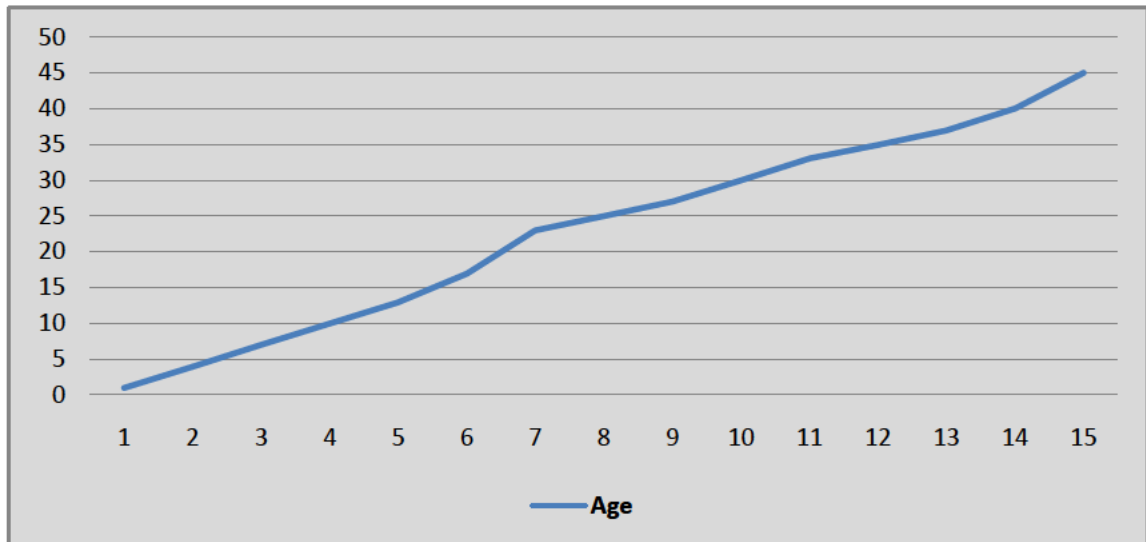


Odingi, A, Ratemo, L and Kebaso, N. J (2008: 6)

The South African Time Use Survey, cited in Budlender, Chobokwane and Mpetsheni, (2001), also showed that men spend less time with their children than women. According to figure 2.1 above, approximately 59 percent of men knew about the existence of paternity leave, but they never utilised it, while 23 percent never knew about the existence of paternity leave; this is a more rational explanation of why it was never utilised. Approximately 18 percent knew about the leave and made use of it.

Figure 2.2 below shows that lack of spousal support is correlated with women's employment prospects as children get older. When the child is born, it is likely that women will have to give up their jobs, especially if there is no spousal support. If spouses and/or fathers are reluctant to provide for their family's financial needs, they are more likely to face long term financial burdens. Mothers will be forced to take up employment so as to provide for the family.

Figure 2.2: Employment Probability for mothers with care responsibilities



Eyal, K and Woolard, I (2010)

In figure 2.2, each labour force outcome is plotted against the age of the woman's youngest child, in order to ascertain how, on average, woman's labour force status changes as their children grow up. It is observed from the figure that woman with young children below the age of three have a very low employment probability of less than 20 percent. This rises in a fairly linear fashion with the age of the youngest child, reaching approximately 50 percent when the child is aged 15. Having the child enter school at age 7 or thereabouts seems to push employment up by a fair percentage (Eyal and Woolard, 2010).

Aycan and Eskin (2005: 29) define spousal support as "the help, advice, understanding and the like that spouses provide for one another". They note two kinds of spousal support of which the one significant to this study is the instrumental support that expresses tangible support for child care. They further indicate that the "support from family members which excludes spouses is an important variable affecting work family-conflict" (Aycan and Eskin, 2005: 30).

It is believed that support from family members, especially instrumental spousal support can reduce work-family conflict (Razak, Ormar and Yunus, 2010). The "support provided by husbands and partners provides a critical complement to family-friendly programmes offered by many organisations to facilitate the balancing of

work and family demands and results in greater well-being of women” (Gordon and Whelan, 2004: 840).

In a study conducted by Smit (2006) on the “changing roles of the husband/ father in the dual-earner family in South Africa”, a statistically significant relation was established between the perception of a man’s involvement in domestic responsibilities and his age. On a Cronbach Coefficient scale, 23 items were used to deal with the experience of both work and family-related aspects and men’s perceptions; there results “were $r = -0.03$; and $p = 0, 039$ ” (Smit, 2006: 406). This implies a negative correlation between the two variables. This means that as the age of the man increases, his involvement in domestic responsibilities decreases. It also means that younger men are more inclined to perform domestic responsibilities than older men.

In contrast, it is further demonstrated that men with postgraduate qualifications are the “least inclined to perform household duties ($p = 0.014$)” (Smit, 2006: 407). These findings are contrary to those of Moen (1992). According to Moen (1992: 223), “the higher the man’s educational qualification, the more will he be inclined to be involved in the performance of domestic responsibilities”. Smit (2006) and Moen (1992) present conflicting views about the correlations between the level of education and domestic tasks. This could have been caused by the different time period when the studies were conducted or the different regions in which they were conducted.

The work of Smit (2006) also demonstrates that men’s ‘occupational category’ plays a pertinent role in determining their level of inclination to engage in family responsibilities. In terms of “the man’s perception of the extent to which he demonstrates father involvement in terms of their occupational categories, it was found that men in managerial and professional careers, in comparison to those in other occupational categories, are more inclined to demonstrate father involvement” (Smit, 2006: 404). This means that men in other occupational categories are less inclined to honour their family responsibilities.

Research conducted by Razaket *al* (2010) to examine the relationship between spousal support, parental demand and family involvement focused on work-family

conflict (work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW)). The results of this study indicated that the two variables, parental demand ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.01$) and family involvement ($\beta = 0.11, p < 0.05$) were found to have positive and significant relationship with work interference” (Razaket *al*, 2010: 30). Furthermore, “family interference with work ($r^2 = 0.35, f\text{-change} = 18.50, p < 0.01$) indicated that only two variables which were spousal support ($\beta = -0.18, p = 0.01$) and parental demand ($\beta = 0.26, p < 0.01$) were found to have a positive and significant relationship with family interference with work” (Razaket *al*, 2010: 31). The study demonstrates an integration of attitudinal and behavioral approaches to effective organisational commitment.

Effective organisational commitment refers to “employees’ commitment through emotional bonds, links to, and engagement in, their organisations” (Van Dyk and Coetzee, 2012: 3). An organisation’s support of family-friendly policies will definitely enhance organisational commitment. Organisations should not take family responsibility and paternity leave for granted, as it falls within the ambit of family-friendly policies.

There are certain components of family responsibility/paternity leave that need to be considered when one is dealing with this kind of leave and the manner in which is being used in the workplace. “Men who make use of family responsibility/paternity leave, unlike those who will not utilise this option, will not only be more involved in domestic task responsibilities for child care, but will also be inclined to perform emotion work in the marriage and experience marital integration”(Smit, 2006: 407).

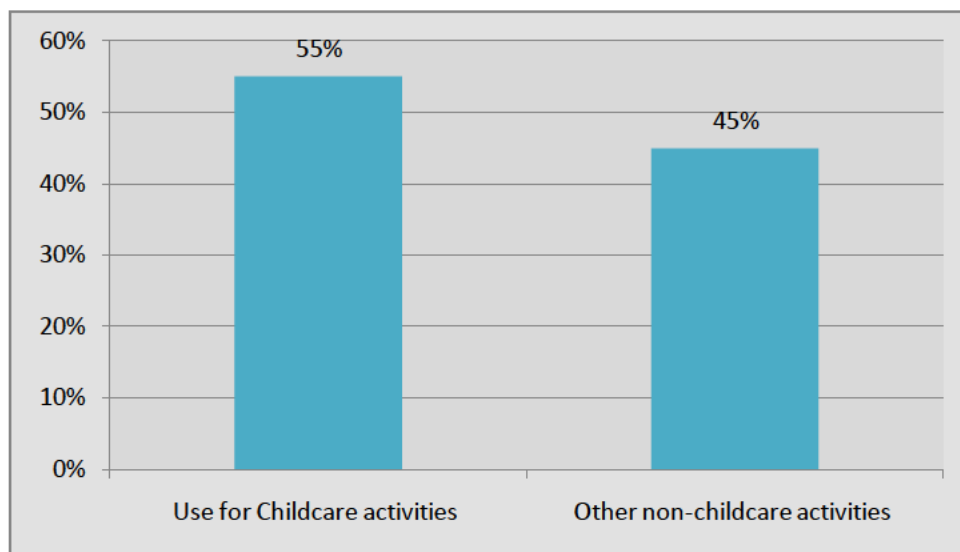
The South African BCEA makes provision for family responsibility leave and therefore contributes to creating a worker-friendly environment. Stoddard and Madsen (2007: 7) note that a “man’s utilisation of family responsibility leave does not only stand in relation to the level of father involvement, but it also has implications for other components of the man’s marital and family life”.

Irrespective of these assertions and beliefs, it would seem the majority of male employees are still of the view that care-giving is a female domain and that childcare is nothing to do with them. However, Odingi *et al*’s (2008) study on ‘Use of Paternity

Leave' amongst male employees in Nairobi, Kenya shows that men are slowly becoming aware of their parental role.

As illustrated in figure 2.3 below, 55 percent of Odingi *et al*'s study respondents who had taken paternity leave used the time on childcare related activities. It is clear that more awareness needs to be created, as 45 percent of the respondents that made use of this leave, used it for non-child- related activities.

Figure 2.3: Use of family responsibility leave taken



Odingi, A, Ratemo, L and Kebaso, N. J. (2008: 06)

According to Odingi *et al* (2008), the reason for these behaviours varies according to different individuals and different factors. Odingi *et al* (2008) observe that those who took leave to be with their new born babies as shown in Figures 2.1 and 2.3 were aged between 23 and 34. This implies that younger men are more inclined to participate in caring for their children than their older counterparts aged between 35 and 55. This means that child care is more important to the younger generation of men than the older generation.

Hosking (2006) argues that all responsible employers will have to develop and implement comprehensive and effective policies to support the fathers they employ to benefit both employer and employee and that these policies will require courageous

men and women to implement them. This may not be practicable if there is a lack of commitment from the officials responsible for policy development to create policy that is family-friendly and that encourages family development. South Africa's constitutional framework that was developed in the early 1990s and implemented as an interim measure in 1994 and a final document in 1996 has facilitated the entry of women into the labour market. The impact of HIV and AIDS has also been increasing, requiring policy makers to frame meaningful responses.

It should be noted that policy formulation may give rise to other forms of inequalities or discrimination; hence, the introduction of family responsibility leave does not necessarily protect male employees from workplace discrimination. It should be borne in mind that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa guarantees the right to equality and protection from unfair discrimination (Bhoola, 2002).

A review of employment laws that are intended to enhance the ability of workers to change their working arrangements, found that the majority of European states have introduced flexible working statutes (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). This emanated from the need to reconcile work and private and family life in the European Union (EU) in promoting equality between men and women. It is stated that "the main policy focus at EU and Member State level is on how to ensure a measure of 'flexicurity' that will enable adults to move in and out of the workforce for socially and politically acceptable reasons; whether educational, 'care-related', or in pursuit of leisure at different points in their working lives" (Lewis, Knijn, Martin, and Ostner, 2008: 278).

Countries like the United Kingdom and Germany that have introduced child care support policies have enacted statutes that help parents to adjust their working hours. There are also statutory measures to address the working arrangements of all employees, regardless of their reasons for seeking such arrangements (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010).

In Germany, for example, the introduction of the general right to work part-time was motivated by the expectation that such an entitlement would contribute not only to job creation, but also to an increase in the proportion of men working part-time and

thereby to the creation of equal opportunities for men and women (Jacobs and Schmidt, 2001), while according to Dancaster and Cohen (2010: 36), “the Dutch intended the legislation to contribute to more equitable distribution of occupational and family duties between couples”.

In the United Kingdom, the introduction of the right to request flexible working arrangements was driven by the view that employment rights help to ensure a productive and committed workforce rather than create burdens for businesses (Croucher and Kelliher, 2005). This was a “reflection of the government commitment to supporting working families” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 37). It can be deduced that if countries such as Germany and United Kingdom have done it, any country can do it including South Africa, as long as there is political stability that allows for government to devote time to designing these policies.

The Work Life Balance survey that was carried out in United Kingdom by Hooker, Neathey, Casebourne and Munro (2006) found high levels of employee satisfaction and a significant increase in the availability of most types of flexible working arrangements since 2003. It noted that, “17 percent of employees had submitted a request to change their working arrangements over the last two years of the surveyed period” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 39); and that only 9 percent of employees who had made such requests in the previous 12 months had been turned down (Hayward, Fong and Thornton, 2007).

From the findings in the United Kingdom, it can be construed that if employers support an environment that is family-friendly, it is likely that this will lead to increased work satisfaction; more strategically, employers will be able to retain their employees.

In countries where policy makers have held extensive and inclusive consultations with employers, there has been less employer resistance (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). Hegewisch (2005) notes that in Germany, for instance, employers were far less involved in the development of the law and have remained hostile towards it. In the United Kingdom the “Prime Minister launched the work-life balance campaign three years prior to the introduction of the legislation and the campaign was given a lot of

publicity through promotional activity and website information” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 39). Consultative and advisory bodies were also established to debate the issues arising from the proposed legislation. South Africa, which is known for its progressive labour legislation, should not encounter problems if it applies a systematic approach as was the case in the United Kingdom and Germany.

2.3 A Brief Theoretical Overview

There has been an increase in ‘dual earner’ families since the 1960s. This has triggered economic change in families. As a result, the patriarchal model has been challenged by the rise of feminism (Smit, 2006). This has caused a paradigm shift within households. According to Ritner (1992) and Gerson (1993), the role of the father as a sole bread winner has drastically shifted to one of being actively involved in household responsibilities, including child care. In considering these changes and/or shifts in marital relationships, three aspects need to be considered. These aspects are a ‘power relationship’, ‘domestic task responsibility’ and the ‘new fatherhood’.

With respect to a ‘power relationship’, there has been a dramatic change in the relationship between husband and wife. In many households, women claim equal power with men. This is “due to *inter alia* the wife’s labour market participation as she has become financially less dependent on her husband and has gained more decision making and bargaining power in the marital relationship” (Smit, 2006: 402).

This assertion is supported by statistics released by Statistics-SA (2008), showing that the South African female labour force rose from just below 40 percent of the total labour force in 1995 to 51.2 percent in 2008. As Smit (2006) argues, this has promoted a more egalitarian outlook. Smit (2006) argues that the egalitarian outlook presupposes an equal distribution of household responsibilities. Increased female participation in the labour market and the increased bargaining power women now have in their families has brought about solutions to what Gerson (1993) and Benokratis (1996) call the “brunt of the preponderance” of the domestic chores that are still borne by many women.

Amongst other factors that accelerate a more egalitarian approach to family matters, the involvement of women in the labour market has played a pivotal role. According to Dancaster and Cohen (2010), the involvement of females in paid employment has upset the balance on which traditional work-force regimes were premised, whereby women were assigned to the unpaid labour of caring and domestic work and the ideal worker was assumed to be full-time and male; hence employers were slow to respond to employee demands for workplace flexibility which resulted in mothers being pushed out of the labour market. “They have been pushed out either temporarily or altogether with adverse long term effects on family income, retirement security and the utilisation of human resource capacity” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010:33). This can be viewed in the same light as the findings of studies by Bailyn, (1993) and Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, and Pruitt (2002: 16), “who noted that ‘family’ is a woman’s domain and thus the public sphere of paid work is a man’s domain”.

Firmly entrenched “societal practices and cultural norms are responsible for reinforcing assumptions about the role of women as a primary caregivers and the importance of family and good parenting”(Cohen and Dancaster, 2009: 26). By the same token, societies prioritise paid work over the unpaid work of carers and in doing so, prejudice employees that attempt to juggle these two social ideals; “namely family-to-work and work-to-family” (Stoddard and Madsen, 2007: 4).

“Family-to-work conflict occurs when experiences in the family (for example, the presence of young children, primary responsibility for children, elder care responsibilities, interpersonal conflict within the family unit, and unsupportive family members) interfere with work life” (Mokomane, 2009:2). Furthermore, “work-to-family conflict occurs when experiences at work (such as extensive, irregular, or inflexible work hours; extensive travel, and unsupportive supervisors or organisations) interfere with family life” (Mokomane, 2009: 2). Even though these interferences are strongly interrelated, research has established that work roles are more likely to interfere with family roles than *vice versa*.

With respect to ‘task responsibility’, Smit (2006) is of the view that despite the fact that women still bear the burden of household chores, husbands have become slightly more involved in household responsibilities that are traditionally associated with

women. This demonstrates that there is movement from a ‘male dominated pattern’ to a more ‘egalitarian pattern’ where the marital relationship is characterised by companionship.

