

**THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING  
RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY-AT-HOME  
HUSBANDS: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Chanaz Mitchell, hereby declare that **The experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands: A social work perspective** is my own work and that all sources that have been quoted or referred to have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....  
Mrs C. A. Mitchell

.....  
Date

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## **ABSTRACT**

The transition from traditional to non-traditional marital roles was brought about by changes in the political, social and economic spheres. Within this transition, a new family arrangement has emerged in which traditional marital roles of breadwinning husband and care-giving, nurturer-wife are replaced by a breadwinning wife and a care-giving, nurturer-husband, the so-called stay-at-home husband. Various factors contributed and necessitated this change in marital roles, such as, but not limited to, the feminist movement, the economic recession, changes in legislation, retrenchments and so forth.

However, making this transition is not easy. These couples, fulfilling non-traditional marital roles, are faced with stigmatisation and negative attitudes that make them want to conceal their marital roles from family, friends, the community and society as a whole. This state of affairs results in a situation where these couples stay in the closet and as consequence the topic is ill-researched and ripe for further investigation. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach, this study explored and described the challenges, experiences and coping resources of couples fulfilling non-traditional marital roles in order to propose practice guidelines to support these couples from a social work perspective.

A total of ten couples participated in the study. Independently, the working wives and stay-at-home husbands provided separate accounts of realities related to fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles within their respective marital relationships. Themes that emerged from the in-depth description of their experiences reflected the benefits accrued, the challenges experienced, their needs and coping resources. From the information provided suggestions were derived for social workers to assist couples in a similar working wife and stay-at-home husband marriage set-up to deal with situations encountered.

In consulting extant literature, research on this phenomenon appeared to be totally neglected both internationally and nationally. Hence this study sought to address this lacuna by specifically investigating the situation in South Africa. It also appeared that existing research tended to focus on either the stay-at-home mother or the dual career family. Research on the experiences of stay-at-home husbands was thus severely lacking as were ways in which such couples in these roles could be supported. Therefore, making use of the ecological and role theory perspectives, attention is given to exposing their experiences, challenges and coping resources with a view to developing practice guidelines for helping social work practitioners to adequately support these couples practising non-traditional marital roles.

**Key words:** Stay-at-home husband; working wife; practice guidelines; challenges; experiences; coping resources; role theory; needs; social work; marital roles; traditional gender roles.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The emergence of the phenomenon of couples entering into and fulfilling non-traditional gender and marital roles with specific reference to husbands taking on the role or position of stay-at-home husband (or the “Homo-Domesticus”, or the “house dad”) (cf. McKenna, 1999:3), and the wife taking on the role and position as working wife and sole breadwinner, arose as result of socio-historical, political, legislative and economic evolvments and changes in society (Davidson & Moore, 1996:49-50 & 85-86; Thorn & Gilbert, 1998:259). In this first section the emergence this phenomenon will be introduced by first referring to the working-wife followed by that of the stay-at-home husband in the next section.

##### 1.1.1 The emergence of the working-wife phenomenon

Before providing an account describing the emergence of the working-wife<sup>1</sup> phenomenon that is associated with the various evolvments and changes in society, the concepts “role” and “gender role” are clarified, and brought into the context of the traditional and non-traditional marital roles. Miyamoto (1963:114) explains the concept “role” as follows: “Role may refer to normatively expected behaviour, the behaviour a person in a given position should engage in [or behaviour predicted for a person in a given situation]”.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of the study, a working wife will be described as woman who is employed on a full-time basis outside the home and is the central source of the family's financial support or the sole breadwinner (cf. Chesley, 2011:643) whilst being married to a husband whose primary responsibility it is to perform house chores and child care

Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel and Gutman (1985:102) posit that, in the context of the social role theory, the concept “role” is based on a dramaturgical metaphor which they define as: “... a cluster of social cues that guide and direct an individual’s behaviour in a given setting”. The concept “gender role” is explained by Davidson and Moore (1996:49) as “traits, behaviours, and attitudes [that are culturally] and socially prescribed and [proscribed] for women and men in a given society”. When these explanations of the concept “role” and “gender role” are brought into the milieu of the traditional and the non-traditional marital roles (with the latter specially narrowed down to a focus on being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband) the gospel of the traditional marital form, with its clear-cut and rigidly defined roles and gender stereotyped expectations for husband and wife, have to be borne in mind. Although more pervasive in some societies than in others (cf. Rochlen, Suizzo, McKelley & Scaringi, 2008:19; Sinno & Killen, 2009:16) they are still widely upheld and enforced.

The traditional marital form, according to Rice (in Alpaslan, 1997:3-4) is constructed upon the following doctrines and they proclaim, amongst other, the following:

- Marriage is an institution (comprising of a set of rules and assumptions that regulate social behaviour) (Lauer & Yodanis, 2010:60). Wait et al. (in Lauer & Yodanis, 2010:60) explain that in this institution two adults of the opposite sex [traditionally referred to as the husband and wife] take on the role and commitment to permanently live together in the same house, with the sole purpose of managing the household by combining resources, managing house work and marketplace work, and reproducing and socialising the children.
- Marriage is a means to an end (i.e. to provide a stable environment for raising children).
- This marital form emphasises self-denial and is directed towards realising the goal of the extended family or group.

- The security of the group or the unit is paramount and personal freedom is a foreign concept within the traditional marital arrangement.
- An autocratic management style is pursued – the woman is subordinate to the man.
- A rigid role division is observable, the woman is responsible for home making, child care and attending to the husband's needs, while the husband is the protector and the provider (i.e. the sole breadwinner).
- Sexual intercourse is mainly for procreation. Sex is regarded as male privilege and the wife's duty towards her husband. The woman's enjoyment of sexual intercourse is not an expectation.
- The extended family is directly involved in the choice of a marriage partner.
- Divorce is regarded as unacceptable.
- The expectations of the marriage are low as is the possibility of experiencing disappointment and failure.

Traditionalist guidelines that are transferred from one generation to another through various socialising agents determine what the traditional marital form will entail and how the role of being a husband and wife in this type of marital arrangement is carried out. Children are socialised according to socially prescribed and proscribed behaviour. This happens, through societal and cultural practices, religion, parents, peers, the media (printed and visual) and even through play activities and toys. This applies specifically when children play house and enact what the role of the husband and wife should be (cf. Davidson and Moore, 1996:49; Coetzee, 2001:300). Stahmann and Hiebert (in Alpaslan, 1997:22) point to the fact that "marital expectations, marital attitudes and marital behaviour patterns are not born into us. We learn them [primarily] from parents and the family-of-origin".

For the promoters of the traditional marital form, the accepted norm for women is to be emotional, receptive, passive, submissive, caring, nurturing and kind. They must be inwardly focused and centred i.e. staying at home, be the caregiver, looking after the children and attending to the husband's needs

without any paid remuneration. The viewpoint is summed up by Piotrkowski, (in Cargan, 1991:7) along the following lines: "...[the] women's natural place was in the home, caring for the physical and moral development of children and nurturing husbands after their daily travails in the world outside".

The men within marriages moulded on the traditional marital form are supposed to be self-assertive, competitive, rational and aggressive. They are expected to be outwardly focused, be the heads of households, community leaders and obligated to be the protectors and providers for their families, by being economically engaged and earning a living (Wille, 1995:803; Rice in Alpaslan, 1997:4; Park, Felder and Dangor, 2000:57).

Proponents of the traditional marital form do not approve of couples entering into and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles such as being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. Such couples are violating the stereotypical traditional societal marital role descriptions and are, as a consequence, subjected to negative stereotyping; prejudice and/or discrimination (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440 & 443; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17).

Two specific studies support this statement: Brescoll and Uhlmann, (2005:440; 443) looked at the attitudes of adult men and women (aged between 17-79 years of age) towards traditional and non-traditional parents; and Coleman and Franiuk's work (2011:311) amongst a sample of 167 students at a small regional university in the Midwestern United States was concerned about their perceptions of mothers and fathers who take temporary (paternity and maternity) work leave. Both these studies found that the respondents disliked but respected the working mothers, while their attitudes to the stay-at-home fathers were that of dislike and disrespect. Marshall (1998:9) adds to this by stating that engaging in non-traditional gender roles in the home, even if positive in the long term, may at the outset create personal and family tension or even provoke social discrimination.

Evidence of disapproval, dislike and social discrimination was also reported by Merla (2008:122) who learnt from her sample of Belgium stay-at-home husband participants that, in their daily encounters with both significant and insignificant others, the participants were met with negative remarks, reactions and criticism reminding them about being engaged in a non-traditional marital role (cf. Rochlen, McKelly & Whittaker, 2010:282:284; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:16). Similarly, working wives also faced smirks and criticism by society as they too were seen as contravening traditional views held about the role of the mother in a marriage. They are labelled as “selfish” (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440) resulting in feelings of inadequacy and guilt as described by Mamabola (2009:4): “However, given work demands, women are not as freely available to their children as was traditionally the case. This can leave them feeling that they are neglecting their children”.

In shifting the focus of the discussion back to the evolvments and changes in society on various levels, i.e. the socio-historical, political, legislative and economic, that gave birth to the emergence of the phenomenon of couples entering into and fulfilling non-traditional gender and marital roles (i.e. stay-at-home husbands and working wives), but focusing specifically on the working wives, Davidson and Moore (1996:49) postulate that during the eighteen century (and even up to the nineteenth century) (cf. Cargan, 1991:154) women and men generated an income with selling and exchanging cattle, crops of the harvest and products of their labour manufactured in and around the home (cf. Cargan, 1991:154). This, to a certain extent, typifies the inward and outward focus alluded to in the discussion above where the man was primarily engaged in work outside the house, whilst the woman laboured inside the house. Davidson and Moore (1996:49) too note that during the eighteen century the American colonies operated under British Law which resolved that wives, their possessions and earnings were under the husband’s control. Women were not allowed in politics, to appear in court, nor could they enter into any business transactions without a male relative or guardian’s approval.



However, women were afforded the opportunity to become literate (i.e. to read and write and acquire limited numeracy or mathematical skills) but not to become too educated, as the latter was regarded as a “masculine” trait, right and privilege. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, men started to become the sole breadwinners outside the home, with their wives assuming the dependent role of a “non-working housewife”. Being a housewife and mother came to be considered as a “full-time occupation” and “unproductive work”, whilst men’s labour was regarded as “productive work” (Cargan, 1991:6). During this time it was not common practice for women to be employed in the open labour market. Cargan (1991:154) writes that “except for those who worked out of economic necessity [i.e.] unmarried young women from working class-families, married women from low-income families, poor widows, and black immigrant and rural women, women were not expected to be involved in paid employment outside the home”. Resulting from this, a clear-cut division of labour along gender lines became the norm. By noting this norm or traditional pattern of the husband being employed and the wife staying home to care for the household and the children, Ross, Mirowsky and Huber (1983:820) concluded that it was, in actual fact, a consequence of the Industrial Revolution. They make the interesting remark that “a pattern that appeared with the industrial society may disappear in a post-industrial society”.

Deviation from this well-institutionalised norm was necessitated by the outbreak of the two World Wars in the first half of the twentieth century, when, suddenly women’s productive labour was needed and it became “temporarily acceptable” for women to take on jobs outside the home as fulfilling their part in the war effort (cf. Cargan, 1991:155; Davidson & Moore, 1996:50). Whilst the expectation was that the women would return to their “true roles” after these global emergencies, this expectation did not come to fruition. On the contrary, the presence of women in the labour force continued to increase (Cargan, 1991:155). Ross et al. (1983:809) add to this point when pointing to the fact that the shift from manufacturing to service industries did not only

promote economic growth progression but also reverberated in the family and marital system in that it caused marital roles to change. While, and up to now, predominantly unmarried women and women without children entered the open labour market, the economic growth demand for labour in the traditionally female occupied employments suddenly surpassed the supply of young, unmarried and childless women. A new trend emerged - women with children of school-going age, or grown children entered the labour market in large numbers. Furthermore, the women's continuation in and greater presence in the open labour market was in the past but has currently continued being further necessitated by the global economic depression, their husband's job-losses, rising inflation and economic need (Ross et al., 1983:809; Tengimfene, 2009:3).

When it comes to the South African scenario, Franks, Schurink and Fourie (2006:18) state that: "Because of the high cost of living in our country, as well as increased work opportunities due to employment equity policies, South African women are clearly encouraged to enter the labour market". With reference to employment equity policies, Baden, Hasim and Meintjes (1998:52) commented that affirmative action policies provided the leverage to positively discriminate in favour of blacks and women, and in so doing, contributed to the emergence of the working wife phenomenon in South Africa. They further point out that "There is possibility, with some anecdotal evidence to support it, that given existing hierarchies, affirmative action could end up favouring black men and white women." This could result in significant unemployment among white men which might even lead to an increase in the number of stay-at-home husbands. This observable and growing trend of married women being involved in the open labour market brought about a tolerance towards and approval of the working wife, as one of the partners in a dual-career couple<sup>2</sup> system (Ross et al., 1983:810).

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<sup>2</sup> Cargan (1991:160) explains the concept "dual-career couple" as a marital relationship in which the husband and the wife have demanding jobs to which they are strongly committed.

The working wife phenomenon was further cemented on centre stage with the emergence of feminism. The latter is premised on beliefs and principles that prescribes and proscribes “to any form of opposition and any form of social, personal or economic discrimination which women suffer because of their sex”, to quote Bouchier (in Steyn, Van Wyk and Le Roux, 1990:240), in order to enable a world with more equitable gender relations (Peterson, 2004:37). The feminist movement laboured for the introduction of legislation supporting equal rights for men and women in the workplace. In underscoring this observation, Nontso (1998:5) asserts that, according to feminists and the feminist movements, women and men are equal and should be treated equally. Advocacy for this was quite prevalent with the advent of the second-wave of the feminist movement in the 1970s. According to Zeitz (2008:677), the rise of the second-wave feminism addressed a wide range of issues but focused mainly on addressing evidence of inequalities, with particular reference to workplace inequalities, legal inequalities, sexual myths and inequalities; family-related inequalities (i.e. the wife’s role being limited to that of the primary caretaker and nurturer) and reproductive rights.

Although the second wave of feminism started in Europe and the USA, South Africa was also affected by it. Smit (2006:401) explains: “Women now started entering the workforce and men started assuming a new role of increased participation in the raising of the family. It is especially since the 1960s and 1970s that a more expressive element has been manifesting in the role behaviour of the husband/father. This led to the image of the so-called “new” man - the man that (portrayed)...a more active involvement in the care-taking of the children and the performance of domestic tasks.”

The impact of these social changes gave rise to legislation to enforce this equality and equal treatment of women in various spheres of daily life, amongst them, particularly in the workplace. When focusing on the South African scenario specifically, Park et al. (2000:122) point out that, since the adoption of the country’s new Constitution in 1996, South African Law

fundamentally changed from how it was previously enforced and applied. Under the old dispensation, Acts of Parliament were Supreme Law, and the country's citizens were not able to challenge any of the Acts on the basis of their inherent unfairness or discriminatory impact. Clearly stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa No. 108 of 1996 is the Bill of Rights, which sets out fundamental protection for the citizens of South Africa. This Bill of Rights represents the supreme values against which all legislative and administrative actions can be measured. In addition, and according to Park et al. (2000:122), the Bill of Rights spells out a number of rights, which are of specific relevance to women's lives. They suggest that the most important of these rights are:

- The right to equality, which enumerates both gender and sex as prohibited grounds for unfair discrimination (Section 9);
- The right to human dignity (Section 10);
- The right to freedom and security of the person, which includes the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources (Section 12);
- The right to access to adequate housing (Section 26);
- The right to have access to health care, food, water and social security (Section 27); and
- The right to access to courts (Section 34).

The main focus of the Bill of Rights is to ensure equality of men and women and thus, to ensure that this happens, various legislation and gender machineries were introduced. Relevant legislation includes the Employment Equity Act, (Act No. 55 of 1998) and the Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998) which, according to Berg et al. (in Yakubu, 2009:12), emerged as a result of the South African Government's concerted effort to ensure fairness of access and equity in the treatment of women in the labour market by means of fundamental constitutional changes. With the introduction of the Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998) and various other labour laws, including the Policy on Affirmative Action enacted through the Employment Equity Act (Act

No. 55 of 1998) the constitutional right of equality and true democracy were promoted. It therefore became mandatory for employment sectors to ensure representation of women in the workplace with equal remuneration, thereby aiming to eliminate unfair discrimination in employment and to redress the effects of discrimination. The purpose of the Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998) is twofold in that it seeks to achieve equity in the workplace, by “a) promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and b) implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce” (Employment Equity Act – Act No. 55 of 1998).

In addition to the legislation enacted, the new Democratic Government also went on to establish national gender machinery whose main focus is to address the social and economic marginalisation of South African women through working towards equality for women as Hicks (2010:1) points out. The newly established (2009) National Ministry on Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities operating at national and provincial levels, and the Standing Committees on the Quality of Life and Status of Women in the national and provincial legislatures, further testify to this. The appointment of gender focal persons within every department and municipality to coordinate gendered planning and programme implementation supports these institutions. These state structures are supplemented by the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), as an independent statutory body, and there are civil society structures that represent an active women’s movement (Hicks, 2010:1).

To sum up: the socio-historical, political, legislative and economic changes and developments in society led to the emergence of the working wife phenomenon. This phenomenon, in turn, exercised pressure on the traditional marital form, with its clear-cut gender roles and expectations and caused an escalation in the number of couples who sought to transit from being in

traditional marital roles to move towards fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. Evidence of this is particularly seen in the economic sphere with the emergence of opportunities that enable women to participate in the labour force. This is in direct contrast to the traditional role of mothers which is that of caregiver and home maker. In addition, changes within the political sphere further enhanced this change in roles with the emergence of new gender machinery and legislation that supported women entering into and taking up their rightful place in the labour market.

The sequence of events as described drives home the point that the traditional marriage, as an institution with its moulded, rigidly defined, rules and roles and role expectations for husband and wife (cf. Alpaslan, 1997:3) has not remained static over the years, but has been in transition and certainly underwent dramatic change (Lauer & Yodanis, 2010). The traditional marriage, being in transition, has made way for a modern marriage. Rice in 1983 (in Alpaslan 1997:3), with reference to this trend states: "Marital forms, structures, and functions today are very different from those of yesterday". This, state of affairs, in turn, and to quote Casper (1997:1) "[placed] ... renewed emphasis on ... the well-being of families, fathers' roles in child-rearing [with] articles [that] have been written on diverse topics ranging from stay-at-home dads [with working wives] to fathers as child care providers..." (cf. Bridges, Etaugh, Barnes-Farrell, 2002; Rochlen et al., 2008; Sinno & Killen, 2009; Rochlen, Kelly & Whittaker, 2010; Chesley, 2011; Latshaw, 2011; Fischer & Anderson, 2012). This brings the researcher to shifting the focus of the discussion to the emergence of the stay-at-home husband phenomenon.

### 1.1.2 The emergence of the stay-at-home husband phenomenon

At the societal or macro-system level socio-historical, political, legislative and economic changes emancipated women from the straitjacket limiting them, amongst other responsibilities, to the marital and family roles of homemaker and nurturer-carer of children and nurturing husbands after their daily labours at work (Piotrkowski, in Cargan, 1991:7). Likewise, these changes also freed the men from some of the marital and family roles traditionally assigned to them (i.e. that of being the protector and sole provider or breadwinner of the family) (Wille, 1995:803). Chesley (2011:663), following a study amongst 21 married couples (working wives and stay-at-home fathers) in Wisconsin, USA, explored their experiences in terms of whether economic shifts pushed them into gender-atypical work/family arrangements. The conclusion arrived at was that the macro-level structural shifts (like the ones presented in this discussion) were likely to push some couples into the non-traditional marital roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband.

As a result of these changes, marital patterns emerged as “adaptive responses to the macro [system] level change” and Ross et al. (1983:811) provide a fourfold typology of how the traditional marital form has evolved from most to least traditional according to historical sequence.

- In the Type I-traditional marriage, the husband is the sole provider and with no involvement in child care and housework, whilst the wife is not employed based on the fact that both spouses are of the view that “the woman’s place is at home”.
- The Type II-traditional marriage is characterised by the wife being employed outside the house, but both spouses are still of the view that her place is at home. They prefer that she did not have to work for pay. In spite of being employed outside the house the wife still carries the full load of household responsibilities.
- In the Type III-traditional marriage, an attitude change is noticed in that the wife is employed and both spouses approve of this arrangement.

However, the husband's involvement in the home is very limited or non-existent.

- The Type IV-traditional marriage is characterised by the fact that the wife is employed based on the approval of both spouses to this and the household tasks are shared (Ross et al., 1983:811).

Recently the phenomenon of the stay-at-home husband is seen to be associated with various identified observations such as:

- the growth in female labour force participation (Rochlen, et al., 2010:281; Latshaw, 2011:126);
- some wives' career salience and the noticeable increase in opportunities for career path advancements;
- wives earning much more than their husbands and the wives' incomes being sufficient to sustain the family (Latshaw, 2011:126; Rochlen, et al., 2010:281);
- corporate down-sizing and lay-offs at work (McKenna, 1999) and some men's inability to find other employment (Chesley, 2011:645) due to legislated Affirmative Action Policies (Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998; Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998); and
- specific family values underscored by some couples (i.e. the conviction that one of the parents should be at home, personally instilling values and the father being "better fit for this role" (Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18), the stay-at-home dad as phenomenon, or "Homo-Domesticus", the "House-dad" as McKenna (1999:3) refers to this emerging sub-species.

According to the United States Census, (Census 2008) cited by Latshaw (2011:128), a stay-at-home husband and father is: "a married father with children under 15 years old who has remained out of the labour force for more than one year so he can care for his family while his wife works outside the home". With the emergence of the stay-at-home husband/father phenomenon, the question arises: how prevalent is it?



Prior to providing some figures found in the consulted literature to indicate the prevalence of stay-at-home husband/fathers, the problem of definition is addressed. Latshaw (2011:145,146) points to the fact that the lack of an all-inclusive measure and an all-encompassing definition that would include the different types of stay-at-home husbands/fathers on the basis of the reasons for them being in this role, leads to an undercount of these husbands/fathers. In view of this the exact numbers will remain largely unknown. Adding to this is the fact that in some cultures and societies the Type I-traditional marital form (as already referred to in this discussion) is still strongly adhered to causing stay-at-home husbands/fathers to remain closeted. As stated earlier, societies or segments of societies may negatively stereotype, be prejudiced and discriminate against the non-traditional marital role partners and parents who violate the traditional social norms (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440 & 443; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17).

Comment on the prevalence of stay-at-home husband/fathers in various countries is presented:

#### *United States of America*

According to the US Census Report for 2008 (in Latshaw, 2011:128) 140 000 married fathers out of a total of 25.8 million married fathers with children under the age of 15 years indicated that they were stay-at-home fathers/husbands.

#### *United Kingdom*

Stay-at-home husbands are not the rare breed they once were. According to The Guardian (n.d.) quoting the Government's Office for National Statistics, there were 189 000 of them in the United Kingdom by the start of 2008. Housewives still outnumbered househusbands by almost 11 to 1 in the UK, but the gap is shrinking as more women become the principal or sole earner for their families.

### *Australia*

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005), in 1983, 2.7% of males aged 15-64 years who were not in the labour force said that their main activity was 'childcare/home duties'. By 2003, this had risen to 6.6%. Over the same period, the proportion of couple families where the husband was not in the labour force while the wife was in the labour force more than doubled, from 1.6% to 4.0% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

### *Canada*

In Canada, the stay-at-home father phenomenon became a common trend with a total of 77 000 in 1997. This, according to Marshall (1998:12) may be ascribed to the fact that in October 1990, the Canadian Government passed a Bill which granted paid leave for fathers for the purpose of primary caregiving (Marshall, 1998:12).

### *China*

The prevalence of the stay-at-home father in the Asian countries is not very common due to beliefs held that the man must be the head of the household. In support of this statement, Engel and Breaux (1998:5) note that in China the role of the father was that of disciplining the children and for economic support and not nurturance of the children. This perception that men cannot be primary caregivers is, however, now being challenged when looking particularly at China where, according to People's Daily on Line (2009), mention is made of the fact that traditional family dynamics are changing. In a survey on whether they would opt to take on the role of stay-at-home husband white-collar male workers aged between 28 and 33 in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, 22%, 73%, 34% and 32% respectively were prepared to do the housekeeping if the conditions were right. Engel and Breaux (1998:5) offer another reason for this and attribute this change to rapidly increasing urbanisation in China which has resulted in fathers, particularly college-educated fathers, to see the importance of having an intimate relationship with their children, thus being willing to adopt a new

nurturing role. This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the increase of women working outside the home and a cultural shift towards valuing the closeness of father and son as pointed out by Jankowiak (in Engel and Breaux, 1998:5).

### *Japan*

The stay-at-home husband phenomenon in Japan is also frowned upon. The reason for this as accounted for by Mutsumi (1999) is as follows: "Apparently a man taking time off from work to look after his children is cause for astonishment in Japan". Mutsumi (1999) in this article entitled: "Dad takes childcare leave" provides an account of how he was the first father in Japan to take paternity leave from a private company in Japan. He describes how he persuaded his employer despite many challenges and yet was granted two months paternity leave.

### *Africa*

When it comes to the African continent, Nsamenang, (in Engel & Breaux, 1998:4) posits that the father in West Africa occupies great status within the family but has little parental involvement. The children are rather raised within the extended family. Nsamenang (in Engel and Breaux, 1998:5) goes further to point out that fathers have little to do with young children; they rarely show nurturance towards the children as their primary role is that of disciplinarian. Van Leer (in Engel and Breaux, 1998:7) arrived at the following conclusion in 1991 during a seminar in Lesotho that focused on the role of fathering: interaction between African men and their infants was rare and accidental and considered to be of less importance. In addition, he points out that in Zimbabwe; fathers were surprised when they were told that they should play an active role in the lives of their children from birth onwards in order to ensure balanced development. They believed that their involvement only started when the child could talk.

### *South Africa*

The phenomenon of the stay-at-home husband in South Africa, although slowly increasing is, however, not as common as it appears to be in the case in the countries just mentioned. This is pointed out in a survey conducted by the International Marketing Council of South Africa (South African Info 2007 as cited in Easton, 2007:3). The survey which measures the size of the gender gap in four areas (economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival) of inequality between men and women shows that only 46% of South African women were found to be employed compared to 79% of men. This can be attributed to a number of factors that include stigma and lack of understanding.

Latching on to, and in support of it, thirteen years ago Zimmerman (2000:338) mentioned that the number of stay-at-home husbands was increasing. He also pointed the following out in an article published at that time: "to our knowledge, there is no research to date on the division of household labour and the sharing of child care in stay-at-home father/career mother families." Snitker (2010:19) based on literature consulted (cf. Rubin and Wooten (2007); Gorman & Fritzsche, (2002) and Vejar et al., (2006)), quite recently echoed Zimmerman's conclusion when stating that: "Much research has investigated stay-at-home mother families but few studies have primarily focused on stay-at-home fathers". Chesley (2011:642) concurs and corroborates this by commenting that "the stay-at-home father [husband] or [/and] breadwinner mother [wife] family are rare and represent" a non-typical family form. Harrington, Deusen and Mazar (2012:6), in addition, posit that research on the stay-at-home husband is not extensive and research on the experiences of the stay-at-home husband is quite limited. Rochlen et al. (2008:193-194) are of the opinion that, whilst a body of knowledge is available on the motivations, experiences, challenges and stigma related to the working wife phenomenon in the dual career couple system (cf. Demerouti, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2005;

Hammer, Cullen, Neal, Sinclair & Shafiro, 2005), the unique experiences of stay-at-home husbands, remain largely unknown.

Adding on to the abovementioned observations and conclusions, Smit (2006:412), focusing on the South African multi-cultural context, recommends that research that focuses specifically on the topic of stay-at-home husbands with working wives would enhance our understanding of the changes in the role of husband/father. This would better inform social policies and programmes dealing with the husband/father's rights and obligations. She is of the view that the findings resulting from such research endeavours will put social scientists and people in the helping profession in a better position to create social awareness around these non-traditional marital roles and facilitate addressing the stigma attached to them. Furthermore, to advocate for policies and provide support and encouragement for men to become more involved with their families is necessary. Stay-at-home husbands with working wives need help to feel free to come out of the closet of secrecy they have created and require support and interventions to bring about a better work-family-fit for couples in non-traditional marital roles (Smit, 2006:412).

## 1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

In following on the preceding discussion that served as introduction and backdrop to this study, a research problem needed to be formulated. Monette, Sullivan and De Jong (2008:77) postulate that the research question is the foundation on which the whole research endeavour rests, and the formulation of a research problem is the initial step in the research process. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:12) share similar sentiments and explain that the concept 'research problem', by implication, points to some difficulty, a gap, a limitation and/or lack that the researcher experiences either in theory or in practice and wants to solve. Creswell (2013:68) suggests that, when it comes to problem formulation, researchers must clearly indicate what the problem is

and have a clear idea regarding '*what*' it is they want to find out about and not what they '*think*' they must find out.

Taking the points made about problem formulation in general into account, and considering the introduction and background to the study (presented under sub-sections 1.1.1 and 1.1.2), this study's research problem concerns an atypical family form in which the wife and the husband enter into and fulfil non-traditional marital roles of a working wife (mother) and a stay-at-home husband (father). Scholars have drawn attention to this phenomenon (Chesley, 2011:642; Harrington et al., 2012:6) observing that it is on the increase (Zimmerman, 2000:338) due to socio-historical, political, legislative and economic evolvments and changes in society (Davidson & Moore, 1996:49-50 & 85-86; Thorn & Gilbert, 1998:259). Whilst a body of knowledge is available focusing on the working wife phenomenon within a dual career marital system (cf. Such, 2001), the **research problem of this study is the paucity of knowledge and research on the topic stay-at-home husbands with breadwinning wives (nationally specific, and internationally), in that the former's unique experiences especially as related to their being in this non-traditional marital/family role, is limited and largely unknown** (cf. Chesley, 2011:642; Del Carmen Triana, 2011:1; Harrington et al., 2012:6; Heppner & Heppner, in Helford, Stewart, Gruys and Frank, 2012:2), **resulting in a lack of supportive interventions to couples in non-traditional marital role relationships.**

### 1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The motivation for undertaking this research endeavour was born from the increase in the working wife with a stay-at-home husband phenomenon in the researcher's own work environment and also amongst friends and acquaintances which sparked off her personal interest in this topic. In order to satisfy her curiosity she searched the Internet and realised that this topic was under-researched within the South African context and also on the

international front. The need to explore and understand the experiences, needs and coping resources of the working wife and stay-at-home husband, with the aim of providing practice guidelines to support them was then articulated. In view of the fact that research on this topic in South Africa, and specifically within the ambit of social work, was largely lacking, its research findings will add value to the discipline of Social Work and related social service professionals by furnishing them with a body of knowledge to understand the particular situation and needs of working wives and stay-at-home husbands as a family unit as articulated by Smit (2006:412). Based on these research findings guidelines can be formulated and forwarded as suggestions for use in social work practice to support couples in a non-traditional marital role relationship.

#### 1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the fact that the researcher proposed to adopt a qualitative research approach for studying the topic under investigation, and prior to deciding on a theoretical framework as point of reference and departure, she initially familiarised herself with the place of a literature review when following a qualitative research approach. Creswell (1994:21-23) provides useful pointers that can be summarised as follows. The researcher can follow two routes. When venturing on the first route, the researcher uses literature strategically at the outset only for the purpose of providing a backdrop to and/or introducing and for framing the research problem. Once the research findings emerge, literature can be used as a measure of control to confirm and contrast the research findings. Alternatively, the researcher can follow the second route and conduct a comprehensive literature review prior to the fieldwork, then afterwards use the conducted literature review as a means of control.

In view of the fact that the researcher planned to investigate the phenomenon chosen for scrutiny *inter alia* through a phenomenological lens, the skill of “bracketing” was also applied. Per definition bracketing, means: “to hold all

preconceptions in abeyance” (Beech, 1999:35). One “brackets” oneself by attempting to “unknow the known” by consciously trying to limit contamination of data and manipulating the direction of the interviews and the responses of participants. This entails unknowing one’s own preconceived ideas, theories and frameworks (acquired and adopted from previous study and borne from experience-based and or perception-based circumstances); quieting one’s own thoughts by being constantly aware of them, and by not taking a specific stance, or clinging to a preconceived idea or theoretical framework at the outset of this study.

Since the researcher opted for the first route (as advocated by Creswell, 1994:21-23), and being cognisant of the skill of bracketing and having envisaged employing it, the researcher approached the activity of deciding on a theoretical framework for the study along the following lines.

She familiarised herself with the meaning of the concept “theory”. From Maxwell’s (2013:48) statement she learnt that the concept “theory” per definition refers to: “... a set of concepts and ideas and the proposed relationships amongst these, a structure that is intended to capture or model something about the world”. Maxwell (2013:49) continues by pointing out that the function of theory is to provide “a model”, “a map”, “a “framework”, “a story”, or “a narrative”, explaining “why the world is the way it is”, and it serves to “tell an enlightening story about some phenomenon, one that gives you insights and broadens your understanding of that phenomenon”. Following on from this she searched qualitative research literature for the place and use of a theoretical framework within this context.

Maxwell (2013:53), once again provided guidance when postulating that each study needs a theoretical framework. Such a framework will not only inform the reader about the researcher’s point of departure in relation to the topic proposed for investigation, but will also provide insights into this phenomenon. However, he cautions that the qualitative researcher must refrain from



imposing the chosen theoretical framework on the study, as this straitjacket approach will hinder the researcher to see events and relationships that do not fit the theory. To summarise: to be authentic qualitative research, Maxwell (2013:53) recommends that: “a study must take account of the theories and perspectives of those studied, rather than relying entirely on established theoretical views [frameworks] or the researcher’s perspective”.

The theoretical framework adopted by the researcher as point of departure for this study was based on the ecological systems perspective and gender ideology and role theories. The study aim would be accommodated as it sought to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to provide guidelines in the form of recommendations for social work support extended to couples in these non-traditional marital role relationships.

The origins of the ecological systems perspective which, in essence, places the focus on the interaction and the reciprocal influence between the person and their environment rather than on one or the other by stressing the adaptive fit between organisms and their environments (Fagan & Press, 2008:1137), can be attributed to Bronfenbrenner, a renowned developmental psychologist (Bronfenbrenner, 1994:37-43; Darling, 2007:203). Darling (2007:203) explains a diagrammatical depiction (Figure 1) of the ecosystems theory along the following lines. The individual is placed in the centre of a series of concentric circles representing micro-, meso-, exo- and macro-systems. Connecting these circles are multiple arrows linking and influencing the four level systems in a mutual fashion. Fagan and Press (2008:1137) found this perspective particularly applicable for investigating “father’s crossover and family involvement effects on mothers’ work-family balance because of its focus on multiple system levels and the interrelationships among these systems”. In view of the fact that this study is on the working-wives and stay-at-home husbands, in a sense its theme also represents a “crossover” from the traditional roles of stay-at-home wife and breadwinner husband to the non-traditional roles of being a working wife and a stay-at-

home husband, the researcher deemed it appropriate to use this perspective as part of the theoretical framework to better understand and gain insight into the phenomenon as the point of reference and departure for this study. When making the four level systems applicable to the context of this study, the **INDIVIDUAL in the centre is the working wife and/or the stay-at-home husband.**



Figure 2: Ecological model as adopted from (Bronfenbrenner, 1994)

Bronfenbrenner (in Muuss, 2006:302) explains the concept “micro-system” in the context of the ecological systems perspective as follows: “a micro-system is the complex of relations between the ... [individual] in an immediate setting containing that person” (Cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1994:39.). The other half of the

couple sub-system (i.e. working wife or the stay-at-home husband sub-system), the sibling sub-system and the parent-child sub-system fit into the micro-system. The micro-system may also, amongst others, include the extended family and friends and even the place of employment and church if the latter groups forms part of the individuals' immediate environment, otherwise they can be considered part of the meso-system.

The meso-system is a system of micro-systems and the interactions, linkages and relationships amongst the latter constitute the former (Muuss, 2006:303). Bronfenbrenner (1994:40) confirms when stating that "... the meso system comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings [i.e. between the family (a micro-system) and the extended family (a micro-system)] involving the person". For example, if there is a meso-system linkage and relationship of support between the extended family (a micro-system) and the couple (a micro-system) enabling them to fulfil their non-traditional family roles, evidence is found pointing to a micro- and a meso-system operating in a congruent fashion to reinforce each other (Muuss, 2006:304). However, when the extended family (a micro-system) does not approve of and support the family (a micro-system) where the husband and wife are fulfilling non-traditional roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband, then little or no interaction between the two settings may be the order of the day.

Bronfenbrenner (1994:40) and Bronfenbrenner quoted by Muuss, 2006:305) explains the exo-system as follows: "The exo-system [is an extension of the meso-system] comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings [i.e. other specific social structures (formal and informal)], at least one of which does not contain the... person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the ... person lives" (cf. Fagan & Press, 2008:1137). For example: rumours of job-losses at work may constitute an exo-system influence for the working wife in the sense that it is within her immediate environment, but it can affect the stay-

at-home husband in that she becomes stressed from work and could result in conflict between them.

The macro-system can be regarded as “the societal blueprint for a particular culture or sub-culture” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994:40; Garbarino in Muuss, 2006:307). Muuss (2006:307-308) points out that, embedded in the macro system, is a core of general, cultural, social, legal, political, religious economic and educational values. Socio-historical, political, legislative and economic evolvments and changes shape and modify the macro-system (which changes slowly), but which, in time, finds expression in what is permissible and what is not. Two illustrative examples are the growth in female labour force participation, (Rochlen, et al., 2010:281; Latshaw, 2011:126) and economic recessions, men losing their jobs; corporate down-sizing (McKenna, 1999); and some men’s subsequent inability to find other employment (Chesley, 2011:645) due to affirmative action policies and legislation (Employment Equity Act, Act No 55 of 1998; Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998) (Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18). From happenings such as these the stay-at-home dad as a phenomenon has emerged.

Over and above the effect of these macro-system forces traditional religious, social, cultural values and gender ideologies still persist at meso- and micro-levels giving rise to stereotyping and stigmatising couples in the non-traditional marital role arrangements, characterised by a working wife and a stay-at-home husband. Due the significant influence of these on people the researcher also adopted gender ideology and role theories as part of the theoretical framework in addition to the ecological system perspective. The concept “gender role” is explained by Davidson and Moore (1996:49) as “traits, behaviours, and attitudes [that are culturally] and socially prescribed and [proscribed] for women and men in a given society”. The concept “gender ideology”, according to Nordenmark (in Fagan & Press, 2008:1142) refers to

the beliefs or viewpoints and attitudes or stances that people maintain regarding gender roles.

When these explanations of the concepts “gender role” and “gender ideology” are brought into the contexts of the traditional and the non-traditional marital roles (with the latter specially narrowed to focus on that of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband), it must once again be stressed that the non-traditional marital role phenomenon is emerging next to the traditional marital role phenomenon (Zimmerman, 2000:338; Chesley, 2011:642; Harrington et al., 2012:6).

In spite of this emergence, the gospel of the traditional marital form with its clear-cut and rigidly defined roles and gender stereotyped expectations for husband and wife are still widely upheld and endorsed even though more pervasive in some societies than others (cf. Sinno & Killen, 2009:16; Rochlen et al., 2008:19).

Related to the gender ideology theory are the concepts “role”, “role theory”, and “social role theory”. Miyamoto (1963:114) explains the concept “role” as follows: “Role may refer to normatively expected behaviour, the behaviour a person in a given position should engage in [or behaviour predicted for a person in a given situation]”. According to Hemphil (2008:31) “role theory” offers suggestions with regard to “the emergence of roles, the acquisition of roles, and the expectations that maintain role behaviour in a particular context”. Dulin’s view (2007:104) adds to this train of thought and mentions that the “social role theory” emerged in the 1980s as a gender-related theory and “... uses a structural approach to sex differences, rather than a cultural approach...”, and the reason for this being the fact is that structural pressures resulted in men and women behaving in different ways.

Solomon et al. (1985:102) make mention of the fact that, in the context of the social role theory, the concept “role” is based on a dramaturgical metaphor,

and they define the latter as: "... a cluster of social cues that guide and direct an individual's behaviour in a given setting". Social role theory is premised on the foundation that observed differences in the behaviour of men and women actually arises from the gendered division of labour in society (especially in the realm of family and occupational social roles) (Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:197). Men and women thus have different roles which they are expected to fulfil or act out based on their gender and this according to Eagly (in Dulin, 2007:105) "promotes a view of social life as fundamentally gendered given current social arrangements."

The emergence of roles, the acquisition of roles and the expectations that maintain role behaviour in a particular context, underpin role theory, according to Hemphil (2008:34) evolving as follows and illustrated by means of examples befitting the context of the study:

- People spend much of their lives participating in groups/organisations and observing the roles played by the various members with whom they are in contact. Each role played is learned. Through belonging to and participating in these groups different roles are learnt and people become aware of gender differences and are socialised in the respect of what is expected and accepted gender role behaviour and performance. Proper role socialisation is regarded as a prerequisite for acquiring the ability to predict the behaviour of other role players (Solomon, et al., 1985:103).
- People occupy specific positions in the group in which they find themselves: for example, looking through a traditionalist lens at the family one realises for many proponents of the traditional marital form their actions are based on religious and cultural convictions - the husband occupies the position as the head within the family.
- Each of the positions entails a role: Miyamoto (1963:116) makes two particular points: first, the role, for example, the traditional marital role of the husband being the provider/breadwinner, is a culturally-given role; that

is, it is culturally and institutionally defined and is therefore widely recognised within the specific culture or subculture as the normative prescription of behaviour of a person in a given position; second, a cultural system is maintained by the coordination of various roles, and the way in which the requirements of the system are met exerts various pressures on those holding various positions in the system to conform to role expectations.

With every role come expectations. These are assigned by the group to the person, providing pre- and proscriptions on how this role must be executed or not executed. Role expectations, to quote Solomon et al. (1985:103), “comprise privileges, duties and obligations of any occupant of a social position”. Role expectations “define the limits or the range of acceptable and tolerate behaviour”. In essence this refers to a cluster of behaviours prescribed by a reference group (i.e. society or the family) in terms of what the appropriate and acceptable things to do are for a person occupying a specific role (Sheafor & Horesji, 2008:264). The person’s role performance, or actual behaviour while performing the role, will be approved and or disapproved by the reference group based on their assessment of whether the role expectations assigned to the role are being met satisfactorily and whether the person conforms to the role expectations or not (Sheafor & Horesji, 2008:264). Seen from a traditional perspective, it is the expectations of the group (i.e. society at large, family and friends) that the husband must be the breadwinner of the family. According to society’s expectations the wife must fulfil the role of taking care of the home and nurturing the children and the husband.

- Groups formalise these expectations as norms.
- Individuals carry out their roles in accordance with these norms and the associated expectations accompany each of these roles.

- Group members check the performance of individual roles, assess if the assigned role expectations are met and conformance complied with, which in turn places role demands on the person who has to execute the role. For example: in some cultures and societies where the Type I-traditional marital form (earlier referred to) is still strongly adhered to, group members, societies' or segments of societies (when checking the individual's role performance against the started role expectation to assess conformance) may result in working wives and stay-at-home husbands being labelled as "non-conforming" and "violating" the traditional norms causing them to be negatively stereotyped. They may be prejudiced and discriminated against (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440 & 443; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17).

The non-acceptance, prejudice towards and stereotyping of couples entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles may also be the result of the working wife being in a state of inter-role conflict (i.e. a clash or an incompatibility between two roles) (Sheafor & Horesji, 2008:264). She wants to be more active in her role as mother, but her career role keeps her too occupied. Due to societal conventions, the family and friends' views on this make her feel guilty (cf. Chesley, 2011:653). Attempts to fulfil both roles equally may cause role strain and a role overload in that some of the working wives (as well as stay-at-home husbands) come to realise and experience at times that they cannot cope with all the role demands and expectations placed on them.

Society's non-acceptance of and myths about the stay-at-home husband (i.e. that he is too lazy to work) and them being stigmatised and prejudiced against, may result in a situation where role rejection occurs in that he refuses to perform the role of stay-at-home husband (Latshaw, 2011:135). Husband's subscribing to the traditional marital form with the script that reads that "the man's role is to be the breadwinner and the provider" may result in role conflict, rejection of the role of stay-at-home husband, or an unwillingness to



engage in this particular role. Reluctance to take on the role of stay-at-home husband may hinder the process of role assimilation (i.e. taking on the role of stay-at-home husband). To remedy this, Latshaw, (2011:135) suggests that stay-at-home husbands/fathers should engage in “identity work” in order to shift the labels they use to define themselves and the information they share about their new “occupation”.

The stigma associated with being a stay-at-home husband, is an experience that is especially strong in forcing them back into the closet of secrecy and by withdrawing from society. Moreover, the stigma effect results in a lack of role models on how to approach, assimilate and embrace these roles, causing some role ambiguity or role confusion in that clear expectations and support structures associated with this role are lacking (cf. Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:443; Sheafor & Horesji, 2008:264; Rochlen et al., 2010:282-284).

A comprehensive discussion on the theoretical framework proposed as point of reference and departure for this research has been presented. The focus will now shift to elaborating on the research question, the goal and objectives proposed for the study, as well as the envisaged research approach, design and methods.

## 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

In qualitative research, research questions are used instead of hypotheses to “identify the initial focus of the inquiry” (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott and Davidson, 2002:723). Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011:33) concur and maintain that research questions are the ones that you propose to answer at the end of the research project following the data collection and analysis. In this study the researcher intended to answer the following research question: *What are the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in their non-traditional marriage role relationships?*

### 1.5.1 Research goal

From the stated research question, the research goal needed to be formulated. The concept “goal” in the context of research refers to what the researcher wants to achieve through a particular research endeavour (Hennink et al., 2011:34). Maxwell (2013:23) agrees and mentions that the concept “goal”, broadly speaking, includes the researcher’s motives, desires and purposes (i.e. that which leads one to want to embark on a research endeavour, or what one wants to accomplish through this research). The researcher embarked on this journey with the aim to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to provide guidelines in the form of recommendations for social worker support to couples in these non-traditional marital role relationships. In order to achieve the stated goal, objectives were identified.

### 1.5.2 Objectives

Objectives in the context of research refer to as the steps taken to realise the goal/aim of the study. The objectives are the measurable, attainable steps linked to a time frame that will be taken to achieve the goal (Fouché & de Vos in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2005:104). The research and task objectives for this study are depicted on the next page in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1: Research and task objectives**

<b>RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>TASK OBJECTIVES – in order to realise the stated research objectives the following task objectives were formulated</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in non-traditional marriages</li> <li>• To describe the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in non-traditional marriages</li> <li>• To draw conclusions and make recommendations relating to the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in a non-traditional marriage and provide suggestions or practice guidelines for social work support to couples in the non-traditional marital role relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To obtain a sample of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in Gauteng Province</li> <li>• To collect data, by making use of semi-structured interviews facilitated by open-ended questions contained in an interview-guide</li> <li>• To analyse the data by means of Tesch’s 1992 framework (in Creswell, 2013), applicable to qualitative data analysis</li> <li>• To verify the research findings against the literature review conducted in this study</li> </ul>

## 1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Conventionally an introductory account of methods, strategies and tactics deployed to execute this study (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:34) on which this thesis is based is now given. This section will therefore clarify the qualitative approach followed in this research, the research design and the

method (i.e. the methods of data collection, analysis and verification), as well as the ethical considerations associated with this study.

A qualitative research approach was followed in this study. Qualitative research, according to Fischer (2010:XVI), can be defined as follows: "Qualitative research is a reflective, interpretive, descriptive, and usually reflexive effort to describe and understand actual instances of human action and experience from the perspective of the participants who are living through a particular situation". Hence, from this definition, it is clear that qualitative research seeks to understand how people experience the situations and groups in which they currently find themselves. By means of qualitative research, the researcher tries to understand how others make sense of their experiences. Creswell (2009:4) concurs and points out that "...qualitative researchers endeavour to explore and come to an understanding of the meaning individuals or group ascribe to a social or human problem." To sum up: qualitative research provides an in-depth description of how people experience a given research issue. It thus focuses on the human side, allows for the identifying of intangible factors such as social norms, gender roles and so forth whose role in quantitative research is not always apparent. Moreover, it allows for a better understanding of complex realities in a situation (Ospina, 2004).

According to Benoliel (in Meadows, 2003:465), the main purpose of qualitative research includes the following:

- exploration and description of a group of people of a social phenomenon about which little is known;
- hypothesis generation: in-depth data collection and the subsequent analysis thereof enable researchers to formulate hypotheses, which could be tested more formally in subsequent research; and
- theory development: qualitative generated data are analysed with the view of developing an integrated scheme to explain the observed phenomena.

Ospina (2004) adds on by pointing out some of the reasons why qualitative research is used, namely to:

- explore a phenomenon that has not been studied before;
- add rich detail and nuance that illustrates or documents existing knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation;
- try to “understand” any social phenomenon from the perspective of the actors involved, rather than explaining it (unsuccessfully) from the outside; and
- understand any phenomenon in its complexity, or one that has been dismissed by mainstream research because of the difficulties to study it.

Whittaker (2002:251) gives a succinct analysis of some of the salient characteristics of qualitative research: qualitative research is explanatory and descriptive in nature, inductive, subjective, holistic, process orientated, discovery orientated and views reality to be multi-versioned.

The researcher chose to make use of a qualitative research approach in view of the fact that the topic under investigation seemed to be ill-researched as noted by Harrington et al. (2012:6) and Chesley (2011:642). Even more importantly, opting to employ this approach was based on the fact that the research objectives formulated were to explore and describe experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in non-traditional marital role arrangements since qualitative research is by nature explorative and descriptive.

## 1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to a basic plan for a research project and details the structure according to how the research is going to be executed (D’Cruz & Jones, 2004:87; Maxwell, 2013:2). With reference to qualitative research, Maxwell (2013:3) stresses that the qualitative research plan differs from the

quantitative research designs in that the former is much more a “do-it-yourself” rather than an “off-the-shelf” process. This “do-it-yourself” process necessitates a back and forth movement between the different components of the design (i.e. sampling methods and methods of data collection and analysis) and assessing their appropriateness and implications for one another.

Within the qualitative research approach a collective case study, phenomenological, exploratory, descriptive and contextual design strategy of inquiry was decided upon in order to explore and describe the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in non-traditional marriages.

The concept “case study” in the context of qualitative research refers to a research design or strategy of inquiry that facilitates the exploration of a phenomenon/ research topic amongst one or several cases contextually using a variety of data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008:543,548; Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013:9, 14). Yin (2003) provides the following pointers for when one should opt for the case study design, when:

- the study aims to answer “what”, “how” and “what” questions;
- the behaviour of those involved in the study cannot be manipulated; and
- the contextual conditions need to be explored as they are perceived relevant to the phenomenon under study and one understanding of it.

In this research, the researcher decided on a collective case study in that she planned to involve and study multiple cases as suggested by Yin (2003) and Baxter & Jack, 2008:549-550). In the study these cases would be several working wives and stay-and-stay at home husbands.

According to Trochim (2006), phenomenology is a school of thought that focuses on people’s subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. Hence the phenomenologist wants to understand how the people experience

their own world. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009:463) share the same sentiments and further elaborate by pointing out that: “Phenomenology ... (is) concerned about human existence and experience, rather than metaphysical reality, and the way in which phenomena are experienced by human beings. Phenomenologists urge researchers to return to ‘the phenomena themselves’ as they are revealed in consciousness and lived experience, rather than to impose previously derived theories in the search to understand human behaviour.” As this study seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of how it is for couples to be fulfilling the non-traditional roles of working wives and stay-at-home husbands, the challenges related to performing these roles and the coping resources they employ to deal with the challenges, the researcher deemed the phenomenological research design to be fitting and to include it as part of the strategy of inquiry.

In addition to the collective case study and the phenomenological designs chosen, the researcher also included explorative, descriptive and contextual research designs. Terre Blanche et al. (2009:44) define exploratory research as follows: “Exploratory studies are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research. They employ an open, flexible, and inductive approach to research as they attempt to look for new insights into phenomena.” In view of the fact that one of the research objectives was to explore the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands with the aim of developing practice guidelines in the form of recommendations for social work support to these couples in their non-traditional marital role relationships, the researcher decided to include the exploratory approach in view of its relevance.

A descriptive research design was also integrated. Terre Blanche et al. (2009:44) define descriptive research as: “Descriptive studies aim to describe phenomena accurately, either through narrative-type description..., classification ..., or measuring relationships”. Descriptive research designs are beneficial for describing phenomena or events about which little is known

or identifying new or emerging phenomena (Grove, Burns & Gray, 2013:632). Following on the exploration of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands, the descriptive research design was employed to describe that which was being explored.

In qualitative research, the researcher should be mindful of the fact that investigating a phenomenon through a qualitative lens is context-bound. Therefore, a contextual strategy of inquiry was included as one of the qualitative research designs. All the aspects of the phenomenon under study as it materialises within a particular context should be considered. According to Hennink et al. (2011:288) this includes the following which were also brought into the research design:

- subject context: takes into account and describes the nature of the research problem and topic - how it evolved, considering, for example, the historical, socio-political and economic patterns, issues and context;
- theoretical context: deciding on and describing the theoretical framework relevant to enhance understanding of the topic;
- cultural context: the socio-cultural characteristics of the study's population must be described e.g. beliefs, behaviours and norms that influence the study's theme;
- methodological context: relates to how and where the data was collected and also refers to the experience of the researcher;
- context of issues: the issues raised in the data expressed through direct quotations from the participants i.e. stigmatisation of couples in non-traditional marital roles; and
- context of implications: refers to the recommendations based on the findings related on the topic under investigation i.e. the experiences, challenges and coping resources from the context of being working wives and stay-at-home husbands and, resulting from this, to formulate specific guidelines related to the context of social work to support couples in these non-traditional marital role arrangements.



## 1.8 RESEARCH METHODS

Under this sub-heading the research methods proposed for this research endeavour will be introduced and discussed, with reference to the practical activities of research: i.e. sampling, data collection, analysis and verification.

### 1.8.1 Population

The concept “population” according to Grinnell and Unrau (2008:552), implies “an entire set, or universe of people, objects or events of concern to a research study from which a sample is drawn”. Terre Blanche et al. (2009:132) concur when they note that the sample elements are drawn from a larger pool referred to as “the population”.

The population of this study was defined to constitute all married couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband for a period of at least six months from all different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds within Gauteng, South Africa. This province was decided upon as this is where the researcher resides and it was convenient for her to conduct her research in this province.

### 1.8.2 Sample

According to Bailey (1987:82) a sample refers to a subset or portion of the total population being selected for inclusion in a study (cf. Guest et al., 2013:42). For the purpose of the study, the researcher decided to employ both purposive and snowball sampling methods.

In purposive sampling, the researcher’s own judgement about which participants to choose and to deliberately pick the information-rich ones with some theoretical purpose in mind holds sway (Bailey, 1987:94; D’Cruz & Jones, 2014:94). Babbie (2010:193) supports this explanation by defining

purposive sampling as: “A type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgement about which ones will be the most useful [to provide comprehensive answers to the research questions]”. Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey (2005:6), posit that purposive sampling is one of the most common sampling methods used in qualitative research. Tongco (2007:147) concurs and defines purposive sampling as follows: “The purposive sampling technique, also called ‘judgment sampling’, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants”. Simply put, the researcher [consciously] decides what needs to be known and sets out to find [or select] people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (cf. Higginbottom, 2004:13).

For the purpose of the study, working wives and stay-at-home husbands who met the following criteria for inclusion formed the sample to obtain information regarding their experiences, needs and challenges within a non-traditional marriage:

- married couples with at least one child, where the wife was working and the husband was a stay-at-home husband;
- couples from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds were to be chosen;
- both parties had to be willing and able to participate; and
- the husband must have been a stay-at-home husband for at least 6 months.

Snowball sampling on the other hand according to Babbie (2010:193) involves the following: “... the researcher collects data on the few members of the target population he or she can locate, and then asks those individuals to provide the information needed to locate other members of that population whom they happen to know.” This method of sampling enables the researcher

to get leads from identified stay-at-home husbands to identify other or additional stay-at-home husbands.

In order to obtain a sample, the researcher had the following initial plan. Based on her Internet searches related specifically to stay-at-home husbands, the researcher came across a freelance writer who was self-identified as a stay-at-home husband. He had provided his contact details in an article so the researcher decided to start off by contacting him to firstly ascertain his willingness to participate in the study in view of the fact that he met the criteria for inclusion. Secondly, to seek his assistance to introduce the researcher to other stay-at-home husbands, who would in turn refer the researcher to other stay-at-home husband participants.

The researcher planned to set up an appointment with this potential participant and explained the purpose of the study to him as well as the need for and value of this study. Also, if he consented to explain what his participation would entail as well as the ethical considerations that would be observed during this research project were pointed out. This initial plan as devised did not materialise as, on meeting him, the potential participant did no longer meet the criteria of inclusion and his leads to other participants bore no fruit. For a comprehensive discussion on how the researcher eventually obtained a sample of participants for inclusion in the study the reader is referred to Chapter 2: Table 2.3.

In qualitative research it is customary not to decide on the size of the sample at the outset of the study, but rather to be guided in this regard by the theoretical principle called “saturation”. According to Glaser and Strauss (in Hennink et al., 2011:88), “saturation” refers to: “the point at which the information you collect begins to repeat itself”. Once the researcher observed this trend, and this was confirmed by the study leader (after reading the transcriptions of the interviews conducted), the process of further and purposively recruiting participants was terminated.

## 1.9 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Interviewing is the most commonly used method of data collection in qualitative research and can be described as the activity where a trained interviewer engages in an exploratory conversation with a purposively selected and suitable knowledgeable interviewee (Guest et al., 2013:113). Based on this fact at the outset the researcher decided to use semi-structured interviews to interview the couples, both wives and husbands. In preparation for the process of data collection, the researcher intended to make separate appointments with the wives and husbands whom she recruited based on the mentioned criteria of inclusion and their willingness to participate in the study. During these meetings she aimed to inform them once again, if she had not done it already in writing (see Addendum 1.3) or verbally before they met about what their participation would entail; the nature of the questions related to the topic to be posed to them; and the ethical considerations to be observed in this research endeavour. She planned also to request their permission for the interviews to be digitally recorded. Time would also be set aside for any questions and to clarify any queries.

The researcher, at the outset of the study, decided that the couple would be interviewed separately in order to ensure that they did not influence each other in their responses and/or intimidate each other. This would also allow each individual to contribute freely to the conversation without anyone hampering or dominating the discussion. The couple would be interviewed separately and, where possible, immediately one after the other in order to avoid any bias or the couple influencing one another about what to say.

The researcher initially decided on using semi-structured interviews facilitated by open-ended questions contained in an interview guide to collect information related to the topic under investigation. Hancock (1998:9) defines a semi-structured interview as follows: "semi-structured interviews sometimes referred to as 'focused interviews' involve a series of open ended questions based on

the topic areas the researcher wants to cover. The open ended nature of the question defines the topic under investigation but provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. If the interviewee has difficulty answering a question or provides only a brief response, the interviewer can use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further. In a semi-structured interview the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee.”

Interview guides are used during semi-structured interviews. According to Welman et al. (2005:166), “An interview guide involves a list of topics and aspects of these topics that have a bearing on the given theme and that the interviewer should note during the course of the interview” (Cf. Fossey et al., 2002:27.).

From these definitions, it was clear that this method of data collection would be relevant for the study as it would allow the researcher to probe further and to formulate new questions as the interview proceeded with the aid of open-ended questions. By doing this, during the analysis the researcher would be able to check for consistency of what was previously said. The semi-structured interview way of collecting the data would also afford the participants the opportunity to describe their experiences in their own words. Interviews were conducted individually with the working wives and stay-at-home husbands and were recorded with the aim of coding the content for the purpose of analysis. The interview-guide included the following pertinent questions that were considered relevant for the study.

#### Questions and requests directed to the working wives

##### a) Working wives

- How did it come about that you became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband, and from when was this the arrangement? What

are your reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-home husband?

- What are your responsibilities as a working wife?
- Did your role as wife change when you became a working wife?
- How do you feel about being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a working wife entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for you as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for your family having you as a working wife?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a working wife?
- What are your needs as a working wife?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported...

Questions and request directed to the stay-at-home husbands

b) Stay-at-home husbands

- How did you come to be a stay-at-home husband with a working wife, and when did this happen? What were your reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife?
- What are your responsibilities as a stay-at-home husband?
- Did your role as husband change once you became a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you feel about being a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a stay-at-home husband entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you benefit from being a stay-at-home husband?

- What are the benefits for your family to have a stay-at-home husband?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are your needs as a stay-at-home husband?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

During the interview, the researcher paid special attention to body language and all non-verbal responses. Finally, the researcher also kept a journal where field notes were captured. These field notes focused on the researcher's experiences and observations including reflections and interpretations of points raised and discussed during the interview.

#### 1.10 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Babbie (2010:394) defines qualitative data analysis as: "the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships." Whilst Strauss and Corbin (1998:11) define qualitative research as "...any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions and feelings as well as about organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena and interactions between nations."

The researcher decided at the beginning of the study to employ the eight steps for analysing qualitatively generated data as proposed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186) as these steps seemed easy to operationalise. The steps to be followed were:

- The researcher would read all the transcripts of the interviews conducted in order to get a sense of the whole. Thoughts and ideas that emerged from reading the transcripts would be noted.

- One transcript would be picked and studied in detail and the researcher would use this opportunity to once again write down thoughts and also start with identifying topics emerging.
- The researcher would then repeat step two in respect of all the interview transcripts. Once all the topics were identified, they would be clustered together and labelled according to their characteristics.
- For each of the identified topics, a unique abbreviation would be created. The written narratives and transcripts would subsequently be studied again and the abbreviations would be placed in the written transcripts next to the segments of data corresponding with the respective abbreviations relating to the specific identified topics.
- The researcher then tried to find the most descriptive wording for the topics and turned them into themes, sub-themes and categories.
- The list containing the themes, with related sub-themes and categories, would be drawn up in alphabetical order.
- The data belonging to each theme, sub-theme and category would be grouped together in one place by cutting and pasting.
- Where necessary, the researcher would recode segments of data and on completing of the former proceeded with reporting the research findings based on the data analysis.