Smith’s (1995) study illustrates the shift that has been taking place over recent years. According to the results of the study, only 38 percent of women received help from their partners with the care of their infants in the 1950s, as opposed to the 1990s when 82 percent of women reported paternal involvement in the practical care of infants. Despite expectations that fathers should become more involved in the task of parenting, the literature and current trends in society still suggest that “motherhood usually comes naturally, while the skills associated with first-time fatherhood are often more difficult to attain and need to be learnt more formally” (Hinckley, Ferreira and Maree, 2007: 2)

With respect to the ‘new fatherhood’, the role of father has been restored to better reflect the support of child care in the era of dual families. This, according to VanJaarsveld (2002) means restoring fathers to the lives of the many children who live without them. The ‘new father’ refers to the “man who on one hand acts highly nurturing towards his children and who is on the other hand becoming to an increasing extent involved in the daily care-taking of the children” (Smit, 2006: 403).

2.4 Work-Family and International Standards

In addition to family-friendly legislation, non-legal factors impact on the relationship between work and family life in different countries. There are “underlying cultural attitudes to paid and unpaid work” as outlined by Smit (2006: 4) and Benokratis (1996). In addition, there are some “traditional patterns of control and hierarchy at work, the general system of industrial relations within which workplace decisions are taken, the economic context of the time, access to state-run and private sources of care for family members, and the impact of other relevant legal systems (for example, taxation and social security laws and policies)” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 43).

Given the differences between the laws, cultures and other factors in different countries, it is vital to establish the standards to use when these countries are

benchmarked. Law is one of the important aspects of benchmarking. It is not only a paramount regulatory device, “but it also shapes the other non-legal elements such as traditional patterns” (Smit, 2006: 401).

Comparison is useful because, despite the tendency towards national specificity, important trends may emerge. “There is strong trend towards State intervention in the labour market to assist workers achieve a better balance between their work and family responsibilities, and to enable employers to attract and retain suitable staff to meet the needs of the enterprise” (Murray, 2004:14). Trend information of this kind is useful because it enables policy decision-makers to consider the developing laws and labour trends within a broader context.

In the Netherlands for example, the legislation provides for 16 weeks’ pregnancy and maternity leave, and two days’ paternity leave. In addition, “employees have an unrestricted right to six months’ part-time parental leave until the child reaches eight years of age” (Murray, 2004: 48). “Due to the success of the family integration policy (Act on Work and Care) in Netherlands, the women labour force participation has escalated to 76.7 percent in 2004 from 64.5 percent in 1994” (Bergemann and Van den Berg, 2006:7).

In Germany, “parents have an entitlement to unpaid leave (with sickness benefit) to care for an ill child for up to a maximum of ten days per year” (Murray, 2004: 92). In addition, “there is an entitlement for three years’ full-time unpaid parental leave, to be taken before the child’s eighth birthday” (Murray, 2004: 96). Germany enjoys relatively high female labour market participation. “In this country the gap between male and female labour force participation rate amounts to less than 10 percentage points in absolute value” (Bergemann and Van den Berg, 2006:9).

New Zealand “affords the employees the maternity leave of up to 14 continuous weeks; partner’s/paternity leave of up to two weeks on the birth or adoption of a child; extended leave of up to 52 weeks (which includes any period of maternity leave) that can be shared between parents, if both are eligible” (Murray, 2004: 101). According to Murray (2004), this leave must be utilised during the first year after the birth or adoption of a child.

In Ireland, there is no paternity leave; however, working fathers have the option of parental leave (Bergemann and Van den Berg, 2006). Parental leave amounts to a total of 14 working weeks per child. Where an employee has more than one child, parental leave is limited to 14 weeks in a 12-month period. In 2004, Ireland recorded a 67.9 percent rate of female labour market participation. This shows an increase from a 53.6 percent female participation rate in 1994 (Bergemann and Van den Berg, 2006).

Countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have promulgated progressive labour legislation that encourages women's participation in the labour market; therefore, South Africa can borrow those ideas that suit the country's needs: "Regulatory measures and techniques used in other jurisdictions may provide a suitable model for application within the unique institutional, social and economic settings of South Africa" (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 14).

South Africa can use ideas that provide a suitable model for application within its unique settings. Presently, the country does not have a policy that allows an employee to take care of a child once maternity leave has been exhausted (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). This requires re-assessment in the context of improved international parental leave provisions (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). Family responsibility leave combines parental, paternity and emergency leave. However, "paternity leave should not be included under family responsibility leave, but should be treated as a separate category or as part of a 'fathers' only' quota in parental leave" (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 34).

It should be acknowledged however, that "legislation is not the only vehicle by which to reconcile work and care" (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 41). The government's willingness to change legislation may, to some extent, depend on its assessment of whether or not the regulatory forces of collective bargaining or business case arguments have produced employer responses that accommodate work-family integration, including the right to parental leave by working fathers (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). There is no evidence that demonstrates employers' willingness to accommodate working fathers' family needs; except the 'catch all' of family responsibility leave. On the contrary, some evidence suggests reluctance on the part of

employers to implement other work-family provisions, except for maternity and family responsibility leave.

In 2007, Elsey conducted a review of 361 enterprise level agreements and 31 bargaining council agreements in South Africa. It was found that the “duration of maternity leave in collective agreements mirrors the four consecutive months stipulated in the BCEA, and only about 7 percent of agreements specifically provided for additional unpaid maternity leave of about two months” (Elsey, 2007: 15). Given this evidence, it appears unlikely that South African employers will be proactive in implementing employee-orientated policies through which working fathers can be given extended time off for child-caring. It is also unlikely that trade unions will take the initiative to put pressure on employers for this right, given that they are on the ‘horns of a dilemma’ when it comes to workplace flexibility. This leads to the conclusion that, without government regulation, it is unlikely that the right to request extended leave in relation to child-caring will be implemented to any great extent in the South African workplace.

2.5 The International Labour Standards (ILO) and Child-Caring

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities (No 156, 1981) deals with the “obligations of ratifying states to meet the needs of workers with family responsibilities”. The scope of care responsibilities dealt with in the Convention is broader than those of parent to dependent child, as it also covers workers “with responsibilities in relation to other members of their immediate family who clearly need their care or support” (Article 1[2]). “This Convention was intended to have universal scope in relation to such workers: it applies to all branches of economic activity and all categories of workers” (Article 2 of the ILO Convention No 156, 1981).

The “Convention aims *inter alia* to ensure that workers with such care responsibilities are able to prepare for, enter, participate in or advance in ‘economic activity’” (Article 1 [1]), and that those who are in or wish to engage in employment are able to do so “to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities” (Article 3[1]). Article 4 “requires that all measures compatible with

national conditions and possibilities are taken to, *inter alia*; take account of (workers with family responsibilities) needs in terms and conditions of employment”. Article 7 requires that “ratifying states take all measures compatible with national conditions and possibilities to enable workers with family responsibilities to become and remain integrated in the labour force, as well as to re-enter the labour force after an absence due to those responsibilities”.

The ILO “Convention clearly requires national policies and measures on the part of ratifying countries which squarely confront the range of possible conflicts between employment and family responsibility, and that nations take all possible measures, including when determining terms and conditions of employment, to overcome these conflicts”. Measures which do not permit workers to remain integrated with the labour market and to re-enter work after a care-related absence do not appear to be within the letter or spirit of the Convention. One of the most obvious and significant conflicts between work and family responsibility is the need to take time off from work to care for young children

2.6 The South African Legislative Framework

Internationally, there has been growing interest in family-friendly working arrangements and related strategies. In the context of increasing business and family pressures, this interest has developed as a potential way of helping families and employers to cope with the real life problems of being carers and employees in a competitive business environment. It is perhaps not surprising that government initiatives have emerged to address some of these issues. South Africa has not yet moved beyond its policy of family responsibility leave. There has not been sufficient debate on family-friendly working arrangements, except for discussions raised by academics. Thus far, “the South African policy makers have only given thought and cognisance to the fact that the scourge of HIV/AIDS has impacted hugely on the need for care giving” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 32)

According to Dancaster and Cohen (2010: 32), “Southern Africa remains the global epicentre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, accounting for 35 percent of all persons living with HIV and 32 percent of AIDS deaths globally”; South Africa has the largest

number of HIV infections in the world (UNAIDS, 2007). Furthermore, there is a growing elderly population in need of care as “South Africa has one of the continent’s highest percentages of older inhabitants” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 32). It is estimated that by 2025, 18 percent of the population will be over the age of 50, with 10.8 percent and 5.1 percent of the population over 60 and 70 years respectively (Kinsella & Ferreira, 1997)

In recognition of the above factors, South African policy makers included a clause in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) 75 of 1997 that allows each worker three days family responsibility leave in each 12-month cycle. Family responsibility leave is afforded to every employee:

- ❖ “When the employee’s child is born;
- ❖ When the employee’s child is sick; or
- ❖ In the event of the death of the:
 - Employee’s spouse or life partner; or
 - The employee’s parent or adoptive parent, grandparent, child, adopted child, grand child or sibling”.

However, there is still a need for a specific policy that deals with child care. A deficiency of this catch-all leave is that it only grants three days in a 12-month cycle, and it may only be used for the three specific reasons outlined in section 27 [2] of the BCEA. Some companies have gone beyond the minimum standard of three days. It is not clear why they have chosen to do so. A better understanding of their motivation and any predisposing factors could be used to encourage a wider range of employers to do the same.

South Africa has developed its labour legislation to meet international standards and to comply with some of the ILO conventions. South Africa has a constitutional mandate to ensure that all citizens have full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms (Sec 9 [2] of the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996).

South Africa faces many social and economic challenges. These include, amongst others things, high levels of unemployment, high level of HIV infections and a high

mortality rate that affect the country's economy, creating a lack of the 'core' skills needed to grow the economy. It is argued that the following aspects of leave policy as outlined by Dancaster and Baird (2008: 42) require urgent consideration in the context of the enormous burden of care facing South African citizens:

- ❖ The duration of paternity leave should be increased (Van Jaarsveld, 2002: 418). As per the provisions of the BCEA, family responsibility leave is currently three days (five days for domestic workers), which is too little given the fact that it has to be used for a wide range of circumstances, including the birth or sickness of a child and/or the death of a family member. Furthermore, the restrictive qualification that only employees who work at least four days per week and who have been employed for more than four months (Sec 27 [1] [a] of BCEA) are permitted to use this leave precludes a large number of employees, particularly part-time workers, from making use of family responsibility leave. According to Dancaster and Cohen (2010), the scope of circumstances and persons for whom family leave may be utilised should also be broadened to include not only leave to attend to a sick child but also leave to attend to a sick adult, particularly in the context of HIV/AIDS.

- ❖ Paternity leave should not be included under family responsibility leave, but should be treated as a separate category or as part of a fathers' only quota in parental leave.

- ❖ Parental leave, that is a period of leave after maternity leave to allow a parent to care for the early childhood development of an infant, should be considered for inclusion in the BCEA. At present, there is no allowance in South Africa for a period of leave to allow an employee to take care of a child once maternity leave has been exhausted. South Africa lags behind international developments in this respect. Almost all EU countries offer some form of parental leave (Moss and Korintus, 2008). European Union countries are required to offer at least three months' parental leave, although there are no requirements regarding payment during this leave.

- ❖ The inadequacy of statutory maternity leave in South Africa, in terms of both duration and entitlement to payment, requires reassessment in the context of improved international maternity leave provisions.

The principal need, however, is to move beyond a comprehensive bundle of leave provisions and to consider introducing a right to request flexible working arrangements. The nature of work has changed rapidly in recent decades. Currently the avenue to pursue such a right in South Africa is through the Employment Equity Act (EEA) 55 of 1998, which provides all employees with protection against unfair discrimination on the grounds of family responsibilities and which requires designated employers to implement affirmative action measures, including the reasonable accommodation of such employees, to ensure the equitable representation of women in the workplace.

According to Dancaster and Cohen (2010), employees seeking to pursue the right to flexible working arrangements through the legislative process would have to initiate and finance litigation against their employer in an individual capacity and then discharge an evidentiary burden of proof linking the employer's conduct directly or indirectly to a discriminatory ground - a difficult undertaking in the light of the subtle yet undeniable role played by gender assumptions and stereotyping in the decision-making process. Reasons advanced by employers to justify inflexible workplace practices, such as operational requirements, business necessity and the inherent requirements of the job, have enabled employers to successfully counter allegations of discrimination in the workplace and are likely to undermine an employee litigant's demand for flexible working arrangements (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010).

Despite the constitutional and legislative commitment to prohibit family responsibility discrimination and the government's initiative to facilitate the advancement of women in the economy, not a single family responsibility discrimination matter has been heard by the labour courts in the ten years since the EEA's enactment. Ironically, the only case that purported to rely on family responsibility discrimination, *Co-Operative Workers Association v Petroleum Oil & Gas Co-Operative of SA* [2007] 28 ILJ 627, involved a claim of unfair discrimination lodged by employees without dependents, who were aggrieved by the employer's provision of increased medical aid benefits to

employees with dependents. In finding that the differential treatment was justified in keeping with the tenet of substantive equality, Judge Pillay held that special measures must apply to workers with family responsibilities to adjust for the hardships of bearing such responsibilities.

The complete absence of legal precedent and the resultant failure of the EEA to address family responsibility discrimination signify either that employees are entirely satisfied with their current working arrangements or, the more likely option, that the EEA does not provide an adequate vehicle to address their needs.

2.7 The Impact of Inflexible Working Times

“Inflexible working times or requirements might be responsible for creating intolerable working conditions for an employee juggling family responsibilities and could lead to the employee’s constructive dismissal” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009: 232). In claiming constructive dismissal, the onus is on the employee to prove that the employment contract was repudiated as a result of the intolerable working conditions. The assessment of tolerability is based on the perspective of a reasonable person in the shoes of the employee with the same background, life experience and position (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009).

In *Masondo v Crossway [1998] 19 ILJ 171 (CCMA)*, the only reported CCMA award considering family responsibility discrimination, the employee was compensated for an automatically unfair constructive dismissal in circumstances where she resigned after being required to work a night-shift which clashed with her family responsibilities. The commissioner was satisfied that discrimination had taken place, as the employee had been prevented from attending to her child by the allocation of a late shift to her; an action which the employer was unable to justify.

Section 7(d) of the BCEA requires every employer to regulate the working time of each employee with due regard to their family responsibilities. Furthermore, the “Code of Good Practice on the Integration of Employment Equity into Human Resource Policies and Practices requires employers to endeavour to provide an accessible, supportive and flexible environment for employees with family

responsibilities: including considering flexible working hours and granting sufficient family responsibility leave for both parents”. In terms of the above statement, it is suggested that employers should be sensitive when designing shift rosters and must consider the impact it would have on employees with childcare responsibilities. The special needs of employees must be paramount when these rosters are designed.

2.8 The South African Crisis with Respect to Family Responsibility Leave

In South Africa, working families have higher care-giving burdens and far fewer resources to help them. The scourge of HIV/AIDS has impacted hugely on the need for care-giving (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). Apart from demands linked to the normal care of the child, the broader family is faced with demands to provide comprehensive care in respect of the burden of HIV/AIDS. South Africa is at the epicenter of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, accounting for about 35 percent of all persons living with HIV and 32 percent of AIDS deaths (UNAIDS, 2007).

What were initially experienced as “individual problems become relabelled as shared problems, although not necessarily as social problems requiring social collective solutions” (Caproni, 2004: 15). While there is more widespread debate about family-work conflicts and care, the manner in which this has been conceptualised is shaped by broader messages and assumptions about family responsibilities and work.

It is therefore argued that work-family conflict emerged in response to current pressures; hence it fails to focus on the broader systemic issues that these changes raised. Thus while reflecting particular pressures, the debate on family responsibility simultaneously creates and produces particular family-work experiences and tensions; hence the legislation combined paternity leave and emergency care leave unsatisfactorily into a “catch-all leave provision known as family responsibility leave” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 33).

The discourse on work-family conflict can be located not only historically but also culturally. These debates and concerns are experienced differently in various national contexts and at different times. For example, “there is more concern about employed mothers in countries with traditional gender values and a history of ‘the housewife’

than in countries where it was the norm for women from across the social spectrum to be employed” (Lewis, Izraeli, and Hootsmans, 1992: 15).

Similarly, it is no coincidence that the work-life balance discourse originated in neoliberal contexts, particularly the United States of America and the United Kingdom, “with a focus in policy and practice on enhancing competitiveness through minimal regulation and reliance on market forces and where the experience of imbalance between paid work and the rest of life were strongest” (Lewis, Gambles and Rapoport, 2007: 232).

2.9 Misconceptions about Women being the Best Care-Givers

A leave policy that distinguishes between the genders has a well-figured out intention to assist female employees with work-family challenges and codifies gender roles for men and women at the organisational level. Leave policies are fundamentally “good in intentions, but unfair in practice” (Cunningham, 2001: 977). South Africa has not yet reached the stage where it fully welcomes the fact that fathers, as well as mothers, are primary caregivers.

It would appear that men will be forced to prove their ability as primary caregivers before a leave policy to this effect can be deliberated. By forcing men to prove that they are primary care-givers in order to ‘earn’ paternity leave, the country undermines its already difficult struggle to obtain some semblance of work-family balance.

According to Cunningham (2001: 970), “a male employee who musters the courage to approach his employer and ask for time-off to be with his family will have to overcome a policy that is predicated on the assumption that parental leave is woman’s work”. This comes at a time in a man’s career when being successful both as a professional or ordinary worker and as a father is particularly important for long-term success on both fronts.

Cunningham (2001: 972) also questions the “all-encompassing work commitments that are usually required in professional life; because careers are not as certain as they were in the past and he believes that a good life is one that integrates work and family”. An official policy breeds unofficial stigmatisation that motivates male

employees to stay within prescribed norms. Cunningham (2001) is of the opinion that there are some things that are more expected of women that are not male attributes; hence they are the core functions of the social role.

Similarly, female employees are hampered by the compassionate policy that automatically assumes they are the primary caregiver for a new-born child. Women who do not take maternity leave may be viewed as suspect mothers; at the same time, women who take time off to be with their new-born child face the opposite presumption; that they are somehow less ‘committed’ to their organisations. According to Cunningham (2001:27), “organisations claim that women ‘need’ more time off than men because of their pregnancy ‘disability’”.

However, this excuse fails on a rudimentary medical level. Following average childbirth, most mothers do not have a ‘physical need’ for three months of recovery (Gordon and McCall, 1999). According to these authors, the average hospital recovery time for an unassisted delivery in the United States is 2.1 days. Gordon and McCall (1999: 25) add that the “average length of a hospital stay for child birth dropped by 50 percent between 1970 and 1992”.

While the time required for recovery after child birth will obviously depend on the standard of living in a country, common sense cannot equate these 2.1 days with the four consecutive months that the South African legislation affords to mothers (Section 25 (1) BCEA). Section 25 (3) of the BCEA further adds that “no employee may work for six weeks after the birth of her child, unless a medical practitioner or a midwife certifies that she is fit to do so”.

Working on the assumption that a married couple work for the same company and are expecting their first child, as per their company’s policy, in line with the BCEA 75 of 1997, the mother would receive three months unpaid leave after the birth, whereas the father could not take any leave except for three days family responsibility leave (Section 27 [2] of BCEA), provided that he has not exhaust them within that cycle of leave. If the mother recuperates within a week of delivery, she would have the remaining eleven weeks at home to form the strong bonds with her baby characteristic

of a primary caregiver, while the father would be unable to perform the duties of a primary caregiver.

The learning curve for the parent during these first days and weeks with the newborn baby is steep. While the father is away from home all day at work, the mother quickly learns the baby's patterns and routines, thus making her the 'expert' and the father, her 'assistant'. "Although the physical need justification for granting women extended leave is really a pretext for gendered presumptions of caregiver status, the policy becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Cunningham, 2001: 978). A misleading perception is created whereby women seem to be better nurturers and therefore better candidates for more 'generous' leave (Cunningham, 2001).

"Bolstering cultural expectations, the perceptions created by the policy codify roles for both the mother and father" (Cunningham, 2001: 978). A simple first step to remedy the problems faced by both genders would be to make all the language on parental leave gender-neutral. South Africa could learn from the United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia that offer both men and women paid leave after the birth of a child.

According to Ligos (2000), since the policy's inception in the USA, more than five percent of eligible men have taken paternity leave. The fact that the vast majority of countries, including South Africa, have not taken steps to create a gender neutral policy, speaks to the age-old stereotypes that underlie these policies. This double-edged sword must be redefined if women are to achieve upward mobility in organisations and if men are to play a more prominent role as fathers at home.

Although paternity leave is an important aspect of a family-friendly policy, "there is a media fixation with citing the low number of fathers who take parental leave as a proxy for lack of paternal commitment" (Cunningham, 2001: 983). Viewing men's involvement as fathers solely through the lens of paternity leave presents an incomplete picture, and is what James Levine, Director of The Fatherhood Project, calls "paternity leave preoccupation".

When Bill Gates' daughter was born in 1996, he did not take official leave from Microsoft. Instead, he took a brief informal break from work to be with his wife and daughter, despite being questioned by a paternity-fixated journalist as to why he is not doing what most American men do.

Levine (1997: 23), the Director of the Fatherhood Project said shortly afterwards:

“Please don't turn this into one of those stories that uses paternity leave at childbirth as the only way to explain whether fathers are really participating more in their children's lives.... [T]here are lots of years of childrearing ahead. It's going to be important for Bill Gates to be connected to his daughter everyday - on all the days that seem to blend into one another and on all the days that stand out as special. The media should be talking with Bill Gates a year from now when Jennifer is taking her first steps, three years from now when it's her first day of pre-school, eight years from now when she's part of an after-school soccer league, fifteen years from now when she's going on her first date, and twenty-two years from now when she's about to take her first job out of college”.

The battle relating to the short-term nature of parental leave does not necessarily solve the bigger problems of work-family conflict that employees encounter daily as parents. To promote a lasting balance that enhances men's job satisfaction, organisations need to focus on employees' long term family needs.

2.10 Participation of Women in the Labour Market

Despite the growth in women's participation in paid work over the past decade in South Africa, women retain a much closer tie with family care and domestic responsibilities which are linked to current manifestations of the 'gender order'. Care and domestic responsibilities can limit the time that women allocate to paid work (OECD, 2001; Sook-Yeon, 2005) and also to leisure (Kay, 2000). The “prevailing gender order similarly limits the extent to which men are able to change the allocation of their everyday activities by becoming more involved with care and domestic roles” (Brandth and Kvande, 2001: 21).

Although the flexibility of work-family discourse is positioned as gender neutral and inclusive, in practice it still tends to be interpreted as largely for women. “It is, in effect, in many contexts, the old, deeply gendered debate about managing work and family, dressed up in new terminology but nevertheless largely constructed as a woman’s issue” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009: 43). Despite the care crises due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic that affects both men and women, it is reported that men are not involved with caring activities and that they are often left out when opportunities to change their working practices arise (Mokomane, 2009).

It is not surprising therefore that a significant scholarly effort has been devoted to understanding female labour force participation. Ever since the pioneering work of Mincer (1962), female participation in the labour landscape has received much attention, while the plight of males in care giving was given less attention in both developed and developing countries (Boserup, 1970; Odingi *et al*, 2008 Mokomane, 2009, Dancaster and Cohen, 2009).

Labour market participation and the economic development of women in the developing world were documented by Boserup in the 1970s. It is evident from the early works that the bulk of women’s work took place in non-market activities such as in the home or in the informal economy. Recently, however, there has been a “pronounced increase in the contribution of women in the modern sector employment activities” (Moghadam, 1998:15). “This is demonstrating some improvements because of advances made in females’ educational attainment and the expansion of the market economy” (Maglad, 1998: 86). The increased attention given to women’s labour force participation stems from an interest in assessing the consequences of a wide array of public policies. Such policies include taxes, welfare programmes and the alteration of the institutional features of the labour market (Blundel and McCurdy, 1999).

According to Tansel (2001: 23), “an increased participation of women in economic activities either as employees or entrepreneurs is a desirable goal on equity and efficiency considerations and this in terms of the equity goals implies that increased labour force participation of women improves their relative economic position”.

In accordance with the above views, labour force participation decisions have important implications for the distribution of income. “This is critical because those who do not participate in the labour market lack direct access to wage income and such lack of direct income is problematic, especially since those who have direct access to economic resources have more bargaining power as compared to those who do not contribute directly to the household total income” (Ntuli, 2007:3).

In instances where women do not contribute substantially to household income, the distribution of resources is likely to be skewed against them, which undermines their wellbeing and may spill-over to their children. A World Bank Report (1994: 110) emphasises that a “growing number of studies on households allocations show that women more than men use their economic resources to improve health, nutrition and education status of household members particularly children”. As a result, when women earn their own money, the children’s wellbeing is often improved.

“A crucial stylised fact on labour supply from developed countries is that labour force participation has gradually but perceptibly declined for men as a whole whereas female labour force participation has risen substantially over time” (Berndt, 1991:594). This has resulted in the feminisation of the workforce. An increasing trend in women’s participation rates in less developed countries has also been observed (Standing, 1999; ILO, 2005).

In countries like South Africa and Brazil this is attributed to the added worker effect. This means that when household income falls (e.g. due to a husband becoming unemployed or a decline in the real wage of employed members of the household, “women considered secondary workers of the household, temporarily take up employment to cushion the falling household income, but if there is structural unemployment, the increase in female labour supply will be permanent” (Ntuli, 2007:34). Nonetheless, international evidence demonstrates that overall participation rates for women are still low compared with those of men despite the general feminisation of labour markets (ILO, 2005).

Evidence from other parts of developing world shows that “faced with inadequate public and family support for care responsibilities many working women adopt

various strategies, many of which have implications for gender equality” (Mokomane, 2009: 26). According to Mokomane’s (2009: 28) findings, ‘many women resort to informal employment or subsistence farming as these might offer the only work that provides enough flexibility, autonomy and geographic proximity to home to allow them to combine paid economic activity with family responsibility’. However, according to the ILO (2004) these types of jobs “provide little or no economic security whether in terms of income, savings, insurance or social protection and can thus perpetuate women’s lower socio-economic status”.

“Women often attempt to solve their work-family concerns by adopting less than satisfactory solutions such as taking children with them to work or taking an older sibling out of school to look after younger children” (Mokomane, 2009: 39). Taking children to work not only has the potential of exposing them to a hazardous workplace environment, but it can also decrease the time and investment that women can put into paid work, thus affecting their overall productivity and jeopardizing their career prospects and development. Taking an older sibling out of school also has clear implications for gender inequality as it is often older sisters that are taken out of school to provide care. This has a “negative impact on their long term educational opportunities, and it reduces their prospects for decent work opportunities” (Cassirer and Addati, 2009: 15).

It is also evident in the study conducted by Odingi *et al* (2008) that women’s paid employment outside of the home has created changes in the division of domestic labour as well as a re-organisation of child-care and parental responsibilities within the home and family. Thus men “work inflexible and long hours and women continue to bear the major responsibility within the home and in particular children duties, which limit their ability to take up paid employment or even lessens their chances of getting training” (Odingi *et al*, 2008:2).

“It is trite that family responsibilities and care obligations are responsible for placing obstacles in the way of the advancement of women in the work-place, particularly within senior ranks” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009:227). A highly-related assumption is that family responsibility is a ‘choice’ and a personal responsibility (Caproni, 2004; Lewis, 2003). In the workplace it is often assumed that human resources policies can

provide flexibility and enhance 'choice', thereby solving work-life balance issues, without the need for systemic change to cultures, structures and practices.

2.11 Perceptions of Fathers at Work

Traditional family roles have changed significantly in the past few decades. Both partners are now able to participate in the labour market as dual family income earners and play an active role in the care of their children. Despite that fact that much of the focus in addressing the work-life balance has been on the needs of women; many European organisations have introduced family friendly practices that are available to both male and female workers; however men are often reluctant to access these entitlements (Department of Consumer and Employment Protection [DCEP], 2007).

In addition to this, "the perspective of the work-family conflict suggest that even though women are being responsible for both the productive and the care economy, South African women still work longer hours than men, when both market and non-market activities are taken into account" (Mokomane, 2009: 46). Among other things, this hampers women's ability to participate in other potentially life-enhancing activities such as engaging in income-generating and skills building projects, furthering their education, and attending to other social relationships (Mokomane, 2009). Different cultural expectations may also be imposed on men in the workplace.

According to the DCEP (2007: 536), "the most significant step that employers can take in retaining fathers is to recognise the importance of providing father friendly work environments, and to challenge assumptions that work life balance does not apply to men". This can also help the organisation to achieve resilience and commitment as a family-friendly environment can improve employees' wellbeing.

Management attitudes towards the creation of a family-friendly environment play a major role, as employees will need management approval and support prior to making use of family-friendly policies within the organisation. Even if companies were to adopt paternity leave policies that are more generous than the provisions of the

BCEA, men would still have to overcome the significant attitudinal barriers of their employers.

In Cunningham's (2001: 45) study on paternity leave, when asked "what is a reasonable amount of time for a father to take off from work upon birth or adoption of a child, 63 percent of 1,500 chief executive officers and human resource directors said 'none'". Levine and Pittinsky (1997) found that most fathers would rather use sick leave and vacation leave to spend time with their new-borns.

Contrary to the provisions of the BCEA, some men still believe in the cultural constructs that outlaw any care-giving by fathers as it is believed to be women's domain. These cultural constructs may pressurise men to take unpaid leave rather than having to explain to their employers why they want to take family responsibility leave. Even though this may be an alternative for many fathers, it is often financially impossible to take unpaid leave, especially when the household has already lost a spouse's income due to her taking extended leave.

2.12 Some Barriers and Entitlements of Fathers at Work

Apart from cultural constructs, other barriers hinder the provision of a family-friendly environment for fathers in many organisations. Smit (2006) established that extended working hours that are normally observed in inflexible work practices can contribute to some of the obstacles listed below. The study found that "the average number of working hours per day that the man spends at work only stand in a significant (negative) relationship with the extent to which the man demonstrates paternal involvement ($p = 0.005$)" (Smit, 2006: 407). This negative relationship is not startling and corresponds with the work of Caproni (2004: 28), who identified the "rigidity of long working hours as one of the important obstacles in the incidence of greater levels of father involvement". According to the DCEP (2007: 589), some of these obstacles "include:

- ❖ Attitudes on the part of management and individual supervisors that family-friendly policies only apply to women;
- ❖ A lack of understanding of eligibility for entitlements;

- ❖ A culture in which commitment is equated with long hours in the workplace;
- ❖ Restrictions on the use of family-friendly practices in workplaces where performance is either rewarded or measured solely by production outcomes; and
- ❖ Inflexible work practices that unnecessarily prevent fathers from playing a more active role in child rearing”.

The minimum entitlements that can apply to fathers in the workplace include:

- ❖ Provisions on reasonable hours of work. These are regulated by Section 7 of the BCEA with specific reference to 7 (c) which states that every employer must regulate the working time of each employee “with due regard to the family responsibilities of employees”. Section 9 of the BCEA stipulates normal hours of work as 45 hours a week; nine hours on any day if the employee works five days, or eight hours a day if the employee works more than five days a week. In terms of the Act, an employer may not require or permit an employee to work more than these stipulated ordinary hours of work.
- ❖ Carer’s leave. This is a time-off for fathers (paternity leave) at the time of the birth of a child; it is not recognised in terms of South African labour legislation; rather, it is “unsatisfactorily combined into a catch-all leave provision known as family responsibility leave” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 33).
- ❖ Parental leave. This refers to time off often taken to provide care during the early years of a child’s development. There is no statutory right to parental leave in South Africa.

2.12.1 Father-Friendly Work Arrangements

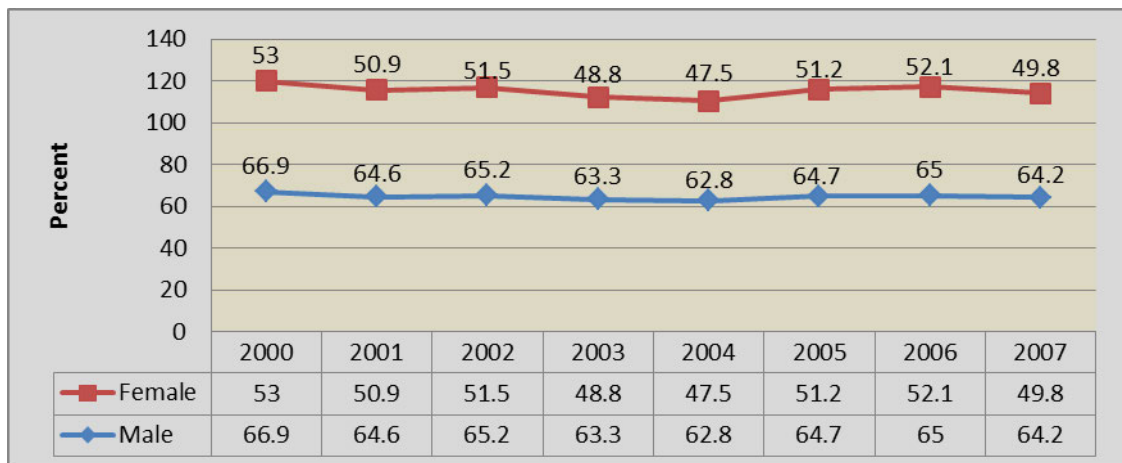
There is a wide range of successful family-friendly policies in different parts of the world, which employers can make available to employees. However, if employers

consider implementing these policies, they must first consider the guidelines of the BCEA and compatibility with their respective collective agreements.

Employers should consider “whether their employment practices or expectations are unnecessarily impacting on fathers” (DCEP, 2007: 590). Often, small steps can be of considerable benefit in retaining quality employees. For instance, in countries with low rates of female labour force participation, the legislation would be aimed at employees with care responsibilities (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010).

South Africa has a high female labour force participation rate, which puts a burden on the male labour force to be responsible not only to work, but to provide care for the family. Figure 2.4 below demonstrates the difference between female and male labour force participation in the South African labour market from 2000 to 2007 (Stats-SA, 2009).

Figure 2.4: Labour Market Participation for Males and Females



Stats-SA (2009). Labour Force Survey: Historical Revision, September Series 2000 to 2007. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa

Figure 2.4 above shows that women’s labour force participation dropped by 3 percent between 2000 and 2007 (Stats-SA, 2009). However, male labour force participation dropped by less than 2 percent (Stats-SA, 2009). It would have been expected that women’s labour force participation should have gained momentum as it is supported by affirmative action policy.