#### 1.11 METHOD OF DATA VERIFICATION

At the outset of their research endeavours qualitative researchers need to put some mechanisms in place to confidently underscore the fact that the research findings are an actual representation of the participants' meanings attributed to the topic under investigation (Lietz, Langer and Furman, 2006:443). In attempting to establish this confidence, qualitative researchers should ensure some level of trustworthiness in the research process. Thus the researcher decided to employ Guba's model (as explicated in Krefting, 1991) for ensuring the trustworthiness of the research findings.



According to Guba (in Krefting, 1991), there are four aspects of trustworthiness, namely: truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. Each of these will be introduced and briefly explained how the researcher envisaged and employed them in this study:

- **Truth value**

Truth value relates to the trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research and is demonstrated when participants recognise the reported research findings as their own experiences. In order to ensure truth value, the researcher did the following:

- Employing triangulation: Triangulation is the comparison of multiple perspectives (Krefting, 1991:219) and in this study the researcher used triangulation of data sources by interviewing and obtaining information from various working-wives and stay-at home husbands.
- Interviewing techniques such as clarification, summarising, focusing and minimal verbal responses were used to tap into the participants accounts of the topic under investigation.
- Peer-examination, which according to Krefting (1991:219) is a profitable criterion for data verification would be employed. Peer examination allows for one's decisions and actions taken during the research process to be questioned by people outside the context of the study, who are conversant not only in the research methodology employed but also about the topic under investigation. The researcher consulted a journalist who had written a feature article on the topic of stay-at-home husbands. She consulted colleagues experienced in the field of qualitative research throughout the research study.
- The researcher kept a journal to record her own experiences, thoughts and feelings whilst interacting with the participants. She used these and went back to check with participants if her understanding of the responses was in fact accurate. This then ensured that the personal perceptions of the researcher did not influence her understanding of the experiences of participants.

- **Applicability**

Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216) defines applicability as the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups. As research on the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands is severely lacking, applicability becomes a challenge. However, the researcher made an effort to provide an in-depth description of the research context and the research methodology employed. In so doing possibilities for assessing the applicability of the research findings to other contexts and settings by researchers who wished to do so in the future were exposed.

- **Consistency**

Consistency considers whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context by a competent researcher (Guba in Krefting, 1991:216). In order to ensure consistency, a detailed description of the research methodology employed was documented. Special attention was given to providing a comprehensive account on the research methodology employed for the purpose of conducting a confirmability audit, should the need arise. In addition, all material used during the study, which includes the semi-structured interview schedule, tapes, essays and consent forms would be kept to allow for such an audit trail. As part of the study, the researcher drew on the services of an independent coder to analyse the collected data independently to ensure that the findings presented were a true reflection of the participants' responses and input.

- **Neutrality**

This is the freedom from bias in the research procedures and results (Guba in Krefting, 1991:216). In order to realise neutrality in the analysis of the transcribed interviews with all participants (wives and husbands) both the researcher and an independent coder (explained under consistency) were involved. The transcribed interviews, decisions made and the result of the data analysis processes will be made available to the supervisor for auditing

purposes. Furthermore, triangulation of data sources, as explained, was also practised.

## 1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Within the context of research, ethics refers to a set of moral principles which provides guidelines on the most correct conduct towards the research participants (Strydom, 2011:114). For the purpose of the study, the following ethical principles were decided upon at the outset of the study:

- **Obtaining the informed consent of participants to participate in this research project**

In all research projects, the individuals' agreements or consent to participate in such endeavours must be out of free will, and the decision to do so must only be taken once they were comprehensively informed (McLaughlin, 2012:59; Guest et al. 2013:325).

Guest et al. (2013:326) recommend that, in order to obtain a potential participant's consent to participate in a research project, the researcher verbally and/or in writing must disclose and explain the key aspects of the research (i.e. the goal of the research; the contribution the individual would make by participating in the research; what the individual's involvement would entail (for example, if the person is going to be interviewed, what would be asked or focused on during the interview); what will happen to the information shared (i.e. when and how it will be published); what the risks are in participating in this study, and what the rights of the participants are (Cf. McLaughlin, 2012:59, 60.). Taking Guest et al.'s recommendation to heart the researcher drew up a letter (see Addendum 1.3) informing potential participants about the research and its relevant aspects. This was provided in writing to the potential participants who met the criteria of inclusion in the study. The contents was also discussed with them verbally and only after they

were fully informed and willing to participate voluntarily. The informed consent form was signed by each participant.

- **Confidentiality, anonymity and management of information**

With reference to the ethical aspects related to confidentiality, anonymity and the management of information, Hennink et al. (2011:71) point out that while confidentiality implies to the non-disclosure of the information provided by the participant to the researcher, it is difficult, in qualitative research, to guarantee absolute confidentiality. The reason being is that the participants' direct words are used in reporting and substantiating the research findings. Anonymity "meaning that those outside the study will not know the identity of the participants" (McLaughlin, 2012:62), can be ensured, as the researcher can vouch to remove all identifiable information from transcripts and quotations and promise to report the research findings in an anonymous fashion, by referring to the participants by way of a code or a pseudonym (Hennink, 2011:71). Although absolute confidentiality in qualitative research is not easily pursued, qualitative researchers can restrict who listens to the digital recordings of the interviews and can manage the data obtained in a confidential manner by locking it away in a safe place (Hennink, 2011:71-72). Furthermore, the recordings of the interviews and the transcripts should be labelled in such a fashion that should not compromise the participants' anonymity and must be sorted separately from each other (McLaughlin, 2012:63-64).

The researcher decided at the outset of the study to follow the pointers provided by Hennink et al. and McLaughlin in that she decided to let the participants choose pseudonyms for themselves and, in reporting the findings, the pseudonyms were used. The digital recordings and the transcripts were safely and separately locked away and she limited the exposure to the transcripts only to the supervisor of the study and the independent coder.

- **Debriefing**

Participating in the study could awaken deep-rooted painful emotions for participants. It is thus crucial that the researcher is prepared and considers ways in which emotions can be contained and where participants can be supported when experiencing psychological risk. Therefore, participants would be informed upfront of their right to refuse questions that make them feel uncomfortable. If they experience any psychological risk, they would be given the LifeLine toll free 24 hour counselling number. In addition, the researcher would have a list of non-governmental organisations available that participants could use for face-to-face counselling sessions, should the need arise. The researcher also arranged for some of her social work colleagues to be available if needed.

### 1.13 DEFINING OF KEY CONCEPTS

In this sub-section the key concepts central to this study are defined and the meaning they assumes in the context of this reported research will be indicated.

#### 1.13.1 Stay-at-home husband

According to the United States Census, (Census 2008) cited by Latshaw (2011:128), a stay-at-home husband and father is: "A married father with children under 15 years old who has remained out of the labour force for more than one year so he can care for his family while his wife works outside the home". Kramer and McCulloch (2011:8) view a stay-at-home father household as "one in which the husband is not part of the labour force and had not received any income in the previous year, while his wife was working a full-time job for pay." For the purpose of the study, a stay-at-home husband refers to a household where the husband is at home and has been fulfilling the role

of caregiver and homemaker for at least six months. In this household, the wife is the main breadwinner.

#### 1.13.2 Working wife

In this study a working wife will be described as a woman who is employed on a full-time basis outside the home and is the central source of the family's financial support or the sole breadwinner (Chesley, 2011:643) whilst being married to a husband whose primary responsibility it is to perform house chores and child care.

#### 1.13.3 Practice Guidelines

According to Peters and McKeon (in Nziyane, 2010:40), practice guidelines as defined by the National Institute of Health are: "...systematically developed statements to assist practitioner and patient decisions about appropriate health care for specific clinical circumstances". They elaborate further by indicating that guidelines prescribe actions which will dictate the type of care provided to a certain group in certain situations and the main purpose of these guidelines is to ensure consistency and to improve the provision of care. Van der Westhuizen (2010:52), coming from a Social Work perspective, defines practice guidelines as follows: "Practice guidelines provide social workers with a strategy to address certain social problems through activities... projects [and interventions]".

For the purpose of this study, practice guidelines will consist of activities and interventions that are recommended to help social work professionals working with couples in a non-traditional marriage unit (working wives and stay-at-home husbands fulfilling non-traditional marital roles) with the aim of supporting these couples.

#### 1.13.4 Challenges

The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013) defines a challenge as: "(the situation of being faced with) something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore tests a person's ability". The Collins English Dictionary (2013) agrees with this and defines a challenge as follows: "A challenge is something new and difficult which requires great effort and determination."

In this study, challenges refer to the difficulties both mentally and physically experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles.

#### 1.13.5 Experiences

The concept "experience" by definition according to Van den Bos (2007:354) refers to a conscious event: an event that is lived through, or undergone, as opposed to one that is imagined or thought about. The Collins English Dictionary (2010:581) offers a similar interpretation by recording that the term "experience" refers to the sum of a person's perceptions, feelings and memories. The concept "experience" can be described as an accumulation of knowledge or skills that results from direct participation in events or activities and leaves a lasting impression on a person. Experience arises in the joining of information from the external world with the information from the internal world, and is personal and unique (Soanes, Spooner & Hawker, 2001:311).

In this study, the experiences of the working wife and stay-at-home husband in the non-traditional marriage are considered. Experiences in this context refer to how the working wife and the stay-at-home husband find their roles fulfilling. This will include their emotions and feelings towards having to meet the demands of the role and accommodate emotions and reactions of how others,

including family, friends, community and society, perceive them within these roles.

#### 1.13.6 Coping resources

Monat and Lazarus (in Garnefski, Kraaij and Spinhoven, 2001:1312) define coping as “an individual’s efforts to master demands (conditions of harm, threat or challenge) that are appraised (or perceived) as exceeding or taxing his or her resources.” Wechsler (1995:124) links closely to this definition and defines coping as a “...behavioural reaction to adverse situations that induce physiological stress reactions...”

For the purpose of the study, the coping resources will refer to the resources, mechanisms and ways of coping employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands which makes it easier for them to successfully meet their non-traditional marital roles.

#### 1.13.7 Social work

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW, 2012) defines Social Work as follows: “The Social Work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work”.

The National Association of Social Workers, according to Baker in Zastrow (2010:3), describe Social Work as “...the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favourable to their goals ...[its] practice consists of the professional application of social work values,



principles, and techniques to one or more of the following ends; helping people obtain tangible services; providing counselling and psychotherapy for individuals, families and groups; helping communities or groups provide or improve social and health services; and participating in relevant legislative processes. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behaviour, of social, economic, and cultural institutions; and the interaction of all these factors.”

Both definitions will be adopted for the context of this study.

#### 1.14 OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research report comprises five chapters that are delimited as follows:

*Chapter 1:* This chapter covers the general introduction and orientation to the thesis specifically focusing on the following: introduction and problem formulation, problem statement, reason/rationale for the study, research questions, goal and objectives, research approach and design, ethical considerations, limitations of the research, clarification of key concepts, and the content plan of the research report.

*Chapter 2:* This chapter details the researcher’s application of the qualitative research process.

*Chapters 3 and 4:* In these chapters the research findings will be presented, discussed, compared and contrasted to existing literature related to the topic.

*Chapter 5* will provide a summary of the research report, and outline the overall conclusions and recommendations.

## 1.15 CONCLUSION

Chapter one focused on providing an introduction and background to the study where attention was given to the emergence of the working-wife phenomenon as well as the emergence of the stay-at-home husband. Attention was paid to the traditional marriage as well as what this marriage type holds for both wife and husband in terms of marital roles and the process of transition from traditional to non-traditional marriage units was emphasised.

In providing an overview of the emergence of the stay-at-home husband phenomenon, reference was made to how common or uncommon this phenomenon is by referring to the situation in various developed and developing countries of the world, including South Africa. Against this backdrop, the process of problem formulation as well as the motivation for the study was reviewed.

The theoretical framework for the study was explained and the fact that the researcher employed the ecological systems perspective and the gender ideology and role theories was justified. These theories were dealt with in detail as applicable to this specific study.

Attention was then given to the research questions and providing an overview of the research goal and objectives followed by the research method specifying that qualitative approach was followed in this research. The sampling methods, purposive and snowball sampling methods were then discussed together with describing the population. Discussions on data collection and data analysis followed. Methods of data verification and ethical considerations were considered and finally the concepts used were defined. Chapter 1 concluded with an outline of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **A DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS FOR EXPLORING THE RESEARCH TOPIC UNDER INVESTIGATION**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Apart from setting the stage and introducing the topic under investigation, providing a problem formulation in order to justify the need for this research endeavour, mentioning the research questions (see Chapter 1, section 1.5), the goal (see Chapter 1, sub-section 1.5.1) and objectives (see Chapter 1, sub-section 1.5.2) to steer this venture, the researcher also, in the preceding chapter, orientated the reader towards the research approach, design and methods she proposed to utilise for investigating the topic under discussion.

In this chapter, the proposed research methodology will take centre stage in that it will be further elaborated upon as the researcher provides a detailed discussion on how the selected research methodology was applied in executing this research project. Whilst being cognisant of the fact that revisiting the already proposed research methodology (see Chapter 1, section 1.6) this chapter, may in some instances be labelled as “repetitive”, the researcher deemed it necessary to further elaborate on the research methodology previously referred to by way of introduction. In doing so and justifying this, the researcher followed the suggestion provided by Strauss and Corbin (in Larson, 2009:32) who pointed out that a description of the processes followed that led to the choice of the particular research methodology should be documented in detail to substantiate the conclusions and insights that evolved from the study. This places a responsibility on the researcher to provide a detailed and thick description of the research methodology employed in order to enable a dependability audit to be conducted in the future, should such a need arise.

According to Shenton (2004:71-72) “dependability” refers to whether the findings would be consistent if the research were repeated with the same participants, with the same method and in a similar context. Shenton (2004:71) posits that, in order to tackle the dependability question, the processes followed within the study should be described in detail in the research report. This would enable a repeat of the same study to be done to get the same result. A future researcher, interested in undertaking a dependability audit, if and when required, would benefit from a comprehensive report of the research methodology processes followed in this study.

Following this motivation and to enable readers of such a research report to have a clear understanding of the research methods employed, and their effectiveness, Shenton (2004:71) proposes that sections of a qualitative research report should be devoted to:

- a) The research design and its implementation, describing what was planned and executed on a strategic level
- b) The operational detail of data gathering, addressing the minutiae of what was done in the field
- c) [A] reflective appraisal of the project, evaluating the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken.

Later on in this chapter a detailed account of the road travelled and steps taken by the researcher to obtain data is given.

This need for a rich and detailed description on the research methodology used is also a prerequisite for the exercise of determining the “transferability of research findings”. Transferability, according to Shenton (2004:69-70), has to do with the ability to demonstrate whether the results of the research at hand can be transferred to other contexts. Rodwell (in Ungar, 2003:95) explains that “the responsibility to determine transferability” does not lie with the researcher, but with the reader of the research report whose intention it is to determine whether the findings “fit” or resonate within the context to which the findings

are to be transferred. In terms of transferability, the researcher's only responsibility is to provide the "thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer[ability] can be contemplated as a possibility" (Lincoln & Guba, in Ungar, 2003:95). In order for, and prior to, any attempt of transference, Guba (in Shenton, 2004:70) underscores the need for "a full description of all the contextual factors impinging on the study". In identifying these "contextual factors" Shenton (2004:7) (in drawing on the works of Cole and Gardner; Marchionini and Pitts) stresses the importance of conveying to the readers of such a qualitative research report, information pertaining to these specific aspects:

- the boundaries of the study i.e. who the participants were who took part in the study;
- any restrictions in the type of people who contributed to the data i.e. was a criterion of inclusion or exclusion used to pick the participants;
- the size of the sample;
- the data collection methods used;
- the number and length of the data collection sessions; and
- the timespan allocated to the activity of collecting the data.

In following these pointers and suggestions the remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to a description of the qualitative research methodology utilised for the purpose of this research undertaking and how it was applied.

## 2.2 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Since the researcher decided to investigate the research topic according to a qualitative research paradigm (see Chapter 1, section 1.7) the main features of the concept "qualitative research" will further be elaborated upon. Habermas (in Ungar, 2003:92) postulates that a qualitative inquiry *inter alia* affords the researcher an opportunity to allow and assist research participants to speaking about experiences that are particularly significant for them in their

own “life world”. According to Hennink et al. (2011:8), the qualitative research approach, through the utilisation of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observations, allows the researcher to examine people’s experiences in detail from the perspectives of the people themselves. The qualitative researcher tries to come to understand the meanings and interpretations the people participating in the study give to behaviour, events, experiences and objects.

In addition, Creswell (2002:58) explains that qualitative research is “... an inquiry approach” useful for exploring and developing a comprehensive understanding of a central phenomenon. In order to explore, learn about, and come to understand this phenomenon, the researcher asks participants broad, general questions and thus collects the detailed views of participants in the form of words or images. The collected data is then thematically analysed and presented in a descriptive manner. From this data, the researcher interprets the meaning of the information drawing on personal reflections and past research. This implies conducting a literature control. The structure of the final report is flexible, takes on a narrative format and displays the researcher’s biases and thoughts.

Drawing on definitions already given in this report (see Chapter 1, section 1.7; and Chapter 2, sections 2.1; 2.2) the discussion turns to elaborating on the inherent characteristics of qualitative research. Interestingly, it is apparent that many authors have the same or similar stance. Holloway and Wheeler (in Rolfe, 2006:306) state that qualitative research is “holistic, emic, contextualised, interpretive, and immersed”. Munhall’s contribution (2001) endorses this view in stating that common features of qualitative research include: “a holistic approach, a focus on human experience, a sustained contact with people in their natural setting, a high level of researcher involvement and the production of descriptive and/or narrative data”. To add to these ideas, Meriam (2002:4) highlights the following as characteristics of qualitative research:

- the researcher strives to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experience;
- the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection as understanding is the aim of the research; and
- the product of a qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive.

When looking at the works of LeCompte and Schensul (1999), Hatch (2002) and Marshall and Rossman (2010) in Creswell (2013:44-46), and that of Creswell himself, the following characteristics of qualitative research can be identified and are depicted in tabular format (Table 2.1):

Table 2.1: Characteristics of qualitative research

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Creswell (2013)</b>	<b>LeCompte &amp; Schensul (1999)</b>	<b>Hatch (2002)</b>	<b>Marshall &amp; Rossman (2010)</b>
Is conducted in a natural setting (the field), a source of data for close interaction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relies on the researcher as key instrument in data collection	Yes	-	Yes	-
Involves using multiple methods	Yes	Yes		Yes
Involves complex reasoning going between inductive and deductive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Focuses on participants' perspectives, their meanings, their multiple subject views	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Is situated within the context or setting of participants/sites	Yes	Yes	-	Yes

(social/political/historical)				
Involves an emergent and evolving design rather than tightly prefigured design	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
Is reflective and interpretive (i.e. sensitive to researcher's biographies/social identities)	Yes	-	-	Yes
Presents a holistic , complex picture	Yes	-	Yes	Yes

Some of the mentioned characteristics are further unpacked and a description is provided on how they were employed in this research endeavour:

- *Qualitative research is conducted in its natural setting.* In qualitative research the focus is on face-to-face interactions in order to obtain a better or in-depth understanding of a phenomenon/a. Participants are not all brought together in a specific setting such as a laboratory, as the core focus is that the researcher seeks to understand how participants behave in their natural settings.

Through her study the researcher sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of the challenges, coping resources and experiences of the working wives and stay-at-home husbands. Thus, and in order to achieve this, the researcher needed to understand how each individual experienced these elements according to the role that they fulfilled, how they behaved and also through the meanings that they attach to these experiences. Separate appointments were made with the wife and the husband at a place and time that suited them, where interviewing them face-to-face where feasible. The researcher, through the use of prompts and open-ended questions, as contained in an interview guide, engaged in purposeful conversation with these participants and, where permission was obtained, the entire interview was recorded.



Where face-to-face interactions were not possible, due to the researcher and the participants being geographically removed from each other, as well as per request from participants, the researcher provided participants with the option of providing an e-mail address where the questions (contained in the interview guide) were e-mailed to them. The participants were requested to respond to the questions via e-mail and return them to the researcher (participants had the option of responding to the questions either individually or in essay format). The researcher also conducted two telephonic interviews with participants who lived in another province. The researcher had, however, contracted with participants, in all cases, that the answers to the questions or essays written by e-mail would be returned to them for member checking. A request to answer additional questions and to further elaborate on information already provided accompanied the first replies. The purpose of this process was to confirm and to gain more clarity to better understand the information initially shared.

- *Researcher as key instrument in the process of data collection.* Throughout the research, the researcher is the key instrument going to the participants to collect the data. Instead of relying on structured instruments or questionnaires the researcher as mentioned, first and foremost made use of interviewing facilitated through open-ended questions as a tool.

The researcher made use of one-on-one semi-structured interviews, facilitated and directed by open-ended questions contained in an interview guide. Additional communication was through utilising interviewing skills in order to probe further where further clarity was needed. Thus in this context of the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, the researcher was the main instrument during the study.

- *Complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic.* In qualitative research the researcher works back and forth between the dataset that became available as a result of the process of data collection, in order

to derive topics that will eventually be turned into themes. The investigated themes will be reported on through the participants' accounts and responses. A to-and-fro movement takes place in order to turn topics into themes until the researcher establishes an all-embracing set of themes depicting all the aspects, facets and multi-layers. Together these encapsulate the participants' experiences, challenges, coping resources in relation to being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband and vice versa. The researcher may go back to participants to collaborate around the accuracy of the themes (i.e. request for member checking). All themes are constantly checked against the data.

The researcher had the opportunity to return to participants when seeking further clarity and also to confirm understanding. Through this process, the researcher had an opportunity to check data and confirm themes with the participants. When reflecting on the interviews the researcher would document thoughts, feelings and questions during and after the interview as well as when doing transcripts and reading the returned e-mailed questions or essays.

- *In qualitative research, the participants' meanings they attach to the phenomenon under investigation take centre stage.* Here the main focus is on the meanings that participants attach to the issue and not the meanings that the researcher attaches to the issue.

Through collaborating with participants, the researcher was able to assess whether her focus remained on the meanings that the participants attached to the issue being explored, namely, the experiences, challenges and coping resources in relation to being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. The researcher ensured that, by means of keeping a journal, she was able to document any thoughts, reflections and record additional questions. She would then go back to the participants to guarantee that these were accurate

or she would obtain additional information, thereby confirming dependability of the data.

- *In qualitative research, the idea of an emergent research design is accommodated.* The qualitative research process is emergent as the initial plan for research may change and evolve as the process of entering the field and collecting data proceeds.

At the outset of the research, the researcher had planned to make use of a journalist (referred to in Chapter 1, section 1.11) as gatekeeper in order to gain access to other stay-at-home husbands. Unfortunately, the contact details he had provided of the stay-at-home husbands were no longer valid. Thus the researcher, in discussion with the supervisor of the study, had to explore other ways of recruiting participants. The procedure adopted will be outlined later in this chapter.

Another point of change came about in terms of the inclusion criteria. Initially, the researcher made use of the following criteria: married couples with at least one child, living in Gauteng and having been either a working wife or stay-at-home husband for at least six months, from any socio-economic and racial backgrounds. Due to the challenges experienced in recruiting participants (discussed later in this chapter), the researcher, together with her supervisor of the study, reviewed the inclusion criteria and decided to include couples beyond the boundaries of Gauteng.

The researcher originally had also decided on conducting only one-on-one semi-structured interviews with participants. However, as time went on, and as a result of several challenges that arose in recruiting participants, the modus operandi had to be revised. Problems concerned the geographical distance between the researcher and participants expressing a willingness to participate and participants not feeling comfortable about being interviewed one-on-one. Therefore the researcher, in consultation and collaboration with

the supervisor of the study, decided to expand the methods of data collection to also include telephonic interviews and data collection via e-mailing. In the latter case the questions were sent electronically to the participants with the request that they answer the questions and return them to the researcher and do so on condition that they would be available for further questioning via e-mail to elaborate on and confirm the information provided through this channel.

- *In qualitative research, the research adopts a reflexive stance whilst being involved in the research project.* Researchers engage in a process of constant reflection on how their “self” and background shapes and informs a decision made and interpretations arrived at, as reflected in this research report.

The researcher remained aware of her thoughts and reflections through keeping a journal. This ensured that she accurately interpreted responses from participants.

- *Qualitative researchers aspire to provide a holistic account of the topic under investigation.* This entails looking at the phenomenon under investigation from different angles and observing the interactions between the factors.

The researcher adopted a holistic stance whilst investigating the issue of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband by not only looking at the phenomenon from the angle of their experiences, but also their experienced-based perceptions in relation to these. She also went into the issues of the benefits, challenges and coping resources in relation to the arrangement of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. In addition she requested participants to forward advice to other couples in similar situations and to provide pointers of intervention to social workers rendering services to such couples.

Based on the explanations provided (see Chapter 1, section 1.7; and Chapter 2, sections 2.1 and 2.2) on what qualitative research entails and what the distinct characteristics inherent to this approach are, the researcher opted to employ a qualitative research approach. She deemed it instrumentally a good fit in assisting her with her aim of developing an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping resources related to the realities of being a working wife and a stay-at-home husband. The method of data collection characteristic of the qualitative research afforded her the opportunity to collect detailed information from the participants. The focus was specifically on their experiences and experienced-based perceptions in relation to being a couple fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. The manner of analysing (see Chapter 1, section 1.10 and elaborated on further in this chapter) and the reporting of qualitative generated data (see Chapters 3 and 4), as introduced and referred to in the discussion of the definition and the characteristics of qualitative research, allowed the researcher an opportunity to paint a word-picture depicting the participants' 'lived experiences', in relation to the topic under investigation. From this, knowledge was generated to assist couples in similar circumstances that laid the foundation for suggestions to develop practice guidelines in the form of recommendations for social workers to support these couples in these non-traditional marriages with their role expectations, functions and responsibilities within this type of marriage.

Against this account of qualitative research that forms the backdrop of this research, attention is now given to the research design adopted during the study, as presented in Chapter 1 of this report.

## 2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design forms the foundation of a research study and determines its quality. It is a strategic framework detailing “what” the research methods inherent in the chosen research approach are, and “how” they must be implemented to answer the research question, stemming from the identified research problem (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:34). Creswell (2009:3) concurs and defines the concept “research design” as follows: “Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decision from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis.”

The researcher opted to use ***a collective case study, phenomenological research design coupled with an explorative, descriptive and contextual strategy of inquiry*** while exploring and describing the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at home-husbands fulfilling non-traditional marital roles, with the aim of developing practice guidelines in the form of recommendations for social work practitioners to support couples in this type of marital relationship (as mentioned by way of introduction in Chapter 1 of this report)

- The collective case study research design

In adding on to what was presented in relation to the collective case study research design, Creswell (in Petty, Thomson and Stew, 2012:379) indicates that the case study methodology originates from human and social sciences as well as from evaluative research. The case study can be regarded as the science of the singular (Simon (1980) and Bassey (1999) in Petty et al., 2012:379).

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009:460), comment that case studies are intensive investigations of individuals. In applying this to the study reported

on here the aim was to study the couples as individuals with reference to their experiences, challenges and coping resources related to them fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband. They further point out that case studies are descriptive in nature and provide rich information about individuals or a particular situation.

- The phenomenological research design

Quintessentially, phenomenology, as a qualitative research design or strategy of inquiry, endeavours to get to the essence of the matter under investigation through concrete details or lived experiences (i.e. in terms of how it is for you to have had a specific experience or currently going through a specific experience and the meaning attached to, or derived from it) (Vydelingum, 2000:101). Sokolowski (in Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007:1373), agrees with the former train of thought and explains that phenomenology involves the use of thick descriptions based on a detailed analysis of lived experiences of individuals in order to understand how meaning is created through embodied experienced-based perceptions. Phenomenology contributes to a deeper understanding of lived experiences by exposing taken-for-granted assumptions about the ways of knowing and for this reason phenomenology has been described “as the use of subjective and first person experience as a source of knowledge-generation” (Maslow in Smith, 1998:214).

Creswell (2013:76) differentiates the phenomenological design from narrative research design by stating that a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Like other authors, including Higginbottom (2004:12) and Petty et al. (2012:378), Creswell emphasises that the core focus of phenomenology is to identify the lived experiences of the individuals of a specific phenomenon or experience and then to describe this experience in terms of what was experienced, and how it was experienced.

Like all research approaches, phenomenology has distinct features (cf. Petty et al., 2012:379 and Creswell, 2013:78) which is summarised as follows:

- One employs phenomenology as strategy of inquiry when the emphasis is on exploring a “how-it-is-experience” from the perceptions of persons who have had a first-hand experience of the phenomenon, or are experiencing the phenomenon under investigation, together with the meanings they attach to this specific experience.
- When employing this strategy of inquiry the researcher will involve a sample group varying in size from between 3 to 4 to 10 to 15 individuals.
- In investigating a phenomenon through a phenomenological lens, the skill of “bracketing” is employed. Bracketing, by definition, means “to hold all preconceptions in abeyance” (Beech, 1999:35) whilst being engaged in a research project in which one adopted phenomenology as part of the strategy of inquiry. One “brackets” oneself by attempting to “unknow the known”. Munhall in Beech (1999:44) “deems bracketing to be the process of unknowing wherein it is important to avoid the assumption that as interviewers we know the experiences and life-world of the interviewee”. This entails unknowing our own preconceived ideas (borne from experience-based and or perception-based circumstances); quieting one’s own thoughts by being constantly aware of them; by reflecting in and on the interviewing process; and thinking about the researcher’s own presence and agenda in all of this.
- When applying a phenomenological strategy of inquiry, in-depth or semi-structured interview data collection methods are used. Hennink et al. (2011:109) explain that (similar to the semi-structured interview) an in-depth interview is a one-on-one method of data collection. The interviewer and interviewee who are involved discuss a specific topic in-depth. It can be regarded as a “conversation with a purpose”. The researcher uses questions contained in a semi-structured interview guide “to gain insight into the aspects inherent to the topic under investigation”. This type of interview is not a two-way dialogue, but



rather an attempt to let the interviewee share their story. The interviewer uses open-ended questions, communication and interviewing skills to strategically elicit the complete and varied layers of the story.

- The researcher, working from a phenomenological perspective, presents the research findings in a tapestry woven with words to relay the participants' first-hand experiences of the phenomenon under discussion.

The definitions and features of the phenomenological approach as described in this report provide evidence that this approach was most fitting for the study for the following reasons:

- The researcher, through the study, sought to explore the experiences, challenges and coping resources in the non-traditional marital roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband. By doing so, the researcher wanted to understand the lived experiences of both parties within the non-traditional marriage, thereby understanding the meanings that they attach to the roles which they fulfil.
- As per the phenomenological approach, the study consisted of a group of individuals who fitted the inclusion criteria referred to in this report. A total of 10 couples participated in the study where wife and husband were interviewed individually (face-to-face). Five couples and one other wife were individually interviewed face-to-face. They were all interviewed individually. Two husbands were interviewed telephonically whereas two couples received the questions via e-mail to complete and two working wives and one stay-at-home husband also received the questions via e-mail to complete (separately from each other). The reasons for this procedure were explained (under section 2.1 earlier in this chapter). All couples comprised married couples where the wife was a working wife and main breadwinner and the husband was a stay-at-home husband.

- To ensure bracketing, the researcher kept notes of her own emotions, feelings and interpretations following interviews or transcribing of the data. She would also return to participants to seek clarity and to confirm interpretation. This enabled the researcher to remain objective as well as provided an opportunity to clarify understanding.
- The researcher made use of different data collection methods, the first was to interview couples one-on-one and this was subsequently (as explained) expanded to include one-on-one telephone interviews and data collection via e-mails.

The wife and husband were however, interviewed separately (and recorded) and where possible, immediately after each other to ensure that they did not influence each other's input. Prior to the interview, both parties were provided with information highlighting the purpose of the study and with documents of consent. Consent for both being interviewed and for the interview to be recorded was required (see Chapter 1, section 1.12; Addenda 1.2 and 1.3). The researcher went through these documents with all participants to be certain that they fully understood the purpose of the study as well as the roles that they played.

The researcher also made participants aware that they could withdraw from the study at any point in time. They were also offered counselling if the interview evoked negative emotions. Social worker colleagues of the researcher volunteered to provide counselling when required. Contact numbers of LifeLine<sup>3</sup> for telephonic counselling and a list of NGOs as an alternative source of help were given to the respondents. The researcher transcribed the interviews word for word and the transcripts were sent to the supervisor for checking. In the event of

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<sup>3</sup> Lifeline is an NGO that provides counselling and connects with people, giving them the necessary tools to better handle stress and improve their emotional health

couples living too far or cases where the person did not feel comfortable about being interviewed and recorded, or those who requested to participate via e-mail, questions were sent electronically. After answering the questions individually or in essay format the information was sent back to the researcher when completed. Two of the participants were also interviewed telephonically due to distance. Data collection through the use of e-mail is explored later in this report (see section 2.5- **the preparation of the recruited participants for the data collection and the methods of data collection employed**).

- An exploratory strategy of inquiry

In view of the fact that one of the research objectives (see Chapter 1, section 1.5.2) was to explore the topic under investigation (i.e. to explore the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands and how they can be supported by social workers in terms of fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles), and, in view of the fact that phenomenology has, as part of its goal, the exploration of lived experiences in relation to a specific phenomenon, the researcher employed an explorative research design as part of the strategy of inquiry. The concept “exploratory research” is defined by Burns and Grove (2003:313) as: “research conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas and/or increase knowledge of the phenomenon”.

According to the University of Southern California Library (2012), the focus with exploratory research is to gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation and/or to become one with phenomena that are in a preliminary stage of investigation.

Both of these definitions underscore the fact that the core focus of this research was to gain new insight into, and to become familiar with, a specifically chosen situation, namely one that concerns a stay-at-home

husband and working wife relationship in which the nature of each partner's role is changing in terms of involvement and commitment in the household. Research on the topic is lacking (Smit, 2006:401) and tends to rely heavily "...on the wife/mother's report on her husband's attitude towards domestic responsibilities..." Short-comings in existing research include obtaining accounts of the role of stay-at-home husbands from the perspective of the man (cf. Chesley, 2011:642; Del Carmen Triana, 2011:1; Harrington et al., 2012:6; Heppner & Heppner, in Helford, Stewart, Gruys and Frank, 2012:2). Thus through adopting the exploratory approach, this researcher is able to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, roles, challenges and needs of both the working wife and her stay-at-home husband as both the wives and husbands were interviewed. This particular stance and action has enabled her to identify practice guidelines in the form of recommendations for social workers who seek to guide couples engaging in the particular situation.

- A descriptive strategy of inquiry

Whilst the one research objective focused on the exploration of the topic under investigation, another research objective (see Chapter 1, section 1.5.2) pointed to describing the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands and how they can be supported by social workers in terms of their non-traditional marital roles. Coupled with this description is the fact that phenomenology has, as part of its goal, a description of lived experiences in relation to a specific phenomenon. Therefore, the researcher also employed a descriptive research design as part of the strategy of inquiry. Terre Blanche et al. (2009:44) define descriptive research as: "studies [that] aim to describe phenomena accurately, [and within a qualitative paradigm, mostly] through narrative-type description[s]". Malek and Dehdashti (2011:3) build on this idea by indicating that descriptive research relies heavily on interviews with participants and data available from secondary data sources. They further mention that descriptive research is best used when the aim of the research is, amongst other intentions, to indicate the

characteristics of a phenomenon, how it occurs, determining the degree to which the variables are associated, as well as making predictions regarding the occurrence of social or physical phenomena.

Based on the explored lived experiences (how it is for the participants to be working wives and stay-at home husbands) and the challenges, coping resources and suggestions for social work support whilst fulfilling these non-traditional marital roles, the researcher employed the descriptive strategy of inquiry to paint a word-picture (i.e. provide a description) of the aspects explored. On a final note: explorative and descriptive research can be viewed in a process-product relationship. The research will first explore (process) and then describe (product) of that which has been explored (Alpaslan, 2010:20).

- The contextual strategy of inquiry

According to Burns and Grove (2003:32), contextual research focuses on specific events in naturalistic settings. Naturalistic settings refer to real-life situations that cannot be controlled as they occur naturally. Conley (2005:229) agrees by adding that contextual research gathers information about everyday situations or contexts suggesting that the following steps exist in contextual research:

- Design the study – this entails deciding on the research approach in order to decide which participants to include and how to collect data from these participants.
- Gather field data – this step entails contacting and collecting the data from participants.
- Code and analyse - once the data has been collected, the researcher approaches the data with rigour. During this step, the analyses ensures “coverage of the context, check or validate assumptions, and help generalize anecdotal evidence into substantiated recommendations” (Conley, 2005:229). The first step here is to code the data followed by

using the coded data to identify patterns of issues, behaviours, values, problems and other categories.

- Develop insights - in this step the patterns identified in the context are looked at in order to develop insight.
- Report results - this step entails reporting on the results of the study.

Bearing these steps in mind, Conley (2005) also draws attention to the following characteristics of contextual research:

- In order to understand the experiences, empathy is crucial. This is an important factor especially given the nature of the study the researcher undertook. As already pointed out in this report, and endorsed by Merla (2008:122), the topic under study is of a sensitive nature since it concerns non-traditional marital roles, a situation in which couples often feel stigmatised by others as a result of the roles each partner fulfils. Thus care must be taken to avoid raising questions that would hurt or unsettle the person, particularly emotionally. Due to the fact that fulfilling non-traditional marital roles are still frowned upon, couples may feel reluctant to disclose their true feelings out of fear of being stigmatised and thus it is crucial that empathy be practised. The researcher thus had to set the scene for each participant ensuring that she did not make couples feel uncomfortable anticipating being further stigmatised and judged. Maintaining an empathetic approach put the participants at ease.
- Establishing rapport with the participants is imperative in order to see true behaviour and values and not just stereotypes. The researcher made sure that she established rapport with the participants by seeing that they all understood the purpose of the study as well as the significant contribution they would be making by participating in the study. In addition, the researcher provided each participant with the information documents (Addenda 1.2; 1.3) and explained the study and the consent forms (consent to be interviewed and consent to be recorded) well but allowing them an opportunity to pose questions for clarification needed. The researcher firmly assured the participants that their anonymity was

guaranteed and that they were not being coerced to participate. Finally, the researcher created a non-threatening environment by allowing participants to choose the place and time where they would be interviewed so that they also felt comfortable.

- The participants lead the exploration. This was achieved as the researcher used an interview guide that contained open-ended questions, which allowed participants to reveal what they felt was important in responding to questions. Whilst probing was also applied when and where necessary. After posing a question to the participants, through probing, restating, paraphrasing and summarising as interviewing skills facilitated further elaboration and exploration at a deeper level.
- Focus on what the participants actually do instead of their opinions. In this study the researcher learnt from Smit's (2006) observations and conclusions from her research conducted on husbands as caregivers that the roles that husbands fulfil as caregivers and stay-at-home husbands were largely based on the accounts of the working wife. Hence she took a conscious decision to find out from the husbands and their wives whom she interviewed separately, information about their context, what their personal experiences, challenges, needs and coping mechanisms were and how they related directly to their roles as a working wife or a stay-at-home husband.

Now that an explanation of the research design together with its application has been provided, attention is given to the research methods.

## 2.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The concept "research methods" refers to the actual methods and/or techniques employed for executing the investigation or conducting the research project (Gravetter & Forzano, 2003:131). This relates to the matters: whom will be involved in the study (i.e. the population, sampling and sampling techniques employed to procure a sample from the population); what will be

asked from them, or what will they be expected to participate in (i.e. the method of data collection and the techniques employed by the researcher to collect the data); how the data will be analysed (i.e. the method and/or process of data-analysis); how the research findings will be verified (i.e. method of data verification); and how the research will be conducted in an ethical manner and how the research findings will be reported. Burns and Grove (2003:488) support this description by stating that research methodology includes the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, and the data collection and analysis techniques in a study. The discussion that follows applies these aspects to this research study.

#### 2.4.1 Population, sample and sampling techniques employed in this study

According to Burns and Grove (2003:43), the concept “population” refers to all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) highlight that a population comprises of a group of people that are the subject of research. The population from which a sample was to be drawn was initially formulated as follows: (as proposed in Chapter 1, sub-section 1.8.1 of this report)

The population of this study will constitute all married couples with at least one child where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband for a period of at least six months. The population will be drawn from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds within Gauteng, South Africa.

The study was initially only limited to this province due to both monetary and time constraints. It was also for the aforementioned reasons that the whole population was not be used, but a sample had be drawn from the population.

However, when the researcher entered the field with the view to procuring a sample from the stipulated population, with time, the researcher was faced



with challenges in recruiting participants. The situations encountered on this quest are described in the order in which they happened.

- Initially, as highlighted in Chapter one of this report, the researcher came across a journalist who had written an article on the stay-at-home husband, with him being a stay-at-home husband. He was also one of the members on a panel of experts on a television talk show entitled 'Stay-at-home dads' that was aired on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008 on the SABC 3's, 3Talk<sup>4</sup> programme. The researcher contacted this journalist and was going to interview him as an expert (see Addendum 2.15 – transcript of the interview) and use him as gatekeeper to gain access to stay-at-home husbands whom he had interviewed. Unfortunately, the contacts he provided did not plan out well at all. The one stay-at-home husband had moved to the Philippines and the contact number of the other had changed and the researcher did not have any forwarding number for this participant. In addition, the journalist's circumstances had also changed and he too was no longer a stay-at-home husband.
- The journalist, however, mentioned that his son-in-law was a stay-at-home husband at the point in time and he would talk to him to determine if he would participate but unfortunately he refused.
- The researcher then started off by speaking to colleagues from work and friends following these failed attempts to obtain participants. Through the assistance of a work colleague she managed to obtain a couple that was willing to participate. This couple also knew of another couple who willingly agreed. However, from the feedback she got from her other friends and colleagues she did learn that the individuals they knew and who fitted the criteria of inclusion were not willing to participate in the study as they felt for them this was too a sensitive topic, and they did not want to expose themselves to be judged or being stigmatised. Helpful information was given by the researcher's

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<sup>4</sup> 3Talk is a live television talk show on the South African Broadcasting Corporation's menu which uses an issue driven approach, providing viewers with interactive opportunities to question guests on air.

friends to explain their contacts' decisions not to participate even though they met the qualifying criteria. The one couple had kept the new roles they were playing in their marital relationship a secret and not even shared this new experience with their extended families. The other couple that had also refused did so on the grounds that the husband mentioned that his current role made him feel to be less of a man as he was not contributing financially and thus he did not want to participate.

- The researcher obtained a lead from a work colleague about two possible couples who fitted the criteria for inclusion. With the first lead, the wife from this couple system, upon establishing contact with her, informed the researcher that she was not willing to participate in the research endeavours of selfish academics, saying that her life was her own business. The wife of the other couple (the second lead) wanted payment for her interview or what she termed "her story".
- Another couple was also brought to the attention of the researcher through a colleague. Upon establishing contact with the husband, requesting him and his wife's possible participation in the study he declined the request to participate stating that performing this role of stay-at-home husband made him feel less than a man for not being able to contribute to his own household financially.
- In a further attempt to obtain participants, the researcher then turned to using social media online communication applications.

Starting with the Google search engine on the Internet, she typed in "stay-at home-husbands" in the search subject line to find potential participants. The results that came up were varied - from explanations of what a stay-at-home husband was to a few international websites hosted by stay-at-home husbands.

In conducting a further search on Google for stay-at-home husbands, the researcher found the contact details of a working wife with a stay-at-home husband who had started her own

coaching business posted on her webpage<sup>5</sup>. Although the information was obtained from a webpage, to ensure that confidentiality is not breached, the names of the webpage will not be made known.

She also, through further searching the Internet, found an article on a working wife (Anne below) posted on Mompreneur whose husband became a stay-at-home husband for medical reasons and again her contact details were on the webpage<sup>6</sup> of one of her businesses.

The researcher in still doing a search on Google about stay-at-home husbands came across an article about three stay-at-home husbands who were interviewed and she started searching for the contact details of these husbands. The article is entitled "Dads who stay home", by Trish Beaver (<http://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/dads-who-stay-at-home-1.622999>). Here the researcher was able to contact two of the husbands. The one simply did not respond to emails and follow-ups whilst the second one first agreed to participate and later refused. The researcher was not able to obtain the contact details of the third husband.

A further two couples responded after the researcher had sent them an e-mail as their e-mail addresses were found on the webpages<sup>7</sup>, but the husband agreed to participate at first and then went silent. The researcher then sent him a follow-up e-mail

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<sup>5</sup> The webpage will not be revealed here as individual has requested that her identity not be revealed.

<sup>6</sup>See <http://www.mompreneur.co.za/cara-watson-cara-watson-photography-and-crystal-fusion-fairywear>.

<sup>7</sup> The webpages will not be revealed here to protect the identity of the individuals as the researcher did not want to breach confidentiality.

to confirm his participation and found that he had changed his mind. The other couple stated that their situation had changed and that they did not want to participate. Once again the webpages will not be revealed in an attempt not to breach the confidentiality of these couples.

- The researcher then made use of postings on Litnet (see Addendum 2.8), the Gumtree website on the Internet and using the Mixit mobile social network instant message application to advertise her study but unfortunately the wrong crowd was drawn as the males who responded mistook the study for an escort agency providing services to stay-at-home husbands.
- The researcher also wanted to place advertisements in local community newspapers in Johannesburg and Pretoria (Gauteng Province) for participant recruitment and contacted the Caxton group<sup>8</sup>, where publishing of the advert proved to be too costly. Thus this route was not followed. (See Addendum 2.4 for e-mail to use media to recruit participants.)
- E-mails sent to a Christian Radio Station and churches (see Addenda 2.5 & 2.6) and schools as well as NGOs (see Addenda 2.3, 2.7 & 2.9) also proved to be fruitless, either because they did not respond or their response was that they did not have clients fitting the criteria, or clients might feel that their confidentiality would not be guaranteed. The researcher even requested just putting up an advert in their bulletins and this was also denied.
- The supervisor of the study established contact with (one of his contacts, a journalist of the Huisgenoot<sup>9</sup>, a popular Afrikaans family magazine, requesting the magazine to do a story on the stay-at-home husband and in this way to publish the researcher's contact details so

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<sup>8</sup> Caxton and CTP Publishers and Printers Limited is recognised as one of the largest publishers and printers of books, magazines, newspapers and commercial print in South Africa.

<sup>9</sup> A popular Afrikaans South African family magazine.

that interested participants could contact the researcher. She expressed interest and appointed a freelance journalist to do the story, but on condition that real-life stay-at-home husbands and working wives had to be interviewed personally with their photographs being featured in the magazine. The supervisor of the study advised the researcher not to go ahead with this as he did not want to compromise their confidentiality (Addenda 2.13 and 2.14) provide proof of evidence of the communication that took place in this regard).

- The supervisor of the study used one of his contacts at a National Radio Station (Radio Sonder Grense)<sup>10</sup> to find out if they could not assist in recruiting participants. This request was forwarded to the Station Manager, and she granted permission that one of the broadcasters could address this topic during his phone-in programme time-slot that is aired weekdays between 14:00-15:00. Following this, a request was made to the initial contact (by the supervisor) to contact the researcher to inform her about the date and timeslot when the programme would be broadcasted so that when the programme was on the air the researcher could call in to participate in the discussion by informing the listeners about the actuality of her research topic, and also put a request for individuals who might be interested in being interviewed, to contact her. She would then screen them in terms of whether they met the criteria of inclusion and the interview them if this was in order (Addendum 2.10, 2.11 and 2.12 – as proof of evidence of all the communication in this regard). However, this did not pan out well as the programme was aired without the researcher being informed about the date and timeslot. Nevertheless, the researcher obtained a copy of the recording of the programme (see Addendum 2.16 - digital copy of the phone-in programme). Because a large number of the callers who called in either remained anonymous or just used a call name, the supervisor and researcher decided to use this information-

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<sup>10</sup> Radio Sonder Grense i.e. Radio without borders is an Afrikaans language radio service run by the South African Broadcasting Corporation broadcasting nationally.

rich first-hand account as part of the literature verification in the section where the findings would be presented. (The digital recording of the phone-in programme was transcribed – see Addendum 3.1 for the transcription in Afrikaans and the translated version in English.)

- The supervisor of the study also suggested that an article be forwarded to Rooi Rose (a predominantly Afrikaans women's magazine) with the aim of recruiting possible participants. Contact was established with the magazine's editor and she requested a short information brief be compiled with the contact details of the researcher. This was submitted to her via e-mail. (Addendum 2.1 – as proof of evidence about the communication that took place in this regard). Unfortunately, it was never published.
- In a further attempt to assist the researcher to obtain more participants, the supervisor used one of his contacts in the printed media industry to get an article about the study with a request for participants published in *The Volksblad*<sup>11</sup>. This venture was successful in that they published a short notice about it (Addendum 2.2 as proof of the notice that was published in the newspaper). Unfortunately, only two couples out of five who responded met the criteria for inclusion and they became part of the sample. The husband of the third couple that responded mentioned that they were in a situation in which he was unemployed and did not participate in any caregiving or household tasks at all. This disqualified them from participating as they were not meeting all criteria for inclusion. The fourth couple's husband did not fit the criteria of being a stay-at-home husband as he had just moved his office to his home so was a full-time employee working from his home office. In the case of couple five, the husband who established contact with the researcher mentioned that both him and his wife were willing to participate (and they met the criteria for inclusion), but when contacted to arrange for the telephone interviews they were not available anymore.

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<sup>11</sup> A newspaper published in the Free State, one of South Africa's provinces.

Due to the challenges encountered in the process of finding suitable interview participants, and following consultation with the study's supervisor, it was decided to expand the study's geographical boundaries and not just limit participants to coming from Gauteng. In the end, the population for the study therefore comprised: married couples with at least one child where the wife was working and the husband had been a stay-at-home husband for a period of at least six months. The sample was now to be drawn from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds from within as many provinces as possible. However due to challenges experienced, participants came only from Gauteng, Free State and the Western Cape.

In view of the fact that the researcher did not have the luxury of time or money at her disposal to explore all the participants from the total population and due to the described challenges and misfortunes when attempting to obtain participants for inclusion in the study, the researcher also had to adjust her sampling methods to recruit participants.

To recap, the meaning of the concept "sample", Burns and Grove (2003: 233) as well as Cohen, et al. (2000) define it as a subset of a population selected to participate in a research study. Cohen, et al. (2000), go one step further by justifying the use of a sample in saying that in some instances, it is not feasible to investigate the entire population for a variety of reasons including cost, time and accessibility and thus researchers would use samples to obtain data.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher sought to understand the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands with the aim of developing or making recommendations for practice guidelines for social work practitioners to support these couples in non-traditional marital roles. With this goal in mind, the researcher employed one of the customary non-random sampling techniques used for participant recruitment in qualitative studies, namely: purposive recruitment. Hennink et

al. (2011:85) posit that purposive sampling or recruitment is both “deliberate” and “flexible”. It is deliberate in that the researcher looks for and selects participants “on purpose” because they are “information-rich” about the topic (i.e. they must possess specific characteristics and/or be knowledgeable about and have a first-hand experience of the topic under investigation in order to contribute to the aim of developing an in-depth understanding of the topic being researched). To select the participants “on purpose”, the researcher used the following criteria of inclusion to guide her:

- married couples, where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband;
- couples from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds;
- both parties must be willing and able to participate; and
- the husband must have been a stay-at-home husband and the wife the main breadwinner for at least 6 months and they must have at least one child.

Purposive recruitment is also flexible (Hennink et al., 2011:85) in that the researcher can alter and adopt various methods or strategies for purposive recruitment of participants (i.e. gatekeepers, snowball sampling, employing formal and informal networks and through notices and advertisements in various media) (cf. Hennink et al., 2011:92-102). Each of these methods or strategies are briefly summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Methods or strategies for purposive recruitment of participants (Hennink et al., 2011:92-102)

Gatekeepers	A gatekeeper can be a community leader, a local service provider, a religious or political leader or any other person or organisation that plays a prominent role in local community. They are knowledgeable about community members’ characteristics and are sufficiently influential to encourage community members’ participation in a research project.
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Formal and informal networks	<p>Formal and informal networks refer to and include any formal or informal organisations to which a study's population belongs, formal or informal events they attend or services they use formally or informally.</p> <p>In the context of this study it might be an organisation offering counselling services specifically directed to assisting couples to adjust to the non-traditional marital roles of being a stay-at-home husband with a working wife.</p> <p>In the context of this study, formal networks also included colleagues (in- and outside the researcher's place of employment) in the field of health, psychological and social work rendering marriage and family services to various client-systems. Informal networks included colleagues, relatives and friends who knew couples in these non-traditional marital roles.</p>
Snowball recruitment	<p>Snowball sampling in practice boils down to requesting current participants for names of other potential individuals who match the stated criteria of inclusion and whose experiences will be relevant to the study (cf. Kuper, Lingard &amp; Levinson, 2008:688; Babbie, 2010:193; Petty et.al., 2012:379).</p>
Notices and advertisements in the media	<p>Notices and advertisements on bulletin boards, newspapers, magazines; on radio, TV and the Internet can also be employed as a method or strategy for the purposive recruitment of participants.</p>

How the 10 couples who participated in this study were recruited is given as a summary overview (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Ways of participant recruited included in the sample

<b>Couple</b>	<b>Strategies or methods employed to recruit the participants</b>
<p>Couple 1: Dr K and Mr A – this couple was recruited through the use of a colleague who was part of the researcher’s informal network</p>	<p>Whilst engaging in conversation with a work colleague about the researcher’s study and the research topic, the colleague mentioned that he knows of a person who is in such a non-traditional marital relationship and promised to make contact with her to find out if she would be interested in participating in the study. The researcher’s colleague returned with feedback stating that she would be interested in participating. Based on this feedback, the researcher contacted her. She is also the researcher’s work colleague and agreed to participate and thus times were made to prepare the participant for the interview and to conduct it. The participant also agreed to find out from her husband what time and place would suit him for conducting his interview as well. He agreed to participate.</p>
<p>Couple 2: Angel and Simon - this couple was recruited through snowball recruitment</p>	<p>Angel and Simon are the neighbours of Dr K and Mr A. Dr K, on being asked if she knew of any other likely participants in the study had thought of this couple and had agreed to speak to them to determine if they would be willing to participate. Fortunately they had agreed and a date and time was set to interview them both. As they were the neighbours of Dr K, the researcher requested if it would be convenient to also interview Dr K’s husband on the same day.</p>
<p>Couple 3: Sonia and David - this couple was recruited through</p>	<p>The researcher consulted with a friend who referred her to a couple with whom she was friends. She provided the researcher with the contact details of the couple who was willing to participate and a time and place for the interview</p>

the use of a friend who was part of the researcher's informal network	was set. The couple also knew of another couple whom the researcher contacted and interviewed, namely Priscilla and Alistair.
Couple 4: Anne and Ewing – this couple was recruited through the use of information obtained from the Internet	When faced with the challenge of not being able to obtain additional participants, the researcher went on the Internet via the Google site searching for stay-at-home husbands and working wives and came across the website of Anne, a working wife who owns her own businesses. Another article featured on the Internet under the title "momtrepreneur" <sup>12</sup> covered Anne's story wherein she revealed that she was a working wife and that her husband was a stay-at-home husband. The researcher thus found her contact details on her website and contacted her. She was most willing to participate and stated that she would speak to her husband to determine whether he too would be willing to participate. When her husband agreed, the researcher and the couple agreed on a time and place to conduct the interview.
Couple 5: Melissa and Augustine - this couple was recruited through the use of a relative who was part of the researcher's informal network	The researcher's husband, at his place of employment, during a conversation with colleagues managed to recruit one lady who mentioned that she was willing to participate in the study. She provided her contact details that were passed on to the researcher who contacted the prospective participant to discuss the study with her and to prepare her for the interview. She also gave the researcher her husband's contact details. The researcher explained the purpose of the study telephonically and a date was set for the interview. The couple were interviewed at different times at a convenient venue for them.
Couple 6:	During the presentation of a qualitative research methodology

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.momtrepreneur.co.za/cara-watson-cara-watson-photography-and-crystal-fusion-fairywear>

<p>Genevieve and Pieter – this couple was recruited through the use of a colleague who was part of the researcher’s formal network</p>	<p>workshop to a new intake group of postgraduate students, the supervisor of this study mentioned the researcher’s study as a case example of how the recruitment of participants in qualitative research is an emerging process. Afterwards one of the students came to him and disclosed that she was a working wife and her husband stayed at home. She was willing to participate and would enquire whether her husband would participate too. The supervisor forwarded the researcher’s contact details to Genevieve. She contacted the researcher and mentioned she and her husband (Pieter) would like to participate. He did not want to be interviewed face-to-face, but requested that the questions in the interview guide be e-mailed to him. He answered the questions in writing and sent the responses back to the researcher via e-mail. Genevieve’s interview took place at her home at a time she set as convenient for her.</p>
<p>Couple 7: Mr and Mrs Franks – this couple was recruited through the use of a colleague who formed part of the researcher’s formal network</p>	<p>In a conversation with a work colleague from another company, the researcher mentioned that she was currently looking for eligible people to participate in her study. The colleague immediately stated that his daughter was currently in a marital relationship where she is the main breadwinner. He offered to speak to her and also provided the researcher with her contact details. The researcher contacted her and both she and her husband agreed to participate in the study. As they lived in the Western Cape, both opted to receive the questions via e-mail and answered them in writing and returned them to the researcher via e-mail.</p>
<p>Couple 8: Priscilla and Alistair - this couple was recruited through snowball</p>	<p>The researcher was referred to this couple by a previous couple interviewed (Sonia and David). The researcher made contact with the wife to determine if the couple were willing to participate. They both opted to receive the questions and answered them in writing and returned them to the researcher</p>

recruitment	via e-mail.
Couple 9: Caroline and Karl - this couple was recruited through the use of a notice in a newspaper	The supervisor of the study has a contact with a journalist of the Volksblad and made contact with her requesting that she place an article in the newspaper highlighting the core focus of the researcher's study, and also asked that readers who were interested in participating in the study contact the researcher. Karl contacted the researcher via sms and the researcher called him to discuss the purpose of the study as well as what his contribution would be. A date and time was agreed upon to conduct a telephonic interview, whilst the questions were e-mailed to his wife who completed them and had sent them back to the researcher.
Couple 10: Japie and Amber - This couple was recruited through the use of a notice in a newspaper	The supervisor of the study had a contact with a journalist of the Volksblad and had made contact with her requesting that she place an article in the newspaper highlighting the core focus of the researcher's study, and asking that readers who were interested in participating in the study to contact the researcher. Japie called the researcher and indicated that he was a stay-at-home husband and that his wife was the main breadwinner. He indicated that he had spoken to his wife and they both were interested in participating. A telephonic interview was conducted with Japie; however, the questions were e-mailed to Japie's wife who was living in Saudi Arabia.

## 2.5. THE PREPARATION OF THE RECRUITED PARTICIPANTS FOR THE DATA COLLECTION AND THE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION EMPLOYED

Prior to collecting data for the purpose of compiling a biographical profile of the participants and about the topic under investigation, **the researcher prepared the recruited participants for data collection**. Turner (2010:757) stresses the importance of preparing participants for the interview process by stating: "Probably the most helpful tip with the interview process is that of interview preparation. This

process can help make or break the process and can either alleviate or exacerbate the problematic circumstances that could potentially occur once the research is implemented.” The importance of the preparation is further supported by McNamara (in Turner, 2010) who highlights that preparation would provide “maximum benefit to the proposed research study” and provides eight principles to adhere to in preparing for the interview. These are:

- Choose a setting with little distraction
- Explain the purpose of the interview
- Address terms of confidentiality
- Explain the format of the interview
- Indicate how long the interview usually takes
- Tell them how to get in touch with you later if they want to
- Ask them if they have any questions before you both get started with the interview
- Don't count on your memory to recall their interviews

The researcher adhered to all of these principles by firstly ensuring that the interviews were conducted in a room that had no distractions. Interviews were conducted at the homes of the participants and were usually in the study with the door closed. Telephonic interviews were also conducted in the study of the researcher who planned that she was not to be disturbed for the duration of the interview. Responding to the questions in writing and sent to the researcher by e-mail (on advice from the researcher) was done in the participants' spare time when it was convenient time for them and they were sure it being a time of least distraction.

As previously mentioned, the researcher provided the prospective participants with the information document requesting their participation and detailing all important information to help them to make an informed decision whether or not to participate (see Addendum 1.3). This letter also stresses their rights and the contact details of both the researcher and the supervisor were given should they have wanted any questions answered, or any information clarified. This information was conveyed to all the participants not only in writing, but also face-to-face, and, if this was not possible, it was shared during the telephonic conversations with the participants. The

researcher also stressed the fact that participants could withdraw at any point in time. Issues of confidentiality were also explicitly stated. In preparation for the interview, the researcher also indicated the expected length of duration of the interview (approximately 90 minutes) and provided an opportunity for clarifying questions.

In the case of the face-to-face mode of data collection, the interviews were recorded with the prior consent of the participants. The telephonic interviews were also recorded once consent was obtained. Moreover, the answers to the interview guide questions that were received via e-mail from the participants were already written; hence, the researcher did not work from memory. Each participant belonging to a couple system interviewed face-to-face and telephonically was prepared and interviewed separately from their partner in order to ensure that they did not influence each other. The researcher relied on the participants to be honest where the participants of the couple system had to answer the questions in the interview guide in writing. They were specifically reminded to answer the questions independently of each other and to despatch them to the researcher individually.

Whilst Fitzpatrick and Boulton (1994:107) in their work on data collection in qualitative research identify the following as customary methods used in qualitative research for collecting data: in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, nominal group techniques, participant observation and case studies, Mack et al. (2005:2) mention that participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions are three of the most commonly used methods for data collection in qualitative research studies. The researcher followed these methods as relevant for her investigation.

Initially (see Chapter 1, section 1.9 of this report) the researcher proposed to use semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection for this study, but when she was confronted with the challenge of recruiting participants to interview and therefore needed to redefine the geographical boundary of her population, she also had to include telephone interviews and receiving responses to the interview guide questions on the research topic by electronic mail.

Each of these data collection methods are now the focus of discussion.

- **Semi-structured and telephone interviews**

Interviewing is one of the most commonly used methods for collecting data in qualitative research (Mack et al., 2005:2). Knox and Burkard (2009:1) distinguish between structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. They indicate that the unstructured interview starts without any predetermined or pre-formulated question or set of questions and the researcher utilises what the participant shares, and develop a follow-up or a different question which is put to the participant. In the case of the semi-structured interview, the researcher makes use of open-ended questions (contained in a semi-structured interview guide) based on the study's central focus and to obtain specific information and to gain insight into the aspects under investigation (Hennink, et al., 2011:109). The interviewer will thus ask questions using the questions in the interview guide and will use follow-up questions and probes to further explore the information shared by the participant. In the case of the semi-structured interview the sequence of the questions may vary. With structured interviewing, the main purpose is to expose each participant to the same interview experience, thus the interview follows a highly structured protocol, most often with closed questions.

This researcher opted for a semi-structured interview conducted face-to-face and telephonically with the participants with the aid of an interview guide to facilitate the process as one of the methods of data collection. According to Meriam (2002:13), "... the semi-structured interview contains a mix of more or less structured questions. Usually, specific information is desired from all participants ... The largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time". Mack et al. (2005:29) and Hennink et al. (2011: 109-111), in defining the in-depth interview, builds on this definition of Meriam (2002), by indicating the following as attributes of



what they refer to as an in-depth interview as based on its descriptive qualities that resemble the semi-structured interview<sup>13</sup>:

- the in-depth interview is a means of obtaining information from the perspective of the participants;
- the participant is seen as the expert during the interview process;
- the researcher seeks to learn everything the participant can share on the research topic and thus interviewing techniques are motivated by this;
- the researcher adopts a neutral approach, does not lead participants in their responses and listens attentively to participants, posing probing and follow-up questions based on responses; and
- the interview is usually conducted face-to-face; however, other forms of obtaining information such as telephone interviews are also allowed.

Now that the attributes and features of the semi-structured interview have been outlined, attention is given to the specific circumstances where the semi-structured or in-depth interview is most appropriate according to Patton (1990):

- Semi-structured/in-depth interviews are appropriate when detailed information is sought. Searching for information on the stay-at-home husband in South Africa, the researcher found that research conducted on the stay-at-home husband was mainly international research, for example Belgium. Articles about stay-at-home husbands were mainly found on websites for stay-at-home husbands such as [Rebeldad.com](http://Rebeldad.com) and other articles written about stay-at-home husbands were in magazines such as *Femina*<sup>14</sup> June 2007 – (Dads are doing it at home by Qaarnita Loxton and Petra Vandecasteele). Given this fact, detailed information was sought after by the researcher in order to document accurate findings and in so doing understand the phenomenon to be able to provide recommendations to practitioners to support such couples.
- Semi-structured/in-depth interviews seem appropriate when one wants to obtain information about a topic under investigation from busy, high-status

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<sup>13</sup> In the context of this research project the concept “in-depth interview” and semi-structured interview” will be regarded as synonymous.

<sup>14</sup> *Femina* is a fortnightly South African women’s magazine

participants. Given the fact that the working wives and stay-at-home husbands had very hectic lifestyles given the roles that they had to fulfil on a daily basis, this method of data collection seemed fitting.

- Semi-structured/in-depth interviews seem appropriate when one wants to obtain information on a highly sensitive topic. Due to the stigma attached to these couples for their choice of having a non-traditional family household (Merla, 2008:1), as well as their own personal journey towards accepting their own situations, made the subject matter under investigation a very sensitive matter.

➤ *Advantages of semi-structured interviews*

Opdenakker (2006) highlights the following advantages of the semi-structured interview:

- during face-to-face interviews the answer of the interviewee is spontaneous without an extended reflection;
- face-to-face interviews can be tape-recorded resulting in the researcher being able to check if the interview is documented accurately;
- the interviewer can re-create a consistent and standardised atmosphere for all participants; and
- the termination of the interview is easy as there are enough cues that the interview is needing to come to an end.

➤ *Disadvantages of semi-structured interviews*

Walsh and Wiggins (2003:98) highlight the following disadvantages of semi-structured interviews:

- the validity of data is always suspect as one cannot be 100% sure if participants are lying or not
- recording information can be difficult and writing down what people say can be intrusive
- people usually give too much information in semi-structured interviews; and

- interviews take a long time to complete.

In order to facilitate the semi-structured/in-depth interview procedure, the researcher prepared an interview guide to be used during the interview. It contains a list of questions that needed to be explored and a set of probing questions for following up on key topics (see Chapter 1, section 1.9 and Addendum 1.1). The interview guide assisted in ensuring that the interview continued systematically and with clarity. It enabled the researcher to create a comfortable environment for participants and to shape the process whilst being an attentive listener. According to Welman et al. (2005:166), "An interview guide involves a list of topics and aspects of these topics that have a bearing on the given theme and that the interviewer should note during the course of the interview". Fossey et al. (2002:727) goes further, by highlighting that: "guides usually contain a list of questions and prompts designed to guide the interview in a focussed, yet flexible and conversational, manner." The use of telephone interviews was also as a result of distance and thus the researcher would agree on a time to call the participants to be interviewed.

Opendakker (2006) highlights some of the following *advantages of telephonic interviews* in social research:

- wide geographical access as people around the world can be interviewed due to the wide reach of telephones;
- hard to reach populations - it is easy to reach people who are not easily available e.g. mothers with small children; and
- sensitive matters - sometimes people do not feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues face-to-face and would prefer to rather discuss telephonically.

The participants who were engaged in the face-to-face semi-structured and the telephonic interviews were interviewed in environments the participants labelled as "quiet, non-threatening, comfortable and devoid from maximum distractions". The semi-structured and telephone interviews lasted approximately 90 minutes and husband and wife were interviewed separately in order to ensure that the couple did not influence each other's responses. The researcher opted for this type of interview as she wanted to ensure that the experiences of the participants were captured in

their own words and that participants felt free to express their experiences in a safe environment.

During the face-to-face interviews, the researcher paid special attention to body language and any non-verbal responses. A variety of interviewing skills were used during the interview. The researcher made use of open-ended questions so as to elicit more information. This was backed up by paraphrasing the stated question and encouraging the participants to open up and to provide information more readily. The researcher also showed that she was listening attentively, by summarising and paraphrasing where necessary. She purposefully ensured that she was empathetic. The researcher consciously made use of reflection so as to link connections and to obtain as much information as possible, creating a comfortable and supportive environment. In preparation for the interview, the researcher did make use of a pilot run of the chosen interview questions, where she used her colleagues to test the interview guide. From the feedback received and suggestions from these colleagues and in order to improve the interview guide adjustments were made. The purpose of this action was to be sure that the questions would elicit responses that provided ample information about the topic and that would contribute to the body of knowledge about the topic. Each question had to have a definite purpose. Importantly, the researcher kept a journal where field notes were captured. These field notes were a record of the researcher's experiences and observations as well as her reflections and interpretations.

- **Data collection via e-communication (e-mail)**

The researcher, as explained above, had to incorporate telephone interviews and data collection via e-communication (hereafter referred to as e-mail) to collect data on the topic under investigation from the recruited participants, as some of them were geographically not within reach, and some of the participants wanted to participate in the study but did not feel comfortable being interviewed face-to-face. This necessity altered the methods initially decided upon for collecting data so, in consultation with the study supervisor the use of e-communication was included as a data collection method. This reluctance to be interviewed face-to-face or

telephonically would come either from both parties where the couple wanted to keep their situation a secret as they had not even told their own extended family about their new marital roles, or from the husbands who felt that this made them feel less than a man due to the fact that they did not contribute to the family financially. Hence, and in order to prevent couples from refusing to participate in the study from the outset, the researcher provided the option of sending the questions contained in the interview guide to the participants via e-mail to complete them and send the responses back to the researcher. This also proved to be most useful as it also made participants feel more secure knowing that their contribution was not being recorded and thus their anonymity was definitely protected.

Data gathering through e-communication also forms part of the repertoire of qualitative data collection methods. Meriam (2002:13) mentions that it is an acceptable form of data collection with the advent of computer technology: "... With the advent of computer technology and the World Wide Web, data can also be collected on-line. Webpages ...and so on can be considered documents simply accessed on-line; ... interviews can be conducted by e-mail; and researchers can "observe" on-line chat rooms and other forms of interaction". McCoyd and Kerson (2006:390) concur with Meriam's statements by pointing out that the use of e-data collection is not new to the field of data collection in Social Work and social work research. They point to the fact that this type of data collection method is especially relevant in accessing "...stigmatized and isolated populations." This was relevant for this particular study as the researcher was indeed faced with a population that felt stigmatised, and, in some cases, isolated as a result of living in a non-tradition family where the wife was working and main breadwinner and the husband stayed at home. In addition, McCoyd and Kerson (2006) suggest that e-data collection can be useful as well in the event of collecting data where participants are geographically dispersed, which in the case of the study was evident as some of the participants were located beyond the borders of Gauteng.

McCoyd and Kerson (2006:10) point out that *interviews through e-mailing, have the following advantages:*

- the seeming anonymity of e-mail appeared to allow more extensive communications;
- rich data can be yielded given the extended time to write responses;
- participants' comments are already in written text;
- participants can 'clean up' their own messages so that the researcher does not modify the participant comments by deciding which verbal tics and stuttering to remove, but obtains responses needing only a cleaning of spelling errors;
- enhances credibility and also included their immediate emotional responses while also describing their prior emotions and thoughts;
- extensive communication – this is attributed to the seemingly anonymity that participants feel exists as they are not being interviewed face to face by a person;
- participants can complete the interview when convenient – this allows for self-reflection;
- responses are already written – this ensures that the responses are captured in the way participants have intended and are thus cleaned up by them and thus transcription is also not needed;
- less social pressure - participants feel less judged or stigmatised as there is a sense of privacy as they are answering the questions alone; and
- distance - despite the geographical distance, the participants can still respond to questions and can complete these at their own convenience and comfort.

Ethical issues can crop up when using e-communication in data collection and researchers have to be aware of this possibility. Concerns can arise over confidentiality as responses are sent via e-mail and the question of who sees the e-mail can become a matter to be considered; and inflicting any form of emotional harm should be consciously avoided hence informed consent and emotional assessment have to be addressed which can be covered by participants' consent and decision to participate voluntarily. As recommended by McCoyd and Kerson

(2006) the researcher provided a facility for telephonic counselling for participants who felt that they needed it (i.e. LifeLine).

In addressing some of these concerns the researcher only allowed e-mails to go to her own e-mail address and, once received, they were moved to a secure folder to which only the researcher had access. The researcher also provided the participants (in writing and telephonically) with a full overview of what the study entailed and felt she was able to guarantee that each participant fully understood the purpose of the study. Furthermore she afforded each participant an opportunity to ask for clarity at any time during the data collection process and made a point of informing them that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Each participant did consent to participate in the study knowing what was involved (Addenda 1.2 and 1.3).

Since the researcher had a detailed contract with the participants she could return to them to clarify uncertainties or provide more information. Hence the researcher could fully explore and probe emotions the participants experienced. In the event of negative emotions arising as a result of the interview or the questions in the interview guide the researcher could refer a participant to LifeLine or specialist NGOs or a group of social workers for debriefing and containment. None of the participants returned to the researcher to request this option as they stated that they had no need for counselling.

Although it could be argued that participants, through the use of e-mail may hold back and not engage in sufficient self-reflection, this did not become a factor for the researcher as she had contracted to return to participants for clarity if necessary. This stance is also supported by McCoyd and Kerson (2006): "The analysis of the study reveals that the e-mail interviews tend to be more complete, to include more self-reflection by respondents, and seemingly more candid." In fact, as Turkle (1995) in McCoyd and Kerson (2006) asserts, "... people have a tendency to confide in machines that are viewed as non-judgemental, rather than directly to another person."

## 2.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Whilst Babbie (2010:394) defines qualitative data analysis as: “The non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships”, Hennink et al. (2011:205) hold the view that qualitative data analysis essentially requires a process of immersion in the data in order to enable the researcher to identify and interpret the study’s participants’ shared experiences. In remaining close to the data the researcher comes to a research-based understanding of the research issues investigated.

In order to enhance the credibility of the findings, and based on the suggestion by Shenton (2004:64), the researcher should employ a widely-accepted qualitative data analysis protocol. This study accepted the eight steps proposed by Tesch in Creswell (2009:186) as proposed in Chapter 1, section 1.10 of the report. This action confirms that the empirical evidence reported on is representative of reality. These steps will be recapped and a brief description will be provided on how they were applied during the process of data-analysis.

- Step 1: After organising and preparing the data for analysis, i.e. the transcribing of the digitally recorded interviews word-for-word (where applicable), the researcher started to immerse herself by reading through all interviews word-for-word to get a sense of the whole picture concentrating on the experiences, challenges and coping resources identified, as well as need for support and suggestions to couples in similar situations. Whilst reading she jotted down ideas and thoughts that came to mind about what she was reading. With great care the researcher went through all responses given by participants to questions in order to get a clear sense of the meaning that was being communicated. This avoided the possibility of any misunderstandings or misinterpretations arising and enabled the researcher to write down any thoughts or questions that arose in her mind after going through the responses. Once done, the transcripts were sent to the supervisor for input and verification.
- Step 2: She then picked one transcript (that of Dr K), went through it and asked herself what is this about? She did this with all the transcripts. Once



the transcripts were received back from the supervisor, these were re-read and the researcher returned to participants to request more clarity where necessary or to verify or comment on the meaning and choice of tentative topics and ideas that she had ascribed to a particular response were indeed correct.

- Step 3: She completed step 2 in respect of all the transcripts and made a list of all topics. All similar themes/topics were grouped together.
- Step 4: She then formed an abbreviation unique to each topic (i.e. F-ww – for feeling experienced by working wife). She then wrote the abbreviated codes next to segments of the text matching the abbreviations.
- Step 5: After completing step 4, she went on to find the most descriptive wording for the topics and turned them into themes.
- Step 6: She then made a list in alphabetical order of the themes and their matching abbreviations.
- Step 7: She assembled the data material belonging to each theme in one place and performed a preliminary analysis.
- Once the themes and categories were identified, the researcher decided to present these findings as Chapters 3 and 4 of this research report and substantiate the findings by means of a literature control. Where necessary, she recoded segments of the data.

## 2.7 METHOD OF DATA VERIFICATION

Guba's model (Chapter 1, section 1.11) of ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative data (in Krefting, 1991:214-222) was proposed for data verification in this research endeavour. To bring together all aspects of data verification, the researcher will table (see Table 2.4 below) the characteristics as advocated by Guba to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data; describe each of the characteristics according to Shenton's (2004) account of these aspects; and provide a description of how it was applied in the context of this research project

Table 2.4 Characteristics of and decisions made, actions taken and activities executed for ensuring the trustworthiness of the research findings		
Characteristics to ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings according to Guba's model (in Krefting, 1991:215-217 and Shenton 2004:64-72 )	A description of the characteristic	Decisions made, actions taken, activities executed to ensure
Truth-value: Truth-value is established through the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants - this relates to credibility	Credibility is concerned with whether the researcher's findings are congruent with the realities or "lived experiences" shared by the participants (Shenton, 2004:64). The question that needs to be answered in this context is: Has the researcher accurately reported the phenomena under study?	<p>... <b>Credibility:</b></p> <p>The researcher employed the following strategies in an attempt to promote confidence in the fact that the research findings were a true reflection of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands and how they can be supported by social workers in terms of their non-traditional marital roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The utilisation of various interviewing techniques and skills</b> that included probing for clarity, allowing the participants to lead the exploration and summarising for</li> </ul>

		<p>clarification as well as ensuring a non-threatening empathetic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Background, qualifications and experience of the researcher</b>— as pointed out by Patton (1990), it is imperative for the researcher to provide personal and professional information. This is given as an information document (Addendum 1.3) that discloses who the researcher is, her qualifications and the institution where she was registered. In addition the study supervisor's contact details were also provided for verification as well as to answer further questions if required. It was also explained that the proposal had been reviewed by a panel and was approved by The Departmental Research and Ethics Committee, Department of Social Work, Unisa where contact details also appeared.</li> </ul> <p>As part of her post-graduate studies the researcher had become familiar with the qualitative research design so already had an in-depth understanding of the qualitative research approach. In addition, through her work</p>
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	<p>experience, she had previously worked with women who were sole working mothers from whom she had obtained a perspective on what the possible benefits, challenges and stigmatisation of this role could entail. In addition, in private practice, the researcher had come across wives who had unemployed husbands and, although they did not necessarily meet the criteria of stay-at-home husbands as stipulated for this study, it was apparent, however, that similar challenges could emerge for the wives participating in this research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>• Triangulation of data sources and data methods</b>            Triangulation of data sources entails obtaining supporting data from documents (i.e. literature), and various participants, while data methods refer to the use of different data collection methods (i.e. face-to-face and telephone interviewing and e-communication) or other information to provide an understanding of the behaviours and attitudes of those in the group being studied.            As previously mentioned, the researcher had interviewed the journalist as a surmised expert on stay-a- home         </li> </ul>
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		<p>husbands and was thus able to look at his findings and compare these to the actual responses of the participants. Finally, the researcher was able to compare the responses of participants within the sample group of the study, again looking at the similarities and differences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tactics to help ensure honesty in informants</b> In preparing the participants for the interview the researcher explained to the participants what their role in the study would be. She made sure that participants knew that they were not going to be coerced into participating in the study and that they could withdraw at any time. In addition, the researcher requested participants to be open and honest and to know that there were no right or wrong answers as are personal views were being sought.</li><li>• <b>Peer consultation - this entails the process where peers or colleagues have an opportunity to scrutinise the work or project undertaken by the researcher, bringing in a fresh perspective and</b></li></ul>
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		<p><b>creating an opportunity to question assumptions made by the researcher.</b> Frequent research supervision and consultation sessions (face-to-face, per e-mail and telephonically) between researcher and supervisor, as well as with colleagues<sup>15</sup> who were engaged in research (either currently studying or as part-time lecturers at institutions of higher learning) took place to discuss feedback on written research work done; the challenges experienced during the fieldwork and possible solution strategies; and planning the progress of the research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Member checks</b></li> </ul> <p>The researcher contracted with the participants for a follow-up interview (should the need arise) to clarify issues and further explore questions she and the supervisor had after scrutinising the transcribed interviews. In addition, with the e-mail questionnaires, the researcher would capture these and send them back to the participant for verification. While in the process of identifying themes and</p>
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<sup>15</sup> All identifying particulars of participants were kept confidential and not shared with colleagues

		patterns the researcher would return to participants to confirm that these had been accurately captured.
Applicability: Applicability is established through and relates to transferability	According to Shenton (2004:69-70), transferability has to do with the ability to be able to demonstrate that the results of the research at hand can be applied or generalised to a wider population. Rodwell (in Ungar, 2003:95) explains that “the responsibility to determine transferability” does not lie with the researcher, but with reader of the research report whose intention it is to determine whether the findings “fit” or resonate within the context to which the findings were to be transferred. In terms of transferability, the researcher’s only responsibility is to provide	<p><b>... transferability</b></p> <p>In enabling the readers of the report to make a call whether or not the findings are transferable, a dense description of the research methodology employed and the research findings which emerged from this endeavour is provided (Chapters 1-3 of this report).</p>

	<p>the “thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer[ability] can be contemplated as a possibility” (Lincoln &amp; Guba, in Ungar, 2003:95). In order for, and prior to, any attempt of transference, Guba (in Shenton 2004:70) underscores the need for “a full description of all the contextual factors impinging on the study”.</p>	
<p>Consistency: Consistency is established through and relates to dependability (Krefting, 1991:216)</p>	<p>According to Shenton (2004:71-72) dependability refers to whether the findings would be consistent if the research were repeated with the same participants, with the same method and in a similar context.</p>	<p>... <b>dependability</b></p> <p>The researcher gave a thorough and detailed description of the research methodology proposed and employed (see Chapters 1 and 2) and an independent coder to analyse the transcripts of the interviews independently to establish dependability.</p>



	<p>Shenton (2004:71) posits that, in order to tackle the dependability question, the processes followed within the study should be described in detail in the research report in order to enable a future repeat of the same study to gain the same result. By reporting comprehensively in this research report on the research methodology processes followed, the probability of a dependability audit being undertaken in the same way, if and when required, will enhance its merit. In adding to this train of thought, and in enabling the readers of a research report to have a clear understanding of the research methods employed</p>	
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	<p>and their effectiveness, Shenton (2004:71) proposes that sections of a qualitative research report should be devoted to: “ a) the research design and its implementation, describing what was planned and executed on a strategic level; b) The operational detail of data gathering, addressing the minutiae of what was done in the field; c) [a] reflective appraisal of the project, evaluating the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken”.</p>	
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<p>Neutrality: Neutrality or transparency is established through and relates to confirmability (Krefting, 1991:217).</p>	<p><b>Confirmability</b> relates to neutrality or transparency (Krefting, 1991:217) and the researcher needs to employ strategies to ensure that the study' findings are free from bias (i.e. the research findings must not be overshadowed by the characteristics and preferences of the researcher, but must be a portrayal of an account depicting the experiences and ideas of the participants). The findings and recommendations need to be based on the data obtained from the participants in order to prevent the researcher's subjective perspective from guiding the process.</p>	<p>... <b>confirmability</b></p> <p>The researcher used triangulation of data sources and data methods to confirm data. and consulted literature on the method to achieve confirmability</p>
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## 2.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Given the fact that the research entailed interviewing people as participants, appropriate ethical conduct was necessary. Focusing on the importance of ethical considerations in research, Halai (2006:5-6) advises that these aspects be specifically addressed: informed and voluntary consent; confidentiality of information shared and anonymity of research participants and no harm to participants, beneficence and reciprocity. These points were acknowledged during the preparatory stages of this study (see Chapter 1, section 1.12).

### 2.8.1 Informed and voluntary consent

Halai (2006:5) reminds researchers that it is imperative to obtain informed consent from all participants who are both directly and indirectly involved in the research. According to Terre Blance et al. (2006:72) the components are:

- Provision of appropriate information
- Participants' competence and understanding
- Voluntariness in participating and freedom to decline or withdraw after the study had started
- Formalisation of consent.

In recruiting participants, the researcher provided all potential participants face-to-face and in writing, or telephonically and via e-mail with information regarding the study, focusing on the purpose as well as their role in participating (Addendum 1.3). Participants were informed of the reasons why they were approached, based on the criteria of inclusion. They were also informed that they were not going to be coerced into participating and could withdraw from the study at any time. Finally, in order to formalise the consent, participants were to sign the consent form provided (see Addendum 1.2).

### 2.8.2 Confidentiality of information shared; anonymity of research participants and management of information

The principle of confidentiality, as pointed out by Halai (2006:5), also concerns respect for participants. Easter, Davis and Henderson, (in Terreblanche et al. (2006) stress the importance of confidentiality further by stating that, like Halai, individuals should be treated with respect but other than this, their information should remain confidential. Information of participants was treated in such a way that pseudonyms were provided to all participants to ensure that they could not be easily identified. In addition, transcripts and tapes were locked away and all e-mail questions were moved immediately on receipt to a safe folder to which only the researcher had access.

### 2.8.3 No harm to participants, beneficence and reciprocity

Terre Blanche et al. (2006:71) forewarn researchers that they should carefully identify all possible risks and experiences that could have a harmful effect on the participants and warn them accordingly. As indicated earlier, the researcher knew full well that the topic of the research study embraced sensitive issues, so she took precautions to alleviate and address any negative reaction that might distress a respondent emotionally as a result of participating on the study. She consulted a few social work colleagues asking them to be available to provide counselling to such participants free of charge, should the need arise. The researcher made participants aware of this service and confirmed again after the interview that such help was available if it was required. In addition, the researcher provided the contact numbers of LifeLine and relevant NGOs, should participants feel a need for counselling at a later stage.

## 2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused primarily on the study's research methodology and its application. It started off with an overview of the research approach as discussed in Chapter 1 as a way of orientation. This was followed by a discussion of the qualitative research approach, where the researcher highlighted the definition and characteristics of the approach, compare the steps followed in doing qualitative research according to different authors.

Attention was then given to the research design where the researcher gave an overview of the phenomenological research approach together with an orientation to descriptive, exploratory and a contextual strategy of inquiry all of which were applied in this study. Next in a summary of the research methods attention was paid to a description of the population, the sample and the sampling techniques used in the study.

The researcher then familiarised the reader with the procedure undertaken to recruit participants for the study and how they were prepared for the interview. This was followed by a discussion of the different methods of data collection employed, its analysis and the verification process. A discussion of ethical considerations concluded the chapter. The next chapter will focus on Part One of the presentation and present the research findings as complemented by a literature control of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands from a Social Work perspective.

## CHAPTER 3

### **THE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS COMPLEMENTED BY A LITERATURE CONTROL ON THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY- AT-HOME HUSBANDS: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE - PART ONE**

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

At the outset of this research project, the following research objectives were formulated: first, to explore the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands; second, to describe the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands; and third, to draw conclusions and make recommendations about the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands and to provide suggestions for support to social work practitioners rendering services to these couple systems.

In order to realise these objectives, the researcher applied three modes of data collection, namely face-to-face and telephonic interviews and via electronic mail. This process was mainly facilitated by open-ended questions contained in an interview guide (Addendum 1.1) which gave the participants the opportunity to elaborate on the topic under investigation. In the case of e-mail-communication the questions were e-mailed to participants who, on completion, returned them via e-mail to the researcher. As explained in the previous chapter, the telephonic interviews were decided upon as an ancillary method of data collection due to the challenges experienced in the recruitment of participants. The telephone interviews were used to accommodate those participants who agreed to participate but who were geographically too far from the researcher to engage in face-to-face interviews, and also for those participants who felt more comfortable being interviewed telephonically.

Apart from the interviews, e-communication served as another method of data collection for those who preferred this way of participating in the study or for various reasons (as stated in Chapter 2, section 2.5). The researcher e-mailed the list of questions contained in the interview guide to these participants. They then answered the questions one-by-one or presented their answers in an essay-format. On receipt of their responses the researcher and the supervisor read through the answers or essays, adding comments to the participants requesting further elaboration. This was part of the agreement contracted with them. They gladly obliged and via this route opportunities were created for further exploration of the information provided via e-communication. This approach to data collection was adopted as the recruitment of the participants remained a challenge. The step was taken in consultation with the study supervisor and in response to feedback from potential participants. For the face-to-face and the telephonic interviews, the wives and the husbands were interviewed separately and the participants whose responses to the questions sent via e-mail were especially requested to reply as individuals and not as a couple. This was mainly to prevent couples from influencing each other, as well as data becoming contaminated. The sample comprised ten working wives and ten stay-at-home husbands (Table 3.1 in Chapter 3).

As previously indicated (see Chapter 2, section 2.3) the researcher opted to use a qualitative research approach with a collective case study, a phenomenological, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design or strategy of inquiry. A collective case study was decided on as part of the strategy of inquiry in that it involved and studied multiple cases (Cf. Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008:549-550.), namely, several working wives and stay-at-home husbands. Their experiences, challenges and coping resources were explored and subsequently described in relation to fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles of working wives with stay-at-home husbands. Despite the fact that there are many definitions of phenomenology, one common characteristic emerges and that is that phenomenology focuses on the lived experiences of the individuals. This fact also comes to the foreground when looking at the definitions of various authors as cited in Groenewald (2004:5), namely, Welman, Kruger and Mitchell who state that “the phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of



people involved". Gubrium and Holstein (in Groenewald, 2004:5) refer to phenomenological research as "...toward the ways in which ordinary members of society attend to their everyday lives"; and finally, Greene as well (in Groenewald, 2004:5) confirms that a researcher applying phenomenology is concerned with the lived experiences of the people.

In summary, phenomenological research refers to an inductive, descriptive qualitative methodology which emphasises the need to explore a phenomenon through direct interaction with it and the suspension of all personal biases through what Husserl (in Wojnar & Swanson, 2007:173) calls "bracketing" – the process which consciously and actively seeks to strip away prior experiential knowledge and personal bias so as not to influence the description of phenomenon at hand (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007:173). To put it in practical terms, this boils down to the researcher not embarking upon an in-depth literature review prior to investigation, in order to neutralise biases, preconceptions and personal knowledge (Deutscher in Wojnar & Swanson 2007:173; Grove, Burns & Gray, 2013:703). From the phenomenological point of departure, "reality" (i.e. the experiences, challenges and coping resources of being working wives and stay-at-home husbands in this case) can be understood in a fully nuanced fashion if the participants' first-hand experiences are perceived to be socially constructed within their everyday world as if seen through their own eyes (Denscombe, 2007:77-79).

The researcher made use of the recognised qualitative data analysis approach of Tesch (i.e. the eight steps proposed by Tesch in Creswell, 2009:186) as given in Chapter 1 of this report and reiterated in Chapter 2 (see section 2.8) for conducting a content analysis on the data collected in order to ensure that the empirical evidence to be reported on is representative of reality. The researcher employed an independent coder who also performed a content analysis of the data presented in this chapter independently from the researcher. Once the processes of data analysis were completed, the researcher and independent coder undertook a four hour consensus discussion facilitated by the researcher's supervisor to compare and consolidate the themes, sub-themes and categories which emerged.

A qualitative content analysis, according to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009:2), involves the identification of unique themes that "... illustrate the range of the meanings of the phenomenon ...". They continue by pointing to the fact that the intention with qualitative content analysis is to reduce raw data to themes and/or categories based on valid inference and interpretation. This process was followed because, as mentioned above, the researcher and the independent coder, separately from each other, engaged in a consensus discussion facilitated by the study supervisor to interrogate the themes and/or categories derived. This resulted in an end-product where thirteen themes with related sub-themes and categories were identified. These are set out in Table 3.8 further on in this chapter.

The research findings will be presented in two parts<sup>16</sup>, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, according to themes, sub-themes and categories and supported by direct quotes or storylines from the transcribed interviews. Schilling (in Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:5) draws attention to the fact that it is common practice in reporting qualitative research findings to use quotations to justify themes and/or categories as this will ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the study by supporting these requirements through providing a literature control to complement and/or contrast the research findings. Hence this study meets this imperative practice.

As a point of departure, the researcher presents (in the next sub-section) the demographic data of all the couples who had participated in the study as part of the sample. As previously intimated, the study is of a sensitive nature so the researcher made use of pseudonyms in order to protect the identity of participants. The participants were given the opportunity to choose their own pseudonyms which were accordingly then used. With reference to the presentation of the themes, sub-themes and categories, Bazeley (2009:6) notes that a theme is used to "... describe elements identified from text...". Gibson and Brown (2009:142) add on by explaining the concept "sub-theme" along the following lines: "...by interrogating the constituent data... researchers will find that there are themes within the theme ... Rather than

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<sup>16</sup> Based on the voluminous amount of information generated as research findings, the researcher, following consultation and guidance from the study supervisor, decided to present them in two chapters to manage their presentation.

separating these out... these can become sub-[themes]...". The themes, sub-themes (and where applicable, the categories) derived from the processes already described thus follow the presentation of the demographic data on the research participants that comes next.

### 3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

A total of 10 couples (i.e. 10 working wives and their stay-at-home husbands) were selected to participate in the study. All couples were in a heterosexual relationship and thus an equal number of male and female participants were involved. The demographic data of the couples portray their cultural/ethnic backgrounds as per South African population clustering units; their socio-economic background; the duration of fulfilling the role as either a working wife or a stay-at-home husband; the number of children they had; as well as the provinces in which they were residing at the time of the study.

These data descriptors are in line with the inclusion criteria that were established for participants (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.4.1) prior to the study. All couples met the criteria of inclusion which are:

- Married couples, where the wife was working as the breadwinner and the husband fulfilled the role of the stay-at-home husband
- Couples were from any cultural or socio-economic background
- Both parties had to be willing and able to participate
- The wife had to be in the role of the main breadwinner and the husband in the role of a stay-at-home husband for at least six months
- They couple had to have at least one child.

#### 3.2.1 The demographics of the participants in relation to their cultural/ethnic classification

It was the aim of the researcher from the outset of the study, to include participants from all cultural/ethnic groups as well as different socio-economic backgrounds as constituted in the South African context. According to the South African Census

Report of 2011, South Africa's population comprises the following population groups: Black, White, Coloured and Indian/Asian. Hence, the researcher has also classified the participants according to these cultural/ethnic groups (see Table 3.1).

Although it was the intention of the researcher to include participants from all cultural or ethnic groups, it did not plan out that way as a result of a number of challenges the researcher experienced during the process of recruiting participants as alluded to in the previous chapter of this thesis. However, despite these challenges, the researcher was able to obtain a total of 10 couples to participate in the study. From the 10 couples, six were white and four were coloured. The researcher was not able to obtain participants belonging to the black or Indian/Asian population groups. The participants belonged predominantly to the white ethnic group (see Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: The participants by age and ethnic classification**

<b>Couples (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Cultural Group</b>
Couple 1: Alistair (50 years) and Priscilla (51 years)	Coloured
Couple 2: Karl (45 years) and Caroline (43 years)	White
Couple 3: Simon (46 years) and Angel (45 years)	White
Couple 4: Ewing (32 years) and Anne (32 years)	White
Couple 5: Mr (35 years) and Mrs Franks (34 years)	Coloured
Couple 6: David (38 years) and Sonia (37 years)	Coloured
Couple 7: Augustine (35 years) and Melissa (29 years)	Coloured
Couple 8: Japie (65 years) and Amber (58 years)	White
Couple 9: Pieter (63 years) and Genevieve (59 years)	White
Couple 10: Mr A (48 years) and Dr K (47 years)	White

In the studies of Rochlen et al. (2008:204) and Rochlen et al. (2010:284), (cf. Fischer, 2010:17) the white ethnic group sample was similarly predominant amongst their stay-at-home fathers. These scholars focused on what influenced the decision to take on the role of stay-at-home husband and included are factors such as how men discuss their decision to have taken on the role; what views other people have of them assuming the role of stay-at-home husband (i.e. jokes about men in this role

and stigmatisation experienced); and how men talk about masculinity and gender roles. In reflecting on this noticeable trend, the authors referred to above caution that no scientific conclusions can be drawn from this trend and perhaps future research is needed in this area. The authors (i.e. Rochlen et al., 2008; 2010 and Fischer, 2010) speculate that the reason for the observed trends could be attributed to the participants' willingness to participate according to their ethnicity, or perhaps the recruiting techniques of the researcher were responsible.

When looking at the challenges this researcher faced particularly in recruiting participants, one of the reasons given for non-participation was the fear of stigma based on the fact that non-traditional marital roles are seen as taboo by their particular ethnic grouping. The feeling was so strong that it resulted in refusal and resistance to participate in the study. This was particularly true among the black and Indian/Asian potential participants whom the researcher approached. Predominant among the reasons for their non-willingness to participate was that non-traditional roles are not seen as part of cultural norms.

Yoder (in Tengimfene, 2009:45) postulates that, in most cultures, women are defined by the parental (or caregiver) roles they fulfil. Thus, as stated by Yoder, based on societal expectations and norms women are supposed to spend their time fully on domestic duties, making caring for the family their sole job. Bearing the clear distinct understanding of the different marital roles which men and women are supposed to fulfil in mind, it is not surprising to have had these reactions from potential participants.

South Africa, has its roots in the system of patriarchy, and Baden, Hassim and Meintjes (1998:19) state that within the South African context this "...social power of patriarchy is proving difficult to shift...", resulting in the traditional roles of men and women becoming even more deeply entrenched.

### 3.2.2 Demographic information on the occupations of the working wives sampled

Concerning the occupations of the working wives in the sample they were full-time employees in careers ranging from clerical to managerial (see Table 3.2). Marshall (1998:14), through a Labour Survey conducted amongst 77 working mothers in Canada in 1997, shows that 88% of working mothers with a stay-at-home husband occupied positions in the labour market that ranged from clerical to managerial, as is the case with the participants of the study. This observation is further supported by Sussman and Bonnell (2006:12) in their study on wives as breadwinners in Canada in a survey of labour and income dynamics, where they found that breadwinner wives were more likely to hold professional or managerial positions. These references from the literature corroborate some of the findings of this study and, in particular this point.

**Table 3.2 Occupations of working wives**

<b>Couples (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Occupation of wife</b>
Couple 1: Alistair and Priscilla	Receptionist
Couple 2: Karl and Caroline	Lecturer
Couple 3: Simon and Angel	Bookkeeper
Couple 4: Ewing and Anne	Self-employed business owner
Couple 5: Mr and Mrs Franks	Lecturer
Couple 6: David and Sonia	Manager
Couple 7: Augustine and Melissa	Administrator
Couple 8: Japie and Amber	Nurse in Saudi Arabia
Couple 9: Pieter and Genevieve	Social Worker
Couple 10: Mr A and Dr K	HR Manager

Yakuba (2009:iii) postulates in a study on female participation in the workforce in South Africa in 2008, that the education of women is positively related to the likelihood of their labour force participation. Thus the more women are exposed to formal or higher education the greater the likelihood is that they would want to participate in the labour market. When looking at the occupations of the wives in this

study's sample (Table 3.2) it is clear that these wives had been exposed to some form of formal education based on the positions that they occupy.

### 3.2.3 Number of years as a stay-at-home husband

The 2008 US Census, quoted in Latshaw (2011:128), defines the stay-at-home father as follows: "a married father with children under 15 years old who has remained out of the labour force for more than one year primarily so he can care for his family while his wife works outside the home." Bearing this definition in mind, and adding one inclusion criterion of the research that the stay-at-home husband had to be fulfilling this non-traditional marital role for at least six months, it is evident that these participants, as stay-at-home husbands, indeed conform to both this inclusion criterion and the definition quoted. Marshall (1998:13) shows that (in a Labour survey conducted amongst 77 stay-at-home husbands in Canada) approximately one in three stay-at-home husbands have been in this role between one and five years. This is the case of six stay-at-home husbands in this study who have been in this role for up to five years (see Table 3.3). Marshall (1998:14) further indicates that, of the number of stay-at-home husbands surveyed, 51% of these husbands were stay-at-home husbands from 1 to more than 60 months.

**Table 3.3: Number of years as stay-at-home husband**

<b>Couples (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Number of years as stay-at-home husband</b>
Couple 1: Alistair and Priscilla	15 years
Couple 2: Karl and Caroline	3 years
Couple 3: Simon and Angel	13 years
Couple 4: Ewing and Anne	3 years
Couple 5: Mr and Mrs Franks	4 years
Couple 6: David and Sonia	7 years
Couple 7: Augustine and Melissa	5 years
Couple 8: Japie and Amber	4 years
Couple 9: Pieter and Genevieve	5 years
Couple 10: Mr A and Dr K	12 years

### 3.2.4 Province of residence of couples included in the sample

Initially, the researcher only wanted to include participants from Gauteng. Due to the challenges in recruiting participants, the researcher, in discussion with her supervisor, decided to extend the study's geographical boundaries to include participants in as many South African provinces as possible. As stated in the Census 2011 report, South Africa has nine provinces, namely: Free State, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and Western Cape. However, in the end, the researcher was only able to obtain participants from three of the nine provinces: seven couples from Gauteng, one couple from the Western Cape and two from the Free State (see Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4 Province of residence of couples included in the sample**

<b>Couples (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Province of residence</b>
Couple 1: Alistair and Priscilla	Gauteng
Couple 2: Karl and Caroline	Free State
Couple 3: Simon and Angel	Gauteng
Couple 4: Ewing and Anne	Gauteng
Couple 5: Mr and Mrs Franks	Western Cape
Couple 6: David and Sonia	Gauteng
Couple 7: Augustine and Melissa	Gauteng
Couple 8: Japie and Amber	Free State
Couple 9: Pieter and Genevieve	Gauteng
Couple 10: Mr A and Dr K	Gauteng

### 3.2.5 Number of children of each of the couples included in the sample

In her research amongst 77 stay-at-home husbands in Canada, Marshall (1998:12) found that the average number of children at home where there is a stay-at-home husband with a working wife was 1.6. As the researcher sought to include married couples with at least one child in the study as part of the inclusion criteria, all couples who participated in the study had children. When looking at the participants, most



couples had either one or two children with the exception of one couple who had three children. The number of children the participants in this study have is in line with the average of 1.6 referred to above. Furthermore, this finding is supported by Kramer and McCulloch (2011:2) who reveal that in non-traditional households where there is a stay-at-home father, there are fewer children.

**Table 3.5: Number of children of each couple**

<b>Couples (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
Couple 1: Alistair and Priscilla	2
Couple 2: Karl and Caroline	2
Couple 3: Simon and Angel	2
Couple 4: Ewing and Anne	2
Couple 5: Mr and Mrs Franks	2
Couple 6: David and Sonia	1
Couple 7: Augustine and Melissa	1
Couple 8: Japie and Amber	1
Couple 9: Pieter and Genevieve	2
Couple 10: Mr A and Dr K	3

This section has focused on the demographic data of the working wives and stay-at-home husbands who participated in this study. The next section of this Chapter 3 will focus on the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged from the processes of data analysis and the consequent consensus discussion between the researcher, the independent coder and the researcher's supervisor.

### 3.3 OVERVIEW OF THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

During the process of data collection (i.e. face-to-face and telephonic interviews as well as the answering the questions contained in the interview guide via e-communication - individually or in essay form), the following requests and questions were used as a guideline to structure the interviews.

Questions and requests directed to the working wives

c) Working wives

- How did it come about that you became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband, and from when was this the arrangement? What are your reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-home husband?
- What are your responsibilities as a working wife?
- Did your role as wife change when you became a working wife?
- How do you feel about being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a working wife entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for you as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for your family having you as a working wife?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a working wife?
- What are your needs as a working wife?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

Questions and request directed to the stay-at-home husbands

d) Stay-at-home husbands

- How did you come to be a stay-at-home husband with a working wife, and when did this happen? What were your reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife?
- What are your responsibilities as a stay-at-home husband?
- Did your role as husband change once you became a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you feel about being a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a stay-at-home husband entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you benefit from being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are the benefits for your family to have a stay-at-home husband?

- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are your needs as a stay-at-home husband?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

Thirteen themes with accompanying sub-themes and categories emerged from the data gathered from participants during methods of data collection employed, and the resultant processes of data analysis by the researcher and the independent coder, as well as the consequent consensus discussion between the independent coder, the study supervisor and the researcher. An exposition of the themes, sub-themes and categories is provided in Table 3.8 on the next page.

**Table 3.8: Overview: themes, subthemes and categories**

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES
<p><b>Circumstances and reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wives' accounts of how they became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband</li>   <li>• Husbands' accounts of how they became a stay-at-home husband with a working wife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Husband's retrenchment as reason</li> <li>• Husband's resignation as the reason</li> <li>• Fragility of child as reason</li> <li>• Relief of financial constraints as reason</li>   <li>• Husband's retrenchment as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Husband's resigning from work as the reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Husband's early retirement as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Fragility of child as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Husband's ill health</li> </ul>
<p><b>How the agreement was reached by the couple to enter into non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A joint agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles was reached through a deliberated process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (David &amp; Sonja)</li> <li>• (Karl &amp; Caroline)</li> <li>• (Pieter &amp; Genevieve)</li> <li>• (Japie &amp; Amber)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles was being forced by circumstances</li> <li>• A one-sided decision by one partner to enter a non-traditional marital role forcing the other partner to do likewise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Ewing &amp; Anne)</li> <li>• (Mr Franks &amp; Mrs Franks)</li> <li>• (Mr A &amp; Dr K)</li> <li>• (Augustine &amp; Melissa)</li> <li>• (Simon &amp; Angel)</li> <li>• (Alistair &amp; Priscilla)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emotional reactions to and feelings about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wives' adjustment and emotional reactions and feelings about entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of becoming and being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• The emotional reactions to and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was easy</li> <li>• The adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was difficult</li> <li>• Felt unhappy, stressed and that it was unfair</li> </ul> <p>Various emotional reactions and feelings were experienced that changed over time for some of the participants:</p>

	feelings of stay-at-home husbands about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles of becoming and being a stay-at-home husband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feelings of excitement and apprehension</li><li>• Feels at ease and enjoys the non-traditional marital role</li><li>• Feelings of hurt, helplessness and anger as to not being able to find employment</li><li>• Feelings of boredom</li><li>• Feelings of frustration</li><li>• Feels unappreciated at times</li><li>• Feels socially excluded</li><li>• Feelings of loss experienced with specific reference to the work environment</li><li>• Found it difficult to adjust at first to non-traditional marital roles</li></ul>
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<p><b>Changes in terms of financial, household chores and childcare responsibilities as a result of entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in terms of financial responsibilities since entering into non-traditional marital roles</li>   <li>• Changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The working wife has now become solely responsible for family's income</li> <li>• The husband now earns an inconsistent income through odd jobs</li> <li>• Changes in financial management and way of budgeting of the family's income since entering and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles</li>   <li>• Significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</li> <li>• Less significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conflicts reported arising from responsibilities for financial and household chores as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicts around finances</li> <li>• Conflict over household chores</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Experiences and feelings of working wives and stay-at-home</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wives' experiences and feelings as working wife with a stay-at-home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife as not easy and stressful</li> </ul>

<p><b>husbands regarding their changed roles and responsibilities</b></p>	<p>husband regarding their changed roles and responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Husbands' experiences and feelings in relation to being stay-at-home husbands with working wives regarding their changed role and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longs for old traditional marital roles of being a stay-at-home wife at times</li> <li>• Feels appreciation towards husband for supporting her in fulfilling her non-traditional marital role as working wife</li> <li>• Feelings of contentment and happiness with the non-traditional marital roles</li> <li>• Loss of control experienced by stay-at-home husbands due to not being breadwinner and having their own money</li> <li>• Feelings of boredom and frustration experienced at times with the role of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Feelings of happiness and enjoyment experienced by being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Experience the stay-at-home husband role as more challenging than being the sole breadwinner</li> <li>• Feelings of frustration for not being appreciated for what he is doing as a stay-at-home husband</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges experienced by working wives about fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles</li>   <li>• Challenges experienced by stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial constraints experienced as a challenge by the working wives</li> <li>• Fear regarding husband's ill health and ability to maintain the non-traditional marital role as a challenge articulated by some of the working wives</li> <li>• Challenges related to balancing the various role demands as challenge experienced by the working wives</li> <li>• Lack of others' understanding about the realities of non-traditional marital roles as a challenge experienced</li> <li>• Loss of child care role as a challenge experienced</li>   <li>• Financial challenges experienced as part of fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Challenges in relation to fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles (i.e. household chores and child care responsibilities)</li> <li>• Lack of support and understanding from the family and the community about being a stay-at-home husband as a challenge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants' perceptions of partner's feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working wives' perceptions of their husbands' feelings and experiences in relation to taking</li> </ul>	

<b>responsibilities</b>	<p>on the role and responsibilities of a stay-at-home husband with a working wife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay-at-home husbands' perceptions of their wives' feelings and experiences as a result of the change in role and responsibilities from being a stay-at-home wife to becoming a working wife</li> </ul>	
<b>Benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands, and children being in a non-traditional marriage unit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits experienced by working wives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoys work and can pursue career goals and self-actualisation as a benefit of being a working wife</li> <li>• Feels powerful, financially in control and able to meet financial needs of the family as benefit of being a working wife</li> <li>• Does not have to worry about children, housework, errands and work commitments as a benefit of being a working wife</li> <li>• Children experience women taking on different roles as benefit of being a working wife</li> <li>• The father being a stay-at-home husband plays a</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits experienced by stay-at-home husbands in relation to being stay-at-home husbands</li> </ul>	<p>significant role in child care as a benefit of being a working wife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to relax and do things they did not have time for previously as a benefit of being a stay-at-home-husband</li> <li>• No work stress and being bossed around as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• More family time and growth as family as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Improved health as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Wife has less to do and more time at weekends as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• The family saves financially as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping resources employed by working wives in order to deal with the demands of being a working wife</li>   <li>• Coping resources employed by stay-at-home husbands in order to cope</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional outbursts way of coping with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Adopting a specific mind-set and positive attitude as resources to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Communication between the couple as resources to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Work as resources to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Pursuing hobbies as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Seeking support from friends as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Self-nurturing/care as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Multi-tasking and planning ahead as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li> <li>• Spending time with children as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife</li>   <li>• Hobbies and further studies as a resources to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> </ul>
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	<p>with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in attitude, being positive and self-preservation as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Relaxes with friends as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Substance abuse as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Volunteer work as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Prioritising the demands related to the non-traditional marital role as a way of coping with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband</li> <li>• Communication between the couple and family time as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs experienced by working wife in relation to fulfilling this non-traditional marital role</li>   <li>• Needs experienced by stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling this non-traditional marital role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and understanding from husband, the extended family and community</li> <li>• Needing more time for self and family (i.e. better work-life balance)</li> <li>• Needing a less stressful job</li> <li>• Needing more time away alone with husband</li> <li>• Assistance with housework and child care</li> <li>• Need for financial security/more money</li> <li>• Need for recognition and respect</li>   <li>• More assistance from children with household chores</li> <li>• More social interaction with friends and others</li> <li>• More understanding from the extended family and community</li> <li>• Need for a babysitter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples' non-traditional marriage</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reactions of family, friends and community to the couple's non-traditional situation as experienced by working wives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended family's reactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concern whether the couple is coping with the non-traditional marital roles</li> <li>○ Non-acceptance of the couple's decision to venture into the non-traditional marital roles they fulfil</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Children's reactions:</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reactions of family, friends and community to the couple's non-traditional marriage as experienced by stay-at-home husbands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Acceptance of the non-traditional family arrangement</li> <li>• Friends' reactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supportive towards the wife about the non-traditional family arrangement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Working wives' perceptions of the community's reaction towards them being in non-traditional marital roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Look down on stay-at-home husbands and that the former are riding on the women's back</li> <li>○ Feeling judged by the community for being in a non-traditional marital role situation – feel the need to constantly defend</li> <li>○ Non-acceptance by society of the non-traditional marital roles</li> <li>○ Acceptance by local community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Extended family's reactions in relations to the non-traditional marriage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Questioning the non-traditional marriage role arrangement (i.e. in some instances non-acceptance and/or ignorance)</li> <li>○ Acceptance of the non-traditional marriage role arrangement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's reactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Acceptance of the non-traditional marriage role arrangement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Friends reactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Remarks, jokes and jealousy about the non-traditional marriage</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Potential employers' reaction to the non-traditional marriage arrangement</li> <li>• Community's reaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Looking down on stay-at-home husbands and feeling judged</li> <li>○ Feeling judged by the community for the non-traditional marriage roles fulfilled</li> <li>○ Non-acceptance by society of the non-traditional marriage roles fulfilled</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions and advice of working wives and stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestions and advice of working wives to other couples in non-traditional marital roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion: do not do it</li> <li>• Suggestion: community should understand, accept and support</li> <li>• Suggestion: communicate, support each other and teamwork</li> <li>• Be mature about the challenges</li> <li>• Develop a 'thick skin'</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestions and advice of stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let go of previous roles</li> <li>• Chat rooms to talk about non-traditional family roles, to vent emotions freely and give advice</li> <li>• Education or publications on the topic</li> <li>• Seek professional advice</li> <li>• Think carefully before entering into the non-traditional family role arrangement</li> <li>• Understanding and constant communication between couple in the non-traditional marriage role arrangement</li> <li>• Careful financial management</li> <li>• Accept situation and be positive</li> <li>• Keep out of each other's domain</li> <li>• See that partnership remains equal in terms of contribution from the role of being a stay-at-home husband and a working wife</li> <li>• Support group (for couples/stay-at-home husbands and use of media)</li> <li>• Community education about the non-traditional family arrangement</li> <li>• Family support</li> <li>• Stay-at-home husbands should engage with and support</li> </ul>
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		other stay-at-home husbands
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support is needed for working wives and mutual respect</li><li>• Seek professional advice and guidance</li></ul>

In the next section of this discussion, each one of the main themes and accompanying sub-themes and categories (where applicable) will be presented and confirmed or endorsed by direct quotes from the transcripts of the interviews. The identified themes and sub-themes, with their supporting storylines from the transcripts will be compared and contrasted with the body of knowledge available, that is, a literature control will be undertaken.

The researcher will also include the comments made by callers who participated in a phone-in talk show on an Afrikaans National Radio Programme, entitled “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1). As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the researcher's supervisor used one of his contacts at this National Radio Station and arranged for this topic to be discussed on this particular programme. The intention with this exercise was to recruit participants for the study as the researcher would also call in and contribute to the discussion. In this way an invitation would also be extended to individuals who met the criteria of inclusion for participating in this study to respond. Unfortunately, the researcher was not informed about the date of the phone-in programme and she missed out on this opportunity. However, a podcast of the programme was obtained and transcribed<sup>17</sup> and the information specifically from stay-at-home husbands who phoned in, will be included as part of the literature control.

In the remainder of this chapter, the first six themes mentioned will be discussed. The last seven themes will be dealt with in Chapter 4 as Part Two of the discussion on the research findings.

### 3.3.1 **Theme 1: Circumstances and reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband**

According to People's Daily Online (2009), sociologists cite three reasons for the emergence of the stay-at-home husband. These are:

- The wife is more invested in her career, ambitious and well-paid whereas her husband has poor job prospects (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:202.).
- The wife is tired of household tasks and wants to work outside the house.

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<sup>17</sup> See Addendum 3.1.

- The husband can work from home and opts to do this whilst looking after the family.

In a qualitative study focusing on 21 stay-at-home fathers in Belgium and 70 in Canada, where the key focus was to understand how these fathers deal with the tension between their role as primary caregivers and their own sense of masculinity, Doucet and Merla (2007:462) cite the same reasons as these but include additional reasons why men opt for the role of stay-at-home husband. These are:

- The wife has a financially rewarding and professional occupation (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18.). (As in the case of Japie, one of the stay-at-home husband participants).
- The role of women in encouraging men to share domestic responsibilities entices men to be more open to the possibility of becoming a stay-at-home husband.
- Preferring home care of children over day care (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198; Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18, 25.); and/or a lack of affordable child care facilities (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18.); a lack of trust in child care facilities (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18.); and/or where the child has specific mental and physical needs, are all instances in which, if the wife has a more financially and rewarding professional career, she can persuade the husband to take on the role of stay-at-home husband. (Which also held true for one of the couples interviewed - David and Sonja).
- Where the wife and/or husband do not want to replicate their own father's involvement in child care.

This theme was deduced from the information provided by the participants on the following question posed to them: "How did it come about or what are the reasons that you are a ...

... working wife with a stay-at-home husband?

... stay-at-home husband/working wife?"

The responses provided gave birth to various sub-themes that are presented next. These also tie in with the reasons for becoming stay-at-home husbands as cited in the literature integrated in the discussion.

Sub-theme 1.1: Wives' accounts of how they became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband

The birth of feminism particularly in the '60 and '70s brought with it a change in how gender roles for men and women were viewed. Hawke (2007:91) states that already as early as World War II, women's roles changed drastically and this is attributed to the need for women to enter into the labour market to support the economy created by the war effort. (Cf. Cargan, 1991:155; Davidson & Moore, 1996:50.) When men went to war due to the shortage of labour, women started taking on the positions that these men occupied due to the need for labour to maintain output. This viewpoint is further supported by Belous and Levitan (1981:26) who agree that, due to the high demand of labour during the war, women started to fulfil these duties (Cf. Cargan, 1991:155; Davidson & Moore, 1996:50.). Dolado, Felgueroso and Jimeno (2001:876) also indicate that women's participation in the workforce has shown a substantial increase particularly in the US and EU countries. They further highlight that women's accessibility to the labour market was facilitated by two factors: first, demand (firms became more willing to hire women due to the increased number of jobs in the service sector and women's higher levels of education); and second, supply (the introduction of flexible working hours and decreased fertility rates).

Coupled with the growth in female labour force participation, (Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Latshaw, 2011:126), the following events also contributed to the emergence of the breadwinner wife with a stay-at-home husband phenomenon: first, economic recessions, leading to corporate down-sizing and men losing their jobs (McKenna, 1999) resulting in some men's subsequent inability to find other employment (Chesley, 2011:645); second, within the South African context due to affirmative action policies and legislation (Employment Equity Act, Act No 55 of 1998; Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998), the emergence of non-traditional marital role arrangements became favoured.

The reasons for taking on the non-traditional marital role of working wife as recounted by the wives in this study are presented in five categories and are closely linked to those given by their husbands.

- *Husband's retrenchment as reason*

This category is confirmed in the literature consulted in that some of the participants in Rochlen et al.'s study (2008:198) noted that they became involved in the non-traditional marital role of stay-at-home husband as result of losing their jobs. Job loss for the husbands entering into this non-traditional marital role was also a common theme mentioned amongst the 21 couples (breadwinner wives and stay-at-home husbands) engaged in Chesley's (2011:650) study.

In support of this category, Mrs Franks explained how *"when his company was liquidated, and after struggling to find employment, we decided that my husband should return to school and pursue a different career"*. Furthermore, although doing some odd jobs for ex-colleagues *"...he was also not getting a consistent income and then became a full-time stay-at-home husband"*.

As indicated in Men at Work (2013), "South Africa's stay-at-home dads take on a different twist than the usual concept. Many of them prefer or have the opportunity to choose to work from the house, work part-time, and have the luxury of a domestic helper." Angel's husband as well as Mrs Franks' husband pursued the path of part-time work. This, however, was not always successful and resulted in them assuming the role of stay-at home husband on a more full-time basis.

Angel described along the following lines how her husband was retrenched *"...thirteen years ago then he started working for himself and ... sometimes he gets work and sometimes he doesn't... that's how it all started where I became the working wife and he the home husband"*. This is not a typical non-traditional marriage as *"...my husband was not a full-time home husband. I mean he does work"*. The wife justified their situation further by stating: *"my salary was a fixed salary and thus I became the working wife with the home husband"*.

The termination of her husband's part-time contracts and subsequent retrenchment was explained by Genevieve as the reason for being a working wife. She stated: *"...he got a contract again ... but ... the labour laws are like this that you can only be on contract twice... and then they made a different... provision for him for a year again...and then after that...he couldn't be employed anymore... In essence I think it's about the affirmative action and then the labour laws...that can be blamed for him to stay at home"*. Genevieve cited affirmative action as the reason for her husband's retrenchment as did many callers in the programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1).

In contrast, Anne described how her husband's illness had led to retrenchment: *"my hubby [Ewing] is sick and we worked with it as far as we could, then he got retrenched and for him to start looking for a job was impractical because he is on treatment for... brain cancer... the brain surgery left him with some brain damage and he would never be at work again..."*.

Melissa also shared how her husband's retrenchment and the inability to obtain subsequent employment were the reasons for her becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband: *"in 2008, my husband was retrenched... At first, we didn't think much of it because he immediately started applying for other jobs... The reality finally dawned on me when my husband was receiving more and more regret letters and was now really struggling to find employment. This was also when the shift became more apparent that he became a stay-at-home husband and me the sole breadwinner"*. She described the reason for his not being able to find other employment as being that he *"... is ITC<sup>18</sup> listed and thus he was not considered for employment"*.

Dr K described how her husband had been retrenched once, got another job and then *"...they decided to close that department down. That's how he became a stay-at-home husband. He is currently working from time to time but basically he is at home and I'm working"*.

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<sup>18</sup> ITC is the name that South African consumers use to refer to a credit bureau because previously the only credit bureau that was operating in the country was ITC prior to being bought over by Transunion Credit Bureau.

- Husband's resignation as the reason

The husband resigning from his job was also cited by some of the working wives who participated in this study as a reason for entering into non-traditional marital roles. Chesley (2011:650,) in her study conducted in South Wisconsin involving 21 stay-at-home husbands and their working wives, aimed at, *inter alia*, eliciting their perceptions and experiences of the factors that had pushed them into gender-atypical work/family situation, pointed to the fact that some of the husbands resigned from their jobs to become a stay-at home husband because of unsatisfactory working and job conditions. This was also true in the case of Caroline's husband (Karl): *"my husband hated the job he was doing and this dislike for his work was so deep rooted that he was diagnosed with depression"*. Caroline went on to explain that *"...financially I always earned more than my husband"*, and so they decided the husband would resign and she would be the breadwinner.

Priscilla, whose husband, Alistair, also resigned, had a different take on the aspect of becoming a working wife, as she was not included in the decision. She explained: *"when my husband decided to resign... I only found out that he had resigned after his resignation"*. She explained further: *"he acquired temp jobs but when they spoke about making it permanent, he would have a fight with the manager and resign. This was his pattern"*.

- Fragility of child as reason

Doucet and Merla (2007:462) mention that one of the reasons why couples take on non-traditional marital roles is the health needs of a child. Fischer and Anderson (2012:18) also point out that where parents have a child with specific physical and special needs, the couple may decide that it would be necessary for the husband (due to him be a better fit for childcare) to become a stay-at-home husband to attend to the child's needs. The fragility of their new baby was cited by both Sonja and David as precipitating the circumstances leading to their entering non-traditional marital roles. Sonja spoke about this as follows: *"...my child was born premature and weighed very little. We were not prepared to put him in a crèche and we didn't have*



*family support... And we came to the point that someone must stay at home to look after him. That's how we came to the decision that my husband will look after my son and that's how I became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband".*

- Relief of financial constraints as reason

The decision to take on the role of stay-at home husband in cases where the wife is in the position to earn more than the husband is a contributor to this decision as mentioned by O'Brien (2012:14). (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198.). Japie, who had not been happy in his job, retired earlier. His early retirement was easily facilitated by the fact that his wife, Amber, took up a lucrative work offer in Saudi Arabia and he becoming a stay-at-home husband. Amber spoke about this along the following lines: *"...I was already the sole breadwinner as my husband had retired...we found our standard of living was slowly starting to drop. We were not used to this adjustment and always having to settle for all the cheaper options. Our standards started to drop even further and were now even affecting what types of food we bought".*

Sub-theme 1.2: Husbands' accounts of how they became a stay-at-home husband with a working wife

Although the reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband vary, West, Lewis, Barnes, Leach, Sylva and Stein (in O'Brien, 2012:21) cite the following as some of the common reasons: "...factors such as a couples current employment situation and relative earning power; the absence of acceptable alternative child care; perceptions of societal values; maternal and paternal health; family history; and ideological values...". Concurring with this Rochlen et al. (2008:198) and Rochlen et al. (2010:279; 281) note that economic reasons play a significant role in husbands deciding to take on the role of stay-at-home husbands with their wives being the breadwinner. Particular situations are the wife earning significantly more than the husband, being career driven and orientated and highly successful in their careers; the husband's job losses; and the father being more suited for caretaking.