The EEA aimed to eradicate unfair discrimination in any form, including hiring, promotion, training, pay, benefits and retrenchment in organisations. “It further outlines measures to encourage employers to undertake organisational transformation and to speed-up the training and promotion of individuals from historical and previously disadvantaged groups” (Nel, Swanepoel, Kirsten, Erasmus and Tsabadi, 2005: 138). Previously disadvantaged groups include women.

As noted previously, South African women have been “subjected to various kinds of discriminatory behaviour, attitudes and policies, whether intended or unintended, which have hampered their full integration into the labour market” (Mokomane, 2009: 84). It is evident that the implementation of various policies and legislation has greatly improved this situation since 1994.

For example, data from Statistics South Africa (2007) show that the female labour force participation in the country increased from just under 40 percent in 1995 to 49.9 percent in 2007, and that while the number of both men and women who were working or willing to work increased over the 2000- 2007 period, “the increase in the female labour force was greater, accounting for almost 58 percent of the growth in the labour force compared to men’s 42.3 percent” (Stats SA, 2009: 15). Despite a slight general decrease in recent years as shown in Figure 2.4, the participation of females is still lower than that of males. It remains “relatively high at around 52.1 in 2006 and 49.8 in 2007” (Stats SA, 2009: 15).

2.12.2 Reasonable Hours of Work and Effects on Care

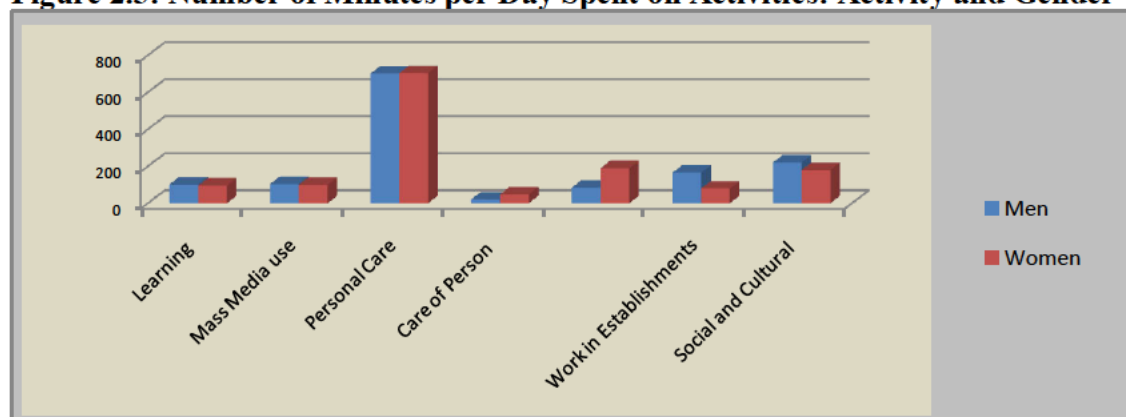
Long hours of work with little flexibility can lead to an increase in employee turnover. Work cultures that emphasise long hours create an environment that is less attractive to potential employees. For many male employees, a higher wage cannot compensate for time away from their families. In South Africa, “women-participation in labour market has grown tremendously; thus, it has reduced the unemployment rate from 26.5 percent in 2000 to 24.3 percent in 2007” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010: 46). Furthermore, the “data from the World Bank show that the proportion of South African women in waged employment in the non-agricultural sector grew by 0.4

percent from 42.7 percent in 2004 to 43.1 percent in 2007; thus showing positive progress in the achievement of Millennium Development Goal three” [3].

From the perspective of work-family conflict, the changes suggest that due to their being responsible for both the productive and the care economy, South African women work longer hours than men, when both market and non-market activities are taken into account. The average number of hours worked by female employees in South Africa has increased since their expanded participation in the labour market, taking into account their non-market activities.

According to Mokomane (2009), this hampers women’s ability to participate in other potential life-enhancing activities such as engaging in income-generating and skills building projects, furthering their education, and attending to other social relationships. The data collected by Budlender, Chobolokoane and Mpetsheni (2001: 63) shows that each day, “an average women in South Africa spends more than double the time men spend on household maintenance and care of persons, but much less time than men on learning, social and cultural activities, and mass media use”. Figure 2.5 below demonstrates these gender inequalities.

Figure 2.5: Number of Minutes per Day Spent on Activities: Activity and Gender



Budlender, D., Chobolokoane, N., and Mpetsheni, Y. (2001)

Figure 2.5 above demonstrates the gender inequalities that are evident in the current employment landscape in South Africa. This is very pertinent in a country that has experienced a growth of women participation in the labour market of “more than 12 percent between 1995 (38 percent of women participation in the labour market) and

2008 (51.2 percent of women participation in the labour market)” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009: 46).

This trend of activities shown in figure 2.5 above, clearly demonstrates that a work-family policy is a less prominent political issue than is the case in other countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States of America and many European countries. According to Dancaster and Baird (2008: 45), “the measures for reconciliation of work and family in South Africa are inadequate; this shows the need for an increased state intervention”.

Measures to reconcile work and family in South Africa do not normally appear on the agendas of current politicians. It is however important to note that South Africa has certain obligations arising from its ratification of international instruments such as:

- ❖ CEDAW (The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women),
- ❖ The recently adopted Southern African Development Community’s protocol on gender, and
- ❖ The relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions.

In analysing the statutory routes to workplace flexibility, Hegewisch, and Gornick (2008) provide four ways in which employee-caregivers can be supported by statutory alternative working rights:

- ❖ A gradual return to work on a part-time basis after the birth or adoption of a child; this is usually for a set period with the right to return to the same or equivalent job at the end of it, with some financial compensation to make up for the loss of earnings.
- ❖ Parental leave for the parents of younger or disabled children once the employee has returned to work, which may be taken in the form of a reduction in working hours, or in blocks. Such arrangements are also job-protected and generally include an allowance for loss of earnings.

- ❖ Reduced hours or other alternative working arrangements for parents of younger or disabled children, without compensation and, though not in all countries, without a right to return to previous working hours.
- ❖ The right to refuse overtime or shift patterns that are incompatible with care responsibilities.

In terms of the four statutory routes to workplace flexibility outlined above, only the right to refuse overtime exists in South Africa through provisions requiring consent to overtime in the BCEA.

2.12.3 Flexible Working Time and Training

A central issue in addressing the work-life balance is providing flexible working hours. This could be as simple as having flexible start and finish times, which suit both the business and the employee. Employers could prescribe the core hours of the day when employees are required to be at work and give employees flexibility within the non-core hours. Razaket *al* (2010: 156) “believe that such flexibility allows employees to meet regular or unexpected family commitments without penalties, provided the missing hours are made up within a specified time period”.

In contrast, “inflexible working times or requirements might be responsible for creating intolerable working conditions for an employee juggling family responsibilities and could lead to the employee’s constructive dismissal” (Dancaster and Cohen, 2009: 232). Employers can avoid this by allowing some employees to regularly start and finish earlier, and others to start and finish later. This could suit employees with childcare responsibilities, and provide a longer span of operating hours for the employer and clients. Roster arrangements should generally be made in consultation with employees, taking into consideration the work requirements and employees’ family responsibilities.

Razaket *al*’s (2010: 140) study in Malaysia established that “training and development courses which are scheduled to start early or late in the day, during

school holidays, or are residential (live-in), can place an additional burden on employees with family responsibilities”. Employers need to consider the normal working hours of employees and school holiday periods when organising training and courses or meetings. They should also provide employees with as much notice as possible to enable them to make alternative arrangements, such as child care, should the need arise.

Razaket *al* (2010: 126) also found that “part time work can be arranged to suit employers and employees”. Part time work in general is an excellent way to tap the pool of talented employees who, for whatever reason, are unable or unwilling to work a full week. This arrangement is ideal for meeting peak workload periods, and can enable fathers to cater for the needs of their families.

Razaket *al* (2010: 25) “suggest that two part time employees could also share a full time job on a regular on-going basis, sharing the duties, pay, holidays and other benefits associated with a single job”. A job can be shared in a number of ways. Employees could share the same workload, have a divided workload or have discrete jobs. The arrangement should result in the position being staffed on a full time basis.

Josias (2005: 23) observed that, as a result of “advancing technology, telecommuting or home based work is becoming a more viable alternative to the traditional site based office”. Through the use of the internet, emails and mobile telephones, employees can maintain contact with their employer and effectively manage their workload at home the same way that they would in the workplace. Home-based work options enable employees to work from home on a full time, part time, or temporary basis. The amount of time that employees spend in the workplace and in their home office will depend on the requirements of their position.

Home-based work can take many forms, such as full time work at home, one day a week at home, or half days at home every working day. Arrangements could be made for the employee to come into the office for a few hours each week for staff meetings and the allocation of work.

2.12.4 Purchased Leave and the Introduction of Paid Paternity Leave

Employers “can allow fathers to work on a full time basis at reduced pay and take additional self-funded, paid leave during the year” (Thomson, 2007: 45). The income earned for the actual time worked (including accrued paid annual leave) is averaged and paid over the full year. This provides a steady, but reduced income and additional leave.

There is no limit to the combination of work and leave that can be designed. This arrangement is useful for fathers needing additional time off to attend to children during school holidays. This may also suit employers if such periods are usually quiet.

Paid paternity leave could be an attractive option for new fathers. It is only relevant for working fathers a few times in their careers, yet could provide a key incentive to remain with an employer. According to Thompson (2007), care-giving plays a key role in a long-term, supportive system and is an emerging workplace concern. However, many fathers will not ask for help, in part because they do not define themselves as a caregiver until some critical event changes their life situation.

Thompson (2007: 48) noted that most “existing research focuses on mothers, with fathers viewed as distant figures in care giving”. Little is known about fathers as caregivers, especially gay men, men from communities of colour, and low-income men. The term ‘care giving’ is a label imposed from the outside; most fathers who care for special needs children do not refer to themselves as ‘caregivers’, rather, they think of themselves simply as ‘father’ or ‘dad’, and view caring for their children as being a normal part of that role.

Other research suggests that men adapt to care-giving with fewer adverse impacts on their physical and mental health than women. For example, “some studies indicate that male caregivers experience less caregiver burden, less anxiety, less role engulfment, and a greater ability to take respite time than do women caregivers” (Thompson, 2007: 38).

Thompson (2007: 23) emphasised that “men provide 40 percent of the nation’s unpaid care work and more men (58 percent) than women are involved in long-distance care

giving”. Like their female counterparts, most male caregivers experience some disruptions in their lives, particularly with respect to work, social activities, and financial well-being. Studies also reveal that “male caregivers do not verbalise their feelings as willingly as women, and may fail to disclose their burdens to friends, co-workers, physicians, and others” (Smit, 2006: 45). Some male caregivers are embarrassed about helping their wives/partners with personal hygiene and daily activities.

2.13 Work-Family Synergy

There is increasing recognition that positive outcomes can also accrue from participation in both work and family roles (Beutell, 2005; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). This concept has been referred to as work-family facilitation (Hill, 2005), “positive spill over” (Grywacz and Marks, 2000: 56), “positive balance, enrichment” (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006: 90), and “synergy” (Beutell, 2005: 26). In contrast to the conflict perspective that views work and family as being on a collision course, resulting from time, strain and behaviour sources (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985: 15), “the synergy approach argues that multiple role participation has beneficial effects for the individual and the family, enhancing the quality of life”. As such, a positive relationship between the work-family synergy and life satisfaction would be expected.

There is some evidence to support this relationship. Hill (2005: 46) found that “work-to-family and family-to-work facilitation were each positively and significantly related to job satisfaction and life satisfaction”. Similarly, Beutell (2005: 189) “found that an overall measure of work-family synergy was significantly related to life satisfaction”. Research on the positive aspects of engaging in work and family roles, including antecedents and consequences, is in its infancy, having been overshadowed by the prevailing conflict paradigm. The work-family synergy is not the opposite (or absence) of work-family conflict; hence work and family are not always at odds.

There is evidence that work and family can sometimes complement or facilitate each other. This is sometimes called ‘positive spill over’ and, as shown by Hill (2005), can occur in the form of moods, skills, behaviours, and values. “Positive spill over refers

to experiences in one domain that transfer to another domain, causing the two domains to be similar” (Rothbard, 2001: 425).

It is also important to note that the lessons learned on the job may also allow one to be a better parent. Further, there is evidence that people who engage in multiple roles have an improved sense of well-being. Hill (2005) suggests that this may occur because one domain may serve as respite from a hectic or stressful time in the other, thus allowing one to face another day refreshed.

2.14 Conclusion

There are a number of policy perspectives that could drive legislation on flexible working arrangements in South Africa, including the need to address high unemployment rates; develop skills through lifelong learning initiatives; provide measures to increase female labour participation, which still lags behind that of males; the need to assist families in the provision of care, particularly in the light of the HIV/AIDS crisis and the need to provide measures to accelerate affirmative action. It is acknowledged, however, that legislation is not the only vehicle by which to reconcile work and care.

Government’s willingness to change legislation may, to some extent, depend on its assessment of whether or not the regulatory forces of collective bargaining or business case arguments have produced employer responses to accommodate work-family integration, including the right to request flexible working arrangements. It has been noted that in countries like France, the role of the state in reconciling family responsibilities and employment has long been acknowledged, but that it is only more recently that this has occurred in the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom (Lewis, Knijn, Martin, and Ostner, 2008).

In South Africa, the state has been reluctant to recognise its role in work-family reconciliation. This can perhaps be attributed to the tripartite nature of the South African labour market which makes it difficult for one party to make a unilateral change in policy. This is in contrast to findings that indicate that countries in Europe are increasingly making work-family reconciliation policies part of their policy goals

and instruments of employment reform (Lewis *et al*, 2008). Inadequate leave provisions and the absence of flexible working options through legislated rights mean that employees who are caregivers in South Africa are forced to rely on the willingness of employers to implement work-family reconciliation measures, or have to use their own resources to pursue claims for unfair discrimination based on family responsibilities.

Relying on employer goodwill to adopt work-family arrangements fails to acknowledge that workplace cultures do not change easily. Even in countries such as Germany and the United Kingdom, where work-family reconciliation was more in the spotlight than it is in South Africa, the evidence indicates that such arrangements were only sporadically available (Hegewisch and Gornick, 2008). The slow and haphazard pace of change towards work flexibility in the context of care giving means that organisations run the risk of employing individuals who are working below their potential or who will leave employment altogether. The costs of such loss of human capital are not only felt by individual employers, but by the economy as a whole.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research involves the application of various methods and techniques in order to create scientifically obtained knowledge by using objective methods and procedures (Welman and Kruger, 2003). This chapter presents the philosophical approach, methods and design employed in the study. The methodological approaches are explored with specific reference to the focus of the study, objectives, ethical issues and confidentiality, sampling techniques, and the description of the sample, data collection methods and psychometric properties. It concludes with the statistical techniques used for data analysis.

Research philosophy “contains important assumptions about the way in which the world is viewed by the researchers” (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007: 101). Understanding the research philosophy for this study helps the researcher to choose the appropriate research methodology. It is also helps in clarifying the strategies for the research; thus allowing the researcher to evaluate different aspects of the research methodology.

3.2 Research Philosophy

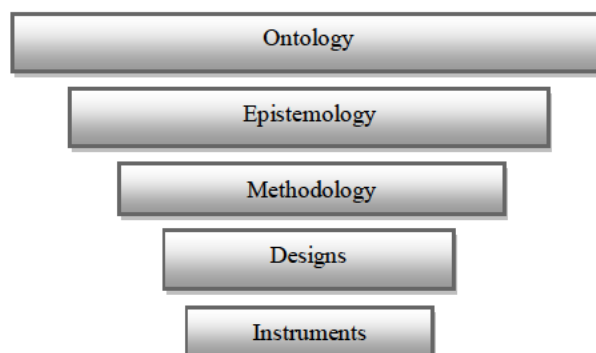
The research philosophy is the beliefs regarding the manner in which data relating to the phenomenon under study is likely to be collected, analysed and interpreted (Levin, 1998). There are diverse kinds of research philosophies and all are used to interpret and understand research problems (Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz, 1998). To interpret and understand the world in which people live there is a need to observe “ways of viewing and ways of interpreting in order to have a full understanding of the multifaceted ideas, facts, and events” (Limpanitgul, 2009: 3). The world of social science can therefore be understood and construed through many schools of thoughts.

The philosophical research approaches comprise of ontology, epistemology and methodology. According to Sarantakos (2005), ontological, epistemological and methodological prescriptions of social research are packaged in paradigms which guide everyday research. Ontology refers to the “nature of reality” (Saunders *et al*, 2007: 108). Ontology is intrinsic to the way in which social researchers observe the world and this is intimately connected to the ways in which their research is carried out. “Social researchers are guided by the perspective of knowledge they adhere to and this informs the concepts they subsequently develop” (Saunders *et al*, 2007: 108).

Epistemology looks at what comprises adequate knowledge in the area of study. Central to the epistemological approach is the question of whether the “approach in the study of the social world is similar to the approach used in the study of natural science”. (Saunders *et al*. 2007: 102). The main focus of epistemology therefore, is to provide the philosophical foundation which legitimises knowledge and the framework for a process that will be produced through a rigorous methodology (Saunders *et al*. 2007).