The reasons, as recounted by the husbands in this study are presented in five categories, namely, retrenchment, resignation, retirement, fragility of a child and ill health of the husband.

- *Husband's retrenchment as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband*

From the stay-at-home husband participants' accounts, being retrenched was the most frequently shared reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife. This can be further expanded to the fact that beyond retrenchment, finding permanent or alternative work was a challenge for these husbands. O'Brien (2012:14) attributes the failure men experience when trying to find permanent or alternative work to the decline of employment opportunities for men as women are increasingly entering into the workplace. The same view is held by Chesley (2011:645) who postulates that the majority of stay-at-home fathers who take on this role do so because of their failure to find work or as a result of ill health. While searching for suitable people to interview for this research, the researcher had the interesting experience of access to a phone-in programme. A significant number of callers, in responding to the radio programme 'Loslip' (see Addendum 3.1), blamed affirmative action as being a direct cause of males being retrenched and not being able to find another job easily. Thus the resultant retrenchment can therefore result in an increase in the stay-at-home husband phenomenon.

Mr Franks shared the following with the researcher about his retrenchment and how he became a stay-at-home husband (SAH) *"I was retrenched, as the company I worked for had management conflict and eventually liquidated"*. This participant also explained how he worked for his ex-colleagues for a while but this *"did not go according to plan as the work did not come in consistently and that is how I became a stay-at-home husband"*.

Simon described the reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband along the following lines: *"First of all the company retrenched staff then they wanted us to do contract work... I contracted with them for two years. I walk in on a Friday morning and they said, 'you are no longer needed, your services are no longer required"*. He

then went on to explain how he reacted: *“So what can I do, I can’t do anything... I grabbed my stuff together and I got paid for the day’s work that I already had”*. This participant later stated that although he is a SAH: *“I still do repairs for people”*. This case corresponds to a finding in Doucet’s (2004:279) study amongst 70 stay-at-home husbands in Canada in which, amongst others, the focus was on the aspects of being a stay-at-home husband and performing some paid-labour tasks outside of the home on a temporary basis. Their finding was that many stay-at-home fathers opted for “self-provisioning” work when it became available as this opportunity enabled them to contribute to the household finances even if minimally (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:136-137.). The case of Simon in this study (quoted above) as well as that of Pieter who, from time to time, does some marking for the University of South Africa (a higher distance education institution).

Pieter’s description was linked to a contract not being renewed. He had been employed on a contract basis and when it ended his contract could not be renewed, so he started looking for a job, *“but with not much success”*. He realised his *“...age of 63 years counted against [him]”*. The decision was then taken that, *“...I would stay at home and fulfil the role of housewife and Genevieve would be the breadwinner”*.

Retrenchment was also the reason for another husband, Augustine, becoming a stay-at-home husband: *“I was employed...and was retrenched in 2008. I tried looking for other employment but due to the fact that I am on ITC, it was very difficult for me to find employment. Thus we ended up in this situation...”*. He further described how he thought he would find a new job *“...but that didn’t work out as I hoped and then the reality started to sink in when the weeks started to turn into months and it started to have an effect on the household”*. This participant also referred to his age (being 35 years old) as a factor *“...when applying for other jobs with your age coming into effect and suddenly becoming a problem...”*.

In 1998, Mr A was retrenched and then employed by another company for two years before the department was closed down and he was again retrenched. He then started a biltong business: *“that didn’t work out... I was then forced to on a part-time basis involve myself in labour related issues and helping another person. With the*

*amount of work coming in, I was forced to spend more time at home than at work and eventually I came to the realisation that I was what you refer to as a 'stay-at-home husband'."*

This failure to obtain alternative or permanent employment is a contributing factor in the rise in the number of stay-at-home husbands. Merla (2008:119) in her study amongst 21 stay-at-home husbands in Belgium, which was compared to studies in Australia, Sweden and the US on fathers as primary caregivers, also highlights the difficulty of finding a satisfying job. A similar theme was noted by Chesley (2011:645) who observed from a Current Population Survey that the majority of stay-at-home fathers reported doing so because as they could not find work (cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:16) or were ill or disabled. Three of her participants who fell in this category stated this as one of the reasons for assuming the role of stay-at-home husbands.

The feelings associated with the inability to find employment and thus finding themselves unemployed can have severe negative feelings for the stay-at-home husband. Callers on the programme 'Loslip' cited the fact that it depletes their self-esteem (see Addendum 3.1). This can also lead to resentment, as pointed out by Siegel (2007:47), where the husband envies the wife based on feelings of insecurity about their loss of their professional identity, which is further exacerbated by the fact that unemployed husbands are viewed in a negative light. Hymowitz (2012:3), in support of this, states that these husbands are often labelled as "frivolous" and "freeloaders". Riggs (1998:431), on the other hand, shows that society frowns on unemployed men based on their expectation that these men should be breadwinners. This then adds to the stresses experienced by these men. Men, who want to take care of their children rather than work outside the home, are also stigmatised (Brescoll & Uhlman, 2005:443,444; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17).

- Husband's resigning from work as the reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband

Alistair described how he resigned of his own volition, leading to the situation of becoming a stay-at-home husband when he shared the following with the researcher: *"I became a stay-at-home-husband when I resigned from my job approximately 15 years ago. I had a very unreasonable boss and he used to put a lot of pressure on me. As a result, I decided to leave my job as I kept having arguments with my boss"*. Furthermore, he described how he tried to find other employment and the jobs were all contract or part-time positions and for months he was not employed. He then stated *"of the other jobs that I did find... I rather opted to resign because of conflict with my bosses. I am not unreasonable but I am not going to be treated like a child and since then I stayed at home"*. He explored small businesses but this did not work out.

Karl cited resignations from work as the reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband, but for different reasons: *"in 2010 I resigned from my job of 21 years. I hated my job and felt that emotionally I was dying in the place. I felt that I was in the wrong place with the wrong people and that I had reached the ceiling. So I decided to resign and stay at home"*.

- Husband's early retirement as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband

In research conducted on South Africa's employment record (Men at Work, 2013), an emerging trend is that some men in South Africa who opt to take on the role of being a stay-at-home husband are semi-retired by choice, and see no problem with giving their wife a chance to prove themselves in the work environment. Japie shares his story on how he retired at the age of 59, thereby giving his wife the opportunity to follow her dreams. In so doing he became the primary breadwinner of the family: *"...a little bit earlier than I was planning"*. The reason for this was *"Too much stress in the workplace"*. He added that *"...my wife received a very, very good offer to go and work in Saudi Arabia"*.

- Fragility of child as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband

As pointed out under the introduction to this theme and noted as well as by Rochlen et al. (2008:198); Rochlen et al. (2010:279; 281); Fischer, (2010:30) Doucet and Merla (2007:462); and Fischer and Anderson (2012:18) and an anonymous caller on the programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1), the decision to take on the non-traditional marital roles could be influenced by the belief that one parent should remain at home to take care of the children. Rochlen et al. (2010:279) further show that the premise for this decision is also attributed to the fact that the father would be in a better position to do so based on his personality and secondly, the partner’s career dedication. The wife would rather be the one pursuing a full-time career than staying at home and also had the higher earning potential.

Another illustration from this study relates to a situation in which the fragility of a new born baby was the reason for one participant to enter into a non-traditional marital role arrangement. The husband, David, explained it as follows: “...when my son was born... we decided that I would become the main caregiver and she would be the breadwinner in the house”. He went on to explain that: “...my son was born with complications and thus had to remain in the hospital for a period after his birth. Me and my wife at that time were in a lot of financial problems and with a new born baby that added to the financial burden”. The couple agreed. The baby was so small, that it needed special attention: “... my wife will bring in more money so we decided that I will be staying at home looking after my son”.

- Husband’s ill health

A further reason for the emergence of the stay-at-home husband is the ill health of one of the parties. At least two callers in the programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) cited this as a reason that led to the husband becoming a stay-at-home husband. Elise from Pretoria states that her husband assumed the role of stay-at-home husband as a result of the extreme amount of pain that he had experienced for 15 years due to ill health. Johan from Pretoria who has been a stay-at-home

husband for the past 15 years stated that he lost his job because of a medical condition.

Ill health was the reason why Ewing (one of the participants in this study) had to enter into the non-traditional marital role arrangement. Despite attempts to remain in the workforce for as long as possible, Ewing's deteriorating medical condition left the couple with no other option but for him to exit the labour market and become a stay-at-home husband. Ewing became a stay-at-home husband as a result of brain damage resulting from a brain tumour that had been surgically removed but regrew. *"I did go back to work and found it extremely difficult ... I was retrenched due to my inability to cope..."*.

When reflecting on the participants' accounts surrounding the circumstances and reasons that push them toward adopting and entering into a non-traditional marital role of being the breadwinner or working wife with a stay-at-home husband, it becomes clear that this move from a traditional marital role to a non-traditional marital role can be correctly labelled as "an adaptive response to external circumstances" (i.e. the retrenchment of the husband, the husband's ill health (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:202; Rochlen et al., 2010:279; Chesley, 2011:645.650.), and the ill health of a child). Rochlen et al. (2008:202) concur with this as they pointed out that none of the 14 stay-at-home husbands in their study envisioned themselves as becoming stay-at-home fathers at earlier points in their lives. However, the reasons for becoming stay-at-home fathers were due more to external circumstances than to them being intrinsically driven.

### **3.3.2 Theme 2: How the agreement was reached by the couple to enter into non-traditional marital roles**

Over and above the circumstances and reasons leading up to the couples entering into non-traditional marital roles (Theme 1), the husbands and wives articulated how they reached an agreement to do so. This was either in response to the initial question posed to the participants regarding the circumstances and reasons leading

to them entering a non-traditional marital role situation or as a follow-up question to their descriptions of their respective roles.

Rochlen et al. (2008:197) conducted a study using grounded theory with 14 stay-at-home husbands in the US focusing on what influenced their decision to take on the role of stay-at-home husband. They included factors such as: how men discuss their decision to have taken on the role; what the views of others are of them assuming the role of stay-at-home husband; and how men talk about masculinity and gender roles. These authors, in articulating the move from traditional to non-traditional marital roles, explain that the process either entails one of the three processes:

- Single instance in which the decision seemed clear with or without discussion
- Realisation over time involving several discussions with spouse
- Events occurred outside the control of couple that led to this decision to migrate in terms of marital roles from the traditional to a non-traditional style.

The authors found that the most common decision-making process was the realisation over time involving several discussions with spouse.

The next three sub-themes emerged from Theme 2 underscoring the research findings of Rochlen et al. (2008:197) where: (1) a joint agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles was reached through a deliberated process by the couple; (2) an agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital role arrangement was being forced on them by circumstances; and (3) no agreement being made between the couple through discussion, they merely adopted the roles. The majority of participants ventured into the non-traditional marital role arrangement of becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife by mutual agreement in response to being forced by circumstances. The storylines of each couple unfold per theme.

Sub-theme 2.1: A joint agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles was reached through a deliberated process

Decisions to take on marital roles that fall outside the norm have to be made and the pros and cons it holds considered against the reality that the traditional way is still followed and prescribed by the majority of society. These choices are influenced by



both internal and external factors. Chesley (2011:645) holds the view that this decision is becoming more and more a result of choice. Baylies (2004:5) states that, in the deliberations between the couple on whether or not to take on the non-traditional marital roles, the following questions that centred on the financial and emotional factors that are imbedded in such a decision have to be normally interrogated by the couple when investigating the implications of the change:

- What are our fixed and variable expenses?
- Can we meet all of these needs on one income?
- What about day care costs?
- How much will we automatically save by the one partner being at home?
- Are there ways we can cut down on expenses to make it possible to survive on one income?
- Is the husband the kind of person who can stay home during the day?
- What are the long-term benefits to the wife and children?

The couples' accounts presented below testify to the fact that a joint agreement to venture into a non-traditional marital role arrangement was reached through a deliberated process.

- *David and Sonja*

David and Sonja's version (quoted) does not only speak to how they jointly came to an agreement for David to be a stay-at-home husband and Sonja a working wife, but it also points to the fact that the circumstances brought about by the fragility of their newly born baby steered them in this direction: *"me and my wife sat down and said look who between us earns more money because one of us needs to take care of our son. My son was not a special needs child but he needed that extra attention because he was so small ...It was a mutual agreement between the two of us"*. David later elaborated on how other options were not available as they did not have family support and *"we didn't trust the crèches with a baby that small"*. He also pointed to the fact that: *"when we got married, from the start there was never the traditional direction that I'm the husband, the head of the house, and my word is law."*

*It was a fifty-fifty partnership in everything that we do. So we took it from there, because of this the decision we took was easier”.*

His wife, Sonja, supported these assertions by stating “*we were not prepared to put him [i.e. their new born baby] in a crèche and we didn’t have that family support, like someone to look after him, and then we came to the point that someone must stay at home to look after him. That’s how we came to the decision...*”. What facilitated their decision was the fact that “*in my career it was easier to find work and there was a bigger earning potential in my career*”, and “*I’m also not a person that can stay at home. I would go insane*”.

In latching on to and to confirm Sonja’s contribution, reference can be made to the work of Riekert and Taute (2009:31). In their research on 28 working mothers in a leading motor industry in South Africa to ascertain the influence of family dynamics on the productivity of working mothers, Riekert and Taute (2009:34) found that one of the reasons why these women wants to be employed outside the home was articulated by one participant as follows: “I work in order to protect my sanity”. Not only does this resonate with Sonja’s viewpoint but so does the following reason cited by another participant in Riekert and Taute’s (2009:31.) study: “interaction that one has with people at work and dealing with certain situations keeps the mind stimulated”. With specific reference to South Africa, Franks, Schurink and Fourie (2006:17) point out the fact that in years to come there will be a continuous increase in women’s participation in the workforce which is fuelled by women awakening and pursuing their educational and career aspirations. Riekert and Taute (2009) point to the fact that this increase of women in South Africa labour force can be attributed to the non-racial and non-sexist democracy that was introduced in 1994.

- *Karl and Caroline*

Karl had resigned from his job because he was unhappy but planned to find another one, which, in the end, did not materialise. He did not expressly say that an agreement was reached through a deliberated process. However, his wife, Caroline, shared this: “*it was either my husband continued working and ... continue suffering*

from depression... have a negative effect on his health, his state of mind and the family unit as a whole or make a change and embrace the changes". She then referred specifically to a deliberated agreement: "we discussed our options and took the decision together that he would resign and I would continue working".

- *Pieter and Genevieve*

Pieter who, after being retrenched, described how "Genevieve and I then sat down and did our calculations... We realised that... we could survive on her salary, if we cut down on unnecessary expenses. So the answer was that I would stay at home and fulfil the role of housewife and Genevieve would be the breadwinner". However, from Genevieve's description a different take on the state of affairs emerged: "... there was never for me an official formal agreement between the two of us. I just kept on and he was sitting at home, you know".

- *Japie and Amber*

Amber clearly described that the agreement between her and Japie about him becoming a stay-at-home husband and she the working wife was reached through a deliberated process: "I then spoke to my husband and told him that I would like to consider going back to work in Saudi Arabia again. We discussed all the implications – the pros and cons - and then came to the decision that I would go back to work in Saudi Arabia...After a lot of consideration, we decided that it was the best decision at the time". On the other hand, her husband, Japie's, account does not make any reference to an agreement process. He just shared the following with the researcher: "I said you go and work and you go and have fun and go and see the world and don't worry about anything that is in South Africa. I'm doing everything".

Sub-theme 2.2: An agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital role situation was being forced by circumstances

Apart from David and Sonja's circumstances having been discussed in the previous sub-theme they also reflect the essence of this sub-theme in that circumstances

beyond their control influenced their decision. The scenarios of four other couples now presented demonstrate how they too were forced by circumstances to agree to venture into a non-traditional marital role.

- *Ewing and Anne*

This couple was forced to enter into a non-traditional marital role arrangement due to the fact that the husband, Ewing, had brain damage and was consequently retrenched. Anne referred to this along the following lines: *"...we never sat down and had a discussion about it. It was a coping mechanism to find a way to continue despite what was happening, and it just made more sense"*. Ewing described how he had been retrenched *"due to my inability to cope"*, and *"...my wife had a couple of businesses going and we kinda decided that we had no choice"*.

- Mr Franks and Mrs Franks

Mr Franks was retrenched when the company he worked for was liquidated. As a couple they *"...decided that I would continue working for colleagues and perhaps then earn an income out of this"* but this *"did not go according to plan"*. Mrs Franks corroborated this and also explained how, before the company was liquidated, the couple had *"...decided to give my husband the opportunity to study and me the opportunity to work for our family. When his company was liquidated, and after struggling to find employment, we decided that my husband would return to school and pursue a different career"*. Although the couple had made this initial agreement, the actual step of entering into non-traditional marital roles was forced due to the company's subsequent liquidation.

In the programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1), ill health of the husband as well as the husband's loss of employment, regardless of a reason, also emerged as a forced circumstance that resulted in the wife becoming the main breadwinner and the husband the stay-at-home husband. Johan from Newlands who phoned in, mentioned that he had lost his job due to retrenchment, whilst Alwin (another caller) stated that due to ill health he had to become a stay-at-home husband.

- *Mr A and Dr K*

This couple's mutual agreement to venture into a non-traditional marital role arrangement was also forced and due to circumstances, namely the husband's retrenchment. As Dr K explained *"it was circumstances and not really out of choice"*. Furthermore, in response to the researcher's question about whether the couple had had a discussion on this matter she added: *"it wasn't a formal specific time period that we had discussion it just came naturally. I just continued to work. We did discuss the options and at that stage there really wasn't that much options"*.

Mr A recounted how, after retrenchment, he tried to earn some income on a part-time basis but *"I was forced to spend more time at home than at work and eventually I came to the realisation that I was ... a stay-at-home husband"*.

- *Augustine and Melissa*

Melissa, whose husband was retrenched, described how the couple was forced to play non-traditional marital roles due to circumstances: *"the reality finally dawned on me when my husband was receiving more regret letters and was now really struggling to find employment. This was also when the shift became more apparent that he became a stay-at-home husband"*. Her husband, Augustine, corroborated this when he communicated: *"...we ended up in this situation not out of choice but out of necessity... the reality started to sink in when the weeks started to turn into months [for him not finding another job following his retrenchment from his last place of employment]."*

Examples from the literature confirm this sub-theme that the participants' communication endorses. Rochlen et al. (2008:202) would concur too as they point out that none of the 14 stay-at-home husbands in their study envisioned themselves becoming stay-at-home fathers at earlier points in their lives. However, the reasons for them becoming stay-at-home fathers were more due to external circumstances (i.e. the retrenchment of the husband, the husband's ill health) (Cf. Chesley,

2011:645.650, Rochlen et al., 2008:202; Rochlen et al., 2010:279.), and the ill health of a child.

Sub-theme 2.3: A one-sided decision by one partner to enter into a non-traditional marital role forcing the other partner to do like-wise

For a husband to take on a non-traditional marital role of becoming a stay-at-home husband is, in some ways, not an easy decision to make especially when the stereotypical masculine characteristics are held in high regard by the husband, the immediate and extended family and within his community. To enter into becoming and being a stay-at-home husband who is often faced with the fear of being seen to have lost his masculinity the risk of experiencing prejudice, backlash and maybe even being stigmatised and treated in a negatively way is real (Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17; Brescoll & Uhlman, 2005:443,444; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191). This train of thought is underscored and further elaborated upon by Rochlen et al. in Fischer (2010:31) where they postulate that: “stay at home fathers with fewer stereotypical masculine characteristics may make a more cooperative decision with their partners about staying home, compared to stay at home fathers with more stereotypical masculine characteristics”. That both Simon and Alistair still held very strong views about stereotypical masculine characteristics became apparent during their interviews and, in their case this could have prolonged the transition into them becoming stay-at-home husbands. This further resulted in a state of affairs where the agreement of entering into these non-traditional marital roles was not discussed and mutually agreed upon by the couples. In support of this finding, the couples’ scenarios are presented below.

- *Simon and Angel*

During the interviews Simon and Angel did not refer to any agreement having been made between them to engage in non-traditional marital roles which, to an extent, were also forced by circumstances. After being retrenched, Simon did odd jobs and as Angel described: “*we didn’t have a choice really... my husband was not a full-time*

*home-husband. I mean he does work and often it depends on... whether he gets work or not but at the end of the day my salary was guaranteed”.*

- *Alistair and Priscilla*

This couple did not engage in communicating with each other before taking on a non-traditional marital role. Alistair merely stated: “...I resigned from my job approximately 15 years ago” and ascribed this to having “...a very unreasonable boss...”. Furthermore, Alistair said nothing about how and whether he had communicated this to his wife, Priscilla, or how she had reacted. On the other hand, she described how “when my husband decided to resign, this was a decision that he took alone... I was not happy”. She went on to say: “I tried speaking to him but when he didn’t listen I just left him to do what he wanted”.

### 3.3.3 Theme 3: **Emotional reactions to and feelings about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles**

This theme on the participants’ emotional reactions to their non-traditional marital role emerged either during the participants’ narratives or from the researcher asking them how they felt about their changed roles. A variety of reactions and emotions emerged, some of which changed over time as participants expressed their initial emotional reactions and their current feelings.

Two sub-themes are presented, namely the emotional reactions and feelings of the working wives to their changed roles, followed by those of the stay-at-home husbands.

#### **Sub-theme 3.1: Wives’ adjustment and emotional reactions and feelings about entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of becoming and being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband**

From the narratives of the wives pertaining to their adjustment and emotional reactions and feelings about entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role

of becoming and being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband, three categories (to be presented next) came to the fore.

- *The adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was easy*

This was the case with Amber and Caroline. Amber stated: “...to accept the job in Saudi was an easy decision to make for both of us”. She ascribed this mainly to the fact that they had experienced a drop in their standard of living and the high salary she earned in Saudi Arabia enabled her to “send R45 000 to R50 000 a month home to my husband [over and above meeting her financial needs]”.

Caroline, described the decision to become and be a working wife with a stay-at-home husband as being “...an easy one and one I could take quite easily”. However, she described the adjustment the couple had to make as being “...gradual. I had to get used to the idea ... There were even times when I felt that he was in my space and it had to take a mind shift for me to relinquish some of my previous responsibilities”.

- *The adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was difficult*

A number of the working wives felt it was difficult to enter and settle into their non-traditional marital roles. However, as time passed, the adjustment became easier for them.

Melissa described the difficulties she and her husband experienced along the following lines: “I found the situation very difficult to cope with and I had to continually hide my emotions. On the one hand you tried to be supportive whilst on the other side, you don't feel that it is fair to be the only one responsible for the financial aspects... I kept on reminding myself that he is trying to find work”. This resentment of the primary earner is also alluded to by Siegel (2007:46) who points out that “...primary earners can feel trapped by work, resentful that they didn't have the



choice to stay home; or they may feel let down by partners who, once professionally ambitious, now relish their domestic identities to an alienating degree”.

Melissa went on to describe how they as couple were continuously fighting. Her husband was abusing substances so she took her son to her parents to protect him. *“I just decided to avoid him [i.e. her husband]”*. Melissa spoke about how the situation then changed, without her being able to explain this: *“...he eventually came around and I could see he was now trying to change”*. Her husband, Augustine, abused substances less, they did not argue as much, he started volunteer work and got odd jobs. She concluded that: *“things are much better now and my husband still continues helping around the house”*.

Mrs Franks was another participating working wife who found the adjustment somewhat difficult. She explained: *“it did take some getting used to as at first I would go to work and my husband would stay at home”* [which had not been the case previously] ... *The adjustment for us was not an easy one...him leaving work came as quite a shock to us and we did need time to adjust to the new circumstances. No the adjustment was not easy for me. There were a lot of fears about how we will cope and what the impact on the family will be”*. The ability to cope on one salary was the main concern for this couple.

Genevieve did not focus on her own adjustment but rather her perceptions on how the adjustment was for her husband. Pieter, initially found the situation difficult: *“I didn’t realise how much it affected him, until one evening where he really started to cry because he didn’t have a work... so then I realised you know it’s much emotionally you know the big thing about Afrikaner boys they get socialised that they are the breadwinner and they must provide everything and if they cannot provide then they are sort of not good enough fathers and husbands... they take it very bad..”*

In view of this category pointing to the fact that adjusting to non-traditional marital roles can be a challenge for both the stay-at-home husband and the working wife,

Chesley (2011:661) recommends that couples entering these roles must allow themselves time to adjust and accept the non-traditional marital roles each one has.

- *Felt unhappy, stressed and that it was unfair*

In the literature consulted, the researcher did not come across any reference or scenario where the husband had left his employment on his own accord without any discussion with his wife to turn to becoming a stay-at-home husband. Priscilla, whose husband Alistair had taken the decision to resign his job on his own and did not discuss or consider her in this matter, expressed how she felt: *"I was not happy about the decision"*. In fact, she found the role of being a working wife *"... a very challenging role as I'm always stressed and have even been hospitalised before because of the stress"*. Later she added: *"I feel it was a bit unfair that my husband decided to just leave his job, but life goes on"*.

Sub-theme 3.2: The emotional reactions to and feelings of stay-at-home husbands about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles of becoming and being a stay-at-home husband

From the accounts of the stay-at-home husband participants a variety of feelings and emotional reactions were deduced which will be presented in the next section.

- *Feelings of excitement and apprehension*

The opportunity to be a more active parent to their children as stay-at-home husbands, according to Harrington, Van Deusen and Mazar (2012:13), filled their participants with an excitement and eagerness to take on this role. This attitude resulted in an easy transition into it. Harrington et al.'s (2012) study included 31 fathers from 13 different states in the USA with a concentration of participants in Massachusetts and New York where the main aim of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences of fathers who had taken on the role of full-time caregiver. All of the 14 stay-at-home husbands in Rochlen et al.'s (2008:198) study talked about feeling highly satisfied and content with their decision to become

stay-at-home husbands and some of them even spoke with great excitement and emotion about the time spent with their children and in taking care of them.

This was the same for David, one of the participants in this study. David, in replying to a question on how he felt, answered *“at the time very excited because I would have the opportunity to spend some time with my son and not a lot of fathers nowadays can say I was there for my son. You know at every waking moment I was there ...it was very, very exciting this small person that is dependent on you for everything....You know looking back on those days it was nice”*. Nevertheless, he tempered this reaction by expressing how he also felt apprehension: *“...it was a decision that we didn’t know how it was going to work out because it was our first child... and it was thus not an easy decision, but one we had to take without knowing what the consequences would be”*.

- *Feels at ease and enjoys the non-traditional marital role*

The experience of fulfilling the role of a stay-at-home husband is often quite positive for many stay-at-home husbands. Rochlen et al. (2008:202), in their study using grounded theory with 14 stay-at-home husbands in the US, focused on what influenced their decision to take on the role of stay-at-home husband. Factors that they included were: how men discuss their decision to have taken on the role; what the views of others are of them assuming the role of stay-at-home husband; and how men talk about masculinity and gender roles. It was found that stay-at-home husbands reported that they had high levels of satisfaction in their lives and their relationships. (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:26.). This sentiment is also shared by Robertson and Verschelden (1993) in their study of 12 couples in the US where the husbands were stay-at-home husbands - they found that the men reported to be well adjusted and happy in their new roles. In addition, Johan from Newlands who phoned in to the call-in programme, “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) shared with the listeners how he enjoys his non-traditional marital role despite the hard work entailed in being a stay-at-home husband.

Japie, one of the stay-at-home husbands from this study felt very positive about this non-traditional marital role and stated: *"I'm happy, I'm having fun every day"*. Explaining his role as a stay-at-home husband doing household chores, he stated: *"I don't feel bad about it. I don't feel that it is below me or ego or anything like that"*. However, regarding his wife being away from home and working in Saudi Arabia he explained: *"I just miss my friend, my soul mate [but] ... the sacrifice is big but the rewards is big [i.e. referring to the high salary his wife earns]"*.

Participant, Karl, stated he is an introvert and described his emotional reactions and feelings about being a stay-at-home husband as *"... the best thing that could have happened to me ...awesome for me"*. Regarding his role, he was also positive: *"I actually enjoyed doing the household tasks and being at home and thus I didn't mind at all"*.

David, another participant, in support of this sub-theme stated: *"for me it was easy because I'm that type of person that always will think there must be another way..."* David also expressed himself freely: *"for me it's not a rollercoaster of emotions, I know what I have to do and I do it"*, and added *"you do get your off-days, but it's few and far between"*.

From the information shared by Mr Franks it was clear that he eased into his role of stay-at-home husband with little difficulty: *"the adjustment from sole breadwinner to stay-at-home husband was not a difficult task for me as I already fulfilled many of the roles...we shared roles equally and assuming the roles came very naturally to me as we did not distinguish between husband and wife specific roles...I found it easy to adjust to being a stay at home dad..."*. Mr Franks also seemed to enjoy this role of stay-at-home husband, as was deduced from the following words: *"I do not find it stressful being a stay-at-home husband...I enjoy being a stay-at-home husband... For me, as long as someone is working and the bills get paid I am not concerned as to who does the earning..."*.

Mr Frank's reference to the fact that his adjustment to the role of stay-at-home husband and father was easy because he did many of the household chores and

accepted child care responsibilities prior to engaging with this role. This sentiment is supported by Rochlen et al. (2008:194) who quote a finding from a study conducted by Lutwin and Siperstein in 1985 where they concluded from the survey with 65 househusbands that the transition into this role was made easy by, amongst other factors, the fact that they were previously actively involved with child and household responsibilities.

- *Feelings of hurt, helplessness and anger as to not being able to find employment*

The inability to find a job and seeing his wife under pressure as the single breadwinner, led Augustine to describe his feelings as: *"...it hurts me as I feel helpless, it's very difficult to find work"*. He expanded further referring to his wife's reaction to others' opinions: *"I could see that it was eating at her, knowing that the people looked at her with the thought of she is an idiot. It made me feel really angry. It hurt me and it put a strain on our relationship and I started to feel angry and useless and inferior"*. He later explained how, because of the negative reactions of the extended family and the community to their non-traditional marital roles, he *"...felt alone because I couldn't talk to anyone to explain my side of the story, not even to my friends because they sided with her completely"*.

Feelings of hurt and helplessness were also expressed by Jan who called in to the call-in programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1). He explained that for him these feelings experienced were a direct result of his declining self-esteem for having to fulfil the role of stay-at-home husband. His feelings of helplessness are so deep-rooted that he described his situation as a daily battle to once again just be a normal person.

- *Feelings of boredom*

In their research focusing on 31 fathers from 13 different states with a concentration of participants in Massachusetts and New York where the main aim of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of fathers who had taken on the role of full-

time caregiver, Harrington et al. (2012:14) support this sub-theme. The next storyline points to the fact that some of their participants (i.e. the stay-at-home-dads) reported feelings of boredom and stress and being on their own. Their participants mentioned as a fact that they sometimes felt alone and socially isolated. In order to overcome the isolation and lack of mental stimulation and socialising with their peers motivated some of the participants in Latshaw's (2011:137) to seek employment and to get involved in volunteer work.

With reference to feeling bored as a stay-at-home husband, Mr A stated the following: *"you get bored because you do this every day...it comes to the point of not enough stimulation"*.

Alistair spoke about feeling bored along the following lines: *"being a stay-at-home husband initially was very boring as I didn't have a lot to do"*.

- *Feelings of frustration*

Feeling frustrated at times was expressed by participating stay-at-home husbands.

Mr A described how at times he feels frustrated and summed this up as follows: *"...over the last year 80 per cent of the time I can live with it...But there is that 20 per cent of the time where you sit back and say...this is becoming a frustration and I'm not used to this because of my traditional role and I'm getting fed up with it"*. He went on to describe his frustrations as *"typical housewife frustration"*.

The main frustration for Alistair was not having an income of his own: *"I was also a little frustrated that I didn't always have my own money and had to keep asking the wife for money. This frustrated me. Over the years, however, I became used to not having the money and would make a plan to get money by engaging in odd jobs here and there"*.

- Feels unappreciated at times

Ewing described how his working wife, Anne, did not understand how much he actually did which made him feel unappreciated: “...she felt I didn't do anything even if I did all the things...that were not really work. You're not actually doing anything...”. This was resolved when Anne was at home for a week “and then afterwards she said I never really understood how much you do around here until now”.

Feeling unappreciated was also mentioned by Mr A, and particularly with regard to his cleaning task, “and the rest of the household don't appreciate it or it feel like they don't appreciate it”, giving the example of the family walking over the floor after he has cleaned it when it is raining.

Johan, who called into the phone-in programme on National Radio, “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) from Newlands as well as two other callers, Leon and Wynand shared the fact that fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband entails an immense amount of work. Leon, in fact, mentioned that he was only able to fulfil this role for three months before returning to work.

- Feels socially excluded

Stay-at-home husbands often feel socially excluded (Harrington et al., 2012:14; O'Brien, 2012:31). Feeling socially excluded can be attributed to a lack of daily interaction with colleagues, peers or clients in the workplace situation. Baylies (2004:13), a stay-at-home dad, in his book, shares that when he became a stay-at-home husband he missed the interaction especially with other dads. This often made him feel out of place as he only saw retirees and other moms when he went to the playground. This resulted in him feeling socially isolated (cf. Rochlen et al., 2010:284). Latshaw (2011:137) notes that stay-at-home husbands and fathers sometimes seek employment to overcome isolation and lack of interaction with peers.

In the study, missing social interaction and people was a feeling articulated by Mr A who describes this absence of social interaction as a frustration for him: “...*being at home and not being able to interact with people, because I’m a people’s person*”.

- *Feelings of loss experienced with specific reference to the work environment*

This category ties in with the previous one. It was noted that Ewing misses the work environment. He spoke about this as follows: “*I miss the interaction, I miss the environment, I miss dealing with clients, I miss the satisfaction of supplying a good product*”. He elaborated further by stating that he had been a specialist in a senior position and “...*I had to lose touch with that and it was very difficult*”.

Baylies (2004:13), points to the fact that without an outside career to define themselves, stay-at-home husbands could be faced with the reality of no longer knowing who they are or what they want. Harrington et al. (2012) endorse this and describe this loss as a feeling of being removed from the professional environment. Both this identified category and Ewing’s disclosure reflect this same idea and reactions.

The negative emotional reactions to and feelings of stay-at-home husbands about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles of becoming and being a stay-at-home husband as discussed are confirmed and summarised in the study of Harrington et al. (2012). Dealing with 31 fathers from 13 different states in the United States of America with the largest concentration of them from Massachusetts and New York, they reported: a lack of social networks and adult interaction; no release or break from the role of being a stay-at-home husband and father; little time for self; stress and frustration; little or no recognition for tasks completed; isolation; boredom; exhaustion; and missing the life that could have been whilst fulfilling their roles of being stay-at-home husbands.



- Found it difficult to adjust at first to non-traditional marital roles

Some of the participants referred to the fact that they found it difficult to adjust to non-traditional marital role of being a stay-at-home husband initially.

Ewing shared the following to this effect: *"...being a stereo-typical male, I like to think of myself as a provider and to look after my family....and having to go back and say I'm not able to any more was hard"*.

In the same vein Pieter shared the following: *"...the question may be asked if I, formerly being the breadwinner and head of the family, now have any feelings about it to be dependent on Genevieve for money. At first it was difficult to accept but you get used to it as time passes..."* Pieter went on ....: *"Did my role as husband change? Am I in any way threatened by all these? To my opinion, not at all. For sure, I had to make adjustments...but I just switched to a different role. I am not on a lower level than before"*.

In support of this category and the storylines provided, the work of O'Brien (2012:29) refers. Based on the findings of his study of six stay-at-home husbands in Ireland while seeking insight into the experiences and views of fathers who are the primary caregivers for their children, he reached the conclusion that husbands having to adjust to the non-traditional marital role of being stay-at-home fathers experienced this as a challenge at times. O'Brien uses words such as "fear" and "anxiety" and even "shock" to describe the adjustment of what his participants termed as "major life adjustments" when they initially took the new role as stay-at-home husband on. Chesley (2011:654) too points out that some stay-at-home husbands struggle to reconcile the stay-at-home father role with the masculine ideals that emphasise the man's role as breadwinner of financial provider for the family.

### 3.3.4 Theme 4: Changes in terms of financial, household chores and childcare responsibilities as a result of entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles

This theme emerged from the questions asked about whether the roles of the working wives/stay-at-home husbands had changed since they entered non-traditional marital roles and what their responsibilities were. Harrington et al. (2012:15), in looking at a typical day of a stay-at-home husband, found that there is a remarkable difference in the day of dads with new-borns versus dads with school-going children in that dads with school-going children still had an opportunity to run errands, exercise, do volunteer work and do part-time jobs whilst the children were at school.

The participants' narratives could with ease be divided into two sub-themes, namely:

- changes in terms of financial responsibilities since entering into non-traditional marital roles; and
- changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities since entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles.

These sub-themes are presented next.

#### Sub-theme 4.1: Changes in terms of financial responsibilities since entering into non-traditional marital roles

The information shared by the participants in relation to this sub-theme is grouped and presented (next) under three categories.

- *The working wife has now become solely responsible for family's income*

The move from being a stay-at-home mother to working wife is becoming more apparent. This can, according to the sources consulted by Tengimfene (2009:45), be attributed to rising divorce rates, economic influences, technological advancement and labour laws such as affirmative action (See Chapter 1, sub-section 1.1.1 and

Chapter 3, section 3.2). It is thus not surprising that one of the reasons for assuming the non-traditional marital roles of becoming and being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband can be attributed to the fact that the wife is in a better position to earn a bigger salary (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18; Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Rochlen et al., 2008:198.). This is also alluded to in the quotations taken from the transcribed interviews of some of the working wife-participants associated with this study.

Views about the change in financial responsibilities since entering into the non-traditional marital roles, with specific reference to the working wives taking on the sole responsibility for providing financially for the family, were expressed by the participants. Extracts are quoted to illustrate.

Sonja stated: *"...my main responsibility would be the financial responsibility, making sure there is money in the house, ...all the bills are paid, all necessities are paid such as crèches, savings and medical aid, etc. that's my main responsibility"*.

Similarly, Mrs Franks remarked: *"...my husband was the breadwinner all this time and he earned a very good salary"*. She further explained how things changed: *"When his company was liquidated...I became the breadwinner...Thus the income decreased dramatically..."*. Her husband expressed pride in his wife: *"I feel proud of my wife providing for me and our family now"*.

Caroline shared: *"...nothing has changed as I have always worked...What did change though was that I am now the main breadwinner"*.

Amber, too, falls within this category of being the 'sole breadwinner', as her husband had retired: *"...I was already the sole breadwinner..."*. This was before she went to Saudi Arabia where she continued her role as sole breadwinner.

In support of this category, Dr K and Mrs Franks respectively stated: *"...I provide the money... the full financial dependence rested on me and I became responsible for everything"*.

Mrs Franks added: *"...I had to work to support myself and my children but it was difficult as a salary can only be stretched thus far"*.

- *The husband now earns an inconsistent income through odd jobs*

A number of stay-at-home husbands who participated in this study earn an inconsistent income through odd jobs. The extent and frequency was not always clearly articulated by either the husbands or the wives in the interviews. This practice holds true because, according to research done on men who had taken on the role of stay-at-home husbands in Canada (Doucet in O'Brien, 2012:15), it was found that stay-at-home fathers still maintain a position in the world of work. Eighteen of the 30 participants in Latshaw's (2011:136-137) study mentioned being employed on a freelance or intermittent basis. This allowed them to contribute monetarily, in a smaller capacity and in so doing reap the benefits of social interaction, mental stimulation and enjoying the self-esteem benefits associated with being employed. Doucet and Merla (2007:462) believe that this trend can be regarded a coping mechanism to deal with public scrutiny and judgement. They found in their study that a common trend among many of the fathers whom they studied in Canada and Belgium, that these fathers would take on even non-paying work as a means to "combine this non-traditional work with more traditional male characteristics."

In support of this sub-theme and latching on to the train of thought emanating from the relevant literature story lines from the participants follow.

Alistair revealed: *"what I did and still do is to take on an odd job here and there where I get at least R200-R300 for the day. In the past I used to get an odd job perhaps every second week for a day. Now the time has been extended a bit"*. Later in the interview he mentioned how he would negotiate the challenge and frustration of not having money, but also how he became used to this state of affairs: *"...I became used to not having the money and would make a plan to get money by engaging in odd jobs here and there"*. His wife, Priscilla, referred to Alistair's odd jobs along the following lines: *"he acquired temp jobs but when they spoke about making it permanent, he would have a fight with the manager and resign"*.

A stay-at-home husband who appears to depend far more on odd jobs is Simon who fixes fridges, stoves and other appliances. His wife referred to this when she stated: *"...my husband was not a full-time home husband. I mean he does work and often it depends on the income whether he gets work or not..."*. This was corroborated by Simon: *"I had some of my own customers that I have built up in that two years that I was working for them. I just carried on from there basically"*. Simon also continued later on to explain that in his typical day: *"...the customers that I still have, I basically wait to receive a phone call so I can carry on with service and repairs"*.

Pieter spoke about his part-time involvement in the labour market in this way: *"...I am still involved with Unisa by doing tutor work and the marking of assignments and examination papers. This gives us an extra income which is most welcome"*. This was endorsed by his wife, Genevieve: *"So now he is staying home, but he is doing marking for them [Unisa] when it's exam time"*.

Without giving any details, Dr K stated that her husband *"...is currently working from time to time but basically he is at home..."*. Mr A, however, made no reference to this in his interview.

Melissa explained how, after some time, her husband Augustine *"finally, he also managed to get an odd job here and there helping out at the gym in our community. Although this is not very often, at least it gives him some purpose helping at least twice a month"*. Augustine also did not mention this during the face-to-face interview with him.

- *Changes in financial management and way of budgeting of the family's income since entering and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles*

Inevitably when the couples find themselves reliant on one income, certain changes take place in terms of managing and budgeting the family's income. This was referred to by a number of couples but not all of them, as it was not a specific question. This category was therefore derived from the information shared by the participants. The responses are provided according to the contributing couples.

- *David and Sonja*

Sonja mentioned that as a couple, from the start they shared household, child care and financial responsibilities: *“...there was always equality, that both of us would be responsible for the household and the children and the finances. We discussed the topic many times before we were married, so the roles haven’t changed much”*. She continued and expressed getting concerned about their finances, with her now being the sole breadwinner: *“...sometimes I get very concerned about finances. I know both of us are big budgeters, so we have a budget for everything but sometimes I do get concerned with finances, probably unnecessarily, as my husband says... the reason for the concern is that I want to ensure that we always have enough when an emergency happens...”*.

- *Augustine and Melissa*

Whilst no specific mention was made about changes in this couple’s financial management and way of budgeting brought about by entering into the non-traditional marital roles, Melissa alludes to the changes in their financial management as a couple particularly after her husband’s retrenchment as follows *“...had to take care of the bills and obviously the financial strain was tremendous resulting in a lot of stress”*. Augustine on the other hand only referred to how his *“...wife is trying to understand [i.e. understanding the fact that he is trying to find employment but has not been successful] but I can see the resentment in my wife’s eyes when she looked at me when it’s time to pay our bills or the creditors are phoning and knowing there is no money to pay them”*.

- *Mr and Mrs Franks*

Mrs Franks explained along the following lines of how, after her husband was retrenched, they as a couple had to revisit their budget and the changes they had to make as far the management of their income was concerned: *“...the income decreased dramatically...The bills however did not change and we still had the same expenses, thus we had to relook how we use our money and had to make a*

*considerable number of cuts in order to meet our monthly expenses, ensuring that we focus on necessities instead of luxuries, for example eating out at restaurants”.*

- *Mr A and Dr K*

Mr A did not refer specifically to any change in their financial management and way of budgeting other than stating: *“...not having an income and buying what you want to or do things like your 4x4 or hunting trips. You need your wife’s money”.* Nevertheless, Dr K went into more detail about the changes they had to make in terms of their financial management. From Dr K’s account the researcher noted that the couple embarked on a mutual way of budgeting: *“Luckily we had the situation where we put our money together so it wasn’t my money or his money so we continued with the same principle... We actually went through quite a rough time discussing it because you must remember the male ego and the perception of him being the breadwinner, especially from an Afrikaans background. But what saved us was the maturity and emotional intelligence that we had to realise that we have to make it work and we made it work”.*

- *Amber and Japie*

This couple had decided that the wife would work in Saudi Arabia to improve their standard of living. Amber described how previously she had *“earned R13 000 ...and after deductions went home with about R8 000. At the moment I send R45 000 to R50 000 a month home to my husband. I am then still left with enough money to live in Saudi and I can even buy things here to send home”.* Japie supported these statements: *“she is earning about five times of what she was earning in South Africa... it’s five times more, it’s tax free, she’s got medical aid and I saved over half a million in three years’ time”.* Japie also explained how *“I’m doing everything, I’m actually managing the finances...”.* Amber, therefore manages her money in Saudi Arabia and leaves her husband to manage the money she sends home.

- *Alistair and Priscilla*

This couple did not expand on the changes in terms of financial management and way of budgeting whilst engaging in the non-traditional marital roles. In actual fact, no information on the way budgeting was done was forthcoming. Priscilla merely referred to having “...to work to support myself and my children”. Alistair, on the other hand, spoke about having “...to keep asking the wife for money”. This he found quite frustrating as he felt a sense of dependency on his wife. He later states through his odd jobs, he was able to earn money where he did not continuously have to ask his wife for money.

- *Simon and Angel*

This couple, where the husband earns some income from odd jobs, appears to have an agreement and they divide the financial responsibilities. Angel stated: “...in terms of finance I got a certain amount of costs like food, medical aid, all our debit orders and my husband’s responsibility would be to cover the water and electricity and the children’s school fees...”. Simon explained that previously he had control over his own income and did what he liked with it but “now we control it. If we ever short whatever I earn through repairs are put towards whatever we need. So, sometimes I don’t even know what’s been paid for because normally it’s to do with the kids and everything in the house. My wife deals with it in that department. She runs the show so if I say to you she always have but whenever she is short she always come to me and say we need to pay for this and that and I don’t have a choice. Everything in the house, it’s something I have to pay because it’s part of living”. From the information provided by Simon and Angel it appears that she is mainly responsible for the budgeting process and the payment of necessities.

- *Pieter and Genevieve*

Genevieve explained in fair detail how, when they as a couple both earned an income, they agreed to divide their financial responsibilities and pay these from their own accounts. Once Pieter was retrenched, this changed and she described the



financial changes and way of budgeting as follows: “...but now with this situation we were forced again to put our incomes or lack of incomes together so that we had a joint understanding where the money was going and how much it will be”. She continued: “everyone wants to be independent you know and you want to have the freedom of making your own decisions about do you want to buy something or not and now you have to wait. Every time I get my money out I think shouldn’t I keep this and I know he still thinks I am not cautious enough. No, he will say you could have left this ... but I mean you learn to get along with less because you think twice, thrice and four times, you know, before you do something”. Pieter did not elaborate in great detail but did say: “I get a monthly allowance for groceries as I suppose happens to other housewives and I also will get in trouble when I overspend”. However, this couple appear to have a mutual agreement about their budget.

Sub-theme 4.2: Changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles

Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005:436) indicate that mothers who are in the workforce with fathers who are stay-at-home husbands occupy non-traditional gender roles. Traditionally, marital roles for husband and wife were divided as follows: the wife occupied the role of caregiver for the family whilst the husband occupied the role of financial breadwinner. However, with the emergence of the feminist movement and the move towards equality, more women have started entering the labour market. This move from traditional to non-traditional roles, whilst often frowned upon, is seen as becoming more evident. Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005: 437) show that the number of fathers who stay at home to care for the children while their wife works outside the home is steadily increasing, rising 18% since 1994 in the US (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

This adoption of non-traditional marital roles by the couple themselves brings with it many challenges which, as Merla (2008:128) claims, is rooted in finding new ways to share the burden of work-family balance, as men are no longer able to be sole providers for their families due to the collapse of male breadwinner- female caretaker model. In assuming the role of primary caregiver, men can be subjected to negative

reactions, making it difficult for them to assume these roles (Harper in Merla, 2008:122). In her findings, Merla (2008:122) found that these negative reactions were associated with one of the following three beliefs entertained by men: “child care is a female prerogative; the man’s primary role is to be professionally active and/or the main provider for his family and at-home fathers are not masculine.”

However, in the same vein, working wives too are also subjected to feelings of high stress levels, as pointed out by several authors mentioned in Galanakis, Stalikas, Kallia, Karagianni and Karela (2009). These scholars note that married working women with one or more children have higher stress levels and this they attribute to multiple and complex roles that these women have to fulfil.

Harrington et al. (2012:15), mention that in responses received from stay-at-home husbands regarding the changes in their roles pertaining specifically to child care and household tasks, the stay-at-home fathers pointed out that before becoming at-home dads the child care and household tasks were often evenly split between them and their wives, with the wives tending to do a bit more. After they became at-home dads, they generally took over much more responsibility for both child care and housework.

These role changes and adaptations for both the stay-at-home husband and the working wife could be either markedly significant or less significant. From scrutinising the transcripts a trend was noted that, for couples who had very clear-cut role descriptions in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities, the changes brought about by entering and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles were more significant than for the couples who already had a less rigid role definition in terms of the aspects mentioned. Based on the information gathered from the participants this theme was divided into two sub-themes distinguishing the significant changes from the less significant changes as experienced by the participants in entering and fulfilling their non-traditional family/marital roles, focusing specifically on household chores and child care responsibilities.

- Significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles

Three couples mentioned significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities and their accounts are presented below:

- *Ewing and Anne*

Ewing's experience-based perception was: *"...I think a lot significantly changed. In the beginning we only had one daughter ...I went to work quite early and I used to work until six or so. I never really was involved on a daily basis".* With him being a stay-at-home dad, *"...the day starts off when our two and a half year old wakes up and wakes me up and she generally hands me my glasses and says, 'wake up Dad'...so I get up first. I kind of get the day started with everything. I make coffee, get the kids...and I then organise coffee for my wife 'cos she's still in bed".* Ewing also described how he feeds and clothes his elder daughter, takes her to school, and makes breakfast and made mention of the fact that *"...we do have a lady that comes in and helps..."* His wife, Anne, who works from home, did not refer to any changes specifically in relation to house hold chores and child care responsibilities, but mentioned that *"...I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't have my hubby here at home and what he does".*

- *Karl and Caroline*

Karl, according to Caroline took over many of the household and child care responsibilities. She said: *"what did change though was that I am now the main breadwinner and some of the duties I used to fulfil like driving the children to school are now fulfilled by my husband. We do share some duties like cooking but he still does a lot".* Karl explained how he gets the children up, feeds them, gets them ready for school, takes them and *"I then start off with the cleaning, washing, ironing, etc... Remember, despite just being responsible for the tasks inside the house, I too am responsible for fixing things outside and around the house as well".*

Karl's remark ties in with one of the findings from Rochlen et al.'s (2008:200) research indicating that while stay-at-home husbands and fathers exhibit flexible notions of masculinity, and that they have moved towards the rejection of traditional gender role norms to a self-definition of masculinity, they still engage in hobbies and activities that align with stereotypical masculinity (i.e. moving the lawn and fixing this in and around the house). (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.).

- *David and Sonja*<sup>19</sup>

The fact that David became a stay-at-home husband due to their new-born baby's special needs, his main responsibility became that of child care in addition to the other responsibilities that he had to fulfil as a stay-at-home husband, but the changes related to household chores was not that significant as the couple had already exercised a flexible role division and execution. David shared what his child care responsibilities entailed and also how the household chores that had become his primary responsibility were not much of a challenge: *"...babies will wake up every few hours... So I got up for him and not my wife because she must go to work in the morning... In the morning when the alarm goes off, I will then get up ... make lunch for my wife and iron her clothing for the day. Once she leaves for work, I would bath him and give my son his pap... During the day I would play with him, make sure he has food and juice, changing the nappy, you know the normal things what a mother would have done and also cleaning the house, do the washing, etc. Then around three I would start cooking supper..."*. However, David also stated that in terms the household chores *"...it never really changed. The funny thing is that me and my wife never sat down and said this is our roles in the family. We always help each other. When we come home from work we would do things together whether it's cooking or cleaning but there never was one distinct role for someone and when I became a stay-at-home husband it was kind of easy because I was doing some of the things and now I'm doing all the housework and looking after my son"*.

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<sup>19</sup> David and Sonja's scenario also fits in under the next sub-theme, focusing on less significant changes in terms household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles.

Sonja supported her husband's communication when she remarked: *"I wouldn't say it has changed completely...even when we dated, we didn't have the stereotypical thinking of this is the roles of the wife and this is the role of the husband. The situation was that there was always equality, that both of us would be responsible for the household and the children and the finances...so the roles haven't changed much. My husband does much more of the caregiving and the cooking and cleaning, running of errands, taking care of my son and me"*.

- *Less significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles*

Four couples mentioned significant changes in terms of their household chores and child care responsibilities and their accounts are presented below:

- *Mr and Mrs Franks*

This couple re-iterated some of the views presented by David and Sonja (under the previous sub-theme). Mr Franks, by way of aligning to sub-theme stated: *"I have always been a hands-on father and husband and my wife and I shared all duties equally amongst ourselves... The adjustment from sole breadwinner to stay-at-home husband was not a difficult task for me as I already fulfilled many of the roles that I fulfil now as ...we shared roles equally and assuming the roles came very naturally to me as we did not distinguish between husband and wife specific roles... I do cooking and housework and spend time with the children. I try to make things easier for my wife when she gets home, she does not have much to do...although I'm not sure that these are my responsibilities as a stay-at-home hubby because I also did these when I was working full-time"*. Since his wife had previously been a stay-at-home mother they had merely experienced a role reversal and the comment made was: *"it did take some getting used to as at first I would go to work and my husband would stay at home, occasionally work for ex-colleagues and clean, cook, do laundry and take our daughter to and from school"*.

- *Simon and Angel*

Although this couple did what Simon named “...a role reversal...”, this was largely with reference to being the breadwinner, and not so much related to the household chores and child care. When asked about housework, he replied “*Sometimes I do, sometimes, but not much*”. Angel’s description of a typical day for her and her accompanying responsibilities clearly depicts that she continued to take the major responsibility for household chores and child care: “... *I decided I don’t want help in the house, I will do the housework myself which is tough*”. She continued by mentioning that after she got up in the morning, she woke the children and left for work, “...*I’ll phone home...to make sure my husband is up to take the children to school because he is terrible with time*”. After work she assists the children with homework “...*takes [her son] for training and then makes supper and the children goes to bed at 20:00. Then, if I have work left for the day I’ll finish it and ...I make sure I’m in bed by 23:00 which is quite tough. It’s a lot of things to do*”. In addition, she stated “...*if I’m in a real bad crisis and I’m stressed out about work and the house is dirty, then he starts falling in... Every now and then when it gets too much for me, my husband might empty the dishwasher or load the washing machine, its small things but I appreciate it*”. At the end of the interview Angel remarked: “...*everyone says it’s a man’s world. I still think it’s a man’s world even if you are the breadwinner; you still tied down to the old housewife responsibility that doesn’t change. The perception of you having a house-husband is not the same as being a housewife. A housewife cleans; cooks and husbands don’t do that. They try and help but it’s tough*”.

- *Alistair and Priscilla*

With this couple, the only change that was mentioned was that the husband does cleaning and laundry which he did not do before becoming a stay-at-home husband. Alistair spoke about this along the following lines: “*at home I help with the cleaning and other household tasks such as doing the washing. My children, I have three, were at school then, and thus I didn’t really have to still look after them during the day and they made use of public transport, so I didn’t need to fetch them at school*”.

Priscilla corroborated when she said: *“my husband does the housework such as cleaning and laundry, I still helped and when the children became bigger, they did assist as well”*.

- *Mr A and Dr K*

Mr A mentioned that *“...cleaning the house that is my responsibility. Making food, that’s a role I played before I became a stay-at-home husband but I think it’s more intense now and suddenly you have time to do that now. It is nice to surprise my wife and kids when they get home at five o’clock to say it smells nice and you say yes, the food is ready”*. Furthermore, in response to the question of how the couple’s roles had changed, he responded: *“I think in intensity. If I look percentage wise before the stay-at-home husband phase, we used to share almost like a 50-50. There is no problem now if I take 80 per cent of the responsibility in terms of keeping the house clean, making the food, that kind of thing”*. His wife, when asked about how her role had changed, responded as follows: *“it did a little bit but not so severe...from the start we didn’t have these traditional roles although it’s a little bit more focus on my career, I’m not sure it differed that much. But his roles changed because suddenly he’s not the only breadwinner and he is now looking after the housewife duties, so it changes more for him than me”*.

On closer scrutiny of some of the couples’ accounts (i.e. Mr A and Dr K, Mr and Mrs Franks, David and Sonja) the researcher noticed that in the couple relationships role flexibility, role sharing and role reversal occurred in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities; and the husbands (i.e. Mr Franks, Mr A and David) found the switch from sole breadwinner to that of stay-at-home husband and father less significant. In supporting and adding on to this observation, Chesley (2011:662) points out the importance of fathers’ involvement in parenting as this contributes towards men’s successful adjustment in non-traditional marital and family roles (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:194).

### 3.3.5 Theme 5: Conflicts reported arising from responsibilities for financial and household chores as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles

This identified theme came to the fore, not based on a specific question posed to the participants in this regard, but rather based on the fact that some of the participants freely mentioned that under this new dispensation of fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles conflict did arise as a result of their financial management and budgeting arrangements, and the distribution and execution of household chores.

These conflict areas will now become the focus of discussion presented as sub-themes.

#### Sub-theme 5.1: Conflict around finances

A number of participants (quoted below) identified finances as a source of conflict in their relationship following the decision to enter the non-traditional marital role arrangements and being in it. A corresponding trend was found by Harington et al. (2012:27) in that some of the participants spoke about the effect of the reduced household income using words such as “cutting back” or “being tight”, also indicating that financial difficulties and conflicts had to be faced.

Priscilla stated: *“I was not happy about his decision [i.e. referring to her husband’s decision to resign from his job] because we were dependent on both salaries. This caused a lot of conflict in our house. The children were already in school, primary school, and this added to the financial stress as we had also to pay for all the school necessities”*. Dr K remarked: *“Most of our conflict centres around money, the lack thereof and also when either of become too spend thrifty and buy things we have not budgeted for”*.

Anne spoke about the conflict she and Ewing had around the finances along the following lines: *“when we started to have financial problems, it became stressful. We started to fight a lot about money because I needed to work to bring the money in*



*because we were not earning enough and I still needed to look after him to some degree because he requires supervision...". In an attempt to support each other in their non-traditional marital roles Anne later stated that they had adjusted to their roles and had adopted the following stance: "I think so, we don't fight. We talk to each other when something is on our minds or if we are unhappy about something. Thus we address the negativity head on and try to find solutions instead of fighting".*

Genevieve also admitted to there being times of conflict between herself and her husband regarding finances: "... then when he buys groceries, he has a card, and he has a limitation and he has to see that he buys within that limitation and when he goes beyond that I will tell him, 'you going to pay when you get money again because I cannot carry so much'. He must also exercise some discipline upon himself, but he can get quite aggressive if I ask him: 'what did you do with your money?' He is an auditor, you know. Then he will say, 'listen here, this is where my money went to', so it makes me ...get the egg on my face because then my name will stand there where I have bought something on card that I didn't calculate properly. I can see... he is really cautious on how he spends but he gets uptight when I ask him, 'what did you do with the money?' That part he didn't like". Pieter, the husband, referred merely to getting "...a monthly allowance for groceries...and I also will get into trouble when I overspend".

#### Sub-theme 5.2: Conflict over household chores

A few participants reported conflict over household chores whilst fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. Often the wife is not able to completely entrust the role of stay-at-home husband to the husband and is constantly trying to provide advice on how to do things better. Baylies (2004:35) cautions on the dangers of doing this as it leaves the husband feeling that his wife does not trust him with his new responsibilities. Harrington et al. (2012:30) in support of this situation that working wives tend to point things out but they needed to adjust to the new situation by relinquishing control over the way the house was managed, and to lower their expectations to match their husband's standards. They also add that making these adjustments was sometimes difficult for them as working mothers as previously they

were in charge based on the traditional role that had to fulfil. Some tension, particularly around house cleaning did come into play according to their observations. On the other hand Siegel (2007:46) points out that stay-at-home husbands may resent their wives telling them what to do, which holds true for Pieter whose views are now given.

Pieter shared incidents that led to conflict between Genevieve and himself in relation to household chores: *"last week Monday, I did the washing as usual and there was clothing left, not enough for a full wash. When she got home, she went to the machine, put them in and washed them. Why did she do that? Did she not trust my judgement or does she want to be in control? On Tuesday night when Genevieve came home, she passed a shop to buy something. She came home with another bread while there already are two more lying in the kitchen. The kitchen is now my responsibility and I provide what is needed. On Wednesday night I made a rice pudding. Not knowing better, I stirred the mixed sugar/egg into the boiling milk on the stove. The result looked awful because the milk and eggs curdled but it tasted well enough. Genevieve looked at it and said: 'Only a lazy housewife will do a thing like this'. Me, lazy!? Good grief... my blood pressure went through the ceiling".* Pieter's wife also referred to the washing as being a source of conflict: *"...the washing was always my part, 'til he said he would like to do that as well, although I don't think he does it well enough because I like the washing to be sorted – whites, colours, pastels, black things together. He mixes everything and puts it in. You know it makes me crazy when I see it so sometimes, but one day when I did it, he told me you must leave my work now out, but then I said, but then you have to do it like that, white together, pastels, but...it was always your responsibility and now he cannot do it as well as I".*

Augustine also had an experience similar to Pieter's with regard to the washing: *"Sometimes when the weather is ok I would do washing but she prefers to do it herself because she says that I mix the colours".*

### 3.3.6 Theme 6: Experiences and feelings of working wives and stay-at-home husbands regarding their changed roles and responsibilities

This theme was deduced from the working wives' and stay-at-home husbands' descriptions of their changed roles and responsibilities and descriptions of their typical day. In some cases, the researcher specifically asked the participant how this made them feel. Due to the fact, that the role and the responsibilities were often markedly different for the husbands and for the wives, two sub-themes are presented, namely, the experiences and feelings of the wives and then those of the husbands.

#### Sub-theme 6.1: Wives' experiences and feelings as working wife with a stay-at-home husband regarding their changed roles and responsibilities

Due to the various experiences and feelings that emerged the researcher and the independent coder decided to present these as categories under this sub-theme.

- Experience the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife as not easy and stressful

Experiencing the role of working wife as not easy but stressful was one of the most commonly expressed experiences amongst the working wives who participated in this study (see the quotations further on). This could be attributed to the fact that ensuring the balance between work and family life becomes a mammoth task as well as the reality of fulfilling the actual role of working wife is challenging as it stands. In support of this viewpoint, Riekert and Taute (2009), in their study among 28 working mothers in a leading motor industry in South Africa that focused on the impact of family life on the working mother, provide the following responses from participants regarding how they experienced being working mothers: "sometimes you are so drained, but you have to go on. When one has the time to evaluate life in all its facets, it seems that I'm not a happy person any more, I am dissatisfied with life, but because I cannot afford to be distracted, I resume my responsibilities and don't rock

the boat, it affects your bonus". These sentiments correspond closely to those shared by the working wives participating in this study.

Adding to the fact that being a working wife is not easy but stressful may also be attributed to the fact that this role differs from the traditional marital roles of a wife. She aspires to be the best at being a career woman, working wife and caring mother. Gani and Ara (2010:61) add that in trying to find the balance is a challenge in the real sense of the word and they allude to the stress associated with attempting to do this in this extract: "As an ideal woman she wants to fulfil the duties of a faithful wife, a sacrificing mother, obedient and respectful daughter in-law and an efficient and highly placed career woman. These contradictory expectations cause the most confusion, tension and create many other problems for her. A woman employee finds it difficult to do justice to the two roles at the same time. An attempt to play one of the roles with perfection leads to an inadvertent sacrifice of the other". The working wives participating in this study had very similar ideas as supported by hearing them expressing themselves in their own way.

Priscilla said: *"this is a very challenging role as I'm always stressed and have even been hospitalised before, because of the stress... This is no walk in the park..."*.

Mrs Franks contributed the following: *"...the liquidation [of the company where the husband was employ at the time] and him leaving work came as quite a shock to us and we did need time to adjust to the new circumstance. No, the adjustment was not easy for me. There were a lot of fears of how we will cope and what the impact on our family will be...It [referring to being a working wife] is however a huge responsibility and can be hard at times to carry such a heavy load...Financially being responsible for my family is also a task or role that can at times feel daunting and heavy. I do find working the whole day stressful, especially as I was a student before and before that worked only part-time"*.

Sonja underscored this category as she explained: *"...what was difficult for me was I had to come to the understanding I'm doing this for the family and not just for me. I have to think of another two people and not just one... that was very difficult for me but I learned to adjust"*.

Melissa too experienced the change in role as being not easy when she remarked: *"...very difficult for me as I soon began feeling financial pressure, being the only breadwinner and we also have a son that attends crèche and fees needed to be paid as well"*.

Angel, after describing how she had decided to do the housework herself without help, expressed how tough she found it: *"...with work and also having to do housework, it becomes tough to manage"*. This challenge is also alluded to by Gani and Ara (2010:62) who emphasise that the working wife finds herself under tremendous pressure to fulfil the two roles which are at home and the workplace.

As a participant in this study Caroline found it difficult at times to let go of her previous tasks. She explained: *"I had to get used to the idea and thus would take it one day at a time. There were even times that I felt he was in my space and it had to take a mind shift for me to relinquish some of my previous responsibilities"*.

Melissa found the financial responsibility difficult and stressful and referred to it in this way: *"I found the situation very difficult to cope with and I had to continually hide my emotions. On the one hand, you tried to be supportive, whilst on the other side, you don't feel that it is fair to be the only one responsible for the financial aspects in the house...this [i.e. being the sole provided] put a lot of strain on our relationship in that we almost split up. I was faced with so many challenges in that, firstly, I had to take care of the bills and obviously the financial strain was tremendous, resulting in a lot of stress"*.

- Longs for old traditional marital roles of being a stay-at-home wife at times

It is a reality that the role of the woman has changed significantly over the years as shown by Domenico and Jones (2006:1) who point to the fact that "historically, society believed a woman's place was in her home, caring for her husband and children, as opposed to the workplace. Valued feminine traits such as a meek nature and submissiveness were feared to be lost if women entered the workforce".

Genevieve, who by the way mentioned the fact that she and her husband had role models who subscribed to the traditional marital roles was the only participant who expressed a longing to go back to old traditional family roles at times due to the stress that she experiences as a result of the current role that she fulfils: *"...sometimes, you know, you have the longing to fall back on that old traditional thing....and now you have to be the strong one"*.

- *Feels appreciation towards husband for supporting her in fulfilling her non-traditional marital role as working wife*

Anne expressed her feelings of appreciation towards her husband for his support: *"I'm very lucky with my hubby because he is a facilitator, that's what he does. He likes to help and offer support, it's natural for him. So, he was never the stereotypical man that I'm defined by my job...I'm very fortunate with that he is a very gentle man"*

This participant's disclosure concurs with the report given by Harrington et al. (2012:28) that reflects an encouraging and supportive understanding of the theme of this category: "When working spouses were asked how they felt about having their partner at home full-time, the vast majority of the wives (more than 3 out of 4), were highly positive about their arrangements. They expressed feeling grateful and fortunate to have their spouses at home with their children, and "blessed" to be in a position where one of the parents was able to be at home full-time."

- *Feelings of contentment and happiness with the non-traditional marital roles*

Dr K expressed a feeling of contentment which was mainly due to the fact that she could pursue her career and that she had the assurance that the children were being taken care of which was also alluded to above as a reason for assuming non-traditional roles: *"it was circumstances and not really out of choice but I think we made it work at the end of the day, because I know he is there and the children are looked after and I can give much more attention to work than have worries what's happening at home"*.

Sub-theme 6.2: Husbands' experiences and feelings in relation to being stay-at-home husbands with working wives regarding their changed role and responsibilities

A variety of experiences and feelings were expressed by the stay-at-home husbands from loss of control to feeling unappreciated. These will be now presented as five categories:

- *Loss of control experienced by stay-at-home husbands due to not being the breadwinner and having their own money*

Baylies (2004:8) states that one of the adjustments of being a stay-at-home husband is accepting that you are no longer the breadwinner. According to him this could generate a range of reactions from feeling free to feeling extremely terrified. It is not uncommon for the stay-at-home husband to be faced with negative feelings based on the fact that he is no longer the breadwinner of the family. In support of this, Merla (2008:123) draws attention to the fact that paid work plays a central role in men's identity construction and relationships. Her work focused on fathers as primary caregivers and, with a sample of 21 stay-at-home husbands, she conducted her study in Belgium, which she compared to studies in Australia, Sweden and the US. Rejecting this role is perceived as a rejection of the power associated with this role and also starts a process whereby belief in this role is questioned (Harper in Merla, 2008:118). This state of affairs culminated in a situation where the man feels threatened by the rejection of the breadwinner role (Merla, 2008).

The researcher found comments made by five of the stay-at-home husbands to substantiate this category under discussion and the literature consulted.

Simon, although he earns some income from odd jobs, experienced a loss of control. This became evident when he stated: "... *it's difficult, I cannot always say I want to do this and that or if I wanted to do something I'm going to do it and if the wife doesn't like it, well it's my money and I'm doing it. I would say that's the bad side of it...I used to have that when I was still the breadwinner... That's the main*

cause of losing a bit of control". He went on by saying: "my wife... she runs the show... I don't really have a problem, we both seem to have control over our own destiny and we have children and we try to provide for the family as best we can, that's basically how it is".

Alistair expressed annoyance about not having his own money by saying: "I was also a little frustrated that I didn't always have my own money and had to keep asking the wife for money"

Mr A verbalised similar discontent to that of Alistair when he stated: "...that's [i.e. not being the breadwinner and having your own money] one of the frustrations of being at home and not having an income and buying what you want to, or do things like your 4x4 or hunting trips. You need your wife's money for that".

Pieter found it difficult at first but eventually became accustomed to being dependent on Genevieve for money: "the question may be asked if I, formerly being the breadwinner and head of the family, now have any feelings about it to be dependent on Genevieve for money. At first it was difficult to accept but you get used to it as time passes...".

Another husband, David, also expressed some difficulty in this area: "I also came to realise that I'm dependent on my wife financially for everything, whereas in the past you are working and you can buy yourself things but now you have to go to her for everything...".

- Feelings of boredom and frustration experienced at times with the role of being a stay-at-home husband

Amongst others, experiencing feelings of boredom and frustration were reported by some stay-at-home husbands in the study by Harrington et al. (2012) in which the 31 fathers from 13 different states in the United States of America with the largest concentration of them from Massachusetts and New York reporting a lack of social networks and adult interaction; no release or break from the role of being a stay-at-



home husband and father; little time for self; stress and frustration; little or no recognition for tasks completed; isolation; boredom; exhaustion; and missing the life that could have been whilst fulfilling their roles of being stay-at-home husbands. An anonymous caller from Pretoria, who called in to the phone-in programme – “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1), mentioned that he could sympathise with stay-at-home wives for becoming fed-up, bored and frustrated with being a housewife. In substantiating this category, the two stay-at-home husbands who spoke about this are quoted:

Alistair said: *“Being a stay-at-home husband initially was very boring as I didn’t have a lot to do after the housework was done”*.

Mr A stated: *“Yes, there is some times when you think I had enough and I’m not going to do this anymore...”*.

- *Feelings of happiness and enjoyment experienced by being a stay-at-home husband*

Often stay-at-home husbands experience happiness about their arrangement, as well as enjoyment (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:26). An anonymous caller who phoned-in while the programme Loslip (see Addendum 3.1) was on the air on a national radio station described his initial experience of being a stay-at-home husband as him being on long leave.

Of the ten stay-at-home husbands who participated in this study, three of them expressed feeling happy and enjoying the role of being stay-at-home husbands.

Japie expressed his happiness with his role by stating: *“I’m happy. I’m having fun every day”*. When describing the household chores he undertakes, he articulated: *“I even do the ironing and I don’t feel bad about it. I don’t feel that it is below me or ego or anything like that”*. This was further endorsed when he was asked about any challenges he experienced in relation to being a stay-at-home husband, he replied: *“No, it’s lekker”*.

Similarly, Karl expressed his happiness and enjoyment at being a stay-at-home husband: *“I am an introvert and thus being by myself was the best thing that could have happened to me... Being at home as a stay-at-home husband was awesome for me”*. He also shared a conversation he had with his gardener about him being a stay-at-home husband. *“[The gardener] once asked me whilst I was hanging up the washing if I didn’t feel embarrassed that I am hanging up the washing as a man....I said to him I enjoy what I do and that I don’t feel embarrassed and that I did not care what they thought of me...”*.

David, looking back on when he looked after his son as a baby, reminisced: *“You know looking back on those days, it was nice”*. He added later: *“...sometimes you do feel needed and appreciated. I believe that I’m supposed to be here at this moment in time. I don’t know what lies ahead but at this moment in time, I’m doing what I’m supposed to do”*.

- *Experience the stay-at-home husband role as more challenging than being the sole breadwinner*

Anonymous, on the programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) described how after 16 years in a management position, he became a stay-at-home husband. He said that fulfilling this role, entails a lot of work and that point can definitely not be underestimated. Theo from Bloemfontein who called in to the same programme (“Loslip”) also mentioned that it is hard work but he was adamant when he said that he would do it all over again for his family. Ewing, one of the stay-at-home husbands who participated in this research project, shared the same sentiment that fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband is not easy in fact he experienced this new role more challenging than work: *“I think I work harder than when I had a job so I don’t think there any benefits. It’s very challenging. It’s a different kind of work....doing this, this is far more challenging”*.

- Feelings of frustration for not being appreciated for what he is doing as a stay-at-home husband

Mr A was the only participant who touched on the fact that he felt frustrated for not being appreciated in fulfilling his role as stay-at-home husband: *"It's when you clean and the rest of the household don't appreciate it....they don't care if it's dirty or clean because someone will clean after them and that's a frustration"*.

### 3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the first part of the research findings was presented. It started out by presenting a biographical profile of the participants who were recruited as the sample for this study. Following this, six of the thirteen themes together with sub-themes and categories (where applicable) that emerged from the processes of data collection and the consensus discussion between the researcher, the independent coder and the study supervisor were presented. Storylines from the transcribed data were provided to underscore the themes, sub-themes and categories (where applicable) and the research findings presented were also subjected to a literature control.

Theme 1 focused on the circumstances and reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. This theme was divided into two sub-themes namely: wives' accounts of how they became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband and husbands' accounts of how they became a stay-at-home husband with a working wife. Categories that emerged from the sub-theme on the wives' accounts were the following: husband's retrenchment as reason, husband's resignation from his work as the reason, and fragility of child as reason and relief of financial constraints as a reason. Out of sub-theme 2 of Theme 1, the following categories emerged: husband's retrenchment as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband, husband's resignation as the reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband, husband's early retirement as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband, fragility of child as reason for becoming a stay-at-home husband and husband's ill health.

Theme 2 focused on how the agreement was reached by the couple to enter into non-traditional marital roles and out of this theme three sub-themes emerged namely: a joint agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles reached through a deliberated process; an agreement to venture into the non-traditional marital roles was being forced on by circumstances; and a one-sided decision by one partner to enter in a non-traditional marital role forcing the other partner to do like-wise.

Theme 3 focused on the emotional reactions to and feelings about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles. This theme was further divided into the following sub-themes which were even broken down into their respective categories. The first sub-theme that emerged was: wives' adjustment and emotional reactions and feelings about entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of becoming and being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. Here the following categories emerged: the adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was easy; the adjustment of entering and settling into the non-traditional marital role of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was difficult and the stay-at-home husband felt unhappy, stressed and considered it as being unfair. The second sub-theme that emerged was about the emotional reactions to and feelings of stay-at-home husbands about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles of becoming and being a stay-at-home husband. Out of this sub-theme, the following categories emerged: feelings of excitement and apprehension; feeling at ease and enjoying the non-traditional marital role; feelings of hurt, helplessness and anger as to not being able to find employment; feelings of boredom; feelings of frustration; feeling unappreciated at times; feeling socially excluded; feelings of loss were experienced with specific reference to the work environment; and finding it difficult to adjust to non-traditional marital roles at first.

Theme 4 focused on changes in terms of financial, household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. Here two sub-themes with their respective categories were identified. The first sub-theme concerned changes in terms of financial responsibilities since entering into non-traditional marital roles. This sub-theme was further broken down into the following

categories: the working wife has now become solely responsible for family's income; the husband now earns an inconsistent income through odd jobs; and changes in financial management and way of budgeting of the family's income since entering and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles.

Sub-theme 2 under Theme 4 highlighted the changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles, which was further divided into the following categories: significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles; and less significant changes in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles.

Theme 5 focused on the conflicts reported arising from responsibilities for financial and household chores as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles and from this theme, two sub-themes emerged namely: conflicts around finances and conflicts over household chores.

Theme 6 focused on experiences and feelings of working wives and stay-at-home husbands regarding their changed roles and responsibilities. This theme is divided into two sub-themes namely: wives' experiences and feelings as a working wife with a stay-at-home husband regarding their changed roles and responsibilities; and husbands' experiences and feelings in relation to being stay-at-home husbands with working wives regarding their changed role and responsibilities. These sub-themes were then further divided into categories. Wives reporting the following experiences and feelings: they experienced the non-traditional role of being a working wife as not easy; some wives longed for the old traditional marital roles where they were stay-at-home wives. Others reported that they felt appreciation towards their husbands for supporting them in the fulfilment of their non-traditional marital roles, whilst others reported contentment at fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles. Husbands on the other hand, reported that they experienced a loss of control due to not being able to be the breadwinner and having their own money; feelings of boredom and frustration at fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband; and feelings of happiness and enjoyment. Other husbands reported that they experienced the stay-at-home husband role as more challenging than being a sole breadwinner, whilst others

reported feelings of un-appreciation by the family of their role of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles.

In the next chapter, Part Two of the research findings the remainder of the themes will be presented. The themes are: challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles; participants' perceptions of partner's feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities; benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage family unit; coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling non-traditional marital roles; needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles; reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples' non-traditional marriage, and suggestions and advice of working wives and stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles.

## CHAPTER 4

### **THE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS COMPLEMENTED BY A LITERATURE CONTROL ON THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY- AT-HOME HUSBANDS: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE – PART TWO**

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 is a continuation of Chapter 3 where an exposition is provided on the findings of the study. In Chapter 3, the first six themes together with sub-themes and categories (where applicable) were discussed and substantiated with the body of evidence available in the literature as well as from comments and experiences shared by callers who participated in a call-in programme “Loslip” on an Afrikaans national broadcasting radio station (see Addendum 3.1).

All thirteen themes, sub-themes and categories (where applicable) are documented in Table 3.8 in Chapter 3 (see section 3.3), however, for clarity and to provide an overview of what will be presented in this chapter, the following information is provided. The remaining seven of the thirteen themes will be presented in this chapter. These themes are as follows:

- Challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles
- Participants’ perceptions of the partner’s feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities
- Benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage family unit
- Coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling non-traditional marital roles
- Needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles

- Reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples' non-traditional marriage
- Suggestions and advice of working wives and stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles

#### 4.2 **Theme 7: Challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

One of the questions the participants had to respond to via the various methods of data collection employed, centred on the topic of the challenges experienced in fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles. To some extent, these overlap with the experiences and feelings about their non-traditional marital roles but the sub-themes and quotations will focus specifically on the replies given to the question on what challenges were experienced.

The challenges will be presented in two sub-themes, namely: the challenges as experienced by the working wives will be presented first, followed by the challenges experienced by the stay-at-home husbands.

##### Sub-theme 7.1: Challenges experienced by working wives about fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles

As already documented, traditionally, mothers and fathers fulfilled different marital roles as embedded in the societal views of roles traditional for men and women. Sigel, Dreyer, and McGillicuddy-DeLisi (in Wille, 1995:803) describe these roles as follows: "...the mother's role has been that of the primary caretaker-nurturer of the infant. The father's parental role has been that of the provider of the infant's material needs". Zimmerman (2000:337), in support of this noted that, according to tradition, it has been the mother's role to stay home with the children (cf. Piotrkowski, in Cargan, 1991:7).

The transition from traditional to non-traditional marital roles over the past decades blurred the fixed clear-cut roles related to parental involvement that existed. This



state of affairs necessitated a shift in thought about marital roles, where traditional marital roles were strongly linked to gender stereotypes with regard to the tasks fulfilled by men and women. Tamis-LeMonda and Cabrera, (in Laflamme, Pomerleau & Malcuit, 2002:507) point to the fact that mothers with small children are increasingly found in the workforce taking on the role of breadwinner, which was traditionally seen as a stereo-typical role fulfilled by the husband and father. Zimmerman (2000:337) observes that nowadays the husband and father are taking on the role of carer-nurturer, a stereotypically female role and even extending it - "...but in recent years some fathers are staying home full-time with the children while the mother is employed outside the home" (Cf. Bridges, Etaugh, Barness-Farrell, 2002; Rochlen et al., 2008; Sinno & Killen, 2009; Rochlen et al., 2010; Chesley, 2011; Latshaw, 2011; Fischer & Anderson, 2012.).

Various challenges were experienced by the working wives participating in this study, and these are now detailed.

- *Financial constraints experienced as a challenge by the working wives*

Harrington et al. (2012:12) assert that, in considering taking on non-traditional marital roles, there are two major considerations, namely: "...the couples' financial circumstances and their values regarding how their children should be raised and by whom...". It is especially finance that can actually be regarded as the core challenge for couples in non-traditional family roles. Chesley (2011:660) also alludes to the increased stress among working wives as they now have to take full responsibility for the household's financial income.

Financial constraints were mentioned by five of the participants as a challenge they experienced as a result of being in a stay-at-home husband with a working wife situation.

Dr K communicated her concerns about the financial constraints as the sole breadwinner as follows: "*One of the main challenges is ...the financial budget. You have just ten rand, for example, and you have to stretch that ten rand as far as*

*possible to meet all the responsibilities, especially with the children. The older they get, they excel in things [i.e. sports and cultural activities] and their needs become more and more. My main concern is when the eldest one is going to university which will be in a year and a half's time. How will we cope if we barely cope at the moment? That is the biggest challenge financially".*

Melissa also clearly stated that her challenges revolved around finances: *"mainly financial, but we are working together to reduce expenses and to basically survive".* However, although finding it hard, it is commendable to note that the couple is purposefully addressing this challenge.

Sonja's words were *"what's also challenging for me is that sometimes I get very concerned about finances"*, which shows that financial matters are on her mind.

Caroline adopted a long-term view and expressed her challenge as being the amount available for pension when they retire: *"I am also having financial concerns in that I worry if we will have enough pension for the two of us when we retire..."*.

Genevieve also felt constrained by the fact that the family's finances were generated predominantly from her income and she had to fulfil her responsibilities and go to work: *"if you get up in the morning and you don't feel like work, there's no such thing that you can think you'll rather leave work and stay at home. Something like that, because there will be another income or he will stand in for you...you just have to do your thing".* She also added something that related to financial challenges when she said: *"we are waiting now for the increase, so maybe that will maybe make it a little bit better. But that was one of the things I last week realised that I have to, I'll have to look at the budget again but that is actually the part that is a minefield at the end, you know, how you spend your money".* Genevieve thus alludes to the increased pressure as a result of being the main breadwinner.

- Fear regarding husband's ill health and ability to maintain the non-traditional marital role as a challenge articulated by some of the working wives

In support of this category some storylines are provided.

Anne, whose husband has brain damage, expressed her real fear about her husband's ill health: "...he deteriorates faster and he will get old faster".

Amber, who works in Saudi Arabia, expressed a similar fear regarding her husband's ill health: "my biggest fear at the moment is that my husband will die while I am here. He is already 65 years old. He has already had a triple bypass this year and I was forced to take emergency leave to help him recover".

Another wife, Caroline, also expressed concern about whether her husband can "...sustain this role [i.e. of being a stay-at-home husband] in the long run, as I imagine this role to be very lonely".

- Challenges related to balancing the various role demands as challenge experienced by the working wives

In referring to the transition from traditional to non-traditional marital roles of women, Tengimfene (2009:45) points to the fact that being a stay-at-home mother has, over the years, become more the exception than the rule and this be attributed to social aspects such as "... [the] rising divorce rates, economic influences, labour laws [policies on affirmative action] and technological advancement which make communication easier and also make it conducive for women of all racial groups to be in full-time employment whilst also taking care of their families." (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:126, 130; Rochlen, et al., 2010:279, 281,283; Chesley, 2011:645.).

However, in spite of this development, fulfilling this role of working wife, coupled with meeting the role obligations of being wife, mother and carer-nurturer to the family, brings with it many challenges, particularly with regard to balancing the various role demands accompanying it. Tengimfene (2009:46) is of the opinion that, in the family,

the roles of the working wife have to be redefined in a clear-cut fashion as she still has a pivotal role to play in household chores and child care when she gets home from work. This is commonly described as the “second-shift”. The “first-shift” is the time when the stay-at-home father should take over when the wife goes to work. Often this understanding is absent or is impossible to resolve. Adding on the latter, authors, quoted in McVeigh (2006:3), postulate that working mothers are still the ones responsible for child care and household tasks. This boils down to a situation where employed mothers work close to the equivalent of two full-time jobs.

This increased responsibility can lead to what Greenhaus et al. (in Tengimfene, 2009:46) label as “...role overload...” and which is often exacerbated by feelings of guilt of not spending enough time with their children and/or their partners. Heins et al. (in Domenico & Jones, 2006) corroborate with this by stating that working mothers often experience guilt and selfishness if they put their career interests first. Coupled with the role overload experience, the working wife can also be entangled in role conflict that represents a clash between two roles (Sheafor & Horesji, 2008:264). Divergent entities place demands on the working mother resulting in feelings of ambivalence and feelings of guilt. It is therefore not strange that Chesley (2011:668) should mention that adjusting to this new role of working wife is not an easy task. Participants in her study mentioned that it took “five to seven years” before they felt comfortable as a breadwinner working wife.

Four of the working wife participants’ accounts helped to identify this category and support the literature pointing to role-overload.

Angel described the challenges she experienced in balancing the demands made on her as a result of her various roles along the following lines: *“picking up the children. Sometimes you know especially if you’re at a client’s place and you need to go. You can’t go if they have a lot of questions, so that becomes a problem. My housework is a challenge”*. She also alluded to challenges experienced in relation to caring for the children: *“...despite the fact that we are around in the afternoon, it’s not always quality time. It’s more rush and getting things done and trying to get my children into a routine – do your homework when you get home and then you can relax...”*. This

feeling of not having enough time due to the demands of her various roles was later further substantiated when she exclaimed: *"...there is never enough time to do everything"*.

Sonja also spoke of the stress associated with the demands of work and family and how, sometimes, she feels it is too much. She stated: *"my work environment is very stressful and you come home with that stress to the side, trying to be there for the family, trying to be there for your husband that's been alone at home during the day and just chatting to him, making him feel important. And also with my son, he is still a toddler, you come to find at the end of the day you have to keep up with energy which is high most of the day. It's very difficult to push your emotions aside when you feeling tired and stressed. You just want to run away and quit your job because you don't want to be in this situation"*.

Melissa also underscored this category when she said: *"On the other hand, I had to come home and hear about how badly his friends are treating him because he is not working and how everyone looks down on him, I, too, had to deal with my own stuff in terms of wondering if he really wanted to go back to work or if he was really just lazy. Very stressful!"*

Dr K described how her husband's need for social interaction was a challenge, given the compounding demands placed on her by the various roles she already had to perform. She spoke about this as follows: *"another challenge, I remember, is that my husband is an extrovert and I'm not saying I'm an introvert, but I'm a border line case. With so much interaction at work, I just want to come home and relax and don't want to see any person a mile away and he is this extrovert and he wants people always around him... sometimes I come home, there is a lot of people there and I just want to run away...But by now we know how to deal with it because he would phone me and say he wants to invite people, is it okay and I would say please no or yes, it's okay"*.

- *Lack of others' understanding about the realities of non-traditional marital roles as a challenge experienced*

In some cultures and societies where the traditional marital form of stay-at-home wife and mother and breadwinner-husband is still strongly adhered to, family, friends and societies' or segments of societies may view working wives and stay-at-home husbands as "non-conformant" and violators of the traditional marital and family norms. As a result such couples are negatively stereotyped, prejudiced and discriminated against (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440 & 443; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17). This state of affairs places these couples in an uncompromising situation. In order to protect them against these negative views and lack of understanding Commuri and Gentry (in Coskuner-Balli & Thompson, 2012:25) point out that it is not uncommon for these couples "... [to] find it necessary to jointly construct a number of compensatory strategies to minimize the identity threats that men experience when their wives are the primary wage earners for the family". These strategies are explained as follows: "our findings suggest that at-home fathers have formed, as part of their cultural capital repertoire, a collective and reflexive understanding of the ideological incongruities between their emergent social identity, prevailing gender norms, and their primary socialization in gender-based social practices, ideals, expectations, and status hierarchies linked to the breadwinner model of masculinity. Their capitalizing consumption practices are fundamentally intertwined with the ideological goal of attaining greater cultural legitimacy for their unconventional performances of fatherhood and masculinity."

The societal views of what is expected from women (i.e. to be the primary carer-nurturer) can be cited as a direct contributor to the lack of understanding among friends, family and the community of the arrangement of being in a non-traditional marital role partnership (McVeigh, 2006:2).

This lack of understanding by members of the couples' extended families, their friends and the communities in which they live, posed not only a challenge for the stay-at-home husband but also for the working wives, a situation to which Dr K and Mrs Franks refer.

Dr K described how the perceptions some people have and the lack of understanding was a challenge at first but has become less so over time: *“it was a challenge but it’s not a challenge any more ...the perception of society about this person that stays at home. Because at one stage, people thought that if you have a husband staying at home he is lazy to go get a job and just to handle it in terms of the family - how to respond to that in general. I think by now, because we are so long in this situation, we’re okay with it but initially people thought why doesn’t he get his things in order and some of the other people also landed up in the same position. Then they realise that it’s not as easy as they thought”*.

Mrs Franks also expressed the lack of understanding about the couple’s non-traditional marital roles as follows, however, she did not specifically refer to anyone in particular when making this comment: *“the challenges that I face as a working wife, are that others do not necessarily understand our decisions as a couple with a working wife and a stay-at-home husband. It feels as if we have to defend our decision constantly to others [i.e. the family, especially]. We also have the pressure to make it work, even if we struggle at times financially, and not ask for help”*.

- Loss of child care role as a challenge experienced

As is being alluded to, the role of the mother is still primarily viewed as that of caregiver and thus any women who acts in contradiction to this role is often faced with negative reactions (cf. Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005:440 & 443; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011: 191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17). Domenico and Jones (2006:1) point out that this has been a common occurrence throughout history and states that: *“... working women were viewed as immoral and unfeminine objects of pity”*. The fact that working mothers were even accused of being negligent mothers further exacerbated this view. An additional negative emotion linked to the non-fulfilment of the traditional role (i.e. child care) is that of guilt. Chesley (2011:654) reports that six out of the 21 working wives in her research indicated that they felt jealous about their husband’s involvement in the lives of the children as a stay-at-home husband.

Anne's (one of the working-wife participants) confirmed what Chesley found in her study. Anne's loss of being the main child carer for her elder daughter started before her husband became a stay-at-home husband due to a difficult pregnancy with her second child. However, as a result, the child's relationship with her father was strengthened when he became a stay-at-home husband: *"she has been a daddy's little girl for a loooooong time...she sees her dad as the main caregiver. If she has a problem, she goes to Daddy, if she gets hurt, she goes to Daddy. If she wakes up from a nightmare, she goes to Daddy which is heart-breaking for me..."*

Sub-theme 7.2: Challenges experienced by stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles

Harrington et al. (2012:21), in their study that included 31 fathers from 13 different states in the United States of America with the biggest concentration of participants in Massachusetts and New York, had as the main aim of their study to develop an in-depth understanding of fathers who had taken on the role of full-time stay-at-home dad. They list the following as challenges of being a stay-at home husband:

- Lack of social interaction and interaction with other adults and their peers (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:137; 2008:191.)
- No break or release from fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband
- Stress /frustration throughout the day as a result of the role responsibilities of stay-at-home husband which they fulfil
- Lack of positive reinforcement or recognition for the chores performed as stay-at-home husbands
- Isolation from the workforce (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:137.)
- Boredom
- Exhaustion
- Missing the life that could have been.

An additional challenge which stay-at-home husbands face is the stigma stemming from performing non-traditional marital roles. Various authors referred to in Shirani, Henwood and Coltart (2012:275) highlight that, despite the fact that the role of the father has slowly evolved from that of solely being responsible for providing for the



family to including more caregiving and nurturing roles, stay-at-home husbands are still faced with negative reactions based on the non-traditional marital roles which they fulfil.

Dean (2012:1), in highlighting the consequences of these negative reactions, points out that fulfilling this role can be: "... rough on the ego and quite emasculating", for the stay-at-home husband. This sentiment is also shared by callers on the phone-in programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1) where a female caller Gerrie from Kempton Park stated that her husband is a stay-at-home husband, but does not enjoy his role. She maintained that fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband has a negative effect on the self-esteem of the husband. He finds it hard to openly tell anyone that he is a stay-at-home husband and that he feels comfortable with it. A male caller (on the dial-in programme), Jan, from Bellville described how his self-esteem experienced a huge battering to the extent that he is battling to feel normal again. He described his adjustment to fulfilling this role as "terrible".

The stay-at-home husband participants in the study did not experience the fact of being a stay-at-home husband as "rough on the ego" or "quite emasculating" but rather recounted their challenges mainly in terms of financial challenges and challenges experienced in terms of household chores and child care. This will be presented in the next two categories.

- *Financial challenges experienced as part of fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband*

Harrington et al. (2012:27), when exploring the impact of family finances where only one partner is working, assert that they found the answers were varied in their study that aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences of fathers who had taken on the role of full-time caregiver. Some participants had not experienced many financial difficulties whereas there were others who felt that there had been a negative impact, used phrases such as "cutting back" or things "being tight". Hence, there was a contrasting view among their participants where some experienced financial stresses as a result of assuming this role whilst others did not experience

any financial difficulties. Chesley (2011:661), on the other hand, did find in her study with 21 working wives and stay-at-home husbands in the US that women reported that their burden had increased since taking on the role of working wife and one of the reasons cited for this was the pressure of having to be primarily responsible for the finances of the family.

Three of the stay-at-home husbands in this study made reference to financial challenges experienced as part of fulfilling the role of a stay-at-home husband.

These challenges were rooted in the husband's own belief system supporting the masculine ideal that prescribes that the man should provide financially for the family, and/or in the wife's, friends and the extended family's embracing this masculine breadwinner ideal (Chesley, 2011:655).

Augustine explained how, as a stay-at-home husband, the lack of earning a salary was a challenge: *"the mere fact that you don't bring in a salary is a challenge on its own and I have to ask her for everything. And I can see sometimes she doesn't like it, but if it's reasonable she would accommodate me"*.

Karl, in underscoring the challenge under discussion stated: *"in terms of challenges, the biggest challenge in such a situation is the lack of two incomes. It becomes an adjustment because for years you have been used to two incomes and now you have to become reliant on only one"*.

David stated: *"I also came to realise that I'm dependent on my wife financially for everything, whereas in the past you are working and you can buy yourself things. But now you have to go to her for everything. Sometimes I would want something and she would say, 'not now'. Then I have to sit back and realise that we still need to do other things and then we would come to that things I wanted"*.

- Challenges in relation to fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles (i.e. household chores and child care responsibilities)

The transition from being breadwinner to full-time caregiver was not seen as a task without challenges and included a process which was sometimes experienced as lengthy in duration. Harrington et al. (2012:14) assert that for some fathers this transition was: "... a bit of a culture shock going from an active work environment with many adults around to a much more isolated environment taking care of a single infant, or in some cases more than one child. It definitely required some adjustment...". Chesley (2011:668) in her study states that three of the 21 fathers interviewed mentioned that the adjustment to being a stay-at-home husband took a long time, in fact, used words such as "several years" when describing the time taken before feeling comfortable in their roles.

Becoming fed up with household chores was indicated by Karl as a challenge, but he added it was of short duration: *"sometimes, I do become frustrated and feel fed up about doing the chores, but this is short-lived as it may be just the day when I don't feel up to it. But then it becomes nice again and I enjoy it"*.

Similar challenges were expressed by other participating stay-at-home husbands and their story lines also generally described this feeling being of a short-lived nature (see sub-theme 7.2).

David, on the other hand, spoke of the challenge of caring for their infant: *"the challenges were that you have to adjust your lifestyle and learn new things, because taking care of a baby is not easy... . Like, when my son comes and just throws his things around and messing around. But he's small and you accept it. Sometimes you want them to do things you want them to, but it does not always work that way. I know my wife goes to work and comes home tired, but there is that times you want her to fuss over you and she doesn't. But I don't blame her. She was at work and she is tired. I'd most probably do the same things when I came from work tired and don't have the energy to fuss over someone"*.

Ewing also expressed child care as a challenge: “...it’s a lot harder dealing with a two year old than a boss, because at least the boss, even if he screams at you from time to time, he does listen to you and to reason with a two and a half year old is more challenging, whereas a seven month old will sit and play for five minutes, then she wants up... You’re constantly coming up with things for your kids to do. You play with them and try to keep them busy while you’re doing something. It’s hard because the couple of times I almost set the kitchen on fire because I’m on the phone, making dinner and trying to deal with X [child’s name omitted]. It’s impossible”.

Taking on the role of looking after children as cited by the stay-at-home husbands, is not an easy task. In an article found on the Internet entitled *Pros and Cons of being a stay-at-home dad* (mDhil Editorial Team, 2013) written by actual stay-at-home husbands who share their views and experiences as well as providing support to other dads on the pros and cons of being a stay-at-home husband, one of the cons given is the fact that looking after children can be mentally and physically demanding. This tie in with what David and Ewing articulated.

- *Lack of support and understanding from the family and the community about being a stay-at-home husband as a challenge*

With reference to this category various authors referred to by Rouleau (2010:4) conclude that, despite having focused on different variables of stay-at-home husbands, these husbands are exposed to negative reactions from the extended family and the community as a result of not conforming to the prescribed, and still generally accepted, societal norms and marital roles set for the husband. Brescoll and Uhlmann (in Fischer, 2010:10) found that stay-at-home fathers are perceived more negatively than fathers in traditional breadwinner roles. They further highlight that this negative attitude is so apparent that a view is held that stay-at-home fathers often claim to be just unemployed rather than having to admit to being a stay-at-home husband.

This negative view, leads to a continuous struggle of what Doucet and Merla (2007:463) refer to for “social legitimacy in the role of stay-at-home fathers”, where

the stay-at-home husband bears the brunt of judgement as a result of not being a full-time breadwinner and occupying the role of what traditionally belongs to the wife, namely that of full-time caregiver. The extent of this judgement is often experienced as harsh as pointed out by Bridges et al. (in Medved and Rawlins, 2011).

The same sentiment i.e. negative reactions from the extended family and the community as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles are expressed by the husband participants in this study.

Augustine expressed others' lack of understanding and acceptance as a challenge: *"the fact that the family and community don't support you is a big challenge, because they are quick to judge and slow to accept, as in the case of my friends and my wife's parents"*.

Mr Franks too, expressed similar views in this regard: *"what does concern me, is that not everyone understands or accepts our decision of my wife working and me becoming a stay-at-home husband. I often feel judged and respond forcefully (verbally) to others expressing out dated and stereotyped ideas of men and women"*.

#### **4.3 Theme 8: Participants' perceptions of partners' feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities**

This theme emerged naturally from the participants' accounts without any specific question about this aspect being posed, or from the researcher's probing. It is divided into two sub-themes: one giving the husbands' perceptions of their wives' feelings and experiences as result of the change in role and responsibilities as a result of her becoming a primary breadwinner; and second, the wives' perceptions of their husbands' feelings and experiences in relation to taking on the role and responsibilities of a stay-at-home husband with a working wife.

Sub-theme 8.1: Working wives' perceptions of their husbands' feelings and experiences in relation to taking on the role and responsibilities of a stay-at-home husband with a working wife

In a study of unemployment amongst white collar technology workers in the U.S. (Lane in Shirani et al., 2012:276), it was found that these men felt very comfortable to assume the role of caregiver and nurturer. This Lane attributes to a shift in understanding of the role of men and women and, in fact, maintains that it reflects a shift in understanding masculinity. A similar sentiment is also reflected in what the working mothers in this study articulated by specifically referring to their husbands' feelings and experiences in their roles. They remarked that, despite challenges, their stay-at-home husbands had managed to adapt to their marital roles as stay-at-home husbands.

Sonja's perception was that her husband had assimilated the role of stay-at-home husband quite well. She stated: *"I think my husband has accepted his role about ninety per cent and the reason why I say that is that he loves being at home, fixing things, the cooking, the cleaning, making my son's and my life easier, ensuring everything is done and just making our lives easy. I'm saying ninety per cent because there is that ten per cent where he feels he needs to work, also wants to contribute financially to the family. He also wants to be seen as also building on the family dreams to be, [and to be] achieved, etc. I think he sometimes feels guilty that he does not contribute financially, but through us communicating, he then realises the huge amount of contribution he actually makes to the family... I think of the relationship and how we integrated into the roles is fairly well. We're not so long into the roles, it's about six years but I think we have integrated well"*. Later on, she expanded further: *"...my husband wants to work. He does not just want to sit at home and doesn't want to work. I think it was difficult for him when my son started to go to pre-school as he has been looking after my son since birth. So, for him sometimes it becomes very boring for him, even though he keeps himself busy and has things to do like helping me start the business... but given the opportunity he will go and work to help with the finances of the family. But he will talk to me and we will look at what is the best for the family"*.

Amber perceives her husband to be *“...very lonely but at least my daughter lives with him”*.

In contrast, Dr K's perception was that her husband's roles had changed more than hers, creating significant frustrations for him to the extent that she felt he needed support and appreciation. He shared her perception as follows: *“...his roles changed because suddenly he's not the only breadwinner and he is now looking after the housewife duties, so it change more for him than me... sometimes he gets frustrated, you know. He would say things like, 'I'm not the maid' – typical housewife complaints. What we need to be sensitive for is the fact we need to appreciate what each other is doing. We must give recognition...he also needs to know that what he does is appreciated, for all the effort he is putting in, even if it's not money – on a supportive level is important”*. The lack of positive reinforcement or recognition for the chores performed as stay-at-home husband was also referred to by Harrington et al. (2012) as a challenge experienced by stay-at-home husbands. Dr K also later described how she perceived her husband's feelings about being a stay-at-home husband and how her support assisted him: *“...he coped with it quite well, but I think deep inside there is that feeling of 'I'm a failure' sort of thing but he handled it and I the way I handled it, made it easier to accept the situation...whereas if I had to reject him or said to him he's useless, that would have a different spin on it.”*

The impact of support from the spouse, namely the working wife, is something that is seen as very important to the stay-at-home husband. Harrington et al. (2012:26) emphasise this: “when it came to their spouses, fathers cited a range of generally positive reactions to their role as a full-time parent. They mostly felt supported and appreciated by their spouses, though many also mentioned that their spouses felt some jealousy for the time the fathers were able to spend with their children.” Miller (in O'Brien, 2012:14), in support of this view, postulates that men, despite the increased stresses, sometimes have reported that they experienced greater satisfaction from family than work life when preferring to be stay-at-home husbands (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198).

Sub-theme 8.2: Stay-at-home husbands' perceptions of their wives' feelings and experiences as a result of the change in role and responsibilities from being a stay-at-home wife to becoming a working wife

A few stay-at-home husbands spoke about how they perceived their working wives' experiences and feelings about their changed roles and responsibilities.

Karl perceived his wife as having needed time to adjust: *"for my wife it was an adjustment because before that when I was still working, she would do all the tasks, although at that time we had a maid. Thus it took some time for her to let go of some of the tasks which she was fulfilling"*.

Augustine focused more on his wife's feelings regarding her financial responsibilities: *"I can see the pressure that my wife is under as the single breadwinner and it hurts me...I can see the resentment in my wife's eyes when she looked at me when it's time to pay our bills or the creditors are phoning and knowing there is no money them"*.

Augustine's communication matches Harrington et al. (2012:26) findings. In their study they also show that "... some fathers...[cite] discomfort about financial issues, about their spouses' stressful work experiences or demanding schedules, or about their spouses' lack of knowledge regarding the daily ins and outs of their families' lives."

Also supporting this observation of Harrington et al. (2012:26) Alistair shared his perceptions about how his wife stressed about their financial matters mentioning how he would console her: *"I remember my wife always used to stress about money and I would tell her that everything would be fine, and it always was"*.

Pieter perceived that his wife appreciates him: *"I think Genevieve may appreciate the fact that it is not too bad to come home, she gets a cup of tea and then park herself on a chair before the TV to watch Sewende Laan and get a plate of food"*.



#### 4.4 Theme 9: Benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage unit

This theme is linked to a specific request to participants to describe the benefits they experienced by being in this type of non-traditional marital arrangement. Although a few participants expressed that they could see no benefits as a result of being in such an arrangement, many benefits were expressed by other participants. Various authors mentioned in Scott (2011:17) point to the fact that there are stay-at-home husbands who have been in this role for more than a year and say openly how they enjoy their role (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198), in fact to such an extent that they are even comfortable to appear publicly on television and in newspapers. These dads see this role as beneficial - to such an extent that they continually focus on its status quo seeing how it can be maintained as to accommodate the children.

Harrington et al. (2012:21) and Rochlen et al. (2008:198), in support of the introductory remarks to this theme, list the following benefits of being a stay-at-home husband:

- Being able to watch one's children grow and develop at first hand.
- Building a loving relationship with one's children.

While, the stay-at-home husbands in an Internet article entitled: "Pros and Cons of being a stay at home dad" (mDhil Editorial Team. 2013) list the following as benefits of being stay-at-home husbands:

- One is in complete control how your children are raised.
- You are able to manage your own time and plan ahead.
- You are able to watch your children grow and develop whilst being there for them.

This theme is presented in two sub-themes, namely the benefits experienced by the wives and the benefits experienced by the husbands. The benefits experienced by the children are not given separately but are intrinsically linked to and inherently part of the accounts given by the parents.

### Sub-theme 9.1: Benefits experienced by working wives

The benefits experienced by working wives were varied and ranged from enjoying work to children being cared for by their husbands. The benefits are presented next as categories.

- *Enjoys work and can pursue career goals and self-actualisation as a benefit of being a working wife*

Many of the working wives articulated that they enjoy working, even when stressful, and expressed a sense of self-actualisation. This enjoyment was further heightened by the fact that they did not have to worry about the well-being of their children on account of the fact that they were at home with their stay-at-home fathers. Robertson and Verscheldon (in Fischer, 2010:33) concur by stating that "...female providers were most happy with the decision for their male partners to stay home because it allowed them to have a fulfilling career without worrying about their children." Tengimfene (2009:56) agrees with this quotation but adds that working wives develop high resilience and stress levels as a result of juggling of the various role demands. As a result working women gain confidence and self-esteem because of navigating the various role demands and challenges successfully. Hence, when looking at this description it is evident that, through the working wife role, women actually have the opportunity to experience self-actualisation. Seven of the stay-at-home husband participants in Rochlen et al.'s. (2008:198) study, add to this by saying that being in the role of a working wife was an explicit and strong part of their wives' identities. They described their wives' work as self-actualising adding that they were highly successful in their careers. In addition, Tengimfene (2009:55) points out that working wives tend to be happy and more content with life. This positive predisposition flows over into their own relationships with their spouses and that of children.

The benefits of being a working wife were conveyed in several different expressions.

Mrs Franks said: *"...I enjoy working and knowing our household chores and my daughter was taken care of"*.

On being asked about the benefits, Anne replied: *"I get to go out and earn a living and I never really defined my success as a human being as that... I have been allowed total freedom of expression as a photographer and pour myself into that and it's wonderful and I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't have my hubby here at home and what he does"*.

Angel remarked: *"...I love my work. The career I fell into when I left school, it's where you will always find work and I love my work. I enjoy what I do and I also learned that this ex-boss knows I can handle it because he always sends messy stuff to me to work out, people that are difficult to work with. I can work with them and in that regards I enjoy it"*. In addition, Angel expressed the benefit of being able to assist her boss and earn more: *"The fact that I'm helping my ex-boss out. I earn a lot of money than what I would normally do..."*.

Amber, who works in Saudi Arabia, explained how she enjoys work: *"I am a Nurse Educator and I love it. As the hospital is not so big, I am involved in much more than nursing education. I am the only Basic Life Support (BLS) instructor in the hospital so over the weekend, which is Thursday and Friday here, I conduct training on the BLS course and earn R3 200 per course"*. She went on to describe how she enjoys living there as well: *"I have a little flat where I live alone. If anything is broken, I simply phone maintenance and they will come and fix it...I am the only white person in our town and the people treat me like a princess. The cost of living here is extremely cheap and you get almost everything for free"*.

Genevieve's contribution to this category stated: *"...the benefits, you know, is that I like to work...and get out of the house....So, work for me was always a pleasure...that was what I was supposed to do in life. I think I was put on earth to work"*.

Caroline, too, enjoys the opportunity to work and remarked: *"...I have an opportunity to pursue my career as a professional career woman"*.

Sonja was very clear about the benefit of being able to work when she shared the following with the researcher: *"I'm not a person that can stay at home and try to keep myself occupied the whole day. I would go insane. I need to constantly stimulate my mind and I need to have challenges all the time"*. Later on she added: *"...I'm trying to pursue my own business. I'm till at the baby, baby, baby stage but I'm trying to pursue that so I can become successful. Like I previously said, I would not want to be a stay-at-home mother"*. This sentiment is also shared by Amanda on the programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1) who stated that she could never fulfil the role of stay-at-home mother, adding that there are some women who would also not be willing to fulfil this role.

The spirit of these previous comments associated with this theme are captured in Barnett and Marshall's (in McVeigh, 2006:10) statement that career engagement can lead to a decrease in role overload as women derive satisfaction from working.

- *Feels powerful, financially in control and able to meet financial needs of the family as benefit of being a working wife*

Certain individual personality traits can be indicative of the extent to which one is able to cope with the demands of balancing various role demands (Tengimfene, 2009:50). Long (in Tengimfene, 2009:50) undertook a study in which she examined sex-typed traits, the work environment and the importance of stressor episodes as predictors of three measures of coping (avoidance, problem reappraisal and active problem solving) that were derived from a modified Ways of Coping Checklist. The data were collected from 132 managers (60 men and 72 women). Long found that women who succeeded in balancing work and family demands possessed coping styles and inner abilities which resulted in an increase of a greater sense of control. Fried and Ryan (in Tengimfene, 2009) underscore this by attributing this resilience to the individual's personality that determines how they view their life, experiences and their roles.

When looking at the responses of the working wives in this work it is evident that all working wives interviewed possess the resilience and determination to make their non-traditional marriage arrangement work thereby ensuring that they do fulfil the role of working wife in a proactive but controlled manner.

In substantiating this category, the following storylines of the working wives who spoke about this substantiate this category.

Mrs Franks stated: *"I also enjoy a sense of pride in taking care of my family, being a provider feels powerful [and as far as the family is concerned]... the family, the family enjoys the benefits of being financially taken care of"*.

Angel, too, indicated that a benefit for her as working wife is that she can care for the family financially: *"I can pay the medical aid, I can't say I can afford what I want to do for the children. I'm not there yet, but we have been in far worse situations.....I prefer to be in this position where I can afford to have all the basics covered, this is great"*.

Dr K alluded to this benefit as follows: *"...the other benefit is that I'm in the position to provide for the family. It's not a wealth of money but at least there is from time to time when we get bonus and at least there is a little bit extra"*.

Sonja referred explicitly to the benefit of being in control: *"Like I said, I'm very paranoid when it comes to finances so being able to work I feel in control of that and I know where I'm going to and the family is going to and at the end of the day when I look at our checklist of goals, I can see where we come from and where we are going"*. Sonja also pointed to the fact that she cares for the family financially: *"all their needs can be satisfied. My son's school fees are paid and some extra activities at school, he can do, and he is on medical aid. All his needs are satisfied....and concerning my husband; he can see that at least the financial contribution provides a better life for everyone"*.

Amber's contribution to the aspect of benefits was this: *"When looking at the benefits for myself and my family that I am the breadwinner, I look at the financial implications....In Welkom I earned R13 000 before deductions...At the moment I send R45 000 to R50 000 a month home to my husband....I am then still left with enough to live in Saudi and I can even buy things here to send home....Thus financially our standard of living has improved"*.

Priscilla articulated the benefit in terms of being a working wife and provider along the following lines: *"The benefit, however, is seeing my children doing well at school and also the fact that I bought a car and knowing that I played a role in this"*.

- *Does not have to worry about children, housework, errands and work commitments as a benefit of being a working wife*

A number of working wives expressed appreciation for the benefit of not having to worry about their children, the house and work commitments because their husbands were meeting these needs. Both Harrington et al. (2012:27) and Chesley (2011:660, 661) highlight this benefit as the working wives who participated in their studies mentioned the fact that this non-traditional marital arrangement also supported their work schedules allowing them to succeed at work by the reduced stress around child care and involvement in housework. Mundy (2012:4) supports this by confirming that while mothers as main breadwinners needed to adapt to more distant mothering, they thrived on the fact that their children who were at home with their stay-at-home father had an opportunity to develop a more intimate and in-depth relationship with their fathers.

The working wife-participants who specifically referred to this aspect as a benefit of being a working wife describe their views sincerely:

Mrs Franks was appreciative that her husband was at home to manage the child care responsibilities and said very simply: *"I enjoy having the luxury of having my partner do the child care work for our family instead of using paid workers or crèches and aftercare facilities"*.

Dr K shared explicitly: *"I know he is there and the children are looked after and I can give much more attention to work than have any worries what's happening at home"*. Later on, she added: *"there are benefits, like when work sends me away, I don't need to worry, where other people have to plan long in advance and make food for their children. I don't have to worry; my husband will be there and look after the children. He looks better after the children than I do. That's one of the big benefits that I don't have to worry about them and lucky enough he is not the jealous type and he allows me to live out and if I have a crisis at work, I would phone him and say I'm going to be working late and he just handles it, and he does it without any issue"*. She also added to the benefit of: *"I can play to the situation that I am very tired and don't want to make food because I hate to make food"*.

Caroline insightfully said: *"...the benefits for me....is that I have a husband who is there for me and my children"*.

Sonja spoke in support of this category under discussion in detail: *"I don't have to worry about my son. You see my husband looked after my son when he was a baby, so I always knew that my son was safe and well, taken care of. I didn't have to worry about a child having nappy rash, etc. I had the reassurance that my husband is taking care of him. Even now, I still have that reassurance that, like if I'm running late, I know that my husband will make a plan and go and fetch our son, even if he doesn't have a car and also when my son is sick or the schools are closed and I have to go to work, he can stay at home with my husband. That's a huge stress that I don't have to worry about. And, if I have some errands to run, then my husband is there to do it for me and that's a great benefit because I don't have to take off from work to do it"*.

Although Melissa first responded to the question about benefits as *"I would say nothing..."* as she continued she added the following from a practical point of view: *"however, perhaps things like the house is cleaned and I don't have to cook, could perhaps be seen as a benefit"*.

- Children experience women taking on different roles as benefit of being a working wife

Leeder (in Hawke, 2007:71) describes the traditional roles that men and women play as follows: "The husband's role in marriage was to go out into the world: to work as breadwinner, to be the achiever, to go to war, and to risk pain and death. The wife devoted the majority of her time to caring for the home and for the children. The wife was the care provider who made the clothes, taught the children, nursed the family, and biologically produced the children." With the dawn of the non-traditional family brought about by social, economic and political factors, the roles of men and women changed drastically. Helford et al. (2012:1) in agreement with the description of the traditional marital roles of men and women state that the traditional family of the past was characterised by certain roles where one spouse was responsible for the breadwinning (typically the husband) and one was responsible for the caregiving (typically the mother). Williams and Cooper (in Helford et al., 2012:1) make the point that even in recent times research points to the fact that the expectation still remains for men to be fulfilling the role of breadwinner. Furthermore, Neff and Terry-Schmidt in Helford et al. (2012:1) endorse that the stereotypical beliefs are still well entrenched in the more conservative societies and amongst the older generations in which certain tasks are specifically for men and others are specifically for women. These views are transmitted to and become engrained in the children who would find, amongst other conventions, that it is unacceptable for fathers to be stay-at-home husbands and fathers (Sinno & Killen in Helford et al., 2012:1).

Contrary to these sentiments conveyed in the literature supporting the recognised traditional view, one participant, Mrs Franks was the only working wife participant who expressed one of the benefits as her children becoming aware of women taking on non-traditional roles: "*my children see how women can be seen doing different roles than society expects. My daughter does not question why I work and her father doesn't, as most of her friends have working mothers. She understands that her father 'goes to school' [as her father is pursuing further studies whilst being at home as a stay-at-home husband] and has holidays when she does*". This benefit is also underscored by Rapmund (in Tengimfene, 2009:56) who states that one of the



advantages of having a working mother is that it offers the children an opportunity to see their parents equally engaged, taking joint financial decisions and other responsibilities. In actual fact they see equality among the genders (cf. Chesley, 2011:565, 661).

- *The father being a stay-at-home husband plays a significant role in child care as a benefit of being a working wife*

The importance of the role of a good father in the upbringing of a child cannot be underestimated and staying at home presents opportunities for men to strengthen their parenting involvement (Chesley, 2011:656, 657). Dean (2012) substantiates this further: "The bond between father and child is equally important and absolutely necessary for the emotional and social development of the child. Good fathers who are present at home bring just as much emotional balance and security to their children's lives as the mother does, and gives them a better understanding of the full role of parenting ". As in the case of the working wives cited below, the involvement of the stay-at-home father in the lives of the children is imperative as he plays a significant role in their lives. Dean (2012), in support of these working wives, states: "While the bond between a mother and child is usually immediate and considered the primary relationship, a house husband who is also a father will have an opportunity to stay home with their children and play more than just a supportive or secondary role in their children's lives." (Cf. Chesley, 2011:656-658.)

The words of this study's participants support this benefit as an identified category.

Mrs Franks reflected on her husband's role in child care as a benefit: "*the benefits...are to have a husband that I am proud of, as he is more involved in the children's lives*".

Anne also expressed her husband's involvement with the children as a benefit, particularly because he suffers from health: "*the plus side is the girls. He deteriorates faster and he will get old faster and the girls get to know him very well and growing up with their Dad being very involved in their lives, as to him working. It would never*

*have happened, they getting a chance to find out who he is and that's fantastic, so that's a benefit for them”.*

Sub-theme 9.2: Benefits experienced by husbands in relation to being stay-at-home husbands

From the stay-at-home husband participants' accounts various benefits were identified as they articulated their views and experiences about being part of a non-traditional marital arrangement. Most of the stay-at-home husbands who called in on the programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) namely Anonymous, Johan from Newlands, Landi and Johan from Pretoria clearly articulated that despite the stresses, they enjoyed fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband.

In this study, the benefits expressed by stay-at-home husbands about their non-traditional marital role are presented next under various categories.

- *Time to relax and do things they did not have time for previously as benefit of being a stay-at-home husband*

Sadie, on the Programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1), thoughtfully states that a stay-at home husband can lead a very peaceful lifestyle and is able to do things at his own pace. She, however, adds that this non-traditional marital arrangement could work provided that the couple works together and reach an understanding and the husband is still viewed as the ‘respected head of the house’ (“Priester in die huis”). The descriptions of some of the stay-at-home husbands in this study are offered in support of this category.

Pieter said: *“since I have retired, I did a lot of building and paving work, work for which I did not have the time when I had a job ... The benefits I experience are that I have more time now to do things I never had the time before. The challenge for me is how I can organise my time the best.”*

Alistair, appreciated time to relax as a benefit: *“the good thing, however, was that I was able to relax...”*

Karl, who had discovered he could write stated: *“in terms of advantages for me..., I have an opportunity to write. I found my passion and I love it”*.

- *No work stress and being bossed around as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband*

Pieter on the programme “Loslip” (see Addendum 3.1) states that, since becoming a stay-at-home husband, he has experienced these benefits: no traffic, no company politics and he has time to spend time with his wife’s friends. Six of the stay-at home husband participants in Rochlen et al.’s study (2008:198) reported a feeling of “relief” as a result of deciding to become stay-at-home husbands and fathers. Four of the stay-at-home husband who participated in this study contributed to this category identified and support some of the benefits mentioned by Pieter.

Alistair, after describing that being a stay-at-home husband was boring at first, stated: *“the good thing, however, was that I was able to relax and had no-one bossing me around... The benefit of staying at home is that I can do what I want to and when I want to”*. Alistair concluded with the following words: *“I like being at home and now I’m 50, so I don’t think that I will work again. I will continue with the odd jobs to at least bring in money when I can, but I think this situation worked out quite well”*.

Mr A also referred to no work stress and no one to boss you as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband: *“the benefits of being a stay-at-home husband is you have the luxury to plan your day according to your own set of rules and your own needs for that day. For example, if I go through a bad patch, like losing a family member or whatever the case may be, you have the benefit of not being at work, to give some attention to yourself, and today is your day and I don’t need a day off and you don’t have to give in a sick certificate and I plan my day around that. That’s one of the first benefits”*.

Japie, too, articulated the lack of work stress as a benefit: *“no stress. I had a career where I was snowed under stress and pressure every day of my life and if I look back now, it was just not worth it. I would rather earn less than go through the hell again.”*

Karl, after stating he had become physically healthier, agreed that lack of work stress was a benefit: *“when I was working, I was very stressed and I suffered from hypertension. Now I don’t experience those stresses and don’t suffer from hypertension any longer. I feel I am a better person as I love what I do”.*

- *More family time and growth as family as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband*

The increased time and involvement in their children’s lives and the family was expressed as a benefit by many of the stay-at-home husbands in this study, which also held true for the research on stay-at-home husbands conducted by O’Brien (2012:32) and Rochlen et al. (2008:198). Not only does this ensure the development of a deeper bond between the father and the children, but also provides husbands with the opportunity to increase and strengthen their parenting involvement as pointed out by Chesley (2011:657). Dean (2012:2) further confirms that fathers who are at home with their children have an opportunity to experience important milestones in the lives of their children and also have an opportunity to bond with them. This was the one benefit most commonly shared amongst the stay-at-home husbands who participated in this study.

David was very clear that caring for his son was a benefit: *“seeing my son grows up and I took care of him. One of the other benefits is when my son is sick we don’t have to fall around wondering what we are going to do. I’m at home so when he is sick he can stay at home and I’ll make sure he eats and takes his meds and so on. I take him to doctor and my wife don’t have to worry about anything. I’ll just let her know what the doctor said, so that’s a big benefit for us.”* David also referred to the benefit of growth as a family when said: *“...there are also situations that you grow together as a family and the things that used to frustrate you three years ago,*

*doesn't any more. We take it day by day and I'm sure there are a lot of benefits for my wife too".*

Ewing reaffirmed the fact that he spends more time with his children: *"...you spend much more time with them. I think now that our oldest is two and a half, I get to play with her more than when she was a baby and I have the time now to do that and I spend a lot more time with the baby. Not as much as I would like, because I still do a lot of running around in the day. But at least I can, you know, when she gets fussy and everyone else is busy, I can stop what I'm doing and see to her, there is no reason not to..."*

Mr A, when describing the benefits of being a stay-at-home husband, also articulated having more time with his children: *"... and the second one is that you know what happens in your kids' lives and I think that's very important... the benefit of spending time with your kids and you can plan around their activities and you're there for them. My kids can phone me 11 o'clock in the morning and... I'll go and pick them up or take their book for them that they left at home. That's the kind of benefit, I think, for the family".*

Mr Franks held the same view *"...I enjoyed the opportunity to spend more time with my family ... I enjoy being a stay-at-home husband as I can be there for my wife and children".*

Augustine saw the fact that he *"...can spend time with [his] son..."* as a definite benefit of being a stay-at-home husband.