Unlike ontology, epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and what constitutes acceptable knowledge in the field of study; whereas ontology focuses on the nature of social phenomena as entities that are to be admitted to a knowledge system (Saunders *et al*. 2007). However, both influence the structure and process of social research. As shown in Figure 3.1, ontology and epistemology influence methodology, and this guides the choice of research designs and instruments.

Figure 3.1: The foundations of research



Sarantakos, S (2005) *Social Research: 3rd Edition*

As shown in Figure 3.1 above, ontologies inform methodologies as to the nature of reality, or to what social research is supposed to study, whereas epistemologies inform methodologies about the nature of knowledge or about what counts as a fact and where the knowledge is sought (Sarantakos, 2005). Following these instructions, methodologies finally prepare packages of the appropriate research design to be employed by researchers, instructing them where to focus their research activity, and how to recognise and extract knowledge.

3.3 Research Design

Research design prescribes the “logical sequence in which the study is to be carried out, as well as the elements of the study, its methods of data collection and analysis and all administrative procedures that need to be considered for the study to be carried out without problems or delays” (Sarantakos, 2005: 212). It provides an overall guide for the collection and analysis of the study data.

Welman and Kruger (2003:2) state that “research involves the application of various methods and techniques in order to create scientific knowledge by using objective methods and procedures”. Thus a research design clearly indicates the data collection methods, either within a quantitative or qualitative methodology, as well as the techniques for data collection such as questionnaires.

This study examines the extent to which male employees are making use of family responsibility leave and their knowledge about it. Taking this into consideration, it would have been inappropriate for this study to have used a qualitative approach as opposed to a quantitative one. A qualitative approach is not designed to evaluate the extent to which a researcher can generalise from an existing theory; in fact, this approach binds the researcher to a process of falsification (Thietart, 2001). The reasoning behind this is that the researcher would have intended to refute the theory rather than validating it in any way. A quantitative approach, on the other hand, offers a greater assurance of objectivity. This is solely based on its strictness and the precision of statistical techniques that it offers (Silverman, 1993). Moreover, the quantitative approach is grounded in the positivist paradigm as discussed above, hence the choice of this approach in this study.

The choice of research design “reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process” (Bryman and Bell, 2007: 40), and this, of course, has had considerable influence on lower-level methodological procedures such as sampling and statistical packages. The research design is therefore a blueprint that enables researchers to find answers to the questions being studied for any research project. Along with a clear research plan it exposes constraints and ethical issues that a study will inevitably encounter and that must also be taken into account (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

3.4 Sampling Design

There are two major types of sampling designs: probability and non-probability sampling. Probability is defined as the “situation where elements in the population have a known chance of being chosen as subjects in the sample” (Sekaran, 2003: 270). Probability sampling is most commonly associated with survey-based research strategies where there is a need to make inferences from the sample about the population in order to answer the research questions or to meet the research objectives (Saunders *et al*, 2007). In probability sampling, the elements in the population have some known chance or probability of being selected as a sample subject. In non-probability sampling, the elements do not have a known or predetermined chance of being selected as subjects (Sekaran, 2004).

There are approximately 1 615 male employees at eThekweni Electricity. Taking the time frame and cost factors into account, not every employee was requested to fill in the questionnaire. Nonetheless, there were subgroups of elements within which the different parameters on variables of interest to the researcher were expected. Therefore, probability sampling was chosen as the sampling design for this research study as the representativeness of the sample was of importance. “Probability samples have the major advantage for allowing the researcher to determine the degree to which different samples estimates (e.g. means) will differ from each other and from the true population parameter” (Durrheim and Painter, 2007: 136). The statistical laws of probability applied in this sampling design thus allowed the researcher to calculate the degree of error associated with using a sample to estimate a property of the population (Durrheim and Painter, 2007).

It is noted that sampling is “the selection of a fraction of the total number of units of interest to decision makers for the ultimate purpose of being able to draw general conclusions about the entire body of units” (Parasuraman, Grewal, and Krishnan, 2004: 356). In this study, the population consisted of lower level staff, semi-skilled workers, specialised, skilled employees and management. These categories are further outlined below in table 3. 1.

Table 3.1: Job Description and Levels

Semi-Skilled and Discretionary	Skilled Technical and Academically Qualified	Professionally Qualified and Experienced
Decision Making	Qualified Workers (Junior Management)	Specialists and Middle Management
TK 04-08	TK09-13	TK14 and Above
Level 5	Level 4	Level 3
<u>NB:</u>TK as shown above defines the Task or Grade of the Job position		

All the above defined categories formed the respondents of the study who are specified in terms of qualifications as defined by Section 27 of the Basic Conditions of Employment (BCEA) Act No 75 of 1997. As per the requirements of this Act, only employees who work at least four days per week and who have been employed for more than four months are able to take family responsibility leave.

The study respondents of the study were selected using stratified random sampling. Sekaran (2003:271) defines “stratified random sampling as the process that involves a stratification or segregation, followed by random selection of subjects from each stratum”. The population is first divided into mutually exclusive groups that are relevant, appropriate, and meaningful in the context of the study. Stratification is an “efficient research sampling design, which provides more information with a given sample size” (Saunders *et al*, 2000: 221).

Due to the high volume of the population, it would have been difficult to survey the entire population due to financial and time constraints. Certain procedures need to be followed when constructing a sample design. The population was divided into strata in terms of departments, and then random sampling was instituted. Random sampling was used in order to avoid bias in the sample. The stratified random selection method ensures that each respondent has as much of a chance as any other respondent of being selected. In this study, the units in the populations were identified using the

existing staff establishment supplied by the Human Resource Department of the Electricity Unit.

3.4.1 Population

The population of this study consisted of male employees from the Electricity Department of the eThekweni Municipality. The Electricity Department has a total staff complement of 1 973, with the male workforce making up 1 615 of the total (Electricity Annual Report, 2009/2010).

3.4.2 Sample Size

The sample ($n=310$) consisted of only males from four different racial groups (Indian, White, African and Coloured) who are employed on a permanent basis. Subjects were pulled from the staff establishment of the Unit. According to the different “sample sizes” worked out by Sekaran (2003: 294), 310 is the correct sample size for 1 615 employees.

Statistically, it is difficult to collect data from the entire population; therefore it is rational to “select sufficient number of elements from the population so that a study of the sample and understanding of its properties or characteristics make it possible to generalise such properties or characteristics to the population elements” (Sekaran: 2003:266). It would be practically impossible to collect data from, or test or examine every element of the study. Studying a sample instead of using the whole population is likely to yield more reliable results. This is due to the fact that fatigue is reduced and there may be fewer errors when collecting data.

3.4.3 Sampling Technique

Probability sampling is defined as the situation where elements in the population have a known chance of being chosen as subjects in the sample (Sekaran, 2003: 270). Probability sampling can be either unrestricted (simple random sampling) or restricted (complex probability sampling).

Stratified random sampling is the “process that involves a stratification or segregation followed by random selection of subjects from each stratum” (Sekaran, 2003: 271). The population is first divided into mutually exclusive groups that are relevant, appropriate, and meaningful in the context of the study. According to Saunders *et al* (2007: 221), “stratification is an efficient research sampling design, which provides more information with a given sample size”.

Emorney and Cooper (1991) provide the following reasons why stratified random sampling is beneficial in the research process:

- ❖ To increase a sample’s statistical efficiencies;
- ❖ To provide adequate data for analysing the various sub-populations; and
- ❖ To enable different research methods and procedures to be used in different strata.

The population was firstly divided into meaningful segments such as job grades; thereafter subjects were drawn in proportion to their original numbers (Sekaran, 2003). The advantage of using this method was to reduce sampling errors, provide a focus to the sub-population, and narrow down the population by looking at the characteristics which offered value to the study.

Other probability sampling techniques could have been considered for this study. One such is ‘simple random sampling’. Simple random sampling is “simple to accomplish and is easy to explain as each element have exactly the same chance of being selected” (Durrheim and Painter, 2007: 134). Due to time and financial constraints, this sampling method is not appropriate as its process “could become cumbersome and expensive” (Sekaran, 2004: 270).

‘Cluster sampling’ is another form of probability sampling. In cluster sampling, the sampling frame is the complete list of the clusters rather than a complete list of individual cases within the population (Saunders *et al*, 2007). This method is normally used on a very large populations and this study does not have a very large population.

Finally, ‘systematic sampling’ presents an easier and more convenient alternative strategy. Rather than selecting each element randomly, “the principle in ‘systematic

sampling' is that the researcher calculates a fixed distance by calculating a 'sampling interval' until the required sample is reached" (Durrheim and Painter, 2007: 135). In this sampling design, the "telephone directory frequently serves as the population frame" (Sekaran, 2003: 271). Due to confidentiality, the employee's contact details could not be disclosed; therefore this method was not applicable to the study.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The study data comprised primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to "information obtained first hand by the researcher on the variables of interest for the specific purpose of the study whereas secondary data refers to information gathered from sources already existing, for example literature" (Sekaran, 2003: 219). Questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents at eThekwini Municipality's Electricity Department. Questionnaires were used as the main data collection instrument for this study because they enable a researcher to examine and explain relationships between constructs, in particular cause-and-effect relationships (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

This research study is a quantitative study aimed at analysing the policy governing employees' rights to family responsibility leave and paternity leave at the eThekwini Municipality. This study also explores the extent to which a selected sample of male employees from the eThekwini Municipality makes use of family responsibility leave. After careful consideration of the best way to obtain the information required, it was decided that assessing the numbers of male employees who use their family responsibility leave was the best method. This was achieved by conducting a survey.

The survey strategy allows the researcher to collect quantitative data which can be analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics (Saunders *et al*, 2007). The survey was used to study the extent to which male employees from the eThekwini Municipality make use of family responsibility leave. A "survey is a way to collect data from a wide range of respondents by asking questions and it is useful for capturing facts, opinions, behaviours or attitudes" (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005:182).

According to Saunders *et al* (2007:138), a, “survey is used for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way”. A survey is conducted to answer specific questions, test hypotheses or serve as an exploratory study. It is a method of gathering information from a particular group of participants using direct contact. This could either be through personal interviews, telephone interviews or questionnaires.

The questionnaire used in this study gave the researcher more control over the research process and since sampling was used, it became possible to generate findings that were representative of the whole population at a lower cost than if data had been collected from the whole population.

A “questionnaire is an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the variables of interest” (Sekaran, 2003: 236). In this research study, the use of family responsibility leave is the variable of interest based on age and marital status. Therefore, the likelihood of results being biased based on age, marital status and even the job ranking of the respondents is high; as a result, there was a need to safeguard against these biases.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire is “a pre-formulated set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives” (Sekaran, 2003:236). According to Sekaran (2003:238) “a well-designed questionnaire should focus on five principles which are: (1) the appropriateness of the content of the questions, (2) how questions are worded and the level of sophistication of the language used, (3) the type and form of the questions asked, (4) the sequencing of the questions, and (5) the personal data sought from the respondents. All five principles are important as they minimise bias in the research.

The structured questionnaire consisted of four sections and 45 questions. Section A focused on personal data which required respondents to tick the box that best reflected their details. Section B focused on the extent to which the municipality offers family

responsibility leave and paternity leave. In this section, the respondents were required to tick the box that best reflected their experience and knowledge.

Section C focused on respondents' perceptions about the use of family responsibility leave for paternity purposes. Participants were required to rate each statement on a five-point Likert-scale with 1 representing 'strongly agree' and 5 representing 'strongly disagree'. Section D focused on perceptions of fatherhood. This section had Likert-scale questions and questions relating to attitudes. Participants were required to tick the box that best reflected their perceptions and attitudes.

3.5.1.1 Advantages of questionnaires

The main advantage of choosing questionnaires over interviews when there is a large population becomes obvious when the cost per response is considered. Once questionnaires are developed, the costs of administering one additional questionnaire are very low. Questionnaires allow the researcher to get answers to the research questions posed (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005:186).

For the purpose of this study, the cost of making copies of the questionnaire was reasonable, and the administration of the questionnaire was also relatively easy as it was done over a period of five days. The researcher had the advantage of familiarity with the environment due to his employment in the department. Questionnaires were distributed to focus groups which typically consisted of 10 to 15 members. Some participants needed to have the questionnaires read out to them and filled on their behalf due to their literacy levels. The clarity of the questions contributed to a quick response because respondents knew what was expected of them; and the entire process took approximately 45 minutes.

Personally-administered questionnaires can establish "rapport and motivate respondents" (Sekaran, 2003: 236). Respondents' doubts can be clarified. Questionnaires often have a good response rate. Respondents' anonymity is protected. Using a questionnaire can help the researcher cover a wide geographic region. Closed-ended questions give the respondents fixed answers from which to choose and this helps to prevent respondents becoming bored because they have to provide long

answers that require explanation and a lot of thinking. Questionnaires can be administered electronically if desired and thus save time on delivery and collection. Respondents can answer at their convenience. In this study, some questionnaires were left with the department administrators to distribute and employees answered the questionnaire during their break times; this helped prevent interference with their duties.

3.5.1.2 Disadvantages of Questionnaires

Questionnaires are among one of the most widely used and valuable means of collecting data; however they do have some disadvantages. Unlike interviews, “there is less interaction with the respondents when questionnaires are used” (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005:186). Respondents often skip questions if they do not understand them or are bored. With questionnaires respondents cannot ask for directions, clarifications or prompts. This means that good questionnaire design is very important.

“Organisations may be reluctant to give up company time for the survey with groups of employees assembled in order to respond” (Sekaran, 2003:251). The response rate to questionnaires can be poor at times. Electronic questionnaires are always a challenge, as they require respondents to be computer literate and exclude illiterate employees. Respondents must be willing to complete the survey and they must have access to the facility. Furthermore, some organisations may not be willing to assist.

3.6 Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot test is to “refine the questionnaire so that respondents will have no problems in recording data” (Saunders *et al*, 2007:386). The questionnaire was piloted with employees from different departments in the organisation. This helped to address possible deficiencies in the questionnaire and the method of collecting data. Before the pilot study was conducted, it was intended that questionnaires would be left with the clerks in different departments to distribute. It was established during the pilot study that due to their literacy levels, some employees would need help in completing the questionnaire.

Furthermore, employees needed to be given the assurance that the study had nothing to do with their employer. Some participants expected some form of payment in return and the pilot study helped to identify such behaviours; the ‘focus group’ was seen as a platform to address them.

3.6.1 Pilot Sample

The sample of the pilot study was drawn from the main sample of the study. This was approximately 10 percent of the total sample size. The method used to select this sample was random stratified sampling. “Stratified sampling was used to ensure that every member of the population has the equal chance of being selected in relation to their proportion within the total overall sample size” (Denscombe, 2008: 14). In this pilot study, the sample size of 10 percent was drawn from the overall sample size of the study. Since the overall sample size was 310, the pilot sample size was 31. This was deducted from the sample, resulting in a total sample size of 279. Therefore, in terms of data analysis, only 279 questionnaires have been analysed to provide the representative results of the entire study.

3.6.2 Results of the Pilot Study

A few changes were effected to the questionnaires after the pilot study. The questions and the nature of the questions were not changed; the only changes made related to Section D of the questionnaire: ‘Perceptions about fatherhood’. This section was specifically designed for workers who have children; however, it was not specified as such in the questionnaire. During the pilot study, some employees asked whether they were supposed to fill in the questionnaires, particularly Section D, even if they have no children. This part had to be clarified and the following instruction was included: ‘To be filled by workers who have children only’.

3.7 Ethical Concerns

According to Sithole (2005), certain conditions should be met to ensure that the research is conducted with proper regard to ethical considerations. According to the author these considerations are to make sure that:

The participants are briefed as to the purpose of the research; participation is voluntary. Participants should be “informed of their right to refuse to participate and the anonymity of responses should be maintained” (Sithole, 2005: 51).

Participants were briefed by the researcher about the nature and the purpose of the research and it was emphasised that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before administering the questionnaire. In terms of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, all information shared by the participants will be kept private and confidential and will be retained by the supervisor of the study for a period of five years. The results are presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants.

3.7.1 Ethical Procedures

Before conducting the research, permission to access the organisation was requested and obtained from the Human Resources office. The managers of different departments and employees were informed about the research and its main purpose. Prior to the actual research being conducted, arrangements were made with different managers, who notified their staff. During the research process, employees were informed about confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation in the study. It was also made clear that the information would be used for academic research purposes only. Questionnaires were written in both isiZulu and English to accommodate those employees who do not understand English.

Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering and consent letter. The covering letter introduced the researcher and outlined the aims and objectives of the study, confidentiality, protection, anonymity and voluntary participation in the study. Instructions on how to answer the questions were included in the letter. During the research process in each department, employees of that department were gathered in one room; this made it easier for the researcher to verbally explain the purpose of the study and to assure employees of anonymity.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the “application of reasoning to understand and interpret the data that have been collected about a subject” (Zikmund, 2000: 66). ‘Data analysis’ involves reducing data to a form that can be interpreted to produce results. In this study, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the collected data and descriptive and inferential statistics were used. To reduce the possibility of getting wrong answers, attention had to be paid to reliability and validity.