Karl and Simon too agree very specifically. Karl stated: *"being at home as a stay-at-home...and it also provided me an opportunity for self-discovery and to get to know my children better, I was able to find out things about myself which I didn't know and also spend time with my children. I have three and to get to know their interests, etc. Things that I couldn't do to the full extent in the past whilst working ... I can spend more time with my family, I am there for them".*

Simon contributed to this category by confirming: *“the advantage is that I can spend more time with my children. I can have more time with my children than a normal working dad. If I work normal hours, I will most probably see them for about two hours and they would go to bed and I will be more than lucky to see them in the morning, maybe, when I drop them off at school”*.

- *Improved health as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband*

This benefit of improved health of the husband as result of entering into and fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband was also mentioned in the research finding by Rochlen et al. (2008:202). In their work they also refer to a study by Robertson and Verschelden where the 12 stay at home husbands who participated in their study reported being psychologically healthy, happy and well-adjusted in their roles of being stay-at-home husbands. This category, from the information shared by Japie and Karl spoke of improved health as being one of the benefits experienced by being a stay-at-home husband with a working wife. They both exercised and are physically healthy.

Japie, when asked about the benefits, was very clear that being a stay-at-home husband had led to his health improving: *“oh yes...a healthy life, you get exercise every day. I don’t sit in front of a TV with a newspaper...you eat better because you plan and, you know, when you go out and buy groceries and meat and whatever, you don’t just buy because of price. You look at fat content and things like that. Ay, I’ve learned a lot the past years of groceries, meat, chicken, fish and things like that. Got my own recipe books, don’t laugh. I don’t buy motor car books anymore, I buy recipe books”*.

Karl also mentioned: *“I have become healthier physically”* and he attributed this to lack of work stress.

- Wife has less to do and more time at weekends as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband

An inherent benefit of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband is the fact that this arrangement provides practical support for the working wife. Chesley (2011:660) points out that this arrangement eases pressures on the working wife in terms of work schedules and reduces her involvement in housework and child care. To support this category and the literature quoted the following extracts document what was shared by two of the stay-at-home husbands in this study.

David explained how, by being a stay-at-home husband benefited his wife in that *“the other things that I can help my wife with, things she can’t do during normal working hours, whereas other people have half day or a full day’s leave. I can do that for her, then she does not have a need to take leave. I can do things in the week instead of waiting for the weekend, like other husbands have to do, so it frees up time on weekends to spend as a family. So there really are a lot of benefits”*.

Augustine, in underscoring this category stated: *“...my wife has fewer things to do ... but once again because of the financial constraints, the benefits are hard to see”*.

- The family saves financially as a benefit of being a stay-at-home husband

One of the benefits accruing to adopting a non-traditional marital role is the financial gain which, in many instances, also facilitates the decision making process when considering to opt for such a role. These included saving on day care for the children and paying for services such as domestic help (Harrington et al., 2012:13). Pieter was the only stay-at-home husband who specified this benefit when he mentioned: *“Also, we can save on fees for a domestic servant and the garden man”*.

#### 4.5 **Theme 10: Coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles**

In referring to coping resources, it is imperative that the word coping first be defined in the context of this study. Carver and Scheier (in Herbst, 2006:4) defines coping as follows: "Coping is an effort to create conditions that permit one to continue moving towards a desired goal (or away from anti-goals), or an effort to disengage oneself from goals that are no longer seen as attainable". In order to reach these goals, resources or mechanisms are employed and these are not the same for everyone but coping creates the circumstances for individuals to move forward. Mothers and fathers have different ways of managing their stress that results from their family and work arrangements and responsibilities. Fathers tend to react in a stoic fashion, hiding their vulnerability and even employing avoidance techniques such as spending time with recreational activities as a way of escapism. Mothers on the other hand, will try to seek information about the problem as well as finding support from friends and relatives (Pelchat, Lefebvre, & Levert in Palkowitz & Palm, 2009:8).

The researcher asked the participants to describe what they do in order to cope with the demands placed on them when fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles. Some of them tended to interpret this as describing how they relaxed, but nevertheless many did describe a number of coping resources they used in response to how they coped with the demands they experienced.

Two sub-themes are presented, namely the coping resources employed by stay-at-home husbands, followed by the coping resources employed by the working wives in order to cope with their respective non-traditional marital roles.

##### **Sub-theme 10.1: Coping resources employed by working wives in order to deal with the demands of being a working wife**

As an introduction to this sub-theme, relevant work done by different scholars is presented. McVeigh (2006:5) postulates that working wives cope by trying to balance the demands from their multiple roles. They see this balancing act as "the buffer



against role overload". This act of balancing entails working as effectively as possible and is based on prioritising activities. In addressing the role strain brought about by fulfilling the role of working mother, McVeigh (2006:11) refers to Hall's model of coping that entails:

- A structural role redefinition as a way of coping with multiple role demands: this refers to a process of trying to reduce the demands by adopting a set of new expectations pertaining to multiple role demands
- A personal role redefinition: in this instance the working wife will change her own perceptions and attitudes about her role, rather than changing the expectation
- Reactive role behaviour: in this instance the working wife will increase her role performance in order to meet the demands.

The working wife's level of coping with the multiple role demands is determined and influenced by her health-status, her personality disposition (i.e. is she optimistic by nature and embraces challenges and obstacles); her problem solving abilities, her social skills, social support networks and material resources (Lazarus & Folkman in McVeigh, 2006:13).

The following are some of the coping mechanisms mentioned by Tengimfene (2009:56) that working wives employ to cope within their multiple roles:

- Support from their spouses and external families.
- Employing assistance such as a helper.
- Support from supervisors and the work environment of the working wife.

Strober and Weinberg (1980:339), on the other hand, highlight that there are different strategies that working wives can employ in order to economise on time as a coping mechanism. These are:

- Strategy 1 - Replacing of manual labour by automated labour, for example, not doing the dishes every night or by using a dishwasher.
- Strategy 2 – Employing the services of a domestic worker/helper, or employing a domestic worker/helper on a part-time or full-time basis.

- Strategy 3 – Changing household production routines or schedules - this entails reducing the time taken for household tasks and their frequency e.g. vacuuming once a week and not every day
- Strategy 4 and 5 – Decreasing time for volunteer work, leisure and sleep.

In confirming some aspects from the literature presented the different coping resources employed by the working-wife participants in this study are presented as categories.

- *Emotional outbursts as way of coping with the demands of being a working wife*

Sinha (2001:344), after consulting various authors, arrived at the conclusion that once faced with a any kind of stressor (which includes danger, threat or a challenging event), an individual will employ coping resources or mechanisms as a means of reducing or adapting to this stress. Three ways of coping are:

- Problem-focused, involving cognitive restructuring and planning and preparation for a similar event or reoccurrence of the event
- Emotion focused, entailing the managing of one's emotional distress associated with the stress, and
- Avoidance coping - ignoring that the event has taken place or not doing anything about it.

These different ways of coping are described by Carver and Scheier (in Herbst 2006:12) as follows: "*Problem-focused coping* consists of active attempts to remove an obstacle or to minimise its impact. *Emotion-focused coping* consists of attempts to reduce emotions of distress caused by obstacles, which can entail either reappraising the obstacle or managing the emotion. *Avoidance coping* cuts the problem-emotion distinction". Their point of view is that coping entails responses that appear to be aimed either at avoiding any acknowledgement that the problem exists or at giving up the attempt to do anything about the problem.

When looking at the working wife participants and how they coped with their new marital role of working wife as a breadwinner, it is evident that they made use of one

or more of the different coping mechanisms described. Angel and Anne resorted to emotional outbursts to blow off steam as this gave them the opportunity to refocus and, in so doing, to manage their emotional distress associated with the fulfilling of their marital roles. In this respect, Angel shared the following: *“...if it’s a night where my son got training and my daughter have something and my husband...is in people’s homes he must go and see customers at the same time and I can’t shuffle these things around, it gets me down. I crack. I will let him know that I’m stressed out and that I’m not coping and then he helps with the children and some housework”*. She continued and said: *“...every day, I take it each day at a time. Sometimes I got a lot of work and things get too much and do not get done, like example, the house doesn’t get cleaned. I talk about it, and then moan about it, and then I’ll crack. I’m an extrovert. I moan and talk and moan but don’t break things. Then I get the support and I mean if it’s really that bad and I feel it’s getting too much, I’ll take my husband and sit him down and say, ‘I can’t. I need help’. Even if he doesn’t help me with housework I suppose for a man he must fix everything, I don’t know. But the fact that I’m talking about it and getting ideas, it might not resolve to anything but I relieve my stress and I refocus.”* Earlier she shared: *“...Every now and then when it gets too much for me, my husband might empty the dishwasher or load the washing machine. It’s small things but I appreciate it”*.

Anne also spoke of emotional outbursts as a way of letting off some steam: *“I yelled a lot and it worked brilliant”*. She later explained that she had been pregnant and her mother had left the country *“...it was rough because I was pregnant and when you’re pregnant, you are emotional and not coping so well. And then my mom left for Texas and she was my coping mechanism and I crashed and we were talking about divorce September last year. I just couldn’t any more but I once I had my baby and my head straight I was okay”*.

- *Adopting a specific mind-set and positive attitude as resources to cope with the demands of being a working wife*

Carver et al. (in Herbst, 2006:51) distinguish between five types of coping styles of which entail:

- active coping (taking direct action and making an effort to deal with the stressor i.e. by *inter alia* adopting a different mind-set)
- planning (thinking about steps to take to deal with the problem)
- suppression of competing activities (putting other things to the side in order to deal with the stressor)
- restraint coping (waiting for the appropriate time to act)
- seeking social support for instrumental reasons (seeking social support for advice, assistance or information).

Sonja and Genevieve chose to adopt a specific mind-set and positive attitude as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife since they settled for an active coping strategy that entailed taking direct action as an effort to deal with the stressor to meet the demands of their current marital role of being a breadwinner working wife.

Sonja shared: *“you have to constantly remind yourself why you are the working wife with a stay-at-home husband because there are days when you think maybe these people are right because most of the communication is that he is lazy, etc. And you start believing it sometimes. You have to set yourself straight. Mind talk is very important to remind yourself of the reason... You also have to become very strong in terms of your confidence, your principles, because you need to stand up to the people and say I don't have to explain why we are in this situation, because it doesn't affect you at all”*. Sonja also referred to a positive attitude as a coping resource and looking at others: *“I remind myself of the benefits there are for the family, looking in terms of blessings. Because there are a lot of people out there in the same situation that you are in but they are not coping a hundred per cent financially, and I'm not just talking about the working wife and the stay-at-home husband, also in the traditional roles. Even in the situation where both husband and wife are working and they still have financial problems”*.

In response to being asked about her coping resources, Genevieve responded: *“Sometimes you just have to go on, you know, whether you want to or not, you have to. I think as a social worker you know you have more coping skills but if you ask me*

*now what would be my coping skills... my brother-in-law once said, there's only one thing you can do and that is you must keep on going and you must get yourself to the point where you just have to go on and on".*

Genevieve and Sonja's outlook enables them, as the working wife, to cope with the various role-demands and it ties in with Lazarus and Folkman's (in McVeigh's, 2006:12) observation that temperament, that is, being optimistic by nature and embracing challenges and obstacles, is an important asset in this situation.

- *Communication between the couple as resources to cope with the demands of being a working wife*

Together with some of the stay-at-home husbands (see sub-theme 10.2) Sonja (and after her, Anne) articulated clearly that communication was a coping resource: *"...communication is important and what I mean is communication with my husband. If I had a bad day, I can talk to him. If I'm depressed, I can talk to him. Negative emotions and even positive emotions, I can talk to him and in that way my mind is re-aligned from the negative to the positive".*

Anne, who had used emotional outbursts (reported as a coping resource earlier), later stated that what actually helped her to cope with the various demands was the communication between her husband and herself. She mentioned: *"...we don't fight. We talk to each other when something is on our minds or if we are unhappy about something. Thus we address the negativity head on and try to find solutions instead of fighting".*

Extending support for this category on communication as coping resource, Baylies (2004:32) underlines the importance of constant communication between the working wife and her stay-at-home husband, especially through telling her husband about her work schedule and the trying to stick to it to prevent surprises as this could throw the husband's schedule out. Rochlen et al. (2008:202), too stress the importance of communication when they refer to one of the conclusions from their study in which they point to the fact that the decision amongst their participants to

become a stay-at-home husband with working wife was a reaction to a set of externally occurring circumstances and which only materialised after serious and honest open communication between them.

- Work as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

Barnett and Marshall (in McVeigh, 2006:10), postulate that career engagement for working women can have mitigating effects on role overload due to the fact that working women get satisfaction and fulfilment from their careers (Rochlen et al., 2008:198) Moreover, they may also experience some relief from the routine of the various roles that they occupy. This, in turn, decreases both role strain as well as role conflict in the lives of working mothers. This observation could hold true for Anne who was the only working wife who mentioned the fact that to work was her coping resource. She stated: *“I worked....I’m happy because I make more money”*. She also referred to her work as a photographer as being very satisfying: *“I have been allowed total freedom of expression. I’m a photographer and pour myself into that and it’s been wonderful ... I found being behind the camera completely relaxing and being able to get money for that almost seems like a rip-off. It pays to do something you like and get paid for it. It’s insane but I do find my work very relaxing”*.

- Pursuing hobbies as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

Stern (n.d.), in highlighting tips for working mothers, mentions that one tip is that working mothers have to put themselves first as they cannot be successful if they are not happy and do not take care of themselves. Purcell (n.d.) adds to this and mentions that hobbies are important as stress relievers and points out the following benefits of hobbies:

- Hobbies can act as an escapism and recharge your batteries
- Hobbies can be done when and how you want
- A hobby can be a great social outlet allowing you to interact with others with interest in the same hobbies

- Hobbies are natural stress remedies as they can lift your mood and energy levels.

From their storylines, some of the working wives disclosed how they pursue hobbies as a means of coping with the demands of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband.

Dr K referred to reading as a coping resource: *"...by Friday you're so tired because of the stress at work and as well as the stress at home. I'm trying to manage the stress. I'm not sure how successful I am because I can feel the tension building in the back of my neck but I read a lot, just to escape, especially over the weekends, it helps"*. She also referred to running as a coping resource that she needs to take up again: *"At one stage...I used to run. It helped a lot and I thought to myself this one of the things I have for calming myself and it was also good for the body and I really need to get into it again..."*.

Another wife who spoke of reading and music was Sonja: *"...reading, relaxing in terms of just taking time out and also listening to gospel. I listen to Radio Pulpit, the Christian radio station, and you hear all the stories there and it reminds you of how grateful you must be for your situation"*.

Genevieve also referred to reading as a coping resource: *"I do a lot of reading and sometimes I think it's also part to escape, you know, out of the reality...I do not sit so much on the Internet but that can also be a thing to escape from reality..."*.

- Seeking support from friends as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

Seeking support from friends can fit under the label "social support" which, with reference to Carver et al. (in Herbst, 2006:51), entails seeking social support for instrumental reasons, implying seeking support in the form of advice, assistance or information in order to cope with a particular stressor. In support of this, Tengimfene (2009:56) points out that evidence exists that receiving support from their spouse as

well as their extended family and close friends has a positive impact on women as noting that "...these resources offer emotional companionship, assisting women to survive their lifelong challenges, changes and losses".

Mrs Franks and Dr K were the only two working wives mentioning that they seeking out the support of their friends as resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife. Respectively they stated:

*"I would arrange time for myself such as...visits and outings with friends"*

*"I have a few friends that know my situation and I can call them and they give an ear to listen, then afterwards you feel okay but sometimes when it gets really tough you meet for coffee and just talk about other things that not maybe impacting on your own environment. And sometimes you realise how privileged you are because there are people much worse off than you and you must look at the bigger picture and appreciate what you have".*

- Self-nurturing/care as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

Only Mrs Franks referred to self-nurturing or self-care as a coping resource and the fact that her husband allows her me time: *"Luckily my husband is very supportive in me taking time away from home and studies. I would arrange time for myself such as a long hot bath after work, naps during weekends and after work."*

- Multi-tasking and planning ahead as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

In support of this category of multi-tasking and planning ahead as a coping measure, Dr K responded, when asked about coping: *"I think each person has their ups and downs and by now I accepted it as part of life. I take it in my stride and I have the ability to handle a few things simultaneously because I put things in place long in advance. So, if something is wrong, it can be fixed quickly".*



Anne also referred to multi-tasking as a means of coping: *“I’m a multi-tasker. If I don’t do four things at once, I’m not happy it’s been kind of natural for me. I’ve never been able to sit at home and nothing. I started two businesses when I was looking after Jess from home. I was running workshops with her on my hip. It’s very natural for me doing it, I can’t sit still”.*

- Spending time with children as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife

One of the suggestions by Worford (n.d.) on how to cope with the non-traditional marital roles is to spend time and have fun with the children. Melissa, in this study, referred to *“spending time with my son, reading...”* as her way of coping.

Sub-theme 10.2: Coping resources employed by stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband

DiProperzio (n.d.) in her stay-at-home dad survival guide provide the following suggestions and/or advice to stay-at-home husbands on how to survive in the non-traditional marital role that they occupy, and some of the suggestion and/or advice provided correspond with the accounts of the stay-at-home husbands presented further on:

- Be proud of your decision to be a stay-at-home husband and dad (despite the fact that some people may not understand your decision).
- Decide on your duties (as a couple the husband’s chores and duties should be discussed and decided upon).
- Figure out what works for you (decide on daily routines).
- Build a support system.
- Mingle with moms too.
- Make time for yourself.
- Ask for help.

The coping resources as articulated by stay-at-home husbands are presented as categories:

- *Hobbies and further studies as resources to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband*

One of the tips and advice to other stay-at-home husbands and shared by two stay-at-home dads themselves was to find and make time for themselves: "Allow yourself me-time to pursue a hobby, exercise and socialise with your friends" (Somerfeld and Schneider (n.d.)). This ties in with this category and storylines that accompany them.

Karl discovered that he could write and this became an outlet he pursued as stay-at-home husband. He shared the following with the researcher: *"During this time of being a stay-at-home husband, I also found out in my quest of self-discovery, that I actually enjoy writing. I could now pursue this new passion of mine which if I wasn't a stay-at-home husband would never have found out that I wrote well"*.

Pieter, after saying that he must use his time optimally, said: *"I am busy with further studies on computer auditing and preparing for an international examination in December"*. Pieter's case ties in with one of the findings of Latshaw 2011:137) where some of his participants, whilst experiencing full-time stay-at-home fatherhood, engaged in educational pursuits with a view to preparing for future career prospects.

Whilst Karl and Pieter's hobbies are based on their specific interests that grew out of them assuming the role of stay-at-home husbands, Simon and Mr A's hobbies can be seen as more traditional hobbies or chores held by men.

Hobbies were expressed by Simon as being a way of coping: *"...I have hobbies. I would say to you I get stuck into the building things and fixing things around the house to keep me busy. That's why I'm building a shed at the moment. I keep myself occupies basically with work outside the house"*.

Mr A, in relation to this category under discussion said *"...my half an hour of relaxation I claim for myself, I think if you're a stay-at-home husband you can do that"*

*and in that half an hour I'll catch up with the latest news". He also stated: "part of my job for staying at home husband for me is cutting the grass and for me I take that activity to relax my mind".*

The experiences of Simon and Mr A regarding the hobbies in which they engage for relaxation and to help them cope with the demands of being stay-at-home husbands can be clearly understood in terms of what Doucet (2004:290) writes: "While some of these can be viewed as masculine hobbies, which these men would have likely picked up from their fathers or male peers, these are also activities that display or justify men's masculinity and seem to alleviate some of the discomfort men feel with giving up breadwinning." Rochlen et al. (2008:200) point out that, whilst their participants had flexible views about masculinity, 11 out the 14 stay-at-home fathers referred to the fact that they were engaged in commonly considered manly activities like maintaining the car and mowing the lawn (cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17) which is also in line with Mr A's comment.

Mr Franks and Ewing had another way of coping that for them was a form of escapism and a time to relax.

Mr Franks takes part in sport: *"as a means of relaxing, I play soccer, take runs up the mountain and watch sport at weekends which I arrange to suit the family's needs and these serve as a means of de-stressing"*. Whereas Ewing described watching videos with his wife as his way of relaxing: *"...the only time when I can relax is when a couple of hours at night, we spend one to two hours watching TV. We don't have any TV connected to an aerial. We have a collection of series that we bought and then we sit and relax and watching a few series. That's our down-time"*. After mentioning that he missed the stimulation of working, he explained: *"I read the online newspaper while the kids are falling asleep. I sit in the dark with my pc and read it and that's about all the stimulation I get to interact to the outside world"*.

- *Change in attitude, being positive and self-preservation as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband*

Worford (n.d.), in an article, writes of six keys to keep the stay-at-home dad spirit happy and healthy. One way he mentions is the importance of having a fresh mind and being stimulated by engaging in activities such as reading the news. Thus keeping the mind fresh can lead to self-preservation as can be seen in these husbands' comments.

Simon described how, out of necessity, it was a “...*matter of adapt or die...*”. He opted for adaptation which is a form of self-preservation.

David spoke about self-preservation in more detail and said: “*there is a thing called self-preservation that you deal with anything that comes your way. I’m an introvert, so I’m the type of person that wouldn’t need anyone to uplift you or tell you that you are great. Self-esteem also plays a big role. So my coping mechanism is simple, if there is a problem, sort it out, and sometimes you feel needed and appreciated but I believe that I’m supposed to be here at this moment in time. I don’t know what lies ahead but at this moment in time, I’m doing what I’m supposed to do*”.

Japie too mentioned that being positive assisted him in coping: “*It’s all in the mind, you know. If you sit on the stoep and worry and sit and be negative about it, it’s going to be very difficult. But if you’re positive and you see something is wrong, then you get up and go and fix it, even if it’s just a light bulb or something small or cutting the grass. If you stay positive it’s really, it’s not a big deal*”.

- Relaxes with friends as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband

Another point Worford (n.d.) makes in an article on six keys to keeping the stay-at-home dad spirit happy and healthy, highlights the importance of stay-at-home fathers taking a guilt-free break by making time for themselves, be it spending time with the guys or joining a support group just to have that break. Mr A and Alistair described how they took time-out from their marital role of being a stay-at-home husband.

Mr A described how he battles, at times, with negative thoughts and then relaxes with friends: *“traditionally, I’m being seen as the one bringing in the money and now I’m sitting at home. I would say coping with it is where my problem lies. You start feeling worthless ‘cos you cannot fill the role of a man and if I can’t cope with it, I go on hunting trips. That’s how I cope with it, just to break away, to sit in the veld with my friends”*.

Alistair said *“when I’m finished with the cleaning, I relax and sometimes hang out with friends”*.

To spend time with friends in order to help stay-at-home dads cope with this career choice was also suggested by Somerfeld and Schneider (n.d.). Two stay-at-home dads themselves advised other stay-at-home dads to allow themselves “me-time” to, amongst doing other things such as socialising with their friends.

- Substance abuse as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband

Augustine was the one husband who tried to cope and alleviate the pressure and unhappiness he experienced in terms of entering into and being a stay-at-home husband through substance abuse. Khantzian (in Sinha, 2001:345) notes that *“...people use drugs to enhance mood and alleviate emotional distress...”*. In an attempt to alleviate his emotional distress, Augustine turned to alcohol abuse. He detailed how people looked at him and asked questions and how his wife *“...would*

*be interrogated by her parents and by the time she got home she was angry at the whole situation. It put added pressure on me because it came to the point where she couldn't see what I was trying to do. I felt alone because I couldn't talk to anyone to explain my side of the story, not even to my friends because they sided with her completely. Then I resorted to substances to take away the depression. That made things even worse and it came to a point that we were going to split up and she was going to move in with her parents...".* The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (n.d.) show that turning to alcohol is one way in which individuals cope with stress. They, however, caution that initially drinking may lead to positive feelings and relaxation but in the long run negative consequences arise. They summarise this as follows: "instead of "calming your nerves," long-term, heavy drinking can actually work against you, leading to a host of medical and psychological problems and increasing the risk for alcohol dependence" (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, n.d.).

In an attempt to better understand the interaction between stress and alcohol, researchers focused on stressors that occurred in men and women over a year period and how the stresses were linked to alcohol. They made use of the general population. The findings here [which shows the negative effects of alcohol abuse as a means of coping with stress] were that men tended to turn to alcohol to cope with stress more commonly than females (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, n.d.)

Augustine related how he realised that substance abuse was not an appropriate coping resource much later: "...we were constantly arguing and blaming each other for the situation that we were in. My wife even took my son to live with her mother as things became worse and worse. She even wanted to leave as well. That was the turning point as I was becoming a person I didn't like. I realised I needed to change".

- Volunteer work as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband

Doucet (2004:291) points out that: “in addition to unpaid self-provisioning work, men also take on unpaid community work, particularly involvement in school and extracurricular activities”. Baylies (2004:22) also noted that many stay-at-home husbands sought out volunteer activities or got involved in more school activities as a means of keeping busy. Volunteer work provides stay-at-home husbands with an outlet for mental stimulation and socialising (Latshaw, 2011:137).

The literature quoted supports this category that is represented by Augustine. He was the husband in this study who took to doing volunteer work to help him cope with the status and stigma of being “a stay-at-home husband”. He explains: *“in order to keep myself busy, I started doing volunteer work at a women empowerment centre in our community where I predominantly worked with abused children”*. He expanded further on this: *“the volunteering helped me tremendously (although initially I thought it would be a waste of time as I didn’t get paid) as I started to look at the fact that others were worse off than me and it kept me distracted from my current situation. The volunteer work kept me busy, even if I didn’t get paid. I didn’t have time to be depressed and to drink and a week after I started, my wife could see that I am really trying. So things became better and communication started to happen between us and we took it day by day”*. Towards the end of the interview, Augustine related *“...and I think being involved at the shelter also contributed to me coping with everything. I love working with the kids”*.

- Prioritising the demands related to the non-traditional marital role as way of coping with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband

Ewing, in particular, described how he coped by prioritising the various demands made on him as a stay-at-home husband and father: *“...sometimes it feels like I’m not coping and coping is one of those skills you kinda learn like multi-tasking. The only way is to actually step back when Jess [his daughter] is being demanding. I step back and see what is important and if none of it is more important than Jess, is to put*

*it down and focus. If it's more important than Jess, I have to find something for her to do while I'm busy, which is what I'm doing...I just have to prioritise...".* Ewing's way of coping ties in with one of the snippets of advice provided by DiProperzio (n.d.) in her stay-at-home dad survival guide where she suggests that the stay-at-home husband must work out a daily routine on how to handle the tasks at hand.

- *Communication between the couple and family time as a resource to cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband*

Augustine described how, after he had started doing volunteer work and his wife could see he was trying, they started communicating and reached an agreement: *"we came to an agreement that I will help out in the house as well as volunteer work and looking after our son and things became better but obviously the money constraint was still there but at least we finally started to work together".* When specifically asked about his coping resources, he endorsed this earlier statement: *"the mere fact that me and my wife have an understanding now helps a lot and it takes a huge burden off my shoulders..."*.

David also described communication between himself and his wife and their togetherness as an important resource for coping with the demands placed on them: *"because of the traditional roles, if you look at a lot of married couples, they spend time together but there are times when the husband or wife is without each other...Our relationship is different in that we do everything together as a couple. We are always together".* After describing his typical day, David stressed communication and family time: *"...we would spend time as a family and then it's time for my son to go to bed and then me and my wife will sit and chat about the day or anything else but that's the things we speak to each other and we listen to each other. Communication is very important...we never run dry of communication".*

From this particular storyline, the importance of communication and having an understanding between the couple is an important ingredient to the success of the couple fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. Johan from Pretoria who called-in to the programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1) states that he is not embarrassed by being



a stay-at-home husband especially because his wife supports him and gives him the space to function in this role. Moreover, this is facilitated through communication and understanding each other.

#### 4.6 **Theme 11: Needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

The participants when the researcher requested them to describe what their needs were as stay-at-home husbands and working wives, were thematically divided and are presented under the following sub-themes.

##### Sub-theme 11.1: Needs experienced by working wives in relation to fulfilling this non-traditional marital role

The working wives articulated various needs relating to fulfilling their roles and responsibilities in a non-traditional marital relationship and these are now presented as categories.

- *Support and understanding from husband, the extended family and community*

Baxter and Alexander (2008:197) mention that one obvious source of support for the working mother is her spouse as “this appears to moderate the negative aspects of work-to-family spill over”. Chesley (2011:660) concurs when noting that stay-at-home husbands provide an enormous amount of practical support for many working wives. It allows them to succeed at work, ensures their continued success in the workplace and is a catalyst for arresting the equalities resulting from gender differences in work/family responsibilities. The importance of the need for support from husbands and family members becomes even more apparent when looking at the responses from the wives participating in this study.

Anne’s main need focused on support, particularly from her husband, but from what she shared it became clear that he really was supporting her: “*you need a lot of support ‘cos I still feel like wanting to be a hands-on mom and it’s very hard to let go,*

*to let my husband take the kids to school and to make breakfast for them. To let him do that stuff is very difficult and thankfully we have a very open relationship and we communicate that I'm not coping with it and I'm not happy and then we can talk it through. And, you know, I can cry on his shoulder because my little girl doesn't love me anymore. So I think I get the support I need but it takes a lot from my husband to support me because he's dealing with his own issues at the same time and to be able to cope with my emotional side".*

With regard to support from the community, when first entering into a non-traditional family situation, Dr K was of the view that it would be helpful, but then shared the following which shows her situation was no different: *"... our situation currently in our street, there is a lot of people in the same situation, so in a way it [referring to the stay-at-home husband with a working wife- phenomenon] has become the norm rather than the exception".*

Melissa articulated her need for community support and from her husband along the following lines: *"I need people to try to understand and to be supportive, instead of judgemental. From my husband, sometimes just a little patience as we are not in the same frame of mind daily".*

- *Needs more time for self and family (i.e. better work-life balance)*

Chasteen and Kissman (in McVeigh, 2006:14) suggest that, as a means of coping with the role demand of working mothers, families should have more open communication lines and that these mothers allow themselves some time for relaxation and leisure. They, however, go further by indicating that, for this to work, support is needed from the spouse for the working mother and the mother needs to be able to know what her needs are and be comfortable expressing them.

Similar sentiments were also uttered by Caroline and Mrs Franks who expressed the need for relaxation even with the family and time alone as a leisure experience: Caroline said *"...to have time to spend with my family and be able to be there for them. In effect, to have work-life balance"* whereas Mrs Franks shared *"I would also*

*appreciate some time for myself and definitely some sleep as I still have a seven month old baby that I need to take care of”.*

- *Needing a less stressful job*

Balancing the demands of work and family life can result in added pressure on the working mother in fulfilling her non-traditional marital role as previously pointed out. However, achieving that balance between work and family life can lead to relieving the strain experienced by the mother in this role. This becomes evident when referring to Sonja’s comment in which she highlights that she could do with a less stressful job - she stated: *“my biggest need at the end of the day, it’s very difficult to say, because I don’t really have, except maybe a less stressful job. But in terms of needs at home, my husband does everything at home, everything. There is nothing I can say where he is selfish, like I must come home and cook and clean. So, I’m a hundred per cent fine, my son is hundred per cent fine, so work-related, I would say a less stressful job”.*

- *Needing more time away alone with husband*

Mrs Franks was the only working wife needing to spend time alone with her husband. She verbalised it as follows: *“in terms of support, we need support from colleagues, friends and family members. For example, a couple with one member working finds it just as difficult to spend time together, as other couples, and time away from children, can be supported by friends and family. It is important for the couple to remain strong and committed to each other, as it needs both partners to work together to make a family work well”.*

In support not only of this category, but in general with reference to spending time as a couple in marriage together, Fillmore (2011), in an article about important lessons for a strong marriage, states that by spending at least eight hours a week together as a couple makes everything easier in a marriage. Time is needed for the couple to spend time together connecting as a man and a woman not just as ‘mom and dad’ to

have and sustain a meaningful relationship. He states that the priorities of the couple should always be in this order: marriage, children, job, family and friends.

- Assistance with housework and child care

One of the most common practices with working mothers is for them to employ help to assist with child care and household tasks if they can afford to do so. Theunissen et al. (in Tengimfene, 2009:57) note that it is common for white South African women to hire a domestic worker/helper on a full-time basis. Women who have no help, or only have part-time help, showed strain from the overload which they had to shoulder in order to cope with the double burden of work and home commitments.

In support of this identified sub-theme, Mrs Franks expressed her need for support for housework and child care: *“in terms of my needs, my needs are to have support in household tasks and child care as I will feel overburdened if I had to take care of that as well as working. I need a partner that understands my need to work”*. However, she was speaking in general as earlier she had explained: *“[my husband] supports me by taking more responsibilities in the household, leaving me to be free to do what I love, working”*.

- Need for financial security /more money

Angel was the one participant who raised the money issue thus initiated this sub-theme. She actually found it very difficult to express her personal needs and when the researcher prompted her to do so she said: *“I wanted, it’s actually stupid things, I want the finances to have my house finished. My house is incomplete...I would like to do small things in my house that irritate me. I’m house proud, that’s what I wanted to do, and that’s my biggest goal”*. When prompted further to focus on her personal needs she replied: *“you know, I never thought about it. I just, I suppose I just want as a person for myself, I just want to make sure, I actually don’t know. I suppose if you have children, they always come first...I can honestly say my personal needs, look I enjoy the work I’m doing, I don’t want it to stop. I really enjoy what I do and I want*

*that to continue and I would like to have more money now and then, I'm content, it's actually hard to think of your own needs".*

- *Need for recognition and respect*

The thoughts expressed by Dr K and Caroline showing the need for recognition and respect. Dr K said: *"I think the most important thing is just to get recognition and to say thank you for getting up in the morning and going through the whole day. Because I'm not in the position to tell someone I don't want to work today. I just have to take what comes to the table and deal with it. But on both sides, remember, you don't always have to receive, you must also give appreciation and in itself goes a long way".*

Caroline referred to being respected: *"in terms of my needs, I would say that they are probably the same as other working women. This would be to be respected as a working woman..."*.

Sub-theme 11.2: *Needs experienced by stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling this non-traditional marital role*

Whilst some of the stay-at-home husband were content and stated that they have no needs and are, to a large extent, happy with the current state of affairs (as can be deduced from these accounts given), others articulated some specific needs which will be presented further on as categories.

Japie was one who stated: *"I'm happy the way it is....I'm a happy chappy"*.

Mr Franks also remarked: *"I cannot really list any needs that we may have as a couple in this relationship" ... but, on second thoughts, he said: "for me being a stay-at-home husband is pretty easy, I would need more money, definitely"*.

While David stated that *"[he does not] have any personal needs"*, he added: *"my personal needs are the family and if they are happy, I'm happy. My wife respects me*

*as a husband and my son as a father and I'm happy....the needs change according to our situation, so my needs are more family orientated".*

Karl was another stay-at-home husband who stated he had no needs and referred to this along the following lines: *"When referring to needs, I don't really have any at the moment. As I mentioned, I do enjoy what I am doing".*

Other stay-at-home husbands did however express some needs which tended to focus, although not exclusively, on assistance with fulfilling their role and responsibilities. This will now be presented under four categories

The sentiments shared by the participants correlate with one of the findings of Robertson and Verschelden (Rochlen et al., 2008:202) where the 12 stay at-home-husbands who participated in their study reported being psychologically healthy, happy and well-adjusted in their roles of being stay-at-home husbands.

- *More assistance from children with household chores*

Mr A and Simon (respectively) expressed the need for the children to assist more with the household chores:

Mr A uttered: *"I would say if my kids could help a little bit to tidy up. They do, but you have to tell them to do it".*

Simon on the other hand expressed the following: *"...maybe a need with the housework and to not having my children just sitting in front of the computer...but to help".*

- *More social interaction with friends and others*

A sense of isolation in terms of a lack of adult social interaction as experienced by stay-at-home husbands is an aspect raised by several scholars (cf. Latshaw, 2011:137; Rochlen et al., 2008:195). Harrington et al. (2012:22), based on their

research findings, arrived at the conclusion that many stay-at-home husband identified social networks as a strength which not only fosters interaction but also expressed the need for support from family and friends in their at-home roles. As thus documented, the response from Mr A, a participant in this study, too supports this category relating to Theme 11. He expressed the need for more social interaction with friends and people by voicing that: *“my biggest needs would be to have friends around but it does happen sometimes, someone will knock on the door and you don’t answer ‘cos you don’t feel like it. My biggest need is just to have people around me...”*.

- *More understanding from the extended family and community*

Many stay-at-home husbands feel themselves subjected to societal scrutiny as a result of not working and being the breadwinner as per traditional roles of men (Doucet, 2004:28). Brescoll and Uhlmann (in Fischer, 2010:10) echo this and mention that several studies have highlighted the fact that men and women who violate gender norms receive negative reactions, and that stay-at-home husbands and working mothers are viewed less favourably than caregiving mothers and breadwinning fathers (cf. Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al. 2010:280; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17). Rouleau (2010:4) concludes that, despite having focused on different variables related to the rise of the phenomenon of stay-at-home husbands, these husbands are exposed to negative reactions from the extended family and the community, as a result of not conforming to the prescribed and still generally accepted societal norms and marital roles prescribed for the husband.

In view of the fact that the reasons for becoming stay-at-home husbands were less internally driven and more due to external circumstances (Theme 1: sub-section 3.3.1), a little understanding and less judgement eases the pressure on the stay-at-home husband. This is articulated by Augustine in expressing the need for understanding of his situation as a stay-at-home husband: *“I just need for people to understand that I’m not in this situation out of my own free will and that*

circumstances can put you in situation beyond your control. To stop judging and to try to understand”.

- Need for a babysitter

Ewing said quite strongly that the need for a baby sitter was real and emphasised the lack of available support from the extended family: *“you know, in our current situation, my needs and the needs for the family is a baby sitter...we don’t get enough of a break, being a stay-at-home dad, to enjoy... We don’t have immediate family where we can leave our kids with, so for us there is no break and the only time we have time to go for coffee or breakfast is during my wife’s working hours which is never conducive. She should be working and weekends are also not conducive because we have the kids and that’s a nightmare on its own. We go to the local ‘Mugg and Bean’ restaurant and they have a playground but you’re still watching them. My greatest needs will be if we have someone who can take the kids for three weeks, but even just for the weekend but I don’t know if we will cope”*. On the researcher querying this as to whether it was because the couple would be worried about them and missing them, Ewing replied: “Yes”.

#### 4.7 **Theme 12: Reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples’ non-traditional marriage**

Research on the topic of the experiences of stay-at-home husbands is not extensive. In supporting this statement Harrington et al. (2012:7) add that the percentage of reported stay-at-home dads remains low and this can be attributed to the fear of being stigmatised as the core reason for the slow “coming-out” in relation to the stay-at-home dad phenomenon as found in their study. Chesley (2011:644) concurs with the fact that research in this area is lacking and attributes the rare occurrence of the phenomenon of the stay-at-home husband with a working wife to the fact that this is in many societies still regarded as “...a gender-atypical family form.”

This results in a state of affairs where the men and women who violate gender norms receive negative reactions from friends, family and society, and stay-at-home



husbands and working mothers are viewed less favourably than their counterparts, caregiving mothers and breadwinning fathers. (Cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005); , Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al. 2010:280; Fischer, 2010:10; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.) In view of these persisting views and attitudes, the participants were requested to elaborate on the reactions of their family and friends regarding the couples' non-traditional situation.

The two sub-themes presented are the experiences and perceptions of working wives and stay-at-home husbands with regard to the reactions of family, friends and the community as per the question posed to the couples on whether they felt that the family, community and society accepts the non-traditional marital roles of couples.

Sub-theme 12.1: Reactions of family, friends and community to the couple's non-traditional marital situation as experienced by working wives

From the responses provided by the working wife-participants, the following categories emerged and are to be presented next: the working wives' experiences of the extended family's reactions in relation to their non-traditional marital arrangement; the children's reactions in relation to their parent's non-traditional marital arrangement; friends' reactions towards the wife's non-traditional marital role arrangement; working wives' perceptions of the community's reaction towards the stay-at-home phenomenon; and towards them being in this non-traditional marital arrangement. These categories are now presented.

- *The working wives' experiences of the extended family's reactions in relation to their non-traditional marital arrangement*

One extended family's reaction was noticed in the concerns expressed along the lines of their concern for the couple and, although they were not understanding, and as a result not totally accepting of the non-traditional marital role arrangement, they supported them. As Mrs Franks explains: *"It help that I enjoy my work and the support of my immediate and extended family. Although they don't understand our*

*decision, they are concerned for us and want to support us. My husband and I often spoke about the reactions of our extended family and we understand, on the one hand, because it is a result of the traditional background that they come from where wives are not supposed to be the breadwinner whilst the husband sits at home as a stay-at-home husband". Later, Mrs Franks mentioned frustration regarding the family's reaction: "...we on the one hand understand the reason why the family reacts to our situation in the way that they do. However, on the other hand, we feel very frustrated that they cannot just leave us to work this out as we are coping... "...we/I have to constantly defend our decision [for me] to work while my husband does not. To especially older women, both family members are very vocal of their strong negative feelings of a man not working. The extended family feels that a man should provide for his family and not be dependent on his wife financially. They see me as 'suffering' and not up to the task of providing for a family. Which isn't the case".*

Amber and Sonja also spoke about their family's non-acceptance about them and their husbands venturing into the non-traditional marital roles. Amber experienced non-acceptance from her family and this mainly centred on the fact that she left her husband to work in Saudi Arabia in a lucrative job: *"my family's reaction to me being the main breadwinner and working in Saudi is that life is way too short to worry about money. They believe that not everything is about money. But in saying that, they are very quick to run to the house to see what gifts I brought back home for them from Saudi. My husband was taken aback by their reaction as he expected them to be a little more supportive, but they are not".*

Similarly, Sonja articulated about the extended family's reactions and the stigma associated with the couple's non-traditional marital roles: *"there is always a lot of stigma...It starts off first internally in terms of the extended family there is stigma. There is always that thing he is a lazy husband or he is riding on your back; what type of woman would want to work for the husband; this woman is sort of hard-up for her husband, she just wants to keep him there, he is just lazy – so you get it from the family".*

In support of Sonja's utterance, Scott (2011:20) agreed that stay-at-home husbands are negative stereotyped. Friends, family and outsiders stigmatise them as being "lazy" or "unemployable" and this labelling affects them in a negative way.

While it was clear from the accounts of Mrs Franks, Amber and Sonja that their families' reactions pointed, to a certain extent, to the non-acceptance of the couples' non-traditional marital roles, Priscilla, Caroline and Dr K spoke about the support they had received from their respective families whilst they were fulfilling their non-traditional marital roles.

Priscilla shared: *"...my family did help where they could financially, but were reluctant sometimes because my husband chose not to work. Support from your family in the form of emotional support is very important and you do at least need someone to talk to as a lot of people think that I'm a fool for remaining with my husband. But I did not want to break up the family and also could not bear the shame of divorce"*.

Caroline definitely experienced support from her family as she stated: *"the reaction of my immediate family to our change in family circumstances was, as I had expected, very supportive. They seemed to understand the reason why we had to make the decision. My mother told me time and again that I needed to support my husband as they felt that it must be terrible to be experiencing so much unhappiness in your everyday job"*.

Dr K below also articulates her extended family's concern for the family due to their financial situation. It was initially difficult for Dr K's family to accept the arrangement, but they supported her: *"My mother-in-law sometimes would worry about the children financially. Then I said to her, she must realise the children know where the money comes from and they must appreciate it and not be like those spoiled children. We get really emotional support from them. From time to time they would phone us to find out are we ok but by now they're ok with it"*. When specifically asked by the researcher whether it had been hard for them to accept initially, Dr K responded by referring to her father-in-law: *"...because he comes from a background that is very*

*traditional Afrikaans family with the perception that the man is the head of the household and he needs to provide. And in that way he gave me a lot of support because he appreciates and realises what I'm doing for them and I really get more than I expected. I really get recognition from his side, saying thank you for what you are doing...".*

In concurring with Dr K's account above, some of the participants (stay-at-home husbands) in Harrington et al.'s (2012:19) study made mention of the fact that those close to them expressed concern about their family's financial status as a result of husbands being stay-at-home husbands rather than in the labour force.

- *The children's reactions in relation to their parent's non-traditional marital arrangement*

In their research on children's evaluation of parental roles, where a sample of 67 second graders and 54 fifth graders from four public schools in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States participated, Sinno and Killen (2009:24) found that both boys and girls saw it acceptable for either mother or father to work if they so desired. They felt that it was acceptable if mothers choose to work if they so desired but felt that it is a financial necessity for the father to work and be the breadwinner. In addition, it was found that a large portion of the children found it unacceptable for fathers to be at-home parents, whereas they found it acceptable for mothers to fulfil the role of at-home parent. The authors attribute this to the gender stereotypical male and female roles and this is further supported by Neff and Terry-Schmidt (in Sinno and Killen, 2009:25) who state: "these findings reflect previous research with adults revealing that there are certain tasks that people believe are natural for males and females." To the contrary, the stay-at-home husband-participants in Harrington et al.'s (2012:25) study were of the opinion that their role was accepted by the children to the extent that they felt that there was nothing strange about their current situation where the husband was a stay-at-home husband.

Dr K, only working-wife participant who spoke about the children's reactions to them being parents in a non-traditional marital arrangement, remarked that, from the start:

“...they accepted it...I’m not sure they really realise the benefit of it...they don’t realise that other people hardly ever see their parents”. Her experience-based perception ties in with the stay-at-home husband participants in Harrington et al.’s (2012:25) study.

- Friends’ reactions towards the wife’s non-traditional marital role arrangement

Only Caroline and Dr K referred to their friends’ reactions to their non-traditional marital role arrangement of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. Caroline remembered: “the reaction to our change in roles was received in a supportive manner as well from friends and community”.

Dr K spoke about her friends’ support along these lines: “I have a few friends that know my situation and I can call them and they give an ear to listen to, then afterwards you feel okay but sometimes when it gets really tough, you meet for coffee...”.

- Working wives’ perceptions of the community’s reaction towards the stay-at-home phenomenon and towards them being in this non-traditional marital arrangement

While Dr K made mention of the fact that, within their neighbourhood, there were a number of couples in non-traditional marital relationships (i.e. stay-at-home husbands and working wives) - “...our situation currently in our street there is a lot of people in the same situation so in a way it has become the norm than rather the exception”, this trend and its acceptance was not shared by some of the other participants.

Several of the working wives in this study thought that in their neighbourhood the community looked down on their stay-at-home husbands perceiving them to be riding on the wives’ backs. They even felt judged by family, friends and society.

Melissa shared her experiences and perceptions as follows: “they thought my husband was lazy and was riding on my back, while they showed a lot of sympathy towards me”. Whilst Melissa’s other responses in relation to this category can be

labelled as “rather general”, the fact of being questioned and feeling judged from the side of family, friends and society can be deduced from the next statements made: *“I couldn’t really talk to anyone as they would not understand. I also didn’t want to anymore questions asked and thus I kept it to myself. You can, however, only keep a secret for so long, in that my parents soon found out that he isn’t working and his friends started asking questions about the fact that he is always at home and then drew their own conclusions. I could also see that this made him feel extremely uncomfortable, having to continually defend himself and trying to show people that he is trying to find work and that he is not lazy”*. She went on: *“...people always looked at us with judgement”*. In response to the question on whether society accepts non-traditional marital arrangements, she stated: *“Definitely not. The amount of pressure and comments we received were at times unbearable and you felt like screaming out this is not your business and we are trying the best we can. I don’t think society can ever understand this, probably because of mind-sets”*.

Anne stated that she had never met other couples in this situation, but reported on how people in the community reacted negatively: *“people don’t understand, they look down on him for what he does and not working...There is a lot of stigma to that and we don’t know how to deal with it. I had people that where we were staying that say I’m lazy, why don’t I do the laundry or looking after the kids? They can’t adjust to the point and it’s very sad”*.

Dr K initially found the feeling of being judged by the community as a challenge and described it thus: *“because at one stage people thought that if you have a husband staying at home he is lazy to go get a job... initially people thought why doesn’t he get his things in order and some of the people landed up in the same position. Then they realise that it’s not as easy as they thought”*.

Amber voiced her perceptions on whether society accepts couples fulfilling non-traditional marital roles along the following lines: *“I do not think society will easily accept it. This is due to the fact that traditionally men and women are supposed to have certain roles, e.g. wife must look after the children”*.

The same opinion was given by Caroline: *“I expect that this type of family arrangement will not be easily accepted by certain communities who still hold old-fashioned beliefs of the role of the man and woman”*.

After speaking of the extended family's non-acceptance, Sonja went on to speak of the same reaction from the community and its negative influence: *“then you go wider into the community, when they look at you strangely when you tell them your husband is a stay-at-home husband and they judge you as if first of all these people must be suffering financially, they must be so poor and there is an element of sympathy and an element of them looking down on you... You have to constantly remind yourself why you are the working wife with a stay-at-home husband because there are days when you think maybe these people are right because most of the communication is that he is lazy etc. and you start believing it sometimes – you have to set yourself straight”*.

The perceptions shared by these working-wife participants, of whom some were experience-based, can to a large extent, according to Worford (n.d.), be ascribed or attributed to the misconceptions the extended family and the community at large have of stay-at-home husbands and, to a lesser extent, the working wife. Worford (n.d) mentions the following as the top ten misconceptions held by society in respect of stay-at-home husbands. These are:

- He is sitting at home watching sport all day
- His spouse would rather be home
- Men would rather be in the office
- Men don't stay at home with the children
- Men can't watch the kids as well as women
- He must have lost his job
- He must be looking for a job
- He must not have any motivation
- So, you're babysitting today
- He is not masculine.

Harrington et al. (2012:32) further note that, while couples in marriages where they fulfil non-traditional marital roles might view this arrangement as normal, it is not viewed as the “norm”. Older generations seems to react more negatively to these non-traditional marital role arrangements than the younger generations. Not only are the stay-at-home husbands looked down upon and negatively labelled but, in some societies, working wives are also frowned upon which gives rise to feelings of guilt or selfishness for putting their career interests first. (Cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll and Uhlmann, 2005; Domenico & Jones, 2006:1; Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen, et al. 2010:280; Fischer, 2010:10; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.).

Sub-theme 12.2: Reactions of family, friends and community to the couple’s non-traditional marriage as experienced by stay-at-home husbands

The family, friends and the community’s reactions to couples in non-traditional marital arrangements, according to Kramer and McCulloch (2011:4-5), depend on their gender role attitudes as they explain: “less egalitarian gender role attitudes are related to more negative perceptions of both career mothers and stay-at-home fathers...while more egalitarian gender role attitudes are related to more positive perceptions of career mothers and stay-at-home fathers ...”.

With the introductory remark in mind this sub-theme under discussion is dissected into categories: the stay-at-home husband’s experiences of the extended family’s reactions in relation to their non-traditional marital arrangement; the children’s reactions in relation to their parent’s non-traditional marital arrangement; the stay-at-home husband’s experiences of the friends’ reactions in relation to their non-traditional marriage; a stay-at-home husband’s experiences in relation to potential employers’ reaction to his non-traditional marital arrangement; stay-at-home husbands’ perceptions of the community’s reaction towards the stay-at-home phenomenon; and towards them being in this non-traditional marital arrangement.

These categories are presented in the next section of this chapter.



- *The stay-at-home husband's experiences of the extended family's reactions in relation to their non-traditional marriage*

David, Karl, Mr Franks and Japie specifically mentioned of the fact that their extended families question their non-traditional marital arrangements and in some instances displayed *their non-acceptance and ignorance towards it*.

David explained that his parents do not really know the couple's situation but are traditional: *"...my family, they're not a hundred per cent sure of our situation and I choose to keep it that way because of my family is very traditional, especially my father, so his background is definitely a man should take care for his family.. I pick my battles so that's the way I prefer to keep it that way"*. Later on after being asked what their reaction would be if they found out he replied: *"first reaction would be shocked and the second would be what you're doing is wrong; you're supposed to work looking after the family, you're supposed to be the man of the house, etc. They would in a sense want to throw the traditional role down your throat"*. David's situation is a direct reflection of the People's Daily Online (2009) comment on the reality that in some extended families, the phenomenon of the non-traditional marital roles of couples is not easily accepted, and thus the stay-at-home husband prefers that the extended family does not know about the couple's working arrangement. This sense of non-acceptance is further exacerbated by the fear that people might not accept this arrangement as they are strongly influenced by traditional ideas and beliefs of the roles of husbands and wives.

Although Karl did not disclose receiving any support from his family, he clearly stated: *"my mother couldn't really accept the idea that I am a stay-at-home husband as she couldn't really understand it. She cannot understand how a man can be a so-called 'house-husband' and the wife is a breadwinner. She believes that the man should be able to provide for the family"*. Thus, Karl's mother upholds the concept of traditional family roles which, in her case boils down to one of the societal gender role beliefs and expectations that men are still the primary breadwinners and that this role is central to their identity, as Harrington et al. (2012:7) aver.

Mr Franks also contributed to underscoring this category on the non-acceptance and ignorance of the extended family towards their relatives in the non-traditional marital roles, when he stated: *“What does concern me is that not everyone understands or accepts our decision...I often feel judged forcefully (verbally) by others expressing out-dated and stereotyped ideas of men and women. This even happens in our extended family where it is not acceptable for the wife to work whilst the husband stays at home”*.

Japie spoke about how the family criticised them as a couple for his wife going to Saudi Arabia and the criticism centred mainly on money: *“the family criticised both of us to say that money is not everything...”*. After explaining how he wanted his wife to experience achievement in her career, he added: *“...they don’t see it that there is a reason and things like that so they think you’re greedy and things like that, so I don’t care about that”*.

David’s experience was that of acceptance and support from the extended in-law family on their non-traditional marital arrangement. After explaining his own family’s probable non-acceptance of the couple’s non-traditional arrangement, (as stated above), David went on to explain that his wife’s family accepted it: *“my wife’s family was very accommodating and understanding when it came to us. They support us on it and one thing I really respected was that they didn’t make me feel less of a man that I’m a stay-at-home husband...They also saw that I do carry my weight and not just using the stay-at-home husband as an excuse not to work and they saw that between me and my wife, my wife was happy”*.

From these reactions from the extended family it is evident that non-traditional families are not easily accepted. Harrington et al. (2012:19) sum this sub-theme up by admitting to this state of affairs although their participants also provided accounts testifying to the contrary: *“many stated that initially, their families didn’t always understand or accept why they were at home full-time, but upon seeing how well it was working for their families, supported the decision completely”*. Ten of the 14 stay-at-home participants in Rochlen et al.’s (2008:199) study mentioned the support

received from immediate family members, in-laws and close friends whilst fulfilling the non-traditional role of stay-at-home husband.

- *The children's reactions in relation to their parent's non-traditional marital arrangements*

Participants were not asked specifically about their children's reactions, but those with children sometimes volunteered this information or expanded when prompted by the researcher. Two stay-at-home husbands gave accounts of their children's reactions that indicated their acceptance of the situation.

Japie stated that his daughter, who lives with him while his wife is working overseas, accepted the situation and the role Japie plays: *"...she doesn't have a problem. She is really helpful and she's got her little tasks every day..."*. He also made mention of the fact that he and his daughter shared the household chores.

Pieter, who as a result of participating in this study, actually asked his children to comment on how they felt that he was the "housewife" whilst their mother was the "main breadwinner". He recounted his son saying *"...did not have much to comment as he felt that he had left home long before these changes occurred and do not have much experience of our situation"*. However, Pieter added the following about his son's comments: *"what I much appreciated is his remark that he saw me as an example to follow on, what and how to do tasks in the household"*.

However, Pieter's daughter wrote her comments down and these were included as part of his answers to the questions sent through e-communication. She expressed acceptance of her parents' non-traditional family arrangement as the following excerpt demonstrates: *"my father only started being the stay-at-home husband when he retired. I was in my final years at university during this period, so I was not as involved with some of the adjustments...I know it was not easy for my father because of his very traditional upbringing with regard to the roles of male and female. But somehow, I always perceive that it is not as engrained because he has always been a hard worker and my mother appreciates that of him ... For myself, I*

*understand the traditional roles of male and female, but today's society is not the same as when these roles were needed. If both partners work, then I find it unfair that the household is the responsibility of just one partner ...For me it is just a re-allocation of chores based on time available for any of the partner in the marriage”.*

The accounts of the participants in this research corroborate with the findings in Harrington et al.'s (2012:25) study where the stay-at-home husband participants were of the opinion that their children accepted the role they played to the extent that they felt that there was nothing strange about their current situation where the husband was a stay-at-home husband.

- *The stay-at-home husband's experiences of their friends' reactions in relation to their non-traditional marital arrangements*

Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005:438) acknowledge the fact that stay-at-home husbands are perceived in a negative light but also that women assuming the role of working mother may be viewed in a less stigmatised light for fulfilling the husband's traditional breadwinner role. They place on record that “in contrast, while an employed woman might be disliked for violating prescriptive stereotypes, her adoption of the high-status, traditionally male role of breadwinner may win her some of the social respect and regard associated with that role.”

From the accounts of the stay-at-home husbands as quoted below, it becomes clear that their friends made remarks, joked, were jealous and non-accepting of the fact that they were stay-at-home husbands with working wives. This finding corroborates with the information provided by some of the participants in Rochlen et al.'s. (2008:199) study where six of the 14 participants described incidences of perceived joking or kidding from friends and family, whilst seven of the 14 participants referred to the fact that other men responded with comments reflecting a degree of jealousy towards them for being in a stay-at-home husband position. Chesley (2011:655) points out that friends who prescribe to the traditional role of the man as breadwinner are not readily accepting of the stay-at-home phenomenon.

Mr A spoke about the jokes his friends make about him being a stay-at-home husband: *"I think society joke about it 'cos it's a new thing. I'm talking about my friends. They will be joking and say, 'don't phone Mr A 'cos he would be sleeping'. At the end of the day it's something that two or three years ago we wouldn't be talking about it and today we joke about it over a braai and suddenly there is another guy that's in the same situation"*.

Alistair, on the other hand, spoke of his friends' jealousy of his situation: *"Some of my friends are also jealous that I am at home and they still have to face employers day-to-day"*.

Augustine perceived his friends' reactions as being both non-accepting and judgemental. He explained: *"...my friends start looking at me differently and it feels as if they are losing respect for me. They feel that I am riding on my wife's back and that I am lazy and don't want to work. Even the fact that I do volunteer work to keep myself busy, is not taken into consideration, obviously because it is not a paying job"*.

Wynand, who called into the programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1), shared that, despite having fulfilled the role of stay-at-home husband for a mere four months, he hated the role and attributed this mainly to the fact that he found it terrible to have to tell people and friends that he was a stay-at-home husband.

From the work of Harrington et al. (2012:19) a similar set of results comes to the fore as the accounts provided by their participants point to the fact that a common reaction of friends to their stay-at home husband friends' status was that the situation was of a temporary nature; and not a long term commitment with the belief that they would eventually return to full-time work. This perception is strongly influenced by societal perceptions and attitudes of the roles of men as breadwinners and primary providers (cf. Chesley, 2011:655). Moreover, according to Radin (in Medved and Rawlins, 2011:12) who conducted a study on men as primary caregivers in the US, men in primary caregiving roles do not remain in this role for a long time as a result of gender pressure to conform.

- *A stay-at-home husband's experiences in relation to potential employers' reaction to his non-traditional marriage*

On being asked whether they would return to the workforce, the stay-at-home participants in Harrington et al.'s (2012:35) study did admit to the fact that returning to the workforce would not be an easy task, and the longer they stayed in the role of being a stay-at-home husband, the more difficult it would become to re-enter the labour market. This could be for a variety of reasons, one of which is the lack of understanding and acceptance as well as the misconceptions they have about stay-at-home husband, as was David's experience. David was the only participant who explained the reaction of potential employers when he went for job interviews: *"some of the interviews I went to, they all ask me why I didn't work for so many years and I'll tell them that I was a stay-at-home dad and I think they thought I'm lying maybe and I didn't want to work. I always find the same shocked expression on their faces when I tell them"*. Adding to this, over half of the 40 participants (fathers self-identified as "primary caregivers" in North Carolina and Pennsylvania) in Latshaw's (2011:138) study expressed concerns about the gaps in their résumés caused by "just raising kids", especially if they wanted to re-enter the job market full-time. One of the participants in this study mentioned his bias towards other stay-at-home dads and, if he had such a reaction, how many others (especially future employers) might not have the same.

- *Stay-at-home husbands' perceptions of the community's reaction towards the stay-at-home phenomenon and towards them being in this non-traditional marital arrangement*

Five of the stay-at-home participants provide information substantiating this sub-theme.

Ewing was unsure whether society as a whole accepted the non-traditional marital arrangement as he had not met many stay-at-home husbands but had the opinion that: *"...so the stereotype, whether we like it or not, is out there even today when women are emancipated"*.

In adding on to Ewing's perception, Pieter confirmed Wing's perception and held the view that society has not accepted the phenomenon of a stay-at-home husband with the working wife, expressing himself along the following lines: *"whether society has accepted the fact that men can now also assume the role of housewife...I don't think that society has totally accepted it. It may be seen as a temporary measure which will change back to the traditional roles of husband and wife, as and when circumstances change"*.

Karl, another stay-at-home husband's perception was to feel judged and look-down upon due to the fact that he was a stay-at-home husband. He had sensed that: *"Even the neighbours frown upon our situation as they can't understand how the husband, who is supposed to be the main breadwinner, now, sits at home while the wife works"*.

Mr A had a unique interpretation about the community's reaction as he is not the only stay-at-home husband in his street, but from what he shared he seems to have a feeling that the stay-at-home husband phenomenon is not really deeply accepted in the community: *"what's interesting is that I'm staying in an area where three or four households in one street are going through the same thing and we always joke about saying this is the househusband street. We joke about it but it's funny because it's happening around you, suddenly it looks ok, we accept it. It has become a reality especially if you reach a certain point in your life or certain age when the younger guys and the women end up being the breadwinners. Staying in a street where it's an everyday thing and it's ok but in reality it's not ok despite the benefits and luxury, I think that you need to weigh up the benefits and the frustration"*.

Through the stance that David takes he does not seem to be perturbed or feel stressed by his neighbour's attitude towards him as a stay-at-home husband nor, for that matter, society in general: *"...we are very private family, they would see us leaving the house or whatever else but they don't know our family's inner workings... We are not ashamed or try to hide the fact that I'm a stay-at-home husband. It's I just don't care what they say so, I don't feel any pressure from society, they can*

*think what they want to. I know from my wife's point of view her co-workers admire her."*

Many of the stay-at-home husband participants in Harrington et al.'s (2012:20) study had the same attitude as David in that "... they felt comfortable in their roles, and that if others appeared to have problems with it, it was exactly that—their problems felt that society was indeed judging them for the roles that they fulfilled and even goes as far as to say they may not say what they were thinking but they were indeed judging them". This corresponds with the perception held by Karl too. Rouleau (2010:4), referring to various authors, also arrived at the conclusion that stay-at-home fathers (and working mothers) do not conform to traditional masculine (and feminine) norms and are negatively evaluated as a consequence. (Cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll and Uhlmann, 2005; Domenico & Jones, 2006:1; Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al., 2010:280; Fischer, 2010:10; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.)

#### 4.8 **Theme 13: Suggestions and advice of working wives and stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles as well as personal needs expressed by these couples**

The themes identified from the data collected in this study indicate that the roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband may be experienced as both rewarding and challenging. However, the participants in this study have suggested that careful thought and consideration has to go into the decision before taking on such a role. Hart (2013:1) postulates that, through the feminist and other social movements, there has been a shift from the traditional to non-traditional form of marital roles of both males and females which has come to highlighting the importance of reviewing the socialisation of the boy child. Siegel (2007:47), in an article on relationships for couples where there is a wife who is the primary breadwinner and the husband is a stay-at-home parent offers the following suggestions for such couples as a means of support for making the arrangement work.



For the at-home partner (i.e. the stay-at-home husband):

- Own the choice you have made despite traditional roles attributed to couples. This will, amongst other things, require you to “reconstruct [your] masculinity” (Rochlen et al., 2008:200) by embracing the functional tenets of traditional masculinity and rejecting the dysfunctional assumptions; and to maintain gender inequality and exclusivity in meeting both work and family role responsibilities. Defining your masculinity in very personal and flexible terms, whilst acknowledging the stereotyped views of masculinity and not allowing yourself to be limited or influenced by such norms (Rochlen et al., 2008:200). This may be embarking on a road less travelled. Engage in constant “identity work” by ridding yourself of the roles and labels you used to define yourselves and to get out of this closet, by proudly defining yourselves as “stay-at-home husband/fathers” (Latshaw, 2011:135).
- Try to get in touch with others who have also decided to take on the role of caregiver, as a means of dealing with feelings of exclusion and loss of social identity and stigma. In support of this admonition, Dudley (in Rochlen et al., 2010:284) suggests that stay-at-home husbands/fathers must develop strong support networks, “as peer groups help member members to ‘consider more effective ways of confronting stigma by sharing experiences, supporting each other, and rehearsing ways to handle their stigma encounters”.
- Try to understand the pressures of your partner’s work - that it is not a holiday from child-care and chores for her.
- Communication: communicate frequently and specifically about concerns, stresses and challenges relating to the role of being a stay-at-home husband.
- Recognise that your current arrangement may or may not be forever.

For the breadwinner (i.e. the working wife)

- Be sensitive to your partner’s loss of identity.
- Do not take the work that your partner does inside the home for granted.
- Allow your partner time to adjust to new roles and do not try to take over. Baylies (2004:34) supports this suggestion when noting that sometimes working moms can have trouble adjusting to the fact that the husband now

assumes the role of stay-at home husband, which results in conflict as the wife tries to tell the husband how to do things better.

- Remember that being the breadwinner does not mean that you are the greater decision maker, discuss and include your partner.

Some of these suggestions put forward by Siegel (2007:47) and commented on by other scholars, confirmed by the account of suggestions and advice from both the stay-at-home husbands and working wives in this study to other couples in non-traditional marital roles, are to be presented as sub-themes with related categories in the ensuing discussion.

Sub-theme 13.1: Suggestions and advice of working wives to other couples in non-traditional marital roles of working wives and stay-at-home husbands

In an Internet article, Working mom-advice for life (n.d.) Dr Greenfield, author and Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the MacDonald Women's Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, offers the following advice to working mothers:

- Be proud of your juggling abilities; especially when you feel overwhelmed, step back and reflect on your achievements.
- Learn to live with and normalise the guilt feelings experienced as result of dividing time between home and work.
- Think and negotiate creative work options for example, working flexi-hours, when becoming the main breadwinner with a stay-at-home husband.
- Find child care that works for your family.
- Have back-up child care at the ready by involving friends and family, and utilising trusted community resource facilities.
- Simplify your domestic life, for example, shopping online, employing a domestic worker, contracting a cleaning and/or lawn mowing service.
- Be efficient and organised - plan schedules ahead and stick to them as far as possible.
- Spoil yourself, take time out.

- Do a reality check by monitoring and evaluating how your arrangements are working, or not working and adjust where necessary.

Some of the suggestions proposed by Dr Greenfield are echoed and confirmed in the accounts the working wives as participants in this study. Their suggestions and advice to other couples in non-traditional marital roles are presented next as categories related to this sub-theme 13.1.

- Suggestion: Do not do it

Filipovic (2013), in her commentary of working mothers, states that although women are increasingly entering into the workplace, it is not always rosy, averring that: "...while some women are doing better than ever, most of us feel as though we're doing worse because our institutions haven't caught up to our social progress".

Melissa advises against taking on non-traditional marital roles in the home. Looking at her own current situation in which she faced marital conflict as well as financial challenges due to only one person in the couple system providing all the finances for the household was straight to the point: *"I wouldn't advise couples to go this route, given my experience"*.

Although not directly advising couples not to enter into a non-traditional marital role relationship, Priscilla did conclude her interview by stating: *"For me, I do not see any benefits of being in a relationship where there is a stay-at-home husband with a working wife"*.

For Priscilla, the role of being a working wife brought with it many negative reactions socially which added to her other current work and family pressures. Alistair, her husband, had resigned without informing or discussing it with her, resulting in her having to assume the role of primary breadwinner without her consent. Since she felt this was unfair she alludes to the fact that she does not see any benefit in fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. The issue of increased role pressure is also cited by Smit (2001:605) as one that has the consequence of impacting negatively on the

quality of relationships with others: “the woman’s (non-traditional) role as labour market participant does not only bring about a quantitative increase in role obligations, but may also have a (negative) impact on the quality of her relationships with others in both the private (family) and public spheres”.

- *Suggestion: the community, family and friends should understand, accept and support couples in non-traditional marital roles*

One of the findings of a study focusing on the perceptions of employed and unemployed mothers (Gorman & Fritzsche in McVeigh, 2006:2) was that mothers who delayed or ended their employment were seen as less selfish and more dedicated, and more confirming to the norm, as men and women who violate gender norms; and they receive negative reactions from friends, family and society. The non-traditional marital arrangement of stay-at-home husband and working wife are viewed as “...a gender-atypical family form” (Chesley, 2011:644). It is regarded less favourably than the role traditionally followed of being a caregiving mother and a breadwinning father. (Cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Rochlen et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al., 2010:280; Fischer, 2010:10; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.).

Comment [U1]: Check

When taking these sentiments of negative stereotyping, stigmatisation and non-acceptance as found in the literature on the family, friends and society’s frowning on this non-traditional marital arrangement, it is not strange to find suggestions for and advice about accepting, understanding and supporting couples in this type of marital role arrangement. In considering this category, Melissa thoughtfully commented that the community can help couples: *“try to understand, perhaps try to find out the reasons why people are in this situation and not just judge”*.

Mrs Franks too made a plea for support from colleagues, friends and family for couples in the stay-at-home father/working wife set-up: *“...we need support from colleagues, friends and family members. For example, a couple with one member working finds it just as difficult to spend time together as other couples and time away from children”*.

- *Suggestion: Communication with each other, supporting each other and team work as a couple fulfilling non-traditional marital roles*

This suggestion for communication with each other about the realities, challenges and role expectations related to entering and being in this non-traditional marital arrangement was put forward by the stay-at-home husband participants (see section 13.2). Rochlen et al. (2008:202) also underscore the importance of communication for couples venturing into and finding themselves in the non-traditional marital role relationships based on a conclusion from their study. The decision amongst their participants to become a stay-at-home husband with a working wife was in reaction to a set of externally occurring circumstances, and it really only materialised after serious honest and open communication between them. The importance of communication, support and team work was also identified by six of the working wives in this study.

Melissa was emphatic: *"...I would say communication is very important. Try to talk about everything, otherwise things can go haywire"*.

Similarly, Anne focused on communication: *"Communicate, never ever stop communicating because the minute you stop talking, you start with resentment... talk about everything. The fact that you have a bad day... from the fact that you run out of black bags to the car needs a service... Talk about everything, because you maintain perspective on what the other is thinking. It stops you from taking advantage because it's easy. We went through a phase that I took him for granted. I took what he did for granted because I was so wrapped up on what I was doing for the day and that's how the relationship falls apart, I can't stress communication enough"*.

Basically, Angel stressed the importance of teamwork and being together in the situation: *"...as a couple I think number one, first you're in it together... through thick and thin.....and at the end of the day you just got to really support each other... you are a married couple with commitments and stick to that commitments... that's what*

*you promise when you get married...and sometimes to swallow some pride, it's very difficult to do".*

Dr K suggested both teamwork and communication: *"You are a team and you must not reject the person because of their situation and you must stand together and support each other, then you're half way there. And communicate because it's important you share your frustration. Because every situation is not perfect and if you're honest enough about what you feel and what makes you angry and that creates an environment for understanding and respect".*

Mrs Franks also expressed the idea of teamwork: *"It is important for the couple to remain strong and committed to each other as it needs both partners to work together to make a family work well" .*

Genevieve suggested communication from the perspective of being careful about what is said and being sensitive: *"...you have to understand your husband's psychological makeup very well because sometimes you just have to keep quiet about some stuff because sometimes you realise that remarks that are being made is because of his feeling being unable to provide and then you just have to let it go because in the end if you freak out about a thing that he had said, then it will be a full blown fight".* She continued: *"...keep your sensitivity and keep watch in front of your mouth and think what you talk because you can hurt his feelings unnecessarily or easily... how you phrase things".*

Yet another wife emphasised communication. Sonja explained: *it's important that you do communicate with each other about everything. I mean if he sees you dropping your shoes, he must be able to tell you please pick up your shoes and if you ask him to do something at home and he doesn't, you must be able to speak to him. So communicate about everything because resentment starts with the couple".*

- Be mature about being in a marital relationship in which you fulfil non-traditional marital roles

Sonja and Priscilla's opinions gave rise to this category. Sonja spoke specifically about the need to be mature: *"I think first of all couples should be mature about their situation. As you can feel resentment towards each other and believe me, you feel resentment. You continuously have to remind yourself about why you are in the situation or even when you have no choice, you need to be mature about it because you can have resentment and start thinking this person does not want to work, he is riding on my back and he is not trying to find work, etc. But at the end of the day we forget what this person is doing at home because it's a full-time job at home..."*

Priscilla advised that *"for couples in such a relationship, it is crucial that you first discuss and agree if this is the new roles that they want to take on"* and she cautioned: *"This is no walk in the park and is a big decision to take. It should not be taken by one party of the couple only"*, thereby implying taking a mature, well thought through decision.

- Develop a thick skin towards others who are critical of you as a couple being in a non-traditional marital arrangement

Sonja, with reference to this category recommended to couples to develop a thick skin regarding the reactions of others about being in a non-traditional marital arrangement. She stated: *"It's also very important when it comes to the family and the community that the couple develop a thick skin. There are always people that have something negative to say and in South Africa you do find stay-at-home husbands with working wives, but very few people talk about it and the reason is stigma etc. They don't feel comfortable with telling the people that they have a stay-at-home husband, they will come with stories of he has his own business and working from home and if you explore deeper, you will come and find the business really makes money every six months or so"*.

- Advice to other couples in the non-traditional marital arrangements - let go of previous roles

This category came from Caroline's advice that underscored an important point: *"I would say, hand over the power of responsibilities to the husband. They need it and so do you"*.

Caroline's advice can be viewed as a potential conflict diffuser to what Baylies (2004:34) highlighted when noting that sometimes working moms can have trouble adjusting to the fact that the husband now assumes the role of stay-at home husband, which results in conflict as the wife tries to tell the husband how to do things better.

- Chat rooms to talk about non-traditional marital roles, to vent emotions and give advice

Sonja, in substantiating this category, suggested that there should be chat rooms for couples: *"...and have chat rooms for these families for them to speak and say how they feel and for the dads etc. Then there are the support groups for the family, not necessarily physical support groups but something like a chat room where the dads or moms can chat and vent their emotions online and to also ask advice from one another"*. Randall (2008), in support of Sonja's suggestion, advises that, as part of obtaining support for those in non-traditional marital roles, these couples *"...can turn to online resources ... to connect and commiserate"*.

- Education or publications on the topic

Sonja suggested *"there should be more articles in newspapers or magazines to explore this phenomenon ..."*. This is especially important given the rise in the number of working wives with stay-at-home-husbands, as Fischer (2010:1) points out: *"Stay-at-home fathers are becoming more visible in Western societies due to several reasons..."* She cites the some of these reasons as: as a result of a poor economy, as a result of choice or because it may be becoming more socially



acceptable for husbands to assume the non-traditional marital role of stay-at-home husband.

- Suggestion: support groups for couples in non-traditional marital role arrangements

Chasteen and Kissman (in McVeigh, 2006:17) recommend mutual support groups for working mothers in which they can discuss their needs with their peers and then identify constructive ways of dealing with their stresses. This was also one of the suggestions provided by Dr K, one of the working mothers in the study and is also mentioned as a suggestion by the stay-at-home husbands (see Sub-theme 13.2 ).

Dr K gave reasons why she suggested a support group: *"I think there is a lack in South Africa with support. There is ... because people are initially embarrassed about it. They don't talk about it; they try to keep it in their own little world that they know of. And we were lucky to have the skill to handle this kind of emotional and stressful situations and others, where you get people killed, because they don't know how to deal and cope with the situation. So I think if there could be a support group in the future it would really give a lot of value"*. She added that such a support group should focus on: *"To let the husband know that it's ok. You are who you are, not because you don't have a job but what's inside you and also to give the family the skills to cope with their situation, especially on the financial side... that is the basic life skills, how to deal with these kind of things if you in financial troubles, legally what to do"*. Dr K also concluded that, for her personally, she has the following need that affords her the opportunity to learn from other couples about how to cope within the non-traditional marital arrangement *"...it would be interesting to see other people. Obviously it's confidential but it would be interesting about other people and their experience because you can learn from other people because there is always room for improvement"*. In this way she further endorsed the suggestion of support groups.

- Seek professional guidance

Only two of the working-wife participants mentioned seeking professional help, but it was for specific reasons.

Caroline expressed the view that professional guidance may only be necessary in certain circumstances: *“I believe that if the family is ‘solid’ enough from a financial and social aspect, I don’t think a social worker has a role to play, however, it is dependent on the reason why the husband has taken on the role of stay-at-home husband”*.

Amber advised couples to discuss and seek professional guidance, particularly when making the decision: *“I see young couples here [at work] that came for financial reasons and unsteady relationship and it worsen when they are away from home. I think before any couple considers that they need to discuss and come to an agreement... The couple may then need some support from a social work point of view to receive guidance in their decision-making”*.

Sub-theme 13.2: Suggestions and advice of stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles

In an article on the Internet, Somerfeld and Schneider (n.d.), two stay-at-home dads provide the following tips and advice to other stay-at-home husbands:

- Engage in frequent communication and discussion with your wife on household and child care responsibilities and the expectations related to this. Regular communication and clear expectations will limit conflict and resentments.
- Find time for yourself: allow yourself me-time to pursue a hobby, exercise and socialise with your friends.
- Take your job as a stay-at-home husband seriously (commit and plan to succeed at being a stay-at-home husband and dad).
- Consider the future: being a stay-at-home husband and father might not be forever, stay in touch and abreast with your field of expertise and continue to network.

- Connect with other parents: join a dads' group or a local parenting group as this will address feelings of isolation, provide opportunities to socialise and share parenting tips and frustrations with other stay-at-home husbands.
- Establish a routine: this will contribute to the children feelings safe with you, as stay-at-home husband, feeling in control.
- Get out of the house so as to prevent you from feeling trapped.
- Seek advice or help on parenting - be it from friends, family or professionals.
- Embrace the experience and the privilege of being a witness to your children's growth and developmental milestones.
- Shattering stereotypes and informing society (address stereotypes and correct wrong perceptions or attitudes people may have towards you as a result of fulfilling your non-traditional marital role).

Suggestions and advice from Somerfeld and Schneider (n.d.) overlap with the views of the stay-at-home husband-participants in this study and these are now presented as categories.

- *Think carefully before entering into a non-traditional marital roles arrangement*

In support of this category identified, Karl advised: *"being a stay-at-home husband is no piece of cake for just anyone and thus I would advise couples to think very carefully before they embark on taking on this role...There could be a lot of conflict between the couple which could be mainly driven by financial stress and thus there needs to be an understanding between the couple"*.

Doyle-Morris in Harrin (2011) support Karl's opinion and suggests that couples look at the reasons why they want to enter or have to enter into this type of arrangement before they actually take the step to do so. They ought to examine their preparedness to accept the emotional and relational consequences as well as the reactions from other people in their lives.

- Understanding and constant communication between partners in the non-traditional marital arrangement suggested

David's suggestion is in line with Somerfeld and Schneider's (n.d.) advice to engage in frequent communication and discussion with your wife on household and child care responsibilities and the expectations related to this. He explains that: *"husband and wife should have an understanding...Communication is very important and you should really consider each other's concerns and stresses. Be there for one another and come up with a plan that will work for the both of you. This is the time when you leave the ego at the door and deal with your problem...Do things that will benefit your family and sometimes there is sacrifices you need to make and if you make that sacrifices together, then it will work out at the end"*. David concluded: *"...people will talk no matter what decision you make, so make it anyway, and don't worry about the community unless they really have your best interest at other they can overcome anything"*.

To add on further to this category on which David's advice is based, Baylies (2004:32) underscores the importance of constant communication between the working wife and her stay-at-home husband, especially conveying her work schedule to her husband and to try to stick to it to prevent surprises as this could throw the husband's schedule out.

- Careful financial management

Simon, in response to this identified category, emphasised that careful financial management be in place and suggested that couples who want to venture into this type of marital arrangement should *"...clear all your debts before you do anything or go further with anything else, but that is the advice I can give"*. In highlighting the importance of personal financial management, Wealth steps.com (n.d) re-emphasise Simon's description of the importance of careful financial management by stating that the process of financial management entails: "personal finance is the application of the principles of finance to the monetary decisions of a family unit. It addresses the ways in which families obtain, budget, save, spend monetary resources over

time, taking into account various financial risk and future life events". (Cf. Alpaslan, 1997.)

- Accept situation and be positive

Rowbottom (2010:15) postulates that, as a way of acceptance and reframing their new role, stay-at-home husbands often view their role as an opportunity to use existing skills and in the process learning new ones in fulfilling this role. Japie's advice, to a certain extent, concurs with this viewpoint as he stated "...I would just tell them to be positive, adapt to the circumstances, accept it. You chose it; nothing has forced you to do it. So don't come and moan afterwards... make the best of it".

- Keep out of each other's domain

Pieter's advice to couples entering into and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles was to stay out of each other's domain: "...husband and wife...now that roles have switched... should try to keep out of the other one's domain. I believe that this... may cause conflict. For instance, the husband is not the breadwinner but will try to organise everything, the money, the budget etc. The same applies to the wife." He went on further to ask his own questions: "...I suppose you cannot blame housewives for thinking that men cannot be a good housewife? Or is it inherent, programmed in them, to want to be in control of the house, the kitchen, the washing...as this is the role that, according to the Bible, was given to them? Baylies (2004:34) refers to the fact that sometimes working moms can have trouble adjusting to the fact that the husband now assumes the role of stay-at home husband, which results in conflict as the wife tries to tell the husband how to do things better. This comment supports Pieter's advice and this category.

- Support groups for couples in non-traditional marriages; or stay-at-home husbands and the use of social media to connect with others in a similar position

Ewing and Pieter's comments below gave rise to this category. Ewing was of the view that "... *group support would be nice*, [but was concerned about who would look after the children]".

Pieter also suggested support groups for stay-at-home husbands and spoke about this along the following lines: "*one possibility I can think of is to establish a Support Group for husbands in the role of housewife....They may hold periodic meetings, for instance monthly where common issues may be discussed*". Furthermore he suggested the use of the Internet and social media: "*use the Internet with, for example Facebook, and have an e-mail network for all members on which they can communicate and exchange ideas. Periodically, articles and letters in papers, magazines and journals must be organised... to support and promote the role husbands now fulfil and make people aware of the Support Group. All these will help to improve the image of husbands in the role of housewife and provide information on the challenges and how to adapt to it. Challenges... will be how to identify husbands that need help... Maybe to establish links to welfare organisations, police, churches, etc. to report cases...*".

In line with Ewing and Pieter's suggestions, Fischer (2010:37) stresses, as part of her study on stay-at-home husbands, the importance of support groups as well as the need for these support groups to "...become more targeted and sensitive to the gender role characteristics and attitudes of stay-at-home fathers and employed fathers." Somerfeld and Schneider (n.d.), by way of giving advice to stay-at-home dads, endorses Fischer's viewpoint when suggesting to stay-at-home dads to connect with other parents, by joining a dads group or a local parenting group. This should address the feelings of isolation they may be experiencing, provide opportunities to socialise and share the parenting tips and frustrations with other stay-at-home husbands. Harrington et al. (2012:22) further emphasise the importance of support groups by stating that, in their research, one of their stay-at-home fathers even started his own support group for fathers due to the fact that none

existed. In support of this, Dudley (in Rochlen et al., 2010:284) suggests that stay-at-home husbands/fathers must develop strong support networks, “as peer groups help member members to consider more effective ways of confronting stigma by sharing experiences, supporting each other, and rehearsing ways to handle their stigma encounters”.

- Community education about the non-traditional marital role family arrangement

The idea of educating the community was mooted by Augustine: “*I think that the community should be educated about this and not just judge without knowing the facts. Maybe have something like a community workshop or even a book to help families like us would be nice*”. Augustine’s advice was confirmed by Somerfeld and Schneider’s (n.d.) notion that the stay-at-home husbands themselves should call upon others in the same situation to “shatter stereotypes and inform society about the stay-at-home phenomenon: this the mentioned authors expressed as follows: “at-home dads often-times get a bad rap based on the negative perceptions in the media and society at large. It’s your duty to inform others, as well as demonstrate through parenting, that fathers can be nurturing, competent and caring”.

- Request family support as a couple being in a non-traditional marital arrangement

Harrington et al. (2012:22) indicate that many of the stay-at-home husbands in their study revealed that one of the challenges of fulfilling this non-traditional role of stay-at-home husband is the feeling of isolation due to the lack of support structures (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:195; Latshaw, 2011:137). Some fathers reported that one of the reasons for this was because of having relocated as a result of the wife’s job, whilst others expressed difficulties around being accepted into mothers’ playgroups (Latshaw, 2011:137). They experienced feelings of rejection at stay-at-home mother support groups as they openly excluded stay-at-home fathers from their groups. The suggestion, specifically for family support, became evident when Ewing expressed the need couples have for external support, especially from family, which he and Anne did not have: “*Family is extremely important. We know of couples that even if*

*their families are around them, they don't help them you know, and I think that's really wrong because in today's world you really need that".*

- *Stay-at-home husbands should engage with and support other stay-at-home husbands*

The feeling of social isolation has been cited as one of the challenges of stay-at-home husbands (cf. Somerfeld and Schneider, n.d.; Scott, 2011:20). Often stay-at-home husbands feel this isolation due to either fear of being stigmatised or judged, or as a result of not being able to share experiences with other stay-at-home husbands. In support of this conclusion, Rochlen et al. (2008:195) postulate that: "the lack of interaction with men in similar roles also contributed to their feelings of social isolation." Baylies (2004:14) reports that stay-at-home husbands, unlike stay-at-home mothers, do not reach out to each other. This he ascribes to the fact that they may not want to be perceived as wimps, do not want to be told what to do and perhaps, it is also as he states "men don't like asking for directions when lost" - they are reluctant to ask each other for advice (cf. Somerfeld and Schneider, n.d.).

In support of this category and Mr A's suggestion "*...in your immediate surrounding when you hear someone is in the same situation as you ...Make time to go and speak to that person, to tell them it's not so bad and there is a lot of benefits and support each other. In other words, help your neighbour when he goes through that and make time to discuss the subject 'cos it's become part of society and help people maybe going in that same situation. That's the support I will give them, not from a professional point of view"*, Baylies (2004:14) specific contention and the recommendations of other scholars endorse the validity of this category.

- *Suggestions: support is needed for working wives and mutual respect*

Ewing's suggestion was an appeal for support for the working wife and fostering mutual respect, as he stated: "*...one of the things I learned, there must be a big support for the working wife....it's important for me that my wife feels that I respect it and I support her all the way...*". Later on, he added: "*that is my first advice is to*



*respect each other and realise that being a stay-at-home husband is a lot of work, especially if there are kids involved*". Sadie, from the Programme "Loslip" (see Addendum 3.1) contributors, called for support for mutual respect stating that, if the husband and wife work together as a team, then it does not matter who fulfils which role.

- *Seek professional advice, guidance and support*

Karl recommended that couples entering into a non-traditional marital arrangements need: *"...even professional advice in terms of how to make this transition is something that the couple may need and need to consider...any couple that considers this route, need to go into it with open eyes ... A lot of communication would be needed between the couple, hence my suggestion of seeking professional help for guidance and support... This is definitely a role that you must be certain... before stepping into it"*.

Simon also focused his advice on obtaining advice and help: *"I would say seek advice, that's what I will do. Learn to discuss the matters again. I'm not a psychologist but discuss things. If people were a little more open, you might be able to solve a lot of problems"*.

After speaking of his loneliness, Japie suggested having someone to listen: *"it thus will help to sometimes just have an opportunity to vent your emotions to someone who is not there to judge you but is just willing to listen to you. And sometimes give you a new perspective or outlook on your situation, where you can be reminded about the reasons why you are doing what you are doing with new energy and strength"*. Scott (2011:20) relates to these feelings of loneliness mentioned by Japie and points out that stay-at-home husbands often experience feelings of isolation which could be as a result of the at-home child care process or as a result of feeling: *"... acute isolation as males in a traditionally female role. They are also very visible, often singular dads in a sea of moms."*

## 4.9 CONCLUSION

The remainder of the study's thirteen themes not introduced in Chapter 3 were presented in this chapter.

The researcher started this chapter by pointing out that Chapter 4 was a continuation of Chapter 3 in which the first six themes, together with their sub-themes and categories (where appropriate) were discussed and substantiated by a literature control. In this chapter (Chapter 4) the remaining research findings were presented as seven themes with related sub-themes and categories (where necessary). Once again these were substantiated by a body of literature as well as responses from callers on the radio programme "Loslip" (See Addendum 3.1).

Theme 7 focused on the challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. The working wives mentioned the following as challenges experienced within this role: financial constraints; concerns about the ill health of their partner; the ability of the marital partner to fulfil his non-traditional role of stay-at-home husband; role over-load and role conflict as result of the various role demands; lack of understanding of others for couples in non-traditional marriages; and the loss of the child care role. The stay-at-home husbands identified the following as challenges whilst fulfilling this non-traditional marital role: financial challenges (i.e. not having their own money anymore); challenges in relation to fulfilling the various role demands of managing the household and the child care; the lack of support and understanding of family, friends and the community.

In the eighth theme, attention was given to participants' perceptions of the partner's feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities., followed by theme nine which focused on the benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage family unit.

The ninth theme centred on the benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage family unit. The working wives highlighted the following as benefits of the non-traditional marital role

arrangement: enjoying the role of working wife, in that they could pursue career goals and attain self-actualization; some of them reported feeling powerful in the sense of feeling financially in control and being able to meet the family's financial needs; the need not to worry about child care, housework and running errands; affording the children the opportunity to see women in a role other than that of being a homemaker and child nurturer; and the father being significantly involved in child care.

For the stay-at-home husband being in this role had the following benefits: providing them time out to relax and do things they previously did not have time for; some of them were unchained from work-related stress and were no longer being bossed around; more time with the family and could now be a first-hand witness of the family's and the children's growth and development; and experiencing improved health. Furthermore, the wife benefitted that she had less to do (homework-wise) and could relax more over weekends and this arrangement assisted some of the couples to save financially.

In Theme 10, attention was given to the coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. The means to cope employed by the working wives included the following: emotional outbursts; adopting a specific mind-set and positive attitude about being the working wife with a stay-at-home husband; open and honest communication for the couples about the realities and challenges related to being engaged in and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles; some referred to their work as a coping resource; support from friends; self-nurturing and care; spending time with their children; and were employed to cope with the demands of fulfilling the role of working wife with a stay-at-home husband.

From the stay-at-home husbands' accounts, the following ways of coping became apparent: could engage in hobbies, further studies; took time out with friends and could be involved in volunteer work; a change in attitude necessary, adopting a positive outlook on the matter; self-preservation; prioritising the multiple role demands brought about by managing the housework and child care responsibilities;

and communicating with their spouses as a coping resource to manage the realities and challenges related to the being and fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband.

Theme 11 focused on the needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. From the working wives' accounts the following needs surfaced: the need for support and understanding from the husband, family and the community; more time for themselves and the family i.e. a work-life balance; more time away with the husband; need for a less stressful job; assistance with housework and child care; greater financial security; recognition and respect for them in their role of working-wife.

Needs from the stay-at-home husband participants were: nothing as they were happy and content with the current state of affairs; need for their children to assist them with the household chores; need for social interaction with friends and other people; need for a babysitter at times; and the need for understanding from their family about their situation of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband.

Theme 12 covered the reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples' non-traditional marriage. Both the stay-at-home husbands and the working wife shared accounts pointing to both the acceptance and non-acceptance experienced from family and friends with respect to their arrangement of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband. The couples pointed out that their children were accepting of their non-traditional marital arrangements.

Theme 13 brought to the foreground the suggestions and advice offered by working wives and stay-at-home husbands for other couples in non-traditional marital roles. These are summarised as follows: not go into a non-traditional marital arrangement; support and communicate with each other; work as a team; and be mature about the reality of being in a non-traditional marital role and let go of previous roles; develop a thick skin to survive the lack of understanding of others about their decision to be in this non-traditional marital arrangement; seek professional help, should the need arise; join support groups and chat rooms to communicate and commiserate;

educate the public and in so doing elicit the understanding, acceptance and support from family friends and the community.

The suggestions and advice of the stay-at-home husbands to other couples in these non-traditional arrangements, in some instances, overlapped with those of their spouses and can be summarised as follows: think carefully before venturing into the role of becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband or vice versa; note careful financial planning and management is required; important to understanding each other; engage in constant communication with each other, accept the situation and be positive; keep out of each other's domain; support your wife and respect her role as a working wife; elicit the support from friends, family and community; join support groups; use social media to link with other fathers in the same position; and educate the public.

The next and last chapter of this report will and focus on the summary, conclusions and recommendations following from the completion of this research endeavour.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters of this report presented a descriptive account of a research endeavour that was embarked on through the vehicle of a qualitative research approach. It utilised the collective case study and phenomenological research designs coupled with an explorative, descriptive and contextual strategy of inquiry (Chapters 1 and 2). The aim was to acquire an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands, in order to forward recommendations for Social Work Practice guidelines to support couples in non-traditional marital role relationships. The research findings presented as emerging from this research endeavour were also subjected to a literature control (Chapters 3 and 4).

In this final chapter of the report five aspects will be covered. First, a brief summary of Chapter 1 will be given. Second, with reference to Chapter 2, a summary will be provided pointing out how the research approach, designs and strategies of inquiry and research methods were applied to investigate the topic under investigation. This will be complemented with conclusions arrived at during and after the research methodology had been executed, and recommendations pertaining to the research methodology will be forwarded. The research findings documented in Chapters 3 and 4 will be presented in a summarising fashion and interspersed with a conclusion-wise discussion. Third, the conclusions arrived at in respect of the research methodology, and the emerging research, will then be complemented by recommendations, after the limitations inherent to this study are mentioned, specifically as pertaining to the qualitative research process. Fourth, recommendations will focus on the three main foci of this research, namely, Social Work Practice guidelines for couples entering into and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband; training and education; and

further and future research. Fifth, a summary conclusion will draw the threads together.

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1

The first half of this chapter entitled: "Introduction and general orientation to the study", was devoted to providing an introduction and background to the study; a problem formulation; a motivation for the study; and a theoretical framework as point of departure and reference to illuminate the topic under investigation. The remainder of the chapter focused on a description of the research approach, designs and methods originally planned to investigate the topic of the thesis. The ethical considerations the researcher intended to use throughout this research endeavour, and the clarification of the key concepts central to this study, were also introduced. Furthermore, an outline of the research report was provided in terms of the number of chapters comprising the report and the focus of each chapter.

From the background and introduction to the study presented in Chapter 1, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that the societal or macro-system levels change, creating socio-historical, political, legislative and economic changes. One particular change could be attributed to emancipating women from the strait jacket that limited them *inter alia* to the marital and family roles of homemaker and nurturer-carer of children and nurturing husbands after their daily labours at work (Piotrkowski, in Cargan, 1991:7). Similarly, these macro-system level changes also unchained the men from some of the marital and family roles traditionally assigned to them, that of being the protector and sole provider or breadwinner of the family (Wille, 1995:803).

These macro-system level changes resulted in:

- The growth of female participation in the open labour market (Latshaw, 2011:126; Rochlen et al., 2010:281)
- Career path advancements for women
- Instances where women were now earning much more than their spouses and earnings were sufficient to sustain the family on the women's salaries alone (Latshaw, 2011:126; Rochlen et al., 2010:281)

- Corporate down-sizing and lay-offs at work due to economic recessions (McKenna, 1999)
- Some men's inability to find other employment (Chesley, 2011:645) due to the economic recessions and to affirmative action policies and legislation (Employment Equity Act, Act No 55 of 1998; Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998) (Rochlen et al., 2010:281; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18)

As a result of these notable changes, new marital patterns emerged, alongside the traditional marital form as “adaptive responses to the macro [system] level changes” (cf. Ross et al., 1983:811; Chesley, 2011:663), summarised above and presented in Chapter 1. The traditional marriage as an institution with its moulded, rigidly defined rules and roles and role expectation for husband and wife (cf. Alpaslan, 1997:3) had, as a result, shifted (Lauer & Yodanis, 2010) to make way for a modern marriage pattern. The latter is, *inter alia*, characterised by flexible and interchangeable role divisions amongst husband and wife (cf. Alpaslan 1997:3). This state of affairs, in turn, and to quote Casper (1997:1) “[placed] ... renewed emphasis on ... the well-being of families, fathers’ roles in child-rearing [with] articles [that] have been written on diverse topics ranging from stay-at-home dads [with working wives] to fathers as child care providers...” (cf. Bridges, Etaugh, Barnes-Farrell, 2002; Rochlen et al., 2008; Sinno & Killen, 2009; Rochlen, et al., 2010; Chesley, 2011; Latshaw, 2011; Fischer & Anderson, 2012). It culminated in the emergence of the “stay-at-home dad” or “Homo-Domesticus” or the “House-dad” (McKenna, 1999:3).

Zimmerman (2000:338) noted that whilst the number of stay-at-home husbands is increasing ... “there is no research to date on the division of household labour and the sharing of childcare in stay-at-home father/career mother families.” Snitker (2010:19) based on literature consulted (cf. Rubin and Wooten (2007); Gorman & Fritzsche, (2002) and Vejar et al., 2006 in Snitker, 2010:19), quite recently echoes Zimmerman’s conclusion when stating that: “much research has investigated stay-at-home mother families but few studies have primarily focused on stay-at-home fathers”. Chesley (2011:642) concurs and corroborates this by stating that “the stay-at-home father [husband] or [/and] breadwinner mother [wife] family are rare and represent a non-typical family form”. In addition, Harrington et al. (2012:6) posits that



research on the stay-at-home husband is quite limited. Rochlen et al. (2008:193-194) are of the opinion that whilst a body of knowledge is available on the motivations, experiences, challenges and stigma related to the working wife phenomenon in the dual career couple system (cf. Smit, 2001:603; Zimmerman, 2000:350; Moore, 1990:1), the unique experiences of stay-at-home husbands, remain largely unknown. Stemming from the former observations and conclusions, Smit (2006:412), focusing on the South African multi-cultural context, recommends that research specific to the topic of stay-at-home husbands with working wives is needed to enhance our understanding of the changes in the role of the husband/father, in order to inform social policies and programmes dealing with the husband/father's rights and obligations. According to him the findings generated from such research endeavours will enable social scientists and social service professionals to be in a better position to create social awareness around these non-traditional marital roles, and to address the stigma related to them. Furthermore, such findings could inform interventions to support stay-at-home husbands with working wives to come out of the closeted environment in which they find themselves which, in turn, will hopefully bring about a better work-family-fit for couples in non-traditional marital roles (Smit, 2006:412).

This study's research problem was formulated as follows: An atypical family form in which the wife and the husband enter into and fulfil the non-traditional marital roles of a working wife (mother) and a stay-at-home husband (father) (Harrington et al., 2012:6; Chesley, 2011:642) is on the increase (Zimmerman, 2000:338), due to socio-historical, political, legislative and economic evolvments and changes in society (Davidson & Moore, 1996:49.50 & 85-86; Thorn & Gilbert, 1998:259). Whilst a body of knowledge is available focusing on the working wife phenomenon within a dual career marital system (cf. Smit, 2001:603), a paucity in knowledge and research on the topic stay-at-home husbands with breadwinning wives (nationally and internationally) exists. This is especially so in the case of the unique experiences of the working wife and stay-at-home husband in their non-traditional marital/family roles, an area in which information is limited and circumstances are largely unknown (cf. Harrington et al., 2012:6; Chesley, 2011:642; Rochlen et al., 2008:193, 194; Latshaw, 2011:125), with the effect that specific guidelines for Social Work support

for such couples in a non-traditional marital role relationship are limited and to a large extent non-existent.

The defined research problem is thus addressed in a theoretical framework adopted by the researcher as point of departure and serves as a spotlight to illuminate the topic under investigation (cf. Maxwell, 2013:49), with the adoption of the ecological systems perspective, gender ideology and role theories (Chapter 1: Section 1.4 under Theoretical framework).

The ecological systems perspective in essence places the focus on the interaction and the reciprocal influence between persons and their environment, depicted as micro-, meso-, exo- and macro systems, rather than on one or the other, and refers to the adaptive fit between organisms and their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1994:37-43; Darling, 2007:203; Fagan & Press, 2008:1137). Social work *inter alia* concerns itself with the “level of fit” and assessing this level of fit, which in turn “furnish[es] direction and focus to the helping process” (cf. Wakefield, 1996:478).

The concept “gender role” refers to “traits, behaviours, and attitudes [that are culturally] and socially prescribed and [proscribed] for women and men in a given society” (Davidson and Moore, 1996:49), whilst “role theory” mainly focuses on role development and expected role behaviour and performance within a specific context” (cf. Hemphil (2008:31). “Gender ideology” on the other hand, according to Nordenmark (in Fagan & Press, 2008:1142), refers to the beliefs or viewpoints and attitudes or stances that a people maintain regarding gender roles. The fact that macro-system level changes (mentioned above) reverberated and influenced the meso- and micro systems, and the individual, and that these, in reciprocal fashion, influenced the macro-system, drew the researcher to adopting an ecological systems perspective.

The researcher was also drawn to including gender ideology and role theories as part of her theoretical framework for this study. The facts that influenced her concerned: the phenomenon of the working wife with a stay-at-home husband has been labelled a rarity and at present an “atypical family form” (cf. Chesley,

2011:642); and that couples in these relationships are subject to stigma, negative stereotyping and prejudice, for violating the established and normative gender roles (cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll & Uhlmann (2005); Fischer, 2010:10; Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al. 2010:280, Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17;). She arrived at the conclusion that they are well-suited for enhancing her initial understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. These mentioned theories were also deliberately decided upon and employed as a proverbial “coat closet” in that “the existing theory [in the context of qualitative research] function, amongst others, as the “coat hooks” in the closet; they provide places to ‘hang’ data, showing their relationship to other data” (Maxwell, 2013:49).

Based on this problem formulation the following research question was formulated:  
*What are the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in their non-traditional marriage role relationships?*

Through setting a goal and objectives (see Chapter 1, section 1.5) the researcher explored the phenomenon through a qualitative lens, utilising the collective case study and phenomenological research designs coupled with an explorative, descriptive and contextual strategy of inquiry. As explained in Chapter 1 the researcher’s initial plan was to recruit a sample of participants by using purposive and snowball sampling techniques from a population constituting all married couples where the wife was working and the husband was a stay-at-home husband for a period of at least six months within the geographical boundaries of Gauteng. This province was decided upon as matter of convenience, since the researcher resides within this province. She intended to contact and interview a journalist, a self-identified “stay-at-home husband” who had written an article on this topic. She would then request his assistance with the recruitment of participants (i.e. snowball sampling). Semi-structured interviewing was decided upon as the method for data collection. The working wife and stay-at-home husband would be immediately interviewed one after the other to limit them influencing each other regarding the responses. Tesch’s steps of analysing qualitative generated data (as cited in Creswell, 2009:186) were then adopted for data analysis and Guba’s model (in

Krefting, 1991) was selected for ensuring the trustworthiness of the research findings.

### 5.2.1 Summary, conclusions and recommendation on the applied research methodology (Chapter 2)

Chapter 1, apart from providing an introduction and background to the study, a problem formulation and motivation for the study as well as a theoretical framework as point of departure and reference to illuminate the topic under investigation, also reported on the proposed “research plan” to be followed for answering the research question. In Chapter 2 the researcher provided a description of how this proposed research plan introduced in the previous chapter became manifested in reality. As proposed in Chapter 1 the researcher explored and described the topic under investigation by employing a qualitative approach. Based on the fact that qualitative research is explorative by nature and in essence endeavours to gain an in depth understanding of how people experience a given research issue, by focusing on the human side of the issue, and allowing for the identification of intangible factors such as social norms, gender roles, perceptions and experiences, the researcher decided to use this approach (cf. Ospina, 2004; Whittaker, 2002:251; Creswell, 2013:44-46).

In reflecting on the research approach chosen the researcher arrived at the conclusion that the research approach adopted to investigate the topic under investigation was befitting as it allowed her to explore and describe, on a first-hand basis, the experiences, challenges and coping resources related to being a working-wife and a stay-at-home husband from couples fulfilling these non-traditional marital roles.

Inherent to the qualitative research approach, and as originally intended the researcher utilised the collective case study and phenomenological research designs, complemented by an explorative, descriptive and contextual strategy of inquiry. The collective case study as explained (in Chapters 1 and 2) is a type of a case study research design which involves the inclusion of multiple cases (cf. Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008:549-550) [i.e. various couples fulfilling non-traditional

marital roles] in order to facilitate the exploration of a phenomenon/research topic [i.e. the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands in non-traditional marriages] amongst these cases, contextually and by using a variety of data sources (cf. Baxter & Jack, 2008:543,548; Guest, et al., 2013:9, 14). In summary, phenomenology as research design, in essence attempts to understand the lived experiences of individuals related to a phenomenon and the meaning they derived as result of experiencing the phenomenon (cf. Vydellingum, 2000:101; Sokolowski in Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007:1373; Petty, Thomson and Stew, 2012:379).

The explorative, descriptive and contextual strategies of inquiry were employed as the research objectives were to explore and describe from the context of couples in the non-traditional marital roles of working wife and stay-at-home husband their experiences, challenges and coping resources in relation to being in and fulfilling the mentioned roles. Upon reflection, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that research designs, and strategies of inquiry chosen were well-matched to help realise the research objectives and the stated goal formulated at the outset of the study.

With reference to the research methods (i.e. from whom, where, and how the data will be collected, analysed and verified) the researcher had to amend the originally proposed plan in particular with reference to the geographical boundaries of the population, the recruitment methods of participants, and the methods of data collection. Due to challenges experienced in recruiting participants within the geographical boundaries of the province (i.e. Gauteng) originally decided upon for practical, convenient and economical reasons, the researcher had to expand the geographical boundaries of the population from where a sample was to be obtained. In the end the population comprised of participants obtained from three provinces in South Africa (i.e. Gauteng, Free State and Western Cape) who met the stated criteria of inclusion (see Chapter 2, section 2.2). [For a detailed account of the challenges experienced in recruiting participants the reader is referred to Chapter 2, section 2.4.1.]

Whilst the researcher (as originally intended) hand-picked all the participants purposively, and in some instances used the snowball sampling method to recruit participants (as per the original plan), she had to devise a new plan for participant recruitment when the journalist who was a self-identified stay-at-home husband, was no longer fulfilling this role and his referral contacts did not bear any fruit. The researcher had to use family, friends and colleagues from work to refer her to individuals whom they knew were fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles and some had to operate as intermediaries to bring the researcher and prospective participants in contact with each other. Furthermore, she even turned to the Internet to recruit participants who met the started inclusion criteria. She had to elicit assistance from her supervisor who made use of one his social networks, a journalist at Die Volksblad (a newspaper in the Free State). The journalist placed a notice about the research in the newspaper “Die Volksblad” requesting individuals who met the requirements for inclusion in the study to contact the researcher [The reader is referred to Chapter 2, Table 2.3) for a detailed account of how the participants who met the criteria of inclusion were recruited for participation in this research project.]

Due to the physical distance between herself and some of the participants, time and money constraints it was not possible for the researcher to only use the originally planned method of data collection (i.e. semi-structured interviews facilitated by open-ended questions contained in an interview guide). She had to complement this method of data collection with telephonic interviews as well as e-communication to cater for the participants in the provinces other than Gauteng, and to also accommodate those participants who were willing to participate in the study but who were not comfortable and willing to be interviewed in a face-to-face fashion. The researcher stuck to what was originally planned and employed the eight steps for analysing qualitative generated data proposed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186). She also remained with the pointers provided by Guba's (in Krefting, 1991:214-222) for ensuring the trustworthiness of the research findings.

When taking into account the challenges experienced in obtaining individuals who met the criteria for inclusion and who were willing to participate in the study, the researcher came to the conclusion that the chosen research approach with the

designs and methods inherent to the former was well-suited. In qualitative research, the idea of an emergent research design is accommodated (cf. Creswell, 2013 and Marshall & Rossman, 2010 in Creswell, 2013:44-46), which in light of the challenges experienced, became the researcher's saving grace, as the initial plan for research had to be adapted and it evolved as the process of entering the field and collecting data gained momentum. The researcher found the steps for qualitative data analysis by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186), user-friendly and directional. Guba's model for ensuring the trustworthiness of the research findings guided her during the research endeavour to ensure that the voice of the participants came through authentically and unaltered.

Based on the conclusions arrived at related to the research methodology employed (as described in Chapter 2 of the report) the researcher wants to put forward the following **recommendations specific related to the research methodology employed:**

- Where researchers venture into investigating research topics that are ill-researched, of a sensitive nature and where the populations from which samples have to be drawn are vulnerable or hidden (as was the case in this study), the researcher wants to recommend that preference be given to the **qualitative research approach** as it allows for getting out in the field and hand-picking information-rich participants (cf. Ritchie and Lewis, 2005:32-33). When a researcher seeks to understand the perspectives of participants, explore and describe the meaning they give to phenomena, or to observe a process in-depth, then a qualitative approach is recommended (cf. Green and Thorogood, 2009:5, 38).
- Based on the conclusion that the various methods of data collection employed, the semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews, and e-communication, afforded the participants opportunities to share their stories in relation to their own experiences, challenges and coping resources about being in these non-traditional arrangements of working wives and stay-at-home husbands, in ways most comfortable to them, the researcher wants to recommend that researchers

**adopt various modes of data collection.** This will allow for greater inclusivity of participants, and will bridge the limitation caused by the researcher and participants being physically removed from each other. It will also allow for participants who are not comfortable to talk about the topic under investigation, to do it in a less threatened and more comfortable way.

- Permissible ways of recruitment of participants within the qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to negotiate the challenge experienced in recruiting participants who met the criteria for inclusion in this study, and she recommends to other researcher to follow suit by employing this smorgasbord of **participant recruitment methods** should the need arise.
- Initially, after all the interviews were transcribed and the responses received from the participants were formatted for analysis, the researcher felt overwhelmed with the amount of data available and how to manage and analyse the data obtained. The **steps for qualitative data analysis** proposed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186), provided her with clear direction and she found these steps user-friendly in assisting her to manage this mammoth task. In view of her experience she would like to recommend “this recipe” for analysing qualitatively generated data to a researcher feeling stuck in not knowing how to tackle the analysis of the data in a manageable way.

#### 5.2.2 Summary and conclusion-wise discussion Chapters 3 and 4

Chapters 3 and 4 of this report was dedicated to the presentation of the research findings generated using various means of data collection. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2 the data collected were thematically analysed by the researcher and an independent coder, following the step-wise format for analysing qualitative generated data as devised by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186). Resulting from the data analysis, and a subsequent consensus discussion between the researcher, the independent coder and the study's supervisor thirteen themes with accompanying sub-themes and categories (where applicable), were identified. The first six themes were discussed in Chapter 3, and the remaining seven themes in Chapter 4 of this report.



**Theme 1: Circumstances and reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-at-home husband**

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that various circumstances and reasons were responsible for the participants in this study entering into and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles of a working wife and a stay-at-home husband. She further concluded that the reasons for adopting and engaging in these non-traditional marital and family roles were less intrinsically driven in that none of the stay-at-home husbands had seen themselves in this role at earlier points in their lives (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:202) but their position was the result of external circumstances (i.e. the husbands' job losses and subsequent inability to find other employment) (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:202; Chesley, 2011:645,650; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:16). This matches up with a similar finding amongst the 14 full-time stay-at-home husbands in the study of Rochlen et al. (2008:202).

The most common reason provided by the working wife participants for assuming a non-traditional marital role was their husband's retrenchment. Like-wise the husband participants cited retrenchment as the most common reason for becoming stay-at-home husbands, in that five of the ten of them reported this as the explanation together with subsequent inability to find other permanent employment as the main cause of them being in this role.

Looking at the occurrence of five of the male participants being retrenched and their subsequent inability to obtain other permanent employment from an ecological-systems perspective, the researcher arrived at the following conclusion: the macro-system level changes with reference to the economic recessions worldwide also affected the South African economy at meso-level (cf. Chesley, 2011:663). Coupled with this were the political changes in South Africa that brought into existence new legislation, the Employment Equity Act, (Act No 55 of 1998), the Skills Development Act (Act No 97 of 1998) and policies, such as the affirmative action policies based on Section 15 of the Employment Equity Act (Act No 55 of 1998). This, in turn, had a direct influence on the micro-systems and the individual. It resulted in corporate

down-sizing and lay-offs at work (McKenna, 1999); women being in more favourable positions to find employment with higher earning potential and greater career advancements (Cf. Rochlen, et al., 2010:281; Latshaw, 2011:126.), and some men's inability to find other employment. (Cf. Chesley, 2011:645; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:16.)

Two couples cited the husband's resignation from work as the reason for assuming non-traditional marital roles. The one wife was not aware of her husband's intention to resign from his job and she only found out about the resignation after he had done so. The husband of this wife stated that he had conflict with his boss and did not like the manner in which he was being treated, resulting in him resigning from his job. The other wife explains that her husband resigned as a result of his dislike of his job and then the subsequent onset of depression as a result of this dislike. This husband confirmed the wife's account. Men's job dissatisfaction was also mentioned in the literature consulted as reason for taking on the role of stay-at-home husband/father (Chesley, 2011:650, Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18).

One couple described their concern for the well-being of her premature son, and discomfort around sending him to a crèche as the reason for them assuming the non-traditional marital roles of working wife with a stay-at-home husband. In one couple's situation, the husband went on early retirement with a subsequent decline in their life-style letting them decide that the wife would become a working wife accepting a lucrative position abroad to improve and maintain the couple's lifestyle.

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that the reasons and circumstances mentioned by the participants for entering into and fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles matches up with the research findings in the literature consulted (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198; Rochlen et al., 2010:279,281; Chesley, 2011:465; Latshaw, 2011:126,130; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18).

**Theme 2: How the agreement was reached by the couple to enter into non-traditional marital roles**

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that the decision to enter into and fulfil non-traditional marital roles was either brought about by considerations and discussions amongst some of the couples that led to a joint agreement; or an agreement between the couple that was brought about as a result of forced circumstances, or a one-sided decision was made by one of the partners to enter into a non-traditional marital role and in so doing, forced the other partner to do like-wise.

Four couples decided to assume non-traditional marital roles after reaching a joint agreement, following discussion. These couples considered all the pros and cons of entering into these roles through deliberation which then resulted in them deciding that this was the best option for the family. A similar process of deciding to enter into non-traditional marital roles was reported for seven of the 14 stay-at home fathers in Rochlen et al.'s. (2008:198) study. Six wives mentioned that the husband's retrenchment forced them into assuming non-traditional roles. These wives highlighted how the failure or struggle to obtain alternative permanent employment by the husband resulted in the couple assuming non-traditional marital roles. Deciding to enter into non-traditional marital roles as an adaptive response to a forced circumstance of being retrenched was also found reported amongst some of the participants in Rochlen et al.'s. (2008:198) study.

In the case of two of the couples interviewed, there was no specific process of deliberation that led to an agreeing decision to assume the non-traditional marital roles they were currently in. In the case of one couple it was the husband who had reached the decision on his own and the wife only found out later that he had resigned and was thus forced to take on the role of working wife. The other couple indicated that they did not have a period where they had a time of deliberation and discussion and to agree to take on the new roles; they just assumed the non-traditional marital roles.

### **Theme 3: Emotional reactions to and feelings about entering and settling into non-traditional marital roles**

With reference to this theme, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that the emotional reactions and feelings about the entering and settling into the non-traditional marital roles mentioned by the wives and husbands were quite varied. Both the working wives and the stay-at-home husbands experienced positive and negative feelings and emotional reactions. Furthermore, for some, the process of adapting to and assimilating the new or a different role was challenging whilst for others it was easy.

In focusing on the working wives, Caroline and Amber found that adjusting and settling into the non-traditional marital role of working wife was, from the outset easy. Melissa and Mrs Franks found the initial adjustment rather difficult. This, however, was only in the beginning as they settled into the role of working wife with a stay-at-home husband well. In the case where one of the participants (Priscilla) was forced into the role of the working wife due to her husband's one-sided decision to resign, feelings of unfairness, unhappiness and feeling stressed were experienced.

The husband participants identified the following positive and negative emotional reactions and feelings about entering and settling into the non-traditional role of stay-at-home husband/father. Some of these feelings correspond with the emotional reactions and feelings reported by participants in other studies consulted and reference to these sources will be provided further along. Feelings of excitement and apprehension were experienced by David (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198). Japie, Karl. David and Mr Franks mentioned that they felt at ease and enjoyed the non-traditional marital role (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:26). Augustine experienced feelings of hurt, helplessness and anger as to not being able to find employment. Alistair was the only participant who reported feelings of boredom (cf. Harrington et al., 2012:14). Mr A referred to typical feelings of "house-wife frustrations", whilst Alistair expressed feelings of frustration for not having his own money. Ewing and Mr A referred to feeling unappreciated at times with the former's wife thinking he is not doing a thing at home, while Mr A's children did not show

respect for the effort put into cleaning the house. Mr A felt socially isolated and excluded (cf. Harrington et al., 2012:14; O'Brien, 2012:31; Latshaw, 2011:137). Ewing and Pieter experienced feelings of loss with specific reference to the work environment and found it difficult to adjust at first to non-traditional marital roles (cf. Harrington et al., 2012:14; O'Brien, 2012:29).

**Theme 4: Changes in terms of financial, household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that the adoption of a non-traditional marital role catapulted the working wife into the role of main breadwinner, with the other spouse taking on the role of stay-at-home husband and father. However, some of the stay-at-home husband participants (i.e. Alistair, Simon, Pieter, Mr A and Augustine) supplemented their wives' incomes through engaging in part-time jobs or contractual work.

The researcher also arrived at the conclusion that entering into these non-traditional marital roles brought about changes for some of the couples in the way they budget and manage their finances. It became clear that living off one income contributed to financial stress and strain on the side of some of the working wife participants. David and Sonja, previously budgeted together as a couple, but Sonja admitted that being the sole breadwinner caused her to be financially concerned, especially as they would have enough money to cover the emergencies. In the case of Augustine and Melissa, Augustine referred to the fact that being the sole breadwinner was stressful, whilst also revealing that he could notice the resentment in his wife's eyes when they could not foot the bills and him being unable to find employment.

Mrs Franks intimated that, following her husband's retrenchment, they had to adjust the budget and prioritise purchases. They had to then focus on cutting out the luxuries and only procure the necessities. Mr K made reference to the fact that he is now dependent on his wife's money for executing his hobbies. The couple is mutually engaged in the budgeting and management of finances. With Amber

working overseas, and Japie being in South Africa, she does her own budget in Saudi-Arabia and he budgets and manages the finances she sends from abroad. Alistair and Priscilla did not share much about how they budget and manages her income, apart from the fact that she mentioned that she had to support herself and the children; and Alistair referring to the fact that he always had to ask her for money. In the case of Simon and Angel, Angel would be the one managing the finances and Simon would only contribute if there was a shortfall with the income generated from the odd jobs he does. Whilst when Pieter and Genevieve, previously both were gainfully employed divided the financial responsibilities and each had to pay what was due, they now combine all the eggs in one basket and budget together to make ends meet.

Resulting from the accounts of the participants in terms of changes in household chores and child care responsibilities as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles of stay-at-home husband and father and working wife and mother, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that for some couples the changes in this regard were significant, whilst for others it was not. She concluded that in the couple relationships role flexibility, role sharing and role reversal occurred in terms of household chores and child care responsibilities; the husbands (i.e. Mr Franks, Mr A, and David) found the switch from sole breadwinner to that of stay-at-home husband and father less traumatic and overpowering than expected and this observation is confirmed in the literature where it is pointed out that fathers' involvement in parenting assists with their transition to and adjustment to atypical gender role arrangements (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:194; Chesley, 2011:662).

**Theme 5: Conflicts reported arising from responsibilities for financial and household chores as a result of fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

Upon reflection and by way of deduction the researcher came to the conclusion that most of the conflicts the couples experienced as a result of them fulfilling these non-traditional marital roles centred around, and were closely linked, to the aspects of finances and household chores, as these were areas that had changed significantly

as a result of them being in this atypical marital role arrangement. Priscilla, Dr K, Anne and Genevieve cited finances, namely, the lack of money, husband's decision to leave his job without consulting his wife and instances of undisciplined money spending, as the causes for conflict around finances. Harrington et al. (2012:27) confirm this conclusion arrived at by pointing out that the couples in their research had referred to the reliance on one salary as a challenge. Coupled with this is the fact that, in some instances, women still earn smaller salaries than men with the result that the household income is likely to be lower due to the gender income gap. (cf. Bitmann et al. in Kramer and McCulloch, 2011:5).

Pieter and Augustine referred to the fact that their wives' interference with how they perform some of the household chores, and not trusting them completely within this housekeeping department of being a stay-at-home husband, resulted in conflict between them. The researcher concluded that this "not trusting the husband" and the need to supervise, instruct and advise him on how to perform the household responsibilities could, amongst other issues, be regarded as a compensatory response to manage her guilt for negating the stereotypical gender role of homemaker that custom attributes to her. What became clear was that this led to conflict and resentments (Cf. Baylies, 2004:35; Siegel, 2007:46.) and that women in the role of breadwinner will have to let go by relinquishing control over the way the house is managed and to lower their expectations to match their husband's standards to avoid conflict in this regard (cf. Harrington et al., 2012:30).

**Theme 6: Experiences and feelings of stay-at-home husbands and working wives regarding their changed roles and responsibilities**

Theme 6 was derived from the accounts of the working wife and stay-at-home husband participants in relation to how they experienced their changed roles and responsibilities.

From the research findings the researcher arrived at the conclusion that both the wife and husband participants in this study had various experiences and feelings resulting from their changed roles and responsibilities. On closer scrutiny it seems if

they were experiencing more feelings that can be labelled as “negative” than “positive”. The researcher came to the realisation that this change in position in the family and its accompanying responsibilities of becoming the breadwinner was, for six of the ten working wife participants (Priscilla, Mrs Franks, Sonja, Melissa, Angel and Caroline) stressful and not easy for them. Genevieve, who was 59 years of age when the fieldwork was undertaken, related how she longed for the old times when the wife and the husband still fulfilled their traditional marital roles. This longing is not out of place when taking into consideration that Genevieve grew up at a time when the traditional marital form with the clear-cut role prescriptions was the norm of the day. One of the prescribed and accepted norms in this traditional marital relationship was for the husband to be the breadwinner and the wife to be the homemaker, the carer and nurturer of the children. Anne, however, expressed her appreciation towards her husband for fulfilling his non-traditional marital role. Dr K was the only working wife who mentioned that she felt content about fulfilling this non-traditional marital role of working wife.

When looking at the husbands, their experiences and feelings subsequent to them becoming stay-at-home husbands and accepting its accompanying responsibilities were much more varied than those of the working wife participants. Five of the stay-at-home husbands (Simon, Alistair, Mr A, Pieter and David) experienced a loss of control owing to the fact that they were no longer breadwinners, and did not have their own money any more. They were now reliant on their wives for money which often led them to experience feelings of frustration. The researcher also takes the view that these feelings of loss of control of not having their own income together, with the accompanying frustration arising from being dependent on the spouse for money, are further fuelled in cases where a participant’s stay-at-home husband and father status were brought about through external circumstances such as retrenchment and job-loss. A situation like this could well make some of them feel less inclined and even yield to being committed to embracing the role of stay-at-home husbands and fathers. This lack of commitment could even manifest itself even more strongly if this role of being a stay-at-home husband and father is against their own, and their reference group’s scripts that proclaim that the man should be the sole provider and breadwinner for the family (cf. Fisher & Anderson, 2012:18).



Loss of control in not having one's own money due to external circumstances may also exercise an eroding effect on the husband's self-esteem as paid work has self-worth benefits since it plays a central role in men's identity construction and relationships (cf. Merla, 2008; Latshaw, 2011:137).

Mr A was the only husband participant who experienced feelings of not being appreciated for what he was doing in terms of his household chores. Ewing's experience was that being a stay-at-home husband was more challenging than fulfilling the role of breadwinner. Alistair and Mr A expressed feeling bored with the role of being stay-at-home husbands. Japie and Karl were the only two husband participants who expressed feelings of enjoyment about being stay-at-home husbands. The researcher arrived at the conclusion that this may be attributed to the fact that Japie had already retired before taking on this role, and that this new role might provide him with a fresh purpose in life. In Karl's case, being a stay-at-home husband matches well with his introvert disposition. Moreover it allows him the opportunity of pursuing his passion for writing.

#### **Theme 7: Challenges experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands about fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

The researcher came to the realisation and conclusion that while some of the couples who constituted the sample experienced the same challenges in fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles, in other cases the wives and husbands from the respective couple systems raised different challenges. Three of the couples (Melissa and Augustine, Sonja and David, Caroline and Karl) and two more working wives (Dr K and Genevieve) mentioned finances as a challenge in terms of having to make ends meet on one salary, and in some instances, even a lower income; dealing financial concerns; depending on the wife for money; and needing to be financially disciplined.

The lack of understanding shown by family, friends and the community at large about why the couples were fulfilling non-traditional marital roles, and what it entailed, was expressed as a challenge by one couple (Mr and Mrs Franks) and by Dr K and

Augustine. Following the participants accounts relating to this point, the researcher, after consulting the literature pertaining to the family, friends and society's lack of understanding and intolerance towards couples in non-traditional marriage and family arrangements, arrived at the conclusion that where men and women violate the well-established and prescribed gender norms they experience prejudice and backlash from friends, family and society. Stay-at-home husbands and working mothers are viewed less favourably than their counterpart caregiving mothers and breadwinning fathers (cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Rochlen et al. 2010:280; Fischer, 2010:10; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011:191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17).

Three of the working wives (Anne, Amber and Caroline) concerned about their husbands' ailing health, saw this as a challenge. Angel, Sonja, Melissa and Dr K mentioned the balancing of the various role demands as a challenge – that of being a working wife mother, wife, friend and relative. While David (Sonja's husband) and Ewing expressed managing the child care and household responsibilities as a challenge. Anne was the only participant who expressed the loss of the child care role as a challenge.

**Theme 8: Participants' perceptions of partner's feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities**

Upon reflection, the researcher realised that this theme emerged naturally either as part of the participants sharing information that gave birth to this theme or through her probing further after they had shared what they wanted to say. The participants' perceptions of their partners' feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities varied. Sonja perceived her husband to be well adjusted to his role as stay-at-home husband. Amber, who worked overseas, perceived her husband to be lonely. Dr K's perception was that her husband at first experienced frustration in fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husband but later gradually embraced and adjusted to it. The support she provided facilitated him with this adjustment.

With reference to the stay-at-home husbands' perceptions of their partners' feelings and experiences regarding their changed roles and responsibilities Pieter perceived Genevieve as appreciating his contribution to the family as a stay-at-home husband. Karl's perception was that initially it was difficult for Caroline to let go of her previous role and embrace her new role. She had to make various adjustments. Alistair and Augustine perceptions were that their wives were experiencing financial strain and stress in their role as breadwinners. Augustine perceived his wife to be resentful of him, especially when she could not make ends meet and because of his inability to find employment.

**Theme 9: Benefits experienced by working wives, stay-at-home husbands and children being in a non-traditional marriage unit**

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that fulfilling the non-traditional role of breadwinner holds various benefits for the working wives and the spouses fulfilling the role of stay-at-home husbands. When comparing the number of challenges mentioned (under Theme 7) with the benefits related to being in these non-traditional marital role arrangements, she came to realise that the benefits outnumbered the challenges.

The biggest benefit of being in this role of working wife/breadwinner was the fact that it allowed seven of the ten working wife participants (Mrs Franks, Anne, Angel, Amber, Genevieve, Sonja and Caroline) to have the opportunity to pursue their passions for work outside the house with some of them indicating that they enjoyed it very much - i.e. some of them mentioned following their career goals and in so doing they experienced self-actualisation in this sphere of their lives (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:198.). Sonja also described herself as not being the "traditional house-wife type". Being in the role of sole breadwinner also benefitted Mrs Franks, Angel, Dr K, Sonja, Amber and Priscilla in one or more of the following ways: it made them feel powerful, financially in control and able to meet the financial needs of their families.

Whilst focusing on the benefits of being the main breadwinner for the working-wife participants, Mrs Franks, Dr K, Melissa, Caroline and Sonja, pointed out that with

their husbands in the role of stay-at-home husband and father they did not have to worry about child care, doing house chores, running errands and balancing all of the former with their work commitments. They had the assurance that the children were in good hands especially if an emergency arose, their husbands were available to take care of it. In addition, having their husbands at home, also took the pressure off having to leave work in the event of a child getting sick, or organising for and worrying about arranging for a babysitter if they had to work late unexpectedly or on schedule.

Mrs Frank added another benefit of being in this non-traditional marital role arrangement - the fact that their children had an opportunity to experience women taking on a different role other than that of caregiver and nurturer. She, as well as Anne, mentioned the benefit of them being in the breadwinner role was that it allowed for their stay-at-home husbands to play a significant role in family child care. Based on the literature consulted in this regard, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that fathers' involvement in parenting contributes to men's successful adjustment in non-traditional marital and family roles and has the innate potential to reduce the notions of gender inequality (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:194; Chesley, 2011:662).

As for the stay-at-home husband participants, the benefits of being in this role had the following benefits: it provided time for relaxation; no more work stress or being bossed around; more time to spend with the family; improved the overall health; and the wife had less to do in terms of housework, and the family saved financially with this arrangement.

For Alistair, Mr A, Japie and Karl, being stay-at-home husbands was beneficial in that they were no longer exposed to the work-related stresses previously experienced, like deadlines they had to meet; and, in Alistair's case, also being bossed around by the employer. Alistair stated that he had time to relax, while Pieter and Karl mentioned having time to engage in projects and activities for which they did not have time before.

The benefit for most of the stay-at-home husband participants (David, Ewing, Mr A, Mr F, Augustine, Karl and Simon) of being in this role was the fact that they were able to spend more time with their families and witnesses, and be involved in, their children's growth and development (cf. Rochlen et al., 2010:283; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:25).

Japie mentioned that he experienced an improvement in his health since assuming the role of stay-at-home husband due to eating healthier and being more active as now he had the time to do so. Karl also expressed feeling healthier as a result of not being exposed to work-related stress anymore. (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:202.).

David and Augustine pointed out that their wives benefitted by having them as stay-at-home husbands in that their spouses now had more time to relax over weekends as they had less to do in terms of household chores because they had attended to them. Pieter pointed out that with him in the role of stay-at-home husband; they saved on the expense of having to hire additional domestic help.

**Theme 10: Coping resources employed by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in order to cope with the demands placed on them in fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles**

Reflecting upon the information shared by the participants concerning the coping resources they employ to cope with the demands being placed on them whilst fulfilling non-traditional marital roles, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that various ways of coping and coping resources were employed by the participants. Furthermore, when looking at the ways of coping and the resources employed in this regard, a mix of internal and external resources seemed to be drawn upon to meet these demands. Furthermore, the coping resources and/or ways of coping were, with the exception of two ways of coping mentioned, mostly positive and/or constructive ways of coping.

Angel and Anne resorted to emotional outbursts to blow off steam, which also allowed them the opportunity to refocus and, in so doing, manage their emotional

distress associated with the fulfilling and balancing of the various role demands. Sonja and Genevieve adopted an active coping style which entailed taking direct action and making an effort to deal with the stressor – i.e. by *inter alia* adopting a different mindset and positive attitude as a resource to cope with the demands of being a working wife. (Cf. Carver et al., in Herbst, 2006:51.) Also by reminding themselves why they are fulfilling this role and using self-encouragement to persevere.

For Sonja and Anne communication with their husbands was employed as way of coping with the various demands resulting from being in this role of working wife and negotiating the other role demands being placed on them. Dr K, Sonja and Genevieve indulged in hobbies to let them unwind, which as a spinoff assisted them to cope with the various role demands with which they had to deal. Mr Franks (with her husband's blessing) spoke about allowing herself me-time.

Mrs Franks and Dr K used their close friends as a source of support. This seemed to be a popular coping resource for working wives (cf. Sheppard in O'Brien, 2012:13). Dr K and Anne made reference to the fact that their skill of multi-tasking aided them in coping with the demands being placed on them. Melissa pointed out that, apart from reading to escape, spending time with her son helped her to unwind and recharged her batteries.

To cope with the range of demands placed on the stay-at-home husband and father participants, they engaged in various coping resources and ways of coping. Karl, Pieter, Simon, Mr A, Mr Franks and Ewing engaged in various hobbies and leisure activities, playing sport as well as doing maintenance work in and around the house and in the garden to refuel themselves. Adopting a positive attitude assisted David, Japie and Simon to cope with the various role demands being placed on them. Mr A and Alistair mentioned that relaxing with family and friends helped them to unwind. Augustine initially engaged in substance abuse to cope with the realities and demands of being a stay-at-home husband, but replaced this destructive way of coping by getting involved in volunteer work. Ewing referred to the fact that prioritising the demands being placed on him helped him to cope, while Augustine

and David mentioned that communicating with their wives about the demands enabled them to deal with their situation in the home .

**Theme 11: Needs experienced by working wives and stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling non-traditional marital roles**

The researcher arrived at the conclusion that the needs experienced amongst the working wives and the stay-at-home husbands in relation to fulfilling the obligations in these non-traditional marital role arrangements were both different and similar.

The working wives identified a range of needs that would enable them to fulfil their roles. Anne and Melissa conveyed the need for more support; understanding and patience from their husbands, as well as from their families and the community. Dr K reiterated the expressed need for more respect from and understanding from the community's side. Caroline and Mrs Franks voiced the need for more time for self and family and Mrs Franks added the need for more time alone with her husband. Sonja was the only working wife who expressed the need for a less stressful job, whilst at the same time admitting that she had no needs in respect of her home life. Mrs Franks, although acknowledging the support from her husband, articulated the need for assistance with child care and housework. Dr K expressed the need to be recognised for what she does as working wife, whilst Caroline stated that she wanted (like most other working wives) to be respected as a women and as a working wife.

Regarding the needs of the stay-at-home husband participants, Mr A and Simon expressed the need for their children to assist more with house chores. Mr A had the need for more social interaction with friends and others. Augustine expressed the need for more understanding of his situation as stay-at-home husband from his extended family and the community. A babysitter was what Ewing's expressed need was.

**Theme 12: Reactions of family, friends and community towards the couples' non-traditional marriage**

Whilst Dr K, Priscilla and Caroline mentioned the support and acceptance (and even concern from the family's side) they received from their respective families in relation to them being in these non-traditional marital role arrangements, Mrs Franks, Amber and Sonja' accounts testified to the lack of support and understanding from their respective families in relation to them being working wives with stay-at-home husbands.

Dr K was the only working wife who pointed out that their children were accepting of the fact that she was fulfilling the role of the working wife and her spouse that of the stay-at-home husband. Caroline and Dr K experienced their friends' reactions to their non-traditional marital role arrangement as supportive and caring. Melissa, Anne, Dr K, Amber and Caroline articulated how they experienced negative reactions of stigmatisation, prejudice and backlashes from the community about them and their husbands fulfilling non-traditional marital roles. (Cf. Doucet, 2004:28; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Rochlen, et al., 2008:193; Fischer, 2010:10; Rochlen et al., 2010:280; Rouleau, 2010:4; Clow & Ricciardelli, 2011: 191, 200-201; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17.)

As far as the stay-at-home husbands were concerned, David, Karl, Mr Franks and Japie shared how their extended families questioned their non-traditional marital role arrangements. In some instances they even displayed their non-acceptance and ignorance towards it, whilst David indicated that his in-laws showed support for him in this non-traditional marital role of stay-at home husband whilst his wife performed the role of breadwinner.

Three husbands, in referring to how friends reacted to their non-traditional marital roles, had varying answers. Alistair said his friends felt jealous that he was able to be home and not work. (Cf. Rochlen, et al., 2008:199.) Mr A stated that his friends made jokes and teased him a little (Cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:199; 203.) and Augustine mentioned that his friends had negative reactions in that they perceived



him as lazy. (Cf. Worford, n.d.) Ewing, Pieter, Karl, Mr A and David shared the view that the community has still not come to accept the phenomenon of the stay-at-home husband.

In reviewing the responses of the couples, the researcher came to the conclusion that, in reality, the reactions of family, friends and community towards couples in non-traditional marital role relationships vary. They ranged from being understanding and accepting of the situation and supported the couple to instances that showed a lack of understanding, non-acceptance, stereotyping, stigmatising and being prejudiced towards them. The root cause of the latter was not explored by the researcher, and may be regarded as a limitation of the study.

**Theme 13: Suggestions and advice of working wives and stay-at-home husbands to other couples in non-traditional marital roles as well as personal needs expressed by these couples**

The suggestions and advice of the working wives to couples planning to enter into a non-traditional marital role arrangement, and the ones already in the situation, as well as identifying their own needs for support are included the following:

- Do not do it, was Melissa's advice, whilst Priscilla (who was forced into the role of breadwinner due to her husband's one-sided resignation from his job) mentioned seeing/finding no benefit in this non-traditional marital role arrangement.
- Mellissa and Mrs Franks made a plea for understanding, acceptance and support by the community, family and friends.
- Communication as a couple, supporting each other and teamwork was suggested by Genevieve, Melissa, Anne, Angel, Dr K and Mrs Franks.
- Sonja and Priscilla advised couples to be mature about the fact of being in this non-traditional marital role arrangement.
- Sonja advised couples to develop a thick skin towards others who are critical of them as couples being in a non-traditional marital arrangement.
- Caroline's suggestion was to let go of previous roles, for example: that of being the housewife, if you are now the working wife/breadwinner.

- Dr K expressed the need for chat rooms on the Internet to talk about non-traditional family roles, to vent emotions and give advice.
- Sonja suggested the need for the community to be educated on the topic of the working wife with a stay-at-home husband and that more to be written on it.
- Caroline and Amber suggested that couples should seek professional advice, especially to assist them with deciding on whether or not to venture into this non-traditional marital role arrangement.

The stay-at-home husbands offered the following suggestions and advice and expressed the following needs for support:

- Karl's advice was to think carefully before entering into the non-traditional family role arrangement.
- David suggested that couples need to try and understand each other and constantly communicate with each other.
- Simon's advice for couples was to engage in careful financial management before venturing into this type of non-traditional marital role relationship.
- Japie's advice was to accept the situation and be positive.
- Pieter's suggestion was to keep out of each other's domain. See that the partnership remains equal in terms of contribution from the role of being a stay-at-home husband and a working wife.
- Ewing and Pieter suggested support groups for couples/stay-at-home husbands and use of media.
- The idea about educating the community about the non-traditional family arrangement of being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband was mooted by Augustine.
- Requests for family support as a couple being in a non-traditional marital arrangement was suggested by Ewing.
- Stay-at-home husbands should engage with and support other stay-at-home husbands was a suggestion put forward by Mr A.
- Ewing suggested that the stay-at-home husbands should support their working wives and mutual respect should be present in the relationship.

- Karl advised couples to seek professional advice and guidance when entering into this non-traditional marital role arrangement. Simon suggested the same thing in order to solve problems occurring in these types of relationships. Japie also mentioned seeking professional help to address feelings of loneliness.

### 5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS APPLIED TO INVESTIGATE THE RESEARCH TOPIC UNDER DISCUSSION

The following limitations need to be highlighted:

- The fact that the programme presenter at the South African National Radio Station (Radio Sonder Grense) did not inform the researcher about the date and time that a call-in programme on the topic of stay-at-home husbands and working wives would be aired, as negotiated and requested by the study's supervisor through one of his contacts at the Radio Station, needs to be highlighted as a misfortune and a limitation. As a result a golden opportunity was missed out on for the recruitment of participants.
- The fact that sample only comprised of couples from the white and coloured population groups needs to be revealed as a limitation. As already noted before, obtaining a sample of couples to participate in this study was a great challenge. Even amongst the white and coloured population groups, some of the potential participants identified and approached refused to participate. The researcher wants to attribute this to society's ignorance and myths that surround this type of marital role arrangement, and the stereotypical and prejudiced stance taken about couples engaged in this arrangement. This reality was evident in some of the individuals, especially amongst some of the men, their family, and friends who the researcher approached when recruiting participants. The attempts made to obtain participants from the African population groups were futile (Cf. Chesley, 2011:662.), and the researcher arrived at the conclusion that the topic of stay-at-home husbands with working wives is not yet open for discussion and this phenomenon is still very much closeted within the mentioned culture group.

- In addition to having only participants from two population groups, the utilisation of the qualitative research approach that allows for a small sample size<sup>20</sup> must be added as another limitation in that the research findings cannot be generalised to the larger population. The lack of a more diverse sample was also pointed out as a limitation, and limiting the generalisation of the findings to the larger populations in the studies conducted by Rochlen et al. (2008:204); Rochlen et al. (2010:284) and Chesley (2011:662).

#### 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, TRAINING AND EDUCATION AND AN AGENDA FOR FURTHER AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In Chapter 1 of the research report the researcher mentioned embarking on this journey with the aim to develop an in-depth understanding by way of exploring and subsequently describing the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands, in order to provide guidelines in the form of recommendations for social workers to support couples in these non-traditional marital role relationships.

This aim will be accomplished at the end of this chapter as in Chapter 2 the researcher provided a description of how she went about developing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by way of recruiting information-rich participants and exploring the salient aspects related to the topic. In Chapters 3 and 4 she documented the outcome of this exploration where she, by way of description, presented the research findings on the experiences, challenges and coping resources of couples in relationships where the wife fulfils the role or breadwinner, that is, the working wife, and the stay-at-home husband and father. The researcher is now left only with the obligation to put forward guidelines in the form of recommendations to Social Work practitioners for social work support to couples fulfilling a non-traditional marital role, based on the research findings and the conclusions derived.

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<sup>20</sup> Qualitative research is interested in the quality (i.e. the depth and breadth of data) and not the quantity of data (cf. Hennink et al., 2011:88).

The recommendations (to be presented next) will be packaged under recommendations for Social Work practice; recommendations for training and education; and an agenda for further and future research.

#### 5.4.1 Recommendations for social work practice: practice guidelines to Social Work practitioners for rendering social work services to couples in non-traditional marital role arrangements

The recommendations for Social Work support for couples in non-traditional marital role arrangements will be presented as practice guidelines (i.e. services, activities/interventions and projects) (Cf. Van der Westhuizen, 2010:52.) directed to social work practitioners to provide social work services to couples in marital relationships fulfilling the non-traditional marital roles.

As one of the needs expressed by the participants for was for professional guidance and advice, **the researcher wants to recommend to Social Work practitioners need to render individual, marriage guidance and counselling; family counselling; social group work services, community education and awareness raising, and e-counselling services to and on behalf of couples in these non-traditional marital role arrangements**, catering both for couples planning to enter into and the ones who are already engaged this type of non-traditional marital role relationships or arrangements.

Arising from the conclusion from both the research findings and the literature consulted that the onset of entering into this non-traditional marital role arrangements were in most cases as a result of external circumstances (i.e. the husbands' job losses and subsequent inability to find other employment – See Chapter 3, Theme 1) (Cf. Chesley, 2011:645,650, Rochlen et al., 2008:202, Fischer & Anderson, 2012:16.), **the researcher wants to propose the following guidelines when it comes to social work interventions with individuals and/or couples entering into or involved in relationships where they perform the non-traditional roles of breadwinner wife and stay-at-home husband:**

- The reasons (or the “why”) for entering into the non-traditional marital role arrangements need to be explored and opportunities for allowing the clients to express their accompanying feelings resulting from the reasons directing or forcing them into this arrangement need to be facilitated. If the husband was in the role of stay-at-home husband due to retrenchment and subsequent unemployment, interventions need to be introduced where this “loss” of the breadwinner and provider role can be processed and mourned. Like-wise, the wife who now has to step in and take on the role of the breadwinner and provider needs also to be allowed to mourn the loss of her role as stay-at-home mother and primary caregiver. This is especially important if her identity was closely tied to and defined by this status.
  
- The experience of or “how it is” for the husband and wife to be in this non-traditional marital role arrangement needs to be explored and assessed as well.

Where the husband holds a family-of-origin frame of reference made up of role models, role prescriptions and a well-entrenched personal belief-system, pointing to the fact that the man should be the breadwinner and the sole/main provider for his family, the adoption of and adjustment to the role of stay-at-home husband may be troublesome and may never be successfully completed (cf. Chesley, 2011:654). For some of them the “central problem may be one of self-esteem – of getting over the embarrassment, guilt and apprehension associated with their wives’ employment” to quote Ross et al. (1983:821). This may be further intensified by the notion that for men, paid work has self-esteem benefits and for a large cohort of them, work plays a central role in their identity construction and relationships (cf. Merla, 2008; Latshaw, 2011:137).

Based on this point it is recommended that social workers rendering services to the clients guide the stay-at-home husbands and engage with them in what Latshaw (2011:135) refers to as “identity work”. This entails assisting them in shifting, reframing and/or reconstructing the labels they have

previously used to define themselves, and/or allowed others to define them by. Through guidance and encouragement they need to be enabled to:

- Self-define “masculinity in very personal and flexible terms” and reject the traditional gender role norms limiting their growth as persons and within their interpersonal relationships and the growth of the people they relate with (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:200,202).
- Not allowing others to define their masculinity.
- Embrace both the “traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics in their role as primary caregivers” (cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18).
- Acknowledge the stereotypical views of masculinity held by society, but at the same time display the resilience necessary not to feel limited and threatened by these social norms (cf. Rochlen et al., 2008:200).

Whilst the stay-at-home husbands need to engage in “identity work” it is recommended that social workers guide the working wives who have moved from the traditional role of housewife and child carer to that of working-wife/breadwinner (i.e. into a non-traditional marital role) to do like-wise. For the working wife this, to a large extent, implies “letting-go” (as was suggested by two of the participants - Caroline and Pieter) of their previous roles. Ross et al. (1983:821) and Baylies (2004:34) note that sometimes the working wife has trouble adjusting to the fact that the husband now assumes the role of stay-at home husband. They find it hard to entrust the housework and child care responsibilities to their stay-at-home husbands which often results in conflict, as the wives may still be in the habit of trying to instruct and prescribe to their husbands how the house chores should be done and how to care for the children.

In view of this the researcher wants to recommend to social workers servicing these clients to guide them in exploring and confronting those behaviours (verbal and non-verbal), testifying to their inability and/or unwillingness to let go. Such behaviours may manifest (on the side of the working wife) in criticising and prescribing to the husband how the house

chores should be executed. She may still act as “gatekeeper”, in deliberately withholding the husband from performing certain household and child care responsibilities.

It is further recommended that the social worker assists couples with the role division in terms of household and child care responsibilities in view of the changes in terms of entering into the non-traditional marital role arrangement. The former may be in need of adjustment, or a whole new role division for husband and wife will have to be drawn up. The couple needs to be informed that this aspect of role division in marriage is of a dynamic nature. How the roles are to be divided between the couple, the exchanging of roles between them and the role expectations they hold for themselves and each other need have to continuously be communicated and negotiated. Longini (in Alpaslan, 1997:96) concurs and recommends that: “responsibilities, functions and roles need to be discussed and spelled out so that each knows what is expected of him/her and what to expect in return”.

As communication and conflict was touched on in the previous paragraphs, the researcher wants to further recommend to social workers to assist the couples in enhancing their communication, listening and conflict resolution skills. The need for open communication and the ability to understand and respond to each other’s needs was forwarded as part of the advice suggested by the participants (Theme 13). The couples need to be furnished with communication and listening skills not only enabling them to express their fears, joys and needs for support from each other, but they also need to sharpen their listening abilities to enable them to pick up and respond to their partner’s verbalised and unverbaised fears, needs for support and expectations. They should be guided on how to resolve the conflicts in a constructive fashion.

Based on the expressed needs of the participants for me-time, and time together as a couple, and also the need for time to relax and engage in leisure activities, the researcher wants, by way of recommendation, to



propose that social workers in their therapeutic endeavours set time aside and guide the couple to take stock of the growth potential in their non-traditional marriage. This by implication means that the couple needs to be guided to consider what they are currently doing in their relationship, and what needs to remain constant, to afford and facilitate them opportunities to grow and be nurtured as individuals and as a couple. They also need to be allowed to reflect on what causes them to stagnate and what needs to change for them to grow and develop as individuals and as a couple whilst being engaged in this non-traditional marital role relationship. They also need to be furnished with constructive ways of dealing with the stresses experienced whilst meeting all the demands placed on them in these non-traditional marital role arrangements.

- Both the research findings and the literature consulted have revealed that the working wives and their stay-at-home husbands experience prejudice, stigmatisation and backlash from family, friends and society for violating prescriptive gender stereotypes. (Cf. Fischer & Anderson, 2012:17; Rochlen et al., 2010:282; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Rochlen et al., 2008:193.) This prevents them from fully and openly engaging in the non-traditional marital role arrangements and especially the stay-at-home husband's experience of social isolation. (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:137.)

In order to address the stigmatisation and social isolation that these couples, especially the stay-at-home husbands, are exposed to, the researcher wants to recommend that social workers establish support networks and social group work programmes for couples in these non-traditional marital role relationships and for stay-at-home husbands. The researcher proposes groups for couples considering entering into the non-traditional marital role arrangements to assist them with their decision making and preparing them for the adjustments to be made.

Therapeutic group work is also proposed to provide the couples with opportunities to share the experiences, challenges and ways of coping and

the nature of coping resources related to performing these non-traditional marital roles. Furthermore, within these groups the participants will be furnished each other with advice and suggestions to specifically confront the stigma experienced and will be able to rehearse ways to handle the stigma encounters. (Cf. Dudley in Rochlen et al., 2010:284.)

- The researcher also wants to recommend that social workers in their role of educators inform people about the phenomenon of stay-at-home husbands. That they engage in educating both the organisers or management of play groups and the parents who, with their children, attend such groups. They need to be informed about the fact that there are indeed the stay-at-home husbands who have the need to socialise with other parents, and for their children to engage with their peers in such playgroups. Many men have experienced lack of entry into playgrounds and incidences within these groups (mostly comprising mothers) left them feeling isolated (cf. Rochlen et al., 2010:284).
  
- A further recommendation as guideline for social work support for the couples under discussion is for social workers to mobilise couples in the non-traditional marital role relationships to become activists and start blogs, webpages and chat rooms where South African working wives and stay-at-home husbands (as was suggested Dr K) can share experiences, provide advice and support online. These are already in existence in some countries for example: "Rebeldad.com" where stay-at-home husbands write articles and share experiences, however, this is on an international level. In addition social workers need to empower those who have embraced the non-traditional marital role arrangement and openly self-identified themselves as working wives and stay-at-home husbands, to use the media (i.e. writing articles for newspapers, magazines, appearing on radio and TV) and share their stories (i.e. their experiences, challenges and the ways of coping within fulfilling the non-traditional marital role arrangements). In so doing they will help to arrest the prevailing stigmatisation that comes from family, friends and society towards couples in these non-traditional marital role

relationships. This will also serve as a source of support for their peers still in the closet and this to ultimately encourage them to follow suit and break out of the woodwork as working wives and stay-at-home husbands who are proud to fulfil the non-traditional marital roles with dignity.

- In addition to these points it is recommended that social workers take up their roles as public speakers (cf. Zastrow, 2010:17) and do community education and awareness-raising about the reasons for the emergence of the phenomenon where husbands and wives take on the non-traditional marital roles, what their experiences and challenges are and their needs for support. Also, through using the media (in its various forms), social workers can help to inform, educate and address the prejudice, stigmatisation and backlash from family, friends and society toward these couples for violating prescriptive gender stereotypes. It is suggested that they join hands with the couples in the non-traditional marital role relationships and conduct the community education and awareness raising as a collaborate and in a coordinated fashion.
- It is also recommended that social workers, within their role as activist, and within their capacities and mandate as employee assistance practitioners (where applicable), initiate programmes, establish a network of referral sources and services geared to support and assist working women so as to ensure and promote work-life balance. In addition, to fulfil the roles of the broker and advocate to see that policy reforms take place and are inclusive of a father's needs for parental involvement (such as paternity leave) and are officially in place and implemented so as to encourage and facilitate more involvement of men in child care responsibilities. (Cf. Latshaw, 2011:146; Fischer & Anderson, 2012:18-19.)
- As pointed out before, the prevailing stigma, prejudice and negative stereotyping towards stay-at-home husbands and working wives hinder the embracing of the non-traditional marital role thus restraining such incumbents to come out and to face life openly as working wives and stay-

at-home husbands. This may also prevent them from reaching out for help and accessing social work services. In view of this the researcher recommends that social workers engage in e-counselling by starting a blog or a webpage where the couples, in an anonymous fashion, can be furnished with guidance and counselling.

#### 5.4.2 Recommendations pertaining to training and education

With specific reference to social work training and education about the topic being investigated and the findings that have emerged from this study, the researcher wants to recommend the following:

- Social service professionals and practitioners must be informed and educated about the topic of couples in these non-traditional marital roles of stay-at-home husbands and working wives through publications in scholarly journals, presentations at conferences and at meetings, workshops and through continuous professional development activities, seminars and symposia. Through these channels social service professionals can become informed and educated about the couples entering into and fulfilling these non-traditional marital roles, their experiences, challenges faced and their needs for support. The social service professionals could also become aware of social work services, programmes and treatment modalities available to assist and render social work services to such couples. In addition, this can also serve as a platform where new research findings are presented and discussed. The researcher found that conventions informing health and welfare practitioners and the public at large are already in existence in some countries, for example: the 18th convention on stay-at-home dads was held in October 2013 in Denver, USA. This is an Annual Convention.
- The phenomenon of couples in non-traditional marital role arrangements with specific reference to the working wife and stay-at-home husband need to be included in the social work curricula focusing on marital and family

work. The emergence of this phenomenon and the experiences, challenges and ways of coping of these couples need to be covered as well as their need for social work support and a directory social work services should also be available for them.

- It is also recommended that school curriculum be expanded (i.e. the Life Orientation Programme) to incorporate information on the working wife with a stay-at-home husband (the non-traditional marriage unit). This will serve as an opportunity for teaching learners about the various marital and family roles and in so doing start with a process of reducing the prevailing gender intolerance and inequalities.

#### 5.4.3 Recommendation: An agenda for further and future research

In concurring with Fischer and Anderson (2012:27) that the topic of stay-at-home fathers and breadwinner mothers is an area still ripe for more research, the researcher wants to propose the following agenda for further and future indigenous research:

- This research project must be replicated on a larger scale and an attempt must be made to include all population groups within South Africa in order to provide more generalisable results and to allow for comparisons to enhance understanding.
- A research project is proposed focusing on the reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband and their experiences in relation to being a stay-at-home husband and father.
- Based on the fact that this research project did not specifically, as one of its objective, focus on social work support for working wives and stay-at-home husbands, from the participants' perspectives, the researcher wants to suggest that intervention research be conducted with the aim of developing and co-constructing with working wives and stay-at-home husband a guidance programme for social workers to assist coping on entering and fulfilling non-traditional marital and family roles.

- The researcher would also like to propose a research project focusing on the views and experiences of children in relation to having a stay-at-home father and a breadwinner mother.
- Whilst the research findings and the literature pointed to the prejudice, stigmatisation from family, friends and society toward these couples for violating prescriptive gender stereotypes, the researcher wants to propose a research project be undertaken on the topic of the perceptions of society on husbands who fulfil the role of stay-at-home husband and father, and the wife the role of the breadwinner-mother.
- Being cognisant of the fact that the study did not focus on stay-at-home fathering, further research into the experiences and challenges of stay-at-home husbands in relation to fathering is proposed.
- Furthermore, a research project is suggested focusing on women's perception of stay-at-home husbands and fathers.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter 5 provided, by way of summary, an overview of what was covered in the previous chapters of the report and also highlighted some salient conclusions. The researcher also mentioned the limitations facing the research that resulted from following a qualitative research methodology.

Based on the research findings and the conclusions arrived at, it can be claimed that insight into the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands within the non-traditional marital unit was gained. Furthermore, the participants were allowed to put forward suggestions and advice to couples planning to enter into or who are in such a type of relationship, and they were also afforded an opportunity to articulate their own need for support. Following on the research findings and conclusions, recommendations for Social Work Practice in the form of guidelines on how social workers could support couples in this situation and the services they could render to and on behalf of them were provided. In addition, recommendations for training and education and an agenda for further and future research were put forward.

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## LIST OF ADDENDA AND ADDENDA

- Addendum 1.1: Interview guide
- Addendum 1.2: Consent forms
- Addendum 1.3: Information letter for individuals who met the criteria of inclusion informing them about the study and requesting their possible participation
- Addendum 2.1: Rooi Rose article looking for participants
- Addendum 2.2: Notice in Volksblad Newspaper looking for participants
- Addendum 2.3: E-mail to request for a referral from an NGO dealing with families
- Addendum 2.4: E-mail to request for an opportunity to advertise for participants on existing media
- Addendum 2.5: E-mail to a Christian based radio station to explore advertising on existing media
- Addendum 2.6: E-mail to request possibilities of advertising on existing media of church
- Addendum 2.7: E-mail to an organisation focussing on the economic empowerment of black women
- Addendum 2.8: Advertisement on Litnet seeking participants
- Addendum 2.9: Follow up on lead provided by senior lecturer in the Social Work department
- Addendum 2.10: Request from supervisor to Radio Sonder Grense a national radio station to host a talk show on the research topic in order to recruit possible participants
- Addendum 2.11: Response from Radio Sonder Grense regarding airing of the programme
- Addendum 2.12: Confirmation that Ian Wessels will be hosting a call in programme on the stay-at-home husband
- Addendum 2.13: Communication with Huisgenoot magazine exploring the possibility of publishing an article about the study in the magazine

- Addendum 2.14: E-mail to supervisor expressing concerns regarding Huisgenoot's terms and conditions for doing the article
- Addendum 2.15: Transcript of interview with journalist (stay-at-home husband) as expert
- Addendum 2.16: Loslip Podcast
- Addendum 3.1: Transcript of Loslip call in programme broadcasted on Radio Sonder Grense (English)
- Addendum 3.1: Transcript of Loslip call in programme broadcasted on Radio Sonder Grense (Afrikaans)

## **ADDENDUM 1.1: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### Questions and requests directed to the working wives

#### e) Working wives

- How did it come about that you became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband, and from when was this the arrangement? What are your reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-home husband?
- What are your responsibilities as a working wife?
- Did your role as wife change when you became a working wife?
- How do you feel about being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a working wife entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for you as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for your family having you as a working wife?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a working wife?
- What are your needs as a working wife?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported...

### Questions and request directed to the stay-at-home husbands

#### f) Stay-at-home husbands

- How did you come to be a stay-at-home husband with a working wife, and when did this happen? What were your reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife?
- What are your responsibilities as a stay-at-home husband?
- Did your role as husband change once you became a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you feel about being a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a stay-at-home husband entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a stay-at-home husband?

- How do you benefit from being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are the benefits for your family to have a stay-at-home husband?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are your needs as a stay-at-home husband?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

## ADDENDUM 1.2: CONSENT FORMS

Two consent forms will be used: first, consent to participate in the study; and second, consent to be audio-taped.

### 1. Consent to be interviewed

I, \_\_\_\_\_ consent to being interviewed by Ms Chanaz Mitchell for her study on practice guidelines from a Social Work perspective for supporting couples in non-traditional marital roles: the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands.

By agreeing to this, I understand that:

- Participation in this interview is voluntary.
- I may at any time refuse to answer any questions that may lead to discomfort.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time without personal consequence.
- No identifying information will be included in the research report.

Signature of participant \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_



**2. Consent for the interview to be audio-taped**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ provide my consent to having my interview with Ms Chanaz Mitchell audio-taped for her study on practice guidelines from a social work perspective for supporting couples in non-traditional marital roles: the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands.

By agreeing to this, I understand that:

- No real or identifying names will be used in the transcripts or the research report.
- All tapes will be kept in a locked safe and will not be labelled with identifying information and only the researcher will have access to these tapes.
- The tapes and transcripts will not be seen or heard by any other person at any time, and will only be processed by the researcher.
- All tapes will be destroyed on completion of the study.

Signature of participant \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDENDUM 1.3: INFORMATION LETTER FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO MET THE CRITERIA OF INCLUSION INFORMING THEM ABOUT THE STUDY AND REQUESTING THEIR POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION**



20 January 2011

Dear

I, Chanaz Mitchell, the undersigned am a part-time doctoral student in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of requirements for the doctoral degree, I have to undertake a research project and have consequently decided to focus on the following research topic:

**THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY-AT-HOME HUSBANDS: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE**

As you are well-informed about the topic, I would like to request that you participate in the study. Please note however that participation in the study is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time with no personal consequences to you.

To provide some background, the research study originated as a result of a lack of research regarding the non-traditional marital roles of the stay-at-home husband and working wife, specifically with reference to their experiences, challenges and needs. Thus the aim of this study is to provide practice guidelines, from a Social Work perspective, for supporting couples in non-traditional marital roles: the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands.

The information gathered during the study will firstly contribute to the field of Social Work and will enable the researcher to develop practice guidelines from a social work perspective for supporting couples in non-traditional marital roles with regard to: the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands.

Should you agree to participate, you will be requested to participate in a face-to-face interview. It is estimated that the interview will last approximately 90 minutes. During the interview, the following questions will be directed to you:

Questions and requests directed to the working wives

- How did it come about that you became a working wife with a stay-at-home husband, and from when was this the arrangement? What are your reasons for becoming a working wife with a stay-home husband?
- What are your responsibilities as a working wife?
- Did your role as wife change when you became a working wife?
- How do you feel about being a working wife with a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a working wife entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for you as a working wife?
- What are the benefits for your family having you as a working wife?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a working wife?
- What are your needs as a working wife?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported...

Questions and request directed to the stay-at-home husbands

- How did you come to be a stay-at-home husband with a working wife, and when did this happen? What were your reasons for becoming a stay-at-home husband with a working wife?
- What are your responsibilities as a stay-at-home husband?
- Did your role as husband change once you became a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you feel about being a stay-at-home husband? (Or alternatively: What does your role as a stay-at-home husband entail?)
- What are the challenges you experience as a stay-at-home husband?
- How do you benefit from being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are the benefits for your family to have a stay-at-home husband?
- What do you do to help you cope with the demands of being a stay-at-home husband?
- What are your needs as a stay-at-home husband?
- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

With your permission, the interview will be audio taped. The recorded interviews will be transcribed word-for-word as received. Your responses to the interview will be kept strictly confidential.

As the researcher, I also have the right to dismiss you from the study despite your consent if you fail to follow the instructions or if the information you have to divulge is emotionally sensitive and upsets you to such an extent that it hinders you from functioning physically and emotionally in a proper manner. Furthermore, if participating in the study at any time jeopardises your safety in any way, you will be dismissed.

Should I feel that the information you have shared leaves you feeling emotionally upset, or perturbed, I am obliged to refer you to a counsellor for debriefing or counselling, should you agree.

You have the right to ask questions concerning the study at any time. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study, contact this number Chanaz Mitchell - 071 851 4880.

Please note that this study has been approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. Without the approval of this committee, the study cannot be conducted. Should I as the researcher not address your questions and queries adequately you are more than welcome to contact the Chairperson of the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. His contact details are as follows: Prof AH (Nicky) Alpaslan, telephone number: 012 429 6739, or email [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za).

If, after you have consulted the researcher and the Research and Ethics Committee in the Department of Social Work at Unisa, their answers have not satisfied you, you might direct your question/concerns/queries to the Chairperson, Human Ethics Committee, College of Human Sciences, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003.

Based on all the information provided to you, should you want to participate in this research study, and, being aware of your rights, you are asked to kindly give your written consent by signing and dating the information and consent form provided and initialling each section to indicate that you understand and agree to the conditions.

Thank you for your participation.

**Chanaz Mitchell**

**Doctoral Student: Department of Social Work, UNISA**

## **ADDENDUM 2.1: ROOI ROSE ARTICLE<sup>21</sup> LOOKING FOR PARTICIPANTS**

### **OPSOEK NA DEELNEMERS VIR DEELNAME AAN 'N NAVORSINGSPROJEK OOR DIE ERVARINGS, UITDAGINGS EN HANTERINGSMEGANISMES VAN BEROEPSVROUE EN TUISBLYMANS**

Die groeiende voorkoms van die verskynsel van vroue wat as primêre broodwinners en beroepsvroue tot die arbeidsmark toetree en hulle eggenote wat as tuisblymans die rolle vervul wat tradisioneel tot die huisvrou behoort het, word in sekere samelewings al gereedliker aanvaar, maar in ander word daar oor dié verskynsel gefrons en word dit aan 'n magdom stereotypes onderwerp. Die toedrag van sake het 'n ingeskrewe doktrale student by die Department Maatskaplike Werk aan die Universiteit van Suid Afrika laat besluit om 'n navorsingstudie te onderneem rondom die ervarings, uitdaging en hanteringsmeganismes van beroepsvroue en tuisblymans met die oog op die daarstelling van praktykryglyne vanuit 'n maatskaplikewerk-perspektief vir die ondersteuning van pare in nietradisionel huweliksrolle. Chanaz Mitchell, ingeskrewe doktrale student by die Department Maatskaplike Werk aan die Universiteit van Suid Afrika, is op soek na egpare waar die man 'n tuisblyman en die vrou die primêre broodwinner en beroepsvrou is om aan haar studie deel te neem. Die egpaar moet kinders hê wat nog aan huis woon. Sy sal graag met die eggenote afsonderlik van aangesig-tot-aangesig wil gesels om meer rondom hul ervarings, uitdaginge en hanteringsmeganismes as beroepsvrou en tuisblyman uit te vind. Waar onderhoude met deelnemers nie van aangesig-tot-aangesig kan geskied nie, sal sy dit waardeur as die deelnemers hulle ervarings, uitdaginge en hanteringsmeganismes rondom die onderwerp op skrif en per e-pos aan haar voorsien. Sy sal die vrae rondom die onderwerp om hiermee te help aan die deelnemers voorsien. Al die inligting wat ingesamel word sal vertroulik hanteer word en slegs vir navorsingsdoeleindes gebruik word. Geen identifiserende besonderhede rondom die deelnemers sal openbaar gemaak word nie. Vir verifikasie rondom die geldigheid van die studie kan haar studieleier Prof Nicky Alpaslan gekontak word by 012-429 6739 of [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za). Chanaz Mitchell se kontakbesonderhede is soos volg: 071 851 4880.

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<sup>21</sup> In view of the fact that this is an Afrikaans Women's magazine, the content for the article to be considered for publication had to be in Afrikaans

**ADDENDUM 2.2: NOTICE IN VOLKSBLAD NEWSPAPER<sup>22</sup> LOOKING FOR PARTICIPANTS**

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<sup>22</sup> In view of the fact that this is an Afrikaans Newspaper the notice was published in Afrikaans

**ADDENDUM 2.3: E-MAIL TO REQUEST FOR A REFERRAL FROM AN NGO  
DEALING WITH FAMILIES**



**ADDENDUM 2.4: E-MAIL TO REQUEST FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO  
ADVERTISE FOR PARTICIPANTS ON EXISTING MEDIA**

From: Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
Sent: 18 October 2011 09:51 AM  
Subject: research

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chanaz Mitchell and I am a part time student in the department of Social work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of the requirements of my degree, I have to complete a research study and thus I have chosen the following topic: challenges and benefits of couples where the husband is a stay at home husband and the wife is working and breadwinner. I am in search of participants / couples to interview and confidentiality will be guaranteed as I will not make use of real names. I was thus wondering, does your church have a notice board or announcements or any other medium where one can request couples in such marriages to participate in the study.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Regards  
Chanaz Mitchell

**ADDENDUM 2.5: E-MAIL TO A CHRISTIAN BASED RADIO STATION TO  
EXPLORE ADVERTISING ON EXISTING MEDIA**

From: Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
Sent: 18 October 2011 09:40 AM  
Subject: research  
Importance: High

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chanaz Mitchell and I am a part time student in the department of Social work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of the requirements of my degree, I have to complete a research study and thus I have chosen the following topic: challenges and benefits of couples where the husband is a stay at home husband and the wife is working and breadwinner. I am in search of participants / couples to interview and confidentiality will be guaranteed as I will not make use of real names. I was thus wondering, do you Radio station have a notice board or announcements or any other medium where one can request couples in such marriages to participate in the study.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Regards  
Chanaz Mitchell

**ADDENDUM 2.6: E-MAIL TO REQUEST POSSIBILITIES OF ADVERTISING ON  
EXISTING MEDIA OF CHURCH**

**From:** Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
**Sent:** 18 October 2011 09:36 AM  
**To: Subject:** Web query  
**Importance:** High

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chanaz Mitchell and I am a part time student in the department of Social work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of the requirements of my degree, I have to complete a research study and thus I have chosen the following topic: challenges and benefits of couples where the husband is a stay at home husband and the wife is working and breadwinner. I am in search of participants / couples to interview and confidentiality will be guaranteed as I will not make use of real names. I was thus wondering, does your denomination have a notice board or announcements or any other medium where one can request families in such marriages to participate in the study.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Regards

Chanaz Mitchell

## **ADDENDUM 2.7: E-MAIL TO AN ORGANISATION FOCUSING ON THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF BLACK WOMEN**

From: Chanaz Mitchell I JHB

Sent: 17 October 2011 01:43 PM

Subject: research

Importance: High

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chanaz Mitchell and I am a part-time doctorate student at the University of South Africa in the Social Work department. In order to fulfil the requirements of the degree, I need to complete a research study. I have chosen the topic of the non-traditional family, where the wife is the breadwinner and working whilst the husband is the stay at home husband and has taken over a lot of the caregiving role. My focus is on the benefits and challenges of such a relationship with the aim to provide different means of support to this couple.

I am thus looking for couples who are married, where the husband is a stay at home husband and the wife a working wife. I am using different means of sorting couples to interview for my study. Everything is confidential as pseudonyms will be used and thus wanted to know if I could place a small notice/ classified/ listing on your website/ bulletin to try to source participants. I would really appreciate it if I am able to and any further referrals to obtain participants will really be appreciated.

Kind regards

Chanaz Mitchell

## ADDENDUM 2.8: ADVERTISEMENT ON LITNET SEEKING PARTICIPANTS



Neem deel aan 'n studie oor mans wat tuis bly!

### **Chanaz Mitchell**

Registered part-time doctorate student looking for participants for fieldwork!

Looking for working wives with stay at home husbands to participate in a study about the challenges and benefits of being a stay at home husband with a working wife. If interested, please email: [vestallbaadjies@webmail.co.za](mailto:vestallbaadjies@webmail.co.za).

Regards  
Chanaz Mitchell

`/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause_dir_news_item&cause_id=1270&news_id=108386`

## **ADDENDUM 2.9: FOLLOW UP ON LEAD PROVIDED BY SENIOR LECTURER IN THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT (UNISA)**

**From:** Chanaz Mitchell Transnet Freight Rail JHB  
**Sent:** 06 September 2011 10:35 AM  
**To:** sigid\_sibeko@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** RE: research  
**Importance:** High

Dear Mr Sibeko,

Thank you very much for taking my call. Basically to provide you with some background: I am a part-time doctorate student in the social work department. In fulfilment of my requirements of the PhD, I have to write a dissertation and thus conduct research. I have chosen the following topic for my research:

### **THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY-AT-HOME HUSBANDS: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE**

As you know the phenomenon of the stay at home husband is not a common practice not only in South Africa but around the world for a variety of reasons including stigma. In conducting my research, I aim to interview couples where the husband is a stay-at-home husband for at least 6 months, obviously married and where they have at least one child. My target audience is anywhere in Gauteng. To date, I have managed to find four couples that I have interviewed. I am struggling a bit now as couples that I have approached do not want to participate as they do not want people to become aware of their family circumstances and various other reasons. I have also made use of mediums such as online advertising and Litnet in order to find couples to participate in the study but to no avail.

I would thus really appreciate it, if you could assist me by linking me to couples as described above, if you know of any. Please advise what will be the best time to call you to discuss this further.

Kind regards

Chanaz Mitchell

071 851 4880

**ADDENDUM 2.9: FOLLOW UP ON LEAD PROVIDED BY SENIOR LECTURER IN  
THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT (UNISA) (CONTINUE...)**

**From:** Sesoko, Mimie [<mailto:sesokmp@unisa.ac.za>]  
**Sent:** 06 September 2011 10:20 AM  
**To:** Chanaz Mitchell Transnet Freight Rail JHB  
**Cc:** Alpaslan, Assim; [sgidi\\_sibeko@yahoo.com](mailto:sgidi_sibeko@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** RE: research

---

Chanaz

I managed to talk to my former colleague Mr Sigidi Sibeko about the stay at home dads . He is happy to talk to you more and to refer you to the relevant people. His email address is [sgidi\\_sibeko@yahoo.com](mailto:sgidi_sibeko@yahoo.com) I cc him on this email.

His cell number is 0835902398. All the best.

Dr Mimie Sesoko



Social Work Department

**ADDENDUM 2.10: REQUEST FROM SUPERVISOR TO RADIO SONDER  
GRENSE (A NATIONAL RADIO STATION)<sup>23</sup> TO HOST A  
TALK ON THE RESEARCH TOPIC IN ORDER TO RECRUIT  
POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS**

**From:** Alpaslan, Assim [mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za]  
**Sent:** 17 January 2012 02:45 PM  
**To:** amore@rsg.co.za  
**Cc:** Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
**Subject:** Soek na deelnemers vir navorsingprojek en inligting oor registrasie  
**Importance:** High

Beste Amore

Ons telefoongesprek op Dinsdag 17 Januarie 2012 verwys.

Dankie dat jy bereid is om te help om my doktrale-student, Chanaz Mitchell, se navorsingsonderwerp onder die luisteraars se aandag te bring. Haar studie handel oor die volgende onderwerp: PRACTICE GUIDELINES FROM A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE FOR SUPPORTING COUPLES IN NON-TRADITIONAL MARITAL ROLES: THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING RESOURCES OF WORKING WIVES AND STAY-AT-HOME HUSBANDS.

Die doel met die studie is om onderhoude te voer met egpare waar die vrou "die broodwinner" en die man die "tuisteskepper" is, en om uit te vind wat hulle evarings in die verband is, die uitdagings wat hulle in die gesigstaar en die vaardighede wat hulle inspan om die uitdagings die hoof te bied. Chanaz is woonagtig in Johannesburg en sy sal graag met beide die man en vrou onderhoude wil voer in die Johannesburg en Pretoria-omgewing. Alle inligting sal vertroulik hanteer word en geen identifiserende besonderhede sal in enige voortspruitende dokumente en navorsingsverslae vermeld word nie. Die veldwerk vorm deel van haar doktrale studie in Maatskaplike Werk. Enige belangstellendes kan Chanaz kontak by 071 851 4880.

Groete en dankie vir jou hulp

**PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN**  
Department of Social Work  
Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171  
Preller Street  
Muckleneuk Ridge  
PRETORIA  
PO BOX 392  
UNISA 0030  
Tel: +27(12) 4296739  
E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)

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<sup>23</sup> In view of the fact that this is an Afrikaans Radio Station, the communication that took place was in Afrikaans.



## ADDENDUM 2.11: RESPONSE FROM RADIO SONDER GRENSE REGARDING AIRING OF THE PROGRAMME

-----Original Message-----

From: Alpaslan, Assim [mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za]  
Sent: 03 February 2012 12:45 PM  
To: Ian Wessels  
Cc: Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
Subject: RE: Loslip!

Beste Ian!

Dankie vir die terugvoer!

Ek sal die inligting aan die student deurgee wat haar studie daarvoor doen!

Groete

PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN  
Department of Social Work  
Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171 Preller Street Muckleneuk Ridge PRETORIA PO BOX 392  
UNISA  
0030  
Tel: +27(12) 4296739  
E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)

-----Original Message-----

From: Ian Wessels [mailto:[losliprsg@gmail.com](mailto:losliprsg@gmail.com)]  
Sent: 03 February 2012 12:42  
To: [amoreb@iafrica.com](mailto:amoreb@iafrica.com)  
Cc: Alpaslan, Assim; [ian@rsg.co.za](mailto:ian@rsg.co.za)  
Subject: Re: Loslip!

Hi daar

Ek het 'n e-pos gestuur, maar dit het met 'n error teruggekom.

Ek het die onderwerp op 26 Januarie gedoen. Daar is 'n podcast op [www.rsg.co.za](http://www.rsg.co.za). Die program se naam is Loslip.

Lekker naweek.

ian

## ADDENDUM 2.11: RESPONSE FROM RADIO SONDER GRENSE REGARDING AIRING OF THE PROGRAMME (CONTINUE...)

On 2/3/12, [amoreb@iafrica.com](mailto:amoreb@iafrica.com) <[amoreb@iafrica.com](mailto:amoreb@iafrica.com)> wrote:

> Hallo Nicky,  
> Goed om van jou te hoor.  
>> Ek stuur dit aan Ian Wessels, hy bied die program aan.  
>  
>  
> Groete  
>  
> Amore  
>  
> \_\_\_\_\_  
>  
> From: [Alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za)  
> Sent: 2012/02/03 09:48:04 AM  
> To: [amoreb@iafrica.com](mailto:amoreb@iafrica.com)  
> Cc:  
> Subject: RE: Loslip!  
>  
> Amore!  
>  
> Enige id e wanneer die onderwerp van die tuisteskepper mans en die  
> beroepsvroue op die lig gaan wees?  
>  
  
> Groete  
  
> PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN  
> Department of Social Work  
> Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171  
> Preller Street  
> Muckleneuk Ridge  
> PRETORIA  
> PO BOX 392  
> UNISA  
> 0030  
> Tel: +27(12) 4296739  
> E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)  
>

**ADDENDUM 2.12: CONFIRMATION THAT IAN WESSELS WILL BE HOSTING  
CALL-IN PROGRAMME ON THE STAY-AT-HOME HUSBAND**

**From:** Alpaslan, Assim [mailto:[Alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za)]

**Sent:** 20 January 2012 01:00 PM

**To:** Chanaz Mitchell JHB

**Subject:** FW: Soek na deelnemers vir navorsingprojek en inligting oor registrasie

Chanaz

Please see the e-mail below – Ian Wessels is doing a talk on your topic!

We will discuss logistics on Monday – He is on RSG on Monday to Friday from 1.30 – 13.45

Kind regards

**PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN**

Department of Social Work

Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171

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Tel: +27(12) 4296739

E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)

**ADDENDUM 2.12: CONFIRMATION THAT IAN WESSELS WILL BE HOSTING A  
CALL-IN PROGRAMME ON THE STAY-AT-HOME HUSBAND  
(CONTINUE...)**

**From:** Amore [<mailto:amoreb@iafrica.com>]

**Sent:** 20 January 2012 09:40

**To:** Alpaslan, Assim

**Subject:** Re: Soek na deelnemers vir navorsingprojek en inligting oor registrasie

Nicky,

Ian Wessels doen volgende week 'n praatjie hieroor, hy sal jou student kontak, sodat sy kan luister, en dalk 'n ooreenkoms aangaan

dat hy dieluiseraars se sms'e vir haar kan aanstuur.

Amore

On 18 Jan 2012, at 12:06, Alpaslan, Assim wrote:

This message (and attachments) is subject to restrictions and a disclaimer. Please refer to <http://www.unisa.ac.za/disclaimer> for full details.

**ADDENDUM 2.13: COMMUNICATION WITH HUISGENOOT MAGAZINE<sup>24</sup>  
EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING AN  
ARTICLE ABOUT THE STUDY IN THE MAGAZINE**

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**From:** Alpaslan, Assim [<mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za>]  
**Sent:** 24 January 2012 12:56 PM  
**To:** Julia Viljoen  
**Cc:** [Chanaz.Mitchell@transnet.net](mailto:Chanaz.Mitchell@transnet.net)  
**Subject:** Dr Nicky - Liquorice vir die lewe - versoek vir artikel oor Beroepsvroue en mans as tuisteskeppers  
**Importance:** High

Beste Julia

Na omtrent 10 jaar van ons laas gekommunikeer het was dit sommer weer lekker om met jou te kon gesels. Tydens my hantering van die Rubriek by Huisgenoot het ek jou earlike terugvoer en ondersteuning opreg waardeer en baie dankie dat jy 'n gewillige oor gehad het om na my te luister oor my doktorsale student (Chanaz Mitchell) se navorsing en behoefte om proefpersone te bekom.

Soos ek genoem het doen sy navorsing oor die volgende onderwerp: Practice guidelines from a social work perspective for supporting couples in non-traditional marital roles: the experiences, challenges and coping resources of working wives and stay-at-home husbands.

Vir die veldwerk van haar navorsing voer sy onderhoude met beroepsvroue en hulle tuisteskepper mans. Ek het gister 'n gesprek met die student gehad en genoem dat die Huisgenoot dit sal oorweeg om 'n artikel te doen indien hulle met 'n beroepsvrou en tuisteskepper man kan gesels.

Sy het my laat weet dat een van die deelnemers aan haar navorsing ('n tuisteskepper man) en sy vrou sal met graagte en saam met haar wil deelneem aan 'n onderhoud vir so 'n artikel. Dit sal dan opreg waardeer word as die besonderhede van die student en die versoek vir deelnemers ook in die artikel weer gegee kan word. Ek sal graag net die artikel voor publikasie saam met die student en die deelnemers wil goedkeur.

Dankie vir jou bereidwilligheid om hiermee te help en ek hoor so gou moontlik van jou!

Sterkte met al jou werksaamhede

Vriendelike groete

PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN  
Department of Social Work  
Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171  
Preller Street  
Muckleneuk Ridge  
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PO BOX 392  
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0030  
Tel: +27(12) 4296739  
E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)

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<sup>24</sup> In view of the fact that this is an Afrikaans family magazine, the communication that took place to consider publishing an article had to be in Afrikaans

**ADDENDUM 2.13: COMMUNICATION WITH HUISGENOOT MAGAZINE  
EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING AN  
ARTICLE ABOUT THE STUDY IN THE MAGAZINE  
(CONTINUE...)**

From: Alpaslan, Assim [mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za]  
Sent: 31 January 2012 01:44 PM  
To: Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
Subject: FW: Dr Nicky - Liquorice vir die lewe - versoek vir artikel oor Beroepsvroue en mans as  
tuisteskeppers

Chanaz

See e-mail below! The Huisgenoot is going to do an article! Please forward me your cell-number so  
that I can forward it to them

Kind regards

PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN  
Department of Social Work  
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Muckleneuk Ridge  
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PO BOX 392  
UNISA  
0030  
Tel: +27(12) 4296739  
E-mail Address: [alpasah@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpasah@unisa.ac.za)

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From: Julia Viljoen [mailto:JViljoen@huisgenoot.com]  
Sent: 31 January 2012 13:17  
To: Alpaslan, Assim  
Cc: Inge Kuhne; Nadia Sadovsky  
Subject: RE: Dr Nicky - Liquorice vir die lewe - versoek vir artikel oor Beroepsvroue en mans as  
tuisteskeppers

Ons doen dit graag! 'n Verslaggewer sal jou binnekort kontak, dankie!

---

From: Alpaslan, Assim [mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za]  
Sent: 31 January 2012 09:07 AM  
To: Julia Viljoen  
Subject: RE: Dr Nicky - Liquorice vir die lewe - versoek vir artikel oor Beroepsvroue en mans as  
tuisteskeppers

---

Beste Julia!

Dankie, ek hoor van jou! Ek werk more tuis, so hier is my nommer: 083 409 5612

Groete

PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN

**ADDENDUM 2.13: COMMUNICATION WITH HUISGENOOT MAGAZINE  
EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING AN  
ARTICLE ABOUT THE STUDY IN THE MAGAZINE  
(CONTINUE...)**

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From: Julia Viljoen [<mailto:JViljoen@huisgenoot.com>]

Sent: 30 January 2012 18:08

To: Alpaslan, Assim

Subject: RE: Dr Nicky - Liquorice vir die lewe - versoek vir artikel oor Beroepsvroue en mans as tuisteskeppers

Nicky,

Ek vermoed ons het 'n storie! Maar ek kontak jou more sodra ek dit voor die neus van die nuusvergadering rondgeswaai het.

Groete,

Julia

---

From: Alpaslan, Assim [<mailto:Alpasah@unisa.ac.za>]

Sent: 03 February 2012 09:37 AM

To: Chrizane van Zyl

Cc: Chanaz Mitchell JHB

Subject: RE: Stay at home dads

---

Dear Chrizane

Herewith please find Chanaz's telephone number!

071 851 4880

Please keep me updated ek sal graag die artikel wil sien voor dit ter perse gaan! (Ek kontak jou binnekort oor die student wat oor gay/lesbian issues werk!)

Groete

PROFESSOR ASSIM H (NICKY) ALPASLAN

Department of Social Work

Theo van Wijk Building, 8th Floor Room 171

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**ADDENDUM 2.13: COMMUNICATION WITH HUISGENOOT MAGAZINE  
EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING AN  
ARTICLE