3.8.1 Reliability

“Reliability of a measure indicates the extent to which it is without bias (error free) and hence ensures consistent measurement across time and across the various items in the instrument” (Sekaran, 2003: 203). In other words, the reliability of a measure is an indication of the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the “goodness” of a measure”.

The reliability of a measure is established by testing for both consistency and stability. Consistency indicates how well the items measure a concept. “Cronbach’s alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another” (Sekaran, 2003: 307). According to Sekaran (2003), Cronbach’s alpha is computed in terms of the average inter-correlations among the items measuring the concept.

In this study, Cronbach’s alpha was used to check the internal consistency of the scales. According to Pallant (2005), the closer Cronbach’s alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency. While different levels of reliability are required, depending on the nature and purpose of the scale, Pallant (2005) recommends a minimum level of .7.

Cronbach’s alpha values are dependent on the number of items in the scale. When there is a small number of items in the scale (fewer than ten), Cronbach’s alpha values can be quite small; however, this was not the case in this study as the items exceeded ten. Therefore, in terms of the reliability of this study, the most important figure is the alpha value.

3.8.2 Validity

Validity is defined as the evidence that the instrument, technique or process used to measure a concept does indeed measure what it purports to measure (Sekaran, 2003). For example, a test that is used to measure the extent to which the municipality offers family responsibility leave and paternity leave is valid if its scores are directly related to the high usage of such leave. Validity ensures the ability of a scale to measure the intended concept.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

Analysis involves reducing data to a form that can be interpreted to produce the results. In this study the SPSS was used to analyse the collected data and descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

3.9.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are the “analysis that aims to describe data by investigating the distribution of scores on each variable, and by determining whether the scores on different variables are related to each other” (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006: 558). Descriptive statistics include the numbers, tables, charts, and graphs used to describe, organise, summarise, and present raw data. They enable the researcher to describe and compare variables numerically.

3.9.1.1 Frequencies

“Frequency distribution is defined as a table summarising data for individual categories as well as a number of cases falling into them, so that specific values can be read” (Sekaran, 2003). The number of cases that fall in a particular category is known as the frequency in that category. “Frequency distributions summarise and compress data by grouping them into classes and recording how many data points fall into each class” (Saunders *et al*, 2007:423). They are a prerequisite for the various graphs used to display data and the basic statistics used to describe a data set, such as the mean, median, mode, variance, standard deviation.

3.9.2 Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics are used to draw conclusions about populations on the basis of data obtained from samples. They are used to “estimate the parameter, and to test the hypothesis” (Durrheim, 2006: 209). “Inferential statistics allow researchers to infer from the data through analysis of the relationship between two variables, differences in a variable among different subgroups; and how several independent variables might explain the variance in a dependent variable” (Sekaran, 2003:314).

3.9.2.1 Correlations

Correlation allows the researcher to “quantify the strength of the linear relationship between two ranked or quantifiable variables” (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:450). It describes how one variable is related to another; hence the hypothesis, which asserts the relationship between two variables, can be tested by means of this correlation. Pearson’s correlation was used to inter-correlate the data in the study.

Pearson’s correlation is used when there is a need to explore the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables (Pallant, 2005). This gives an indication of both the direction (positive or negative) and the strength of the relationship. According to Pallant (2005: 89), “a positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases, so does the other”. A negative correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other decreases.

It is important to consider the output as the size of the value of Pearson’s correlation (r). This can range from -1.00 to 1.00 . This value will indicate the strength of the relationship between two variables. Statistically, “a correlation of 0 indicates no relationship at all, a correlation of 1.0 indicates a perfect positive correlation, and a value of -1.0 indicates a perfect negative correlation” (Pallant, 2005: 90). How the values are interpreted is the big question and different authors suggest different interpretations; however, Cohen (1988) suggests the following guidelines:

$r=.10$ to $.29$ or $r=-.10$ to $-.29$	Small
$r=.30$ to $.49$ or $r=-.30$ to $-.49$	Medium
$r=.50$ to 1.0 or $r=-.50$ to -1.0	Large

These guidelines apply whether or not there is a negative sign in front of the r value. It is important to reiterate however, that the negative sign refers only to the direction of the relationship, not the strength. The strength of a correlation of $r=.5$ and $r=-.5$ is the same; it is only in a different direction.

3.10 Conclusion

Research methodologies play an important role in any research study. There are many research methodologies available to researchers; however, it is important that before conducting a research study, one carefully scrutinises the relevancy and appropriateness of the data collection methods. In this study, the perceptions and the population size of the employees are the most determining factors in selecting the appropriate data collection methods. With this in mind, questionnaires seemed to be the most appropriate and reliable data collection methods that would give the anticipated results. It is also important to consider appropriate methods of analysing data. The appropriate data analysis method was determined by the characteristics of the research design and the nature of the data collected. Therefore, the data analysis methods have been selected according to their appropriateness and relevance to data collection methods and the nature of the data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

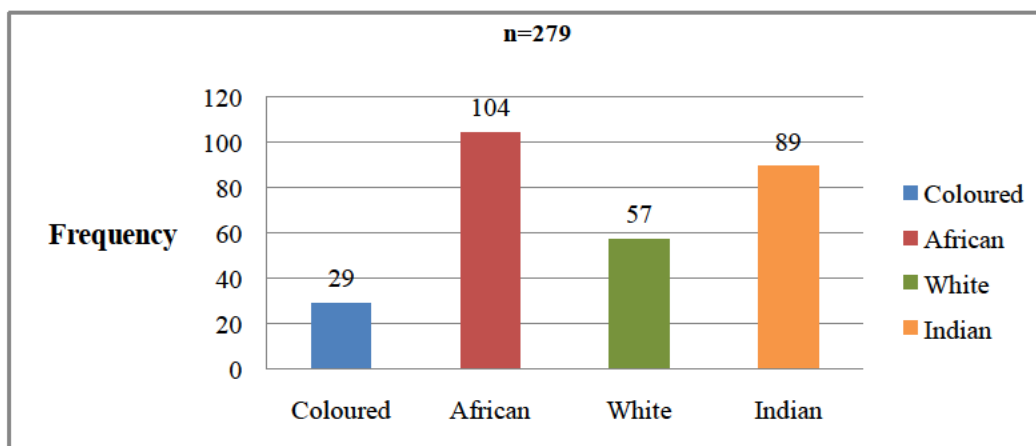
This chapter presents the findings from the study. It is important to note that the chapter only addresses findings that are most pertinent to the research questions. The chapter is divided into sections that follow the structure of the questionnaire. The first section presents the demographic information pertaining to the sample and the second addresses family responsibility and paternity leave and its provision by the municipality. The third part is dedicated to findings on perceptions of family responsibility and paternity leave. The final section examines perceptions of fatherhood. The following chapter, chapter 5, presents a discussion of the findings.

4.2 Response rate

Questionnaires were distributed through section managers and administrators. The initial sample size was 310; however 10 percent of this sample size was used as a sample for pilot study. As a result, $n=279$ was the remaining sample size for this study. A total of 279 questionnaires were distributed and all 279 were completed and returned, representing a 100 percent response rate.

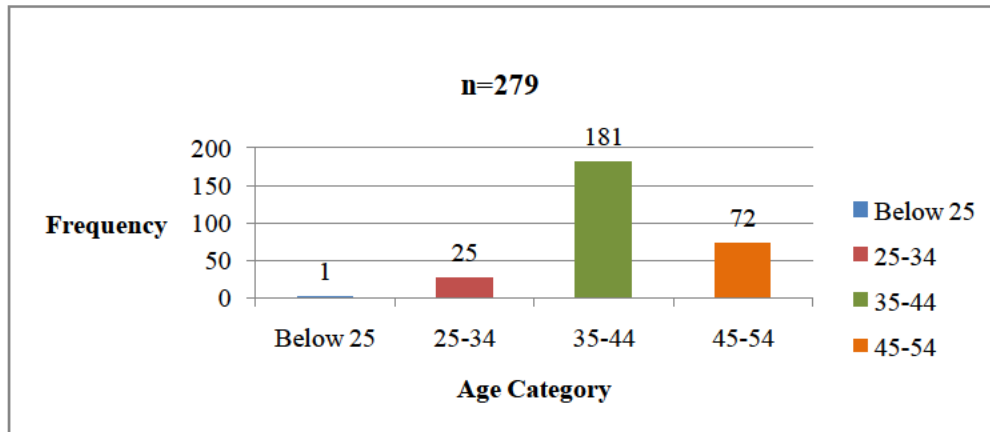
4.2.1 Sample Demographics

Figure 4.1: Respondents by Race



Twenty nine of the respondents are Coloured; 104 are African; 57 are White and there were 89 Indian respondents.

Figure 4.2: Respondents by Age



In terms of age, one respondent was below the age of 25; 25 respondents were in the 25-34 age group category; 181 were between 25 and 44 years old; and 72 were in the 45-54 age group range. Therefore the mean age of respondents in the sample was 25-44 years old. This is a reflection of the workforce at eThekweni Municipality’s Electricity Unit, where employees aged between 35 and 44 comprise the majority; hence the high participation of respondents in this age range.

4.3 The extent to which Municipality offers FR and Paternity Leave

Figure 4.3: Organizational Offering of FRL: Employees’ Knowledge

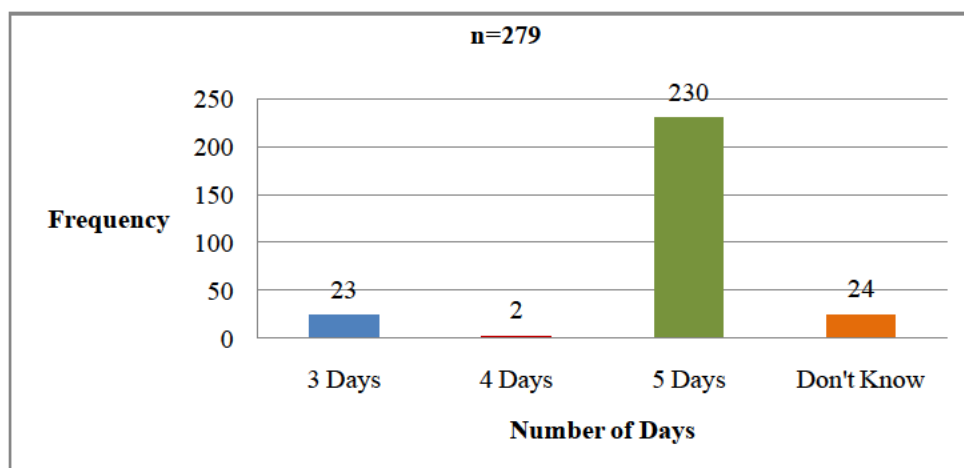


Figure 4.3 above illustrates the respondents' knowledge levels with regard to the number of days of family responsibility leave (FRL) and paternity leave offered by the organisation. It shows that 49 respondents are not sure of the number of days that the organisation offers for FRL. Of these 49 respondents, 23 respondents think that three days FRL is offered; two respondents think that the correct figure is four days and 24 do not know the number of days set aside for FRL by the organisation. However, the majority of the respondents are aware of how many days the organisation has set aside for FRL; this is reflected by the 230 respondents who answered that five days are available for FRL.

The use of FRL differs from individual to individual. The majority of the respondents (235) indicated that they would use FRL when their children are sick. The birth of a child was highlighted by 203 respondents as a reason to use FRL. It is interesting to note that a comparatively small number of respondents (61) indicated that they would use FRL on the death of a family member.

Table 4.1: Reasons to Use FRL

	Yes	No
Birth of Child	203	76
When Child is Sick	235	44
Death of Family Member	61	218

All (100 percent) of the respondents are permanent employees of the municipality; 98.2 percent have been with the Electricity Unit for more than a year. Generally, the respondents displayed a high level of awareness of the conditions attached to FRL. This is reflected by the 83.2 percent of the respondents who stated that they are clear on the requirements attached to FRL. Most (93.5 percent) of the respondents are eligible for FRL. Of those who are eligible, 76.3 percent reported having used FRL before. On the subject of FRL policy, 77.4 percent of the respondents are aware that their employer has a FRL policy in place, whilst 6.1 percent think that the employer does not a FRL policy. The remainder, 16.5 percent of the employees, are not aware of the existence of FRL policy in their organisation.

Figure 4.4: Uptake of FRL

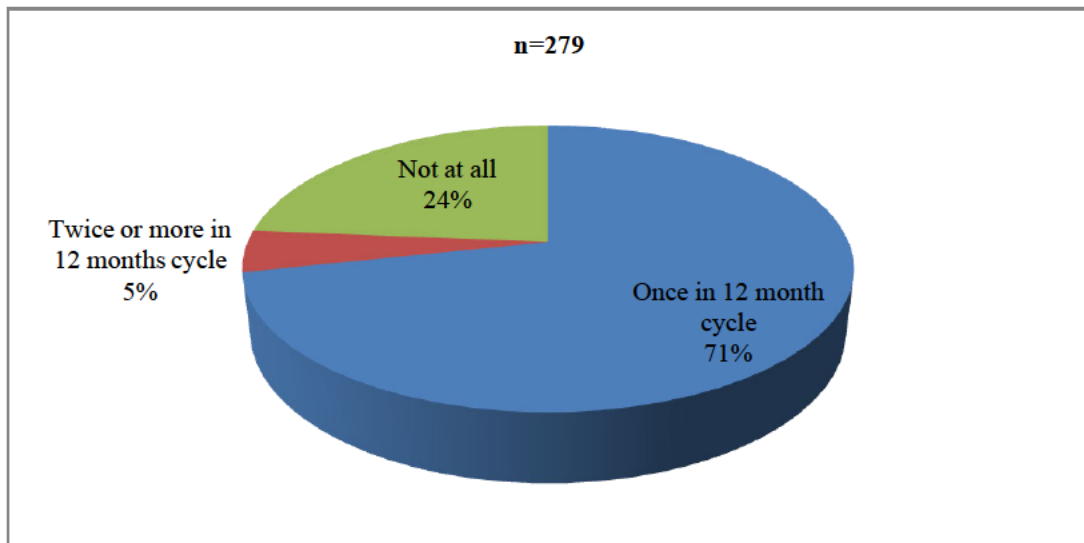
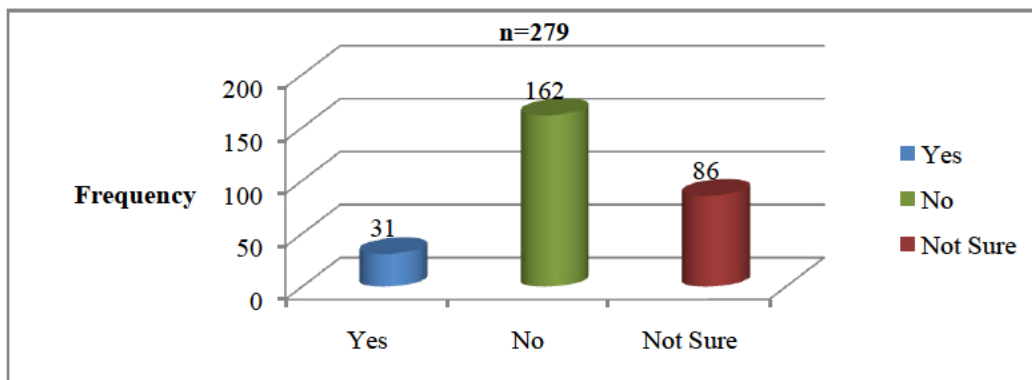


Figure 4.4 illustrates that 71 percent of the respondents indicated that they are more likely to use FRL once during a 12-month cycle, 5 percent highlighted that they are likely to use FRL more than once during a 12-month cycle and 24 percent of the respondents said they are likely not to use FRL provision during a 12-month cycle. From the responses, it emerges that the employees from the Electricity Unit have had a high (71 percent) uptake of FRL during a 12-month cycle.

Figure 4.5: Municipality is a Family-Friendly Environment



Asked whether the municipality offers a family-friendly environment, 31 respondents are of the opinion that it does, whilst a significant number of respondents (162) feel that it does not provide a family-friendly environment. The remainder (86) of the respondents are not sure on whether the municipality provides a family-friendly environment. With regard to training around FRL, a mere 2.2 percent of the

respondents stated that their employer offers training, while 31.5 percent indicated that it does not. The majority of the respondents (63.8 percent) are not sure if their employer offers FRL training.

4.4 Pearson’s Correlations

In terms of uptake of FRL by race, more Indian respondents than any other racial group have used FRL, followed by Coloured, Whites and lastly, African respondents.

Table 4.2: Pearson’s Correlations: Extent to which FRL is offered

n=279						
	Age	Marital Status	Clarity on the Requirements of FRL	Always Used FRL under Circumstances	Encouraging FFWA	Information or Training around FRL
Marital Status	-.064					
	.144					
Clarity on Requirements of FRL	-.420**	.067				
	.000	.132				
Always Used FRL under Circumstances	-.406**	.135*	.699**			
	.000	.012	.000			
Encouraging Family-Friendly Working Environment	-.119*	.090	.547**	.627**		
	.024	.067	.000	.000		
Information or Training around FRL	.077	-.015	-.307**	.196**	.014	
	.100	.400	.000	.001	.409	
Number of Children	.134*	-.212**	-.039	.064	-.166**	-.512**
	.012	.000	.258	.143	.003	.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Pearson’s correlation was also used in the study to ascertain the strength of the relationship between certain variables. In table 4.2 above, both the positive and the negative direction of relationships are indicated. There is a positive ($r = .135$; $p < 0.05$) relationship between marital status and the usage of FRL; this relationship is significant at the 5 percent level.

Policy guidelines or providing clarity on the FRL policy play a major role in that there is a strong positive ($r = .699$; $p < 0.01$) relationship between the provision of guidelines and the usage of FRL. This relationship is significant at the 1 percent level. Attending training on the FRL policy also seems to be the determining factor in the usage of FRL ($r = .196$; $p < 0.01$); this relationship is significant at the 1 percent level.

There is a high statistical probability ($r=.627$; $p<0.01$) that employees who are encouraged to make use of FRL when they need it are most likely to make use of this option. However, there is no significant relationship between the number of children an employee has and the usage of FRL ($r=.064$; $p>0.05$). There is also a significant ($r=-.420$; $p<0.01$) but negative correlation between age and clarity on the requirements to access FRL. This means that the older an employee gets, the more enlightened they become on FRL policy.

Table 4.3: Pearson’s Correlations: Extent to which FRL is offered and perceptions about FRL

n=279	
	Used Family Responsibility Leave Before
Encouraging Family-Friendly Working Environment	.560** .000
Information or Training around FRL	-.105* .040
Prefer the organisation that upholds the values of FFWE	-.027 .329
FRL Retention and Attraction	-.261** .000
FRL advancing commitment of working fathers	.094 .058
Equality between mothers and fathers	-.191** .001
FRL Equality in Care-giving	-.205** .000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

In Table 4.3 above, Pearson’s correlation was used to explore the perceived effect of other variables on intention or reasons to make use of FRL. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, and linearity. There was a strong, positive and negative, partial correlation between perceived control of these variables and perceived intention to make use of FRL

As illustrated above ($r=.560$; and $p<0.01$), Pearson’s correlations show a significant (at the 1 percent level) relationship between the usage of FRL by employees and their perception that the employer encourages a family-friendly working environment. Information or training on FRL and the usage thereof shows a significant but negative correlation ($r=-.105$; $p<0.05$), this relationship is significant at the 5 percent level.

There is no relationship between employees' preference for an organisation that upholds the values of a family-friendly working environment and the usage of FRL. There is a significant but negative correlation between the usage of FRL and employees' perceptions regarding FRL as a retention and attraction strategy ($r = -.261$; and $p < 0.01$). There is also a perception that the usage of FRL by working fathers creates some form of equality between working mothers and working fathers and equality in care giving ($r = -.191$; $p < 0.01$ and $r = -.205$; $p < 0.01$, respectively).

4.5 Perceptions about the use of FRL

Table 4.4: Perceptions about the use of FRL for paternity purposes

n=279				
Variables	The organisational support in the usage of FRL increases worker morale	I prefer working for an organisation that upholds the values of FFWE	Success of FRL in South Africa	FRL on Retention and attraction of staff in the organisation
Responses	%	%	%	%
Strongly Disagree	0 %	0 %	2.5 %	2.5 %
Disagree	0 %	2.5 %	62.0 %	5.4 %
Neither Agree or Disagree	6.1%	0 %	20.4 %	17.6 %
Agree	89.6 %	92.1 %	15.1 %	70.3 %
Strongly Agree	4.3%	5.4 %	0%	4.3 %

Table 4.4 reveals that 89.6 percent of the respondents believe that “the organisational support in the usage of family responsibility leave increases worker morale”. A significant (92.1 percent) percentage of the respondents indicated that they prefer to work for an organisation that upholds the values of a family-friendly working environment. However, many still believe that FRL has not been successful in South Africa; 62 percent of the study respondents felt that FRL is not successful in the South African context. In terms of the impact of FRL on employee retention, 74.6 percent of the respondents feel that FRL has a positive impact on employee retention.

Table 4.5: Perceptions about the use of FRL for paternity purposes

n=279				
Variables	FRL advancing commitment of working fathers	FRL is aimed at enhancing equality between working mothers and fathers	FRL as transformational aspect in SA	FRL was designed to ensure equality in care giving
Responses	%	%	%	%
Strongly Disagree	0 %	2.5 %	0 %	0 %
Disagree	0.4 %	0.4 %	2.2 %	0.4 %
Neither Agree or Disagree	2.9 %	0.4 %	7.2 %	10.4 %
Agree	88.5 %	95.0 %	88.9 %	81.7 %
Strongly Agree	8.2 %	1.8 %	1.8 %	7.5 %

The study also sought to establish employees' perceptions about the use of FRL for paternity purposes. The majority (96.7 percent) of the respondents are of the opinion that the FRL policy has a positive impact in advancing the commitment of working fathers. Most respondents (96.8 percent) also believe that FRL enhances equality between working fathers and mothers. Regarding the perception that FRL is one aspect of transformation in South Africa, 90.7 percent of the respondents agreed that it is. FRL is also viewed by 81.7 percent of respondents as being designed to ensure equality in caregiving.

On the question of whether parenting is perceived as a big job for working fathers, 8.2 percent are undecided, 19 percent do not perceive parenting a big job for working fathers; and 69.5 percent of the respondents perceive parenting as a big job for working fathers. In contrast, 87.1 percent of the respondents perceive parenting as the best part of their life; only 4.7 percent do not perceive parenting in this way and 5 percent of the respondents are undecided on this variable. Seventy one percent of the respondents noted that parenting is harder than they thought it would be; only 15 percent disagreed with this statement and 10.8 percent were undecided.

4.6 Perceptions of fatherhood

When asked if they felt overwhelmed by being a parent, 18.3 percent of the respondents said that they do not feel overwhelmed, whilst 6.1 percent were undecided and 72.5 percent said that they do feel overwhelmed by being a parent. In addition, 73.1 percent of the respondents said that they do not have enough time for themselves, 7.9 percent were undecided and 15.8 percent said that, as much as they are parents, they still have time for themselves. The overwhelming majority (94.7 percent) of the respondents believe that children need a strong relationship with their fathers and a similarly high number (90 percent) believe they are good fathers. About 10 percent of the respondents believe that they cannot be seen as good fathers.

Table 4.7 Perceptions about fatherhood in relation to being a good father

Variables	I offer Financial Support	Teach about Life	Providing direct care	Providing Love	Providing protection	Authority Figure
Total Responses	270					
Missing	9					
Responses	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not important at all	0	0	0	0	2.6	0
Somewhat important	4.1	12.6	3.3	9.6	0.7	5.2
Very Important	95.9	87.4	96.7	90.4	96.7	94.8

Table 4.7 above presents perceptions about fatherhood by way of defining the important responsibilities attached to being a good father. The majority (95 percent) of the respondents believe that offering financial support is an important aspect of being a good father; only 4.1 percent believe this is not that important. 87.4 percent of

the respondents believe that teaching their children about life is an important aspect of being a good father; only 12.6 percent do not perceive this aspect of fatherhood to be important. Ninety six percent of the respondents perceive ‘providing direct care’ as an important aspect of being a good father; only 3.3 percent disagree.

Providing love is viewed as an important aspect of fatherhood by 90.4 percent of the respondents; 9.6 percent feel differently. 96.7 percent of the respondents feel that being able to provide protection to one’s child is an important aspect of being a good father, while 2.5 percent do not agree with this statement. Being a figure of authority was listed as an important aspect of fatherhood by 94.8 percent of the respondents; only 5.2 percent feel that this is not important.

The variables shown in table 4.7 above were also analysed. Only 3 percent of the respondents disagreed that part of being a father is to provide financial support. In terms of teaching their children about life, all the respondents view this factor as an important aspect of being a father. With regard to the provision of care to one’s child, all the respondents agreed. Similarly, all the respondents feel that providing love is an important part of fatherhood.

Table 4.8: Case Processing Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	Percent
Cases	Valid	270	96.8
	Excluded	9	3.2
	Total	279	100.0

In terms of the total case processing summary, as illustrated in table 4.8 above, out of the total questionnaires that were captured, 96.8 percent were valid and 3.2 percent were excluded from the analysis.

4.7 Reliability

Table 4.9: Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.768	45

Cronbach's alpha was used to check the internal consistency and reliability of the scales used. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.76, and is above 0.7; this indicates that the research instrument (questionnaire) has an internal consistency. It confirms that the research instrument provides a consistent and stable measure of the key variables of the study; therefore the scale is considered reliable.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study and the implications of the results for eThekwini Municipality's Electricity Unit. The chapter presents the different hypotheses that were tested and the findings.

H₁: The municipality provides family responsibility leave beyond that prescribed in the BCEA.

Research question: Whether the municipality provides family responsibility leave and paternity leave beyond that prescribed in the BCEA.

In terms of section 27 of the BCEA 75 of 1997, all employees are allowed three days of family responsibility leave (FRL) per annual cycle, which may not be denied unreasonably. This leave can be taken under the following circumstances:

- ❖ Due to the birth, death or illness of a child;
- ❖ Death of a spouse, life partner, parent, adoptive parent, adoptive child, grandchild or siblings.

The BCEA provides that this leave cannot be accrued and is not redeemable for any monetary value; if an employee resigns, they will not be owed the equivalent Rand amount as part of their remuneration package.

H₁ therefore, was seeking to confirm whether eThekwini Municipality's offering of FRL was beyond that prescribed in the BCEA. Two hundred and thirty of the respondents responded that the Municipality offers five days of FRL. This being the case; it can thus be argued that the municipality is offering more days than stipulated in the BCEA.

In terms of the results, the above hypothesis has proven to be correct. As stipulated in its Conditions of Service, eThekwini Municipality is committed to giving its

employees five days of FRL in a 12-month cycle, provided that they meet the minimum requirements. It is important to note that employees are aware of such offering and are thus encouraged by the employer not to abuse it.

The findings reveal that the offering of FRL is the significant predictor in the study. This is depicted in figure 4.3, which shows that a total of 230 respondents are aware of the FRL offering in the Municipality. This may be, amongst other reasons, the reason for the fact that the respondents, who are all male employees, do not agree that women are the primary care-givers. The increased participation of women in the labour market could be another reason.

These beliefs are in contrast with the findings of Kotze and De Villiers (2003: 21), who note that “there is a saliency placed on roles and the individual abilities to prioritise the roles”. They also do not concur with the theoretical assumption that role systems are inherently hierarchical and that management of such roles requires favouring one role over another (Kotze and De Villiers, 2003). In fact, the findings of this research study seem to contradict the literature that suggests that roles are merely based on cultural saliency.

These contradictions run parallel with competitive labour markets, the intensification of work and increased female labour force participation that have given rise to issues relating to work-family arrangements in the workplace. The literature also suggests that the scourge of HIV/AIDS has imposed an enormous burden of care on women, many of whom are battling to find ways to combine their care-giving with their employment in the labour market (Dancaster and Cohen, 2010). This does not suggest that the EEA has increased the pace of change and that all is perfect in the labour market. It merely suggests that a lot has changed since the inception of the EEA, even though there is still a need for increased state intervention in the form of legislation to speed-up women’s participation in the labour market.

Table 4.5 shows that that majority of the respondents have a favourable attitude to being involved in child-care; it is therefore arguable that is in contrast to the study conducted by Smit (2006), which observed that the workplace behaviour of fathers is aligned to the patriarchal model of the role of the husband and father. Table 4.7

illustrates that 96.7 percent of the respondents have shifted their role from that of being a mere breadwinner to that of a more active, nurturing father and marital partner as supported by Odingi *et al*'s (2008) study.

H₂: *Overall health, mental-emotional health, and physical health will be positively related to perceived (a) work-to-family development, (b) work-to-family efficiency, (c) family-to-work development, and (d) family-to-work efficiency.*

Research question: What are the perceived relationships between work-family facilitation and individual health?

Table 4.2 shows that the encouragement of a family-friendly working environment has a significant relationship with the usage of family responsibility leave by male employees. This relationship is at $r=.627$; $p<0.01$ level. On the other hand, the usage of family responsibility leave does not have significant relationship with the commitment of working fathers to child-care. This means that the commitment of working fathers to child-care will not necessarily be driven by the family responsibility leave policy. Furthermore, the results presented in Table 4.3 indicate that the two variables, family responsibility leave offers equality in care-giving and the usage thereof have a significant but negative relationship ($r= -.205$; $p< 0.01$).

Numerous explanations may be presented to explain the negative correlation between care giving and the usage of family responsibility leave. These could include:

1. Employees have a better understanding of their family's needs which may lead to higher usage of family responsibility leave.
2. Less or minimal interrogation by the employer when family responsibility leave has been taken is likely to encourage more employees to use this leave; or individual employees to use it more often when the need arises.
3. Marital status does not determine whether or not an employee qualifies for family responsibility leave. The municipality has common and uniform

conditions of service for employees with respect to family responsibility leave, and marriage is not a precondition for the usage of this leave.

As noted above, marital status does not predict the usage of family responsibility leave amongst the sampled employees. This is consistent with the research conducted by Alavi and Askapur (2003), who reported no significant difference in care giving between single and married personnel.

In terms of this result, it would seem that spousal support is somewhat related to work-family development and family-work development and *vice versa*. This concurs with the findings of a study conducted by Razak, Omar, and Yunus in Malaysia in 2010. This study examined the relationship between spousal support, parental demands and family involvement (family issues) and the two dimensions of work-family conflict (work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW)).

The results indicated that the two variables, parental demand ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.01$) and family involvement ($\beta = 0.11, p < 0.05$) were found to have positive and significant relationship with work interference. As for “family interference with work ($r^2 = 0.35, f\text{-change} = 18.50, p < 0.01$), it is indicated that only two variables which are spousal support ($\beta = -0.18, p = 0.01$) and parental demand ($\beta = 0.26, p < 0.01$) have a positive and significant relationship with family interference with work” (Razak *et al*, 2010: 31). Thus parental demand will be positively related to work-family (work interference with family and family interference with work). This answers the research question regarding the perceived relationship between work-family facilitation and individual health.

However, certain components of family responsibility/paternity leave should be considered when one is dealing with the ‘take up’ of this leave. According to Smit (2006: 407), “men who will make use of family responsibility/paternity leave, unlike men who will not utilise this option, will not only be more involved in domestic task responsibilities, child’s rearing and care-taking of their children, but will also be inclined to perform emotion work in the marriage and experience marital integration”. From the above discussion, it can be concluded that hypothesis two was supported.

Hypothesis two was fully supported in that overall family welfare such as emotional and physical health “was found to have a significant relationship with both work interference with family and family interference with work. Similar findings concerning overall family welfare and work interference with family have been reported by other researchers” (Aryee, Fields and Luk, 1999: 15). The relationship between overall family welfare and family interference with work is also consistent with previous studies (Frone, Yardley and Markel, 1997).

It may be conceived that in terms of this hypothesis, the results of this study did not yield findings parallel to those of other researchers; one plausible explanation is that, most municipal employees do not have the time and leisure to actively accommodate the needs of their children due to their heavy workload and job involvement driven by the economic necessity. Even though the Municipality has recognised the need to strengthen the family relationship and has designated Saturdays and Sundays as days of rest so that the family relationship and bond can be nurtured, some employees may not be able to take advantage of this because they need to be either on duty or on stand-by, even on public holidays to provide services to the rate-payers.

Even though it is envisaged that a work load is a fundamental constraint, many employees may feel that their spouses are playing a bigger role in bringing up their children than they are. This leads to work-family conflict. Maluleke (2012) writes on his Facebook status that “when I am told that my boy can now crawl, it makes me realise that being a man is unfair when it comes to raising a child; I missed another state of seeing my little prince do it, soon they will tell me that he can speak, and worse enough he will not be speaking my language”. This epitomises the plight of working fathers.

Raising children still remains the primary duty of mothers, with fathers viewed as distant figures that only provide financial support. The responsibility of taking care of children is an important part of married life. It is worth mentioning that despite South Africa being very advanced with regard to labour legislation, there is still no specific provision for paternity leave. The closest to paternity leave is found in Section 27 of the BCEA, which is ‘catch all’ family responsibility leave. In terms of this section, an employee is entitled to three days of family responsibility leave. If a father (biological

or adoptive) chooses to take his three days paid family responsibility leave at the time his child is born, he is not eligible for further paid family responsibility leave for that cycle.

It can be concluded therefore that work and family domains lead to a successful, happy life. McFarland (2004) believes that both the work and family domains lead to lower job and family stressors which lowers work-family conflict (in both directions)

H₃: The male employees at eThekweni Municipality will not make use of family responsibility leave or paternity leave even if it is offered.

Research question: Whether male employees at eThekweni Municipality make use of family responsibility leave or paternity leave if offered.

In terms of the above hypothesis, a number of questions were asked in order to understand whether employees would make use of family responsibility leave if it is offered. The questions included organisational support in the usage of family responsibility leave in relation to enhancing worker morale. This is in line with the imperative expressed in the CEDAW, to which South Africa is a signatory and ILO Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities, which South Africa has unfortunately not yet ratified as at 2012. 93.9 percent of the respondents agreed that organisational support in taking up family responsibility leave enhanced worker morale (Table 4.4). It can therefore be deduced that employees prefer an organisation that supports the usage of family responsibility leave.

The other question that was asked related to the employees' preference for an organisation that upholds the values of a family-friendly working environment. As shown in Table 4.4, 97.5 percent of respondents would prefer an organisation that upholds the values of family-friendly working arrangements. This concurs with Lancaster's (2009: 38) observation that, "real equality can be achieved only when the disproportionate burden on women to assume the burden of care and domestic responsibilities is acknowledged and when there are adequate measures to accommodate employees as care givers in the workplace".

With respect to the question of whether family responsibility leave contributes to a family-friendly working environment which in turn, will be a strategic tool for ‘talent management’, which plays a major role in attracting and retaining employees, 74.6 percent of the respondents believe that family responsibility leave will play a major role in retention and attraction (Table 4.4). Stoddard and Madsen (2009) established in their research that family-friendly working arrangements are an effective intervention that may have positive implications for career development, retention, and job satisfaction, which are linked to an increase in individual and organisational effectiveness. It is therefore clear that an organisation that has family-friendly work arrangements could be in a position to create a workplace characterised by constant improvement and efficiency, while promoting retention and employee job satisfaction. Furthermore, the study conducted by Fathers at Work (2007), revealed that “enabling fathers to spend time with their children before they go to bed or go to school and be able to attend significant events in their lives, can be a powerful retention tool in today’s labour market”.

Statistically, it is shown in Table 4.2 that there is a high statistical probability ($r=.627$; $p<0.01$) that employees who are encouraged to make use of family responsibility leave when needed are probably making use of such an option. It is further proven statistically that employees who receive training as a form of awareness regarding the usage of the family responsibility leave will most probably make use of this leave ($r=.196$; and $p<0.01$). It is therefore without any doubt that the null hypothesis is not supported in this study. The research question raised is also answered.

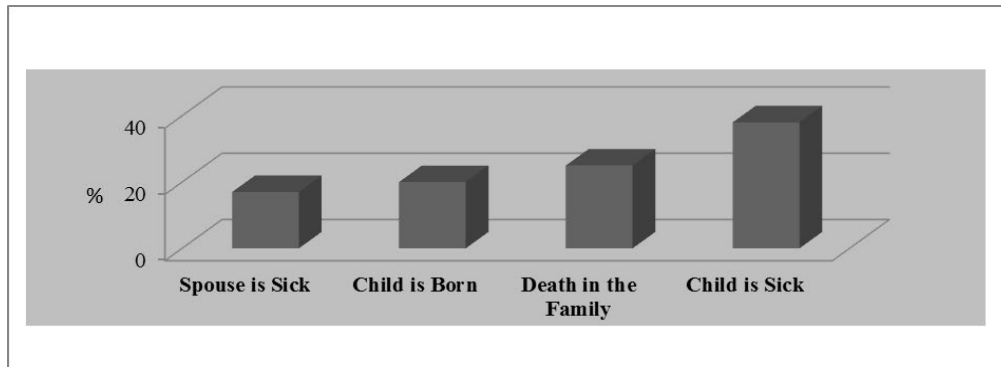
H₄: *There is a correlation between perceptions that male employees have about ‘fatherhood’ and the actual ‘take-up’ of family responsibility leave.*

Research question: Employees’ perceptions of family responsibility leave and paternity leave as a measure to assist with fatherhood.

In terms of employees’ perceptions about fatherhood; the statistical illustrations are provided in Tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7. In table 4.5, it is statistically illustrated that 96.7 percent of the respondents believe that family responsibility leave is aimed at advancing the commitment of working fathers and 90.7 percent of the respondents

perceive family responsibility leave as an aspect of transformation in South Africa. Figure 5.1 below is derived from the eThekweni Municipality’s Human Resources’ statistics on the male take-up of family responsibility leave in 2010.

Figure 5.1: Take-Up of FRL amongst Male Employees in 2010



In 2010, about 58 percent of male employees made use of family responsibility leave to attend to issues relating to their children. It is further noted that 38 percent was in relation to a child being sick and the remaining 20 percent was in respect of the birth of the child. This complements the responses shown in Table 4.1, where a total of 203 respondents used FRL when their child was born and 235 used it when their child was sick.

Table 4.7 shows that 94.8 percent of the respondents perceive the fatherhood role as being a figure of authority; all the respondents felt that providing protection is an important aspect of being a father. Table 4.6 illustrates that 87.1 percent of the respondents view the provision of care to their children as the most important aspect of being a father, while table 4.7 reveals that 95.9 percent of the respondents believe that financial support is a very important part of being a father.

As shown in figure 5.1, out of the listed grounds for which employees may make use of the family responsibility leave, 58 percent of the respondents have utilised such leave to attend to their children. This suggests that the 99 percent of the respondents that view the provision of care for their children as the most important aspect of being a father are not merely paying lip service to this notion. Therefore, there is a correlation between the fatherhood role and the ‘take-up’ of family responsibility

leave. This answers the research question regarding family responsibility leave and paternity leave as a measure to assist with fatherhood.

Despite the above findings, there is a dichotomy of beliefs which, on the one hand, suggest that child-rearing is a women's domain and, on the other, as noted by Cunningham (2007), states that man can be successful both as a professional or ordinary worker and a father who is fully involved in the rearing of his children. Despite the perceptions shown in tables 4.4 and 4.7, table 4.3 shows some significant but negative correlation between the actual take-up of family responsibility leave and the perceived role of fathers as care-givers ($r=-.205$; $p<0.01$). The negative correlation, in this instance, shows that as much as care-giving is perceived as an important part of 'fatherhood', many working fathers are still reluctant to make use of family responsibility leave.

Accordingly, fatherhood status does not predict excellent take-up of family responsibility leave amongst the sample of employees. This is consistent with the research conducted by Alavi and Askaripur (2003), who reported no significant difference in family responsibilities and its dimensions among single and married employees. This may be caused by factors such as beliefs entrenched in traditions or a lack of training or encouragement by the employer to use family responsibility leave. In terms of this significant correlation, many fathers believe in care-giving, but fewer are actually making use of the legislation or policy designed to enhance care-giving by working fathers in South Africa. Hypothesis three is therefore not supported by this study.

5.2 General Conclusion

Historically, concerns regarding child care have placed the work-family integration debate in the spotlight. As noted by Dancaster and Cohen (2010), an increasingly ageing population has led many European countries to focus on the care needs and consequent demands placed on employees. South Africa shares these concerns. The most pressing concern for the work-family agenda in South Africa is the issue of HIV/AIDS; the care needs of those infected with and/or orphaned by HIV/AIDS present an enormous challenge for those required to act as care-givers along with the

demands of employment, particularly, full time employment. It is evident from the study that workers with care responsibilities may need to take time off to attend care emergencies such as the sudden illness of a child or the last minute unavailability of a substitute caregiver.

It has thus emerged throughout the study that family responsibilities and care obligations place obstacles in the advancement of women in the work-place, particularly within senior ranks. It has been emphasised by many authors cited in this study, and is also the opinion of this study, that family responsibility leave should be placed on South Africa's political agenda. This is the only way that this benefit will capture the attention of policy makers and bring to their attention the potential for care obligations to exacerbate work-family conflict.

Four hypotheses were developed in the study, of which two are supported by the research findings. It has been deduced from the analysis of the results that family responsibility leave contributes to a family-friendly working environment which in turn can be a strategic tool for talent management.

5.3 Talent Management

With today's organisations operating under unprecedented conditions of competition and turbulence, it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented employees. One of the main challenges facing organisations in South Africa is the ability to attract and retain the best employees. Initiatives to improve salary packages have not yielded the desired results. It is therefore imperative that organisations develop a purposeful process for sourcing, attracting, engaging, managing, developing and retaining key talent.

It has been established that a family-friendly environment is an effective intervention that may have positive implications for retention and job satisfaction which are linked to an increase in individual and organisational effectiveness (Stoddard and Madsen, 2009). It is therefore clear that an organisation that has family-friendly arrangements is likely to be efficient and this can serve as its attraction and retention strategy.

Allowing fathers to spend time with their children before they go to bed or to school and enabling them to attend significant events in their lives, can be a powerful retention tool in today's labour market.

This study has shown that, men have a high level of awareness and concern for their family responsibilities. They do not construe care-giving as something they have to cope with, but rather as something that influences their perceptions of their careers. This suggests that, "although companies should be aware of men's family concerns and responsibilities and their need for stability, benefit packages and flexible work arrangements" (Van Dyk and Coetzee, 2012: 59), organisations should not let traditional gender stereotyping influence employees' need for care giving.

With regard to the differences between racial groups, the results showed that these differences were, in practical terms, small to moderate in size. One can attribute the higher levels of affective commitment and satisfaction to the perceived benefits of family responsibility leave. Most men indicated that eThekweni Municipality is a caring employer in that it recognises men's need to participate in child-care and for an emotionally supportive work environment.

Van Dyk and Coetzee's (2012) research data suggest that when the work environment is accommodating in terms of family responsibility needs, employees are more satisfied. These findings are especially important in the light of the current competitive labour market in South African workplaces that constantly strives to attract and retain employees. Naris and Ukpere (2010) found that employees who experience an appreciative working environment are more inclined to stay. According to Van Dyk and Coetzee (2012), employees begin to search for external job opportunities when they feel their work environment is no longer conducive to their family responsibilities.

This study contributes valuable new and unique knowledge to the human resources field and practices concerned with attracting and retaining employees. It emphasises the importance of considering family responsibility leave as an attraction and retention strategy. It highlights that family responsibility leave can be used to

influence employee commitment to an organisation. The study results emphasise the importance of adopting a pluralistic approach to attract and retain employees in a multicultural society. It is important that talent management programmes be aimed at ensuring job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Attracting and retaining employees will come with certain benefits, including:

- ❖ Higher worker morale in a high performance culture
- ❖ Increased competence of employees
- ❖ Clearer career paths for employees
- ❖ Opportunities for skills development
- ❖ Motivated and inspired employees who follow a progressive career path.

It is also evident from the study that getting the work-family or family-work balance right is not only vital to improve the welfare of female employees; but it can also have a positive impact on gender equality and on equal opportunity between men and women by reducing the disturbances of careers that are often lost to women due to their caring responsibilities. This will also support the constitutional rights of children in terms of Section 28 [b] of the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996, which states that “every child has the right to family care or parental care or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment”. This provision does not nullify the fact that fathers have a moral and legal duty to provide financial support to their children; but the love and care of both parents play an integral part in a child’s growth and a harmonious family.

5.4 Policy Recommendations

It goes without saying that employers can also play an integral part in the growth of children and the promotion of harmonious families. This can be achieved by creating a work environment for male employees that is family-friendly. Creating a family-friendly work environment will enhance the attraction and retention of staff.

The study results demonstrate that the South African workplace has made some progress in terms of accommodating fathers with child-care needs. The literature also

provides evidence that South Africa and other parts of the developing world have inadequate public and family support for care responsibilities; hence many women have had to embrace strategies which have implications for gender equality. The literature illustrates that many women resort to informal employment as this might offer the flexibility they require.

This study has revealed that eThekweni Municipality offers family responsibility leave over and above the provisions of the BCEA in that the Municipality's Conditions of Service offers five days of family responsibility leave as opposed to the three days provided for in the BCEA. However, most male employees do not make use of family responsibility leave even though they believe it is important to do so. This is depicted by the significant negative correlation between the actual take-up of family responsibility leave and the perceived role of fathers as care-givers.

It is also evident from this study that getting the work-family or family-work balance right is not only vital to improve the welfare of female employees; but also to have a positive impact on gender equality and equal opportunities for “men and women by reducing the disturbances of careers that are often lost to women due to their caring responsibilities” (ILO, 2004). In the South African context, labour legislation and collective agreements are the main source of vigorous change in the work place. This legislation or agreements can be strategically used to facilitate the equilibrium between work and family. Such facilitation can take three forms, as suggested by Oomens, Geurts and Scheepers (2007). These are:

1. Statutory and non-statutory leave such as maternity leave, which it is enshrined in South African labour legislation; paternity leave which is included in the ‘catch all’ phrase of family responsibility leave; parental leave; and temporary leave periods for employees to take care of their children and other dependents.
2. Flexible working arrangements such as flexibility in work schedules; and working from home.

3. Encouraging employers to develop policies that reduce work-family strain for care givers and that accommodate the needs of male care-givers.

As Dancaster and Cohen (2010) observe, flexible working arrangements should be seen in the context of a package of legislative measures designed to assist employees to combine work and care-giving. In New Zealand and the United Kingdom, for example, there is a legislative framework regarding the right of an employee to request flexible working arrangements. Majority of European states have introduced flexible working statutes that promote equality between men and women. “In most European Union States, they have introduced the measure that will enable adults to move in and out of the workforce for socially and politically acceptable reasons; whether educational, ‘care-related’, or in pursuit of leisure at different points in their working lives” (Lewis, Knijn, Martin, and Ostner, 2008: 278).

South African and/or most African countries are still lagging behind in terms of gender equality. A work-family policy is a far more prominent political issue in other countries than in South Africa, where it fails to even appear on the agenda of current politicians. While South Africa has one of the most revered constitutions in the world, gaps remain in fulfilling the mandate of this constitution.

It is acknowledged, however, that legislation is not the only vehicle by which to reconcile work and care. Dancaster and Cohen (2010) propose a trio of regulatory mechanisms encompassing legislation, collective bargaining and unilateral regulation of employers driven primarily by business case arguments. Government’s willingness to change legislation may, to a certain degree, be based on its evaluation of whether or not the regulatory forces of collective bargaining or business case arguments have produced employer responses to accommodate work-family integration, including the right to request flexible working arrangements.

The results of this study will provide decision makers with more knowledge of family responsibility leave and how it can be used as a strategic tool for talent management. The study also provides policy makers with some guidelines on how family responsibility leave has been successfully implemented in different countries.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

There is a critical need for care-giving in South Africa and the legislative framework needs to recognise employees' care-giving role by embracing a range of leave entitlements, as well as the right to request flexible working arrangements. However, there is a need to exercise caution in assuming that family-friendly institutional arrangements adopted by Western and European countries would be appropriate in South Africa. Cognisance should be taken of the political, cultural and economic climate, and South African stakeholders, scholars and academics need to support and undertake in-depth research to address the basic questions that will give rise to the formulation of relevant policies. Multifaceted research or investigations could be conducted in the following areas:

- ❖ Men's role in the professional and social stratum. Emanating from this, the following questions are worth addressing: How do working fathers compare with their female counterparts when it comes to key measures of work and family characteristics? What are the work and family characteristics that significantly predict work-family conflict and balance for working men? What impact does the 'catch all' phrase of family responsibility leave have on fathers being part of their children's lives?
- ❖ Analysis of labour legislation and collective agreements on family responsibility issues. This kind of research would examine the gaps that exist between the needs of workers and their families and the existing labour legislation and collective agreements. It would be vital to examine the views of both trade unions and employers on the work-family balance.
- ❖ Examine how men's care-giving experiences are influenced by differences in the following: the care recipient, dimension of care, age/stage of the caregiver, racial/ethnic background of the caregiver and the care-recipient.

- ❖ Investigate employers' responses to the proposed introduction of paid paternity leave, as this may be an attractive option for new fathers and could provide a key incentive to remain with an employer.

- ❖ The importance and benefits of flexible working arrangements. Some companies in South Africa have flexible working arrangements. Consultative research could be conducted with such companies to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of flexible working arrangements. It is envisaged that this would yield information that could help South African policy makers to engage in tailor-made policy formulations.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed analysis of the findings of the study and a discussion of the formulated hypotheses. Four hypotheses were tested and two of these are supported by the study, while the other two are not supported. These hypotheses were discussed against the background of the statistical tables and Pearson's correlation tables, which provided statistical probabilities of the results. In confirming the reliability of the results and the scale used, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used as a measuring tool. The alpha coefficient, which in this case is 0.76, indicated that the research instrument has an internal consistency as the value is above 0.7. An alpha value above 0.7 confirms that the research instrument is a consistent and stable measure of the key variables of the study; therefore the scale used is considered reliable.

This study has noted that there is a paucity of research on family responsibility leave with specific reference to male employees. Along with a few others, this study provides a foundation for further research on family responsibility and paternity leave for male employees. Such research will not only inform policy formulation; but will also enable South Africa to fulfil its obligations in terms of ILO Convention No. 156 of 1981 that encourages ratifying states to meet the needs of workers with family responsibilities.

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City Manager's Circular No 06/2004: Collective Agreement on Common Conditions of Service. EThekweni Municipality

Employment Equity Act, No. 55 Of 1998

Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001

Unemployment Insurance Contributions Act 4 of 2002

ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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26 May 2011

Mr ME Liphapang (203504945)
School of Management Studies
Faculty of Management Studies
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Liphapang

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0272/011M

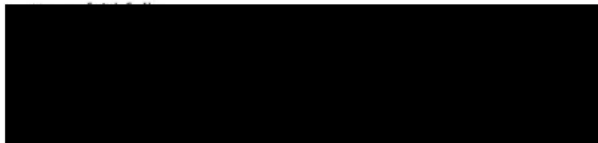
PROJECT TITLE: Family Responsibility and Paternity Leave Among Male Employees at eThekweni Municipality

In response to your application dated 25 May 2011, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

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

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



Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor: Ms A Maharaj
cc. Mrs C Haddon



Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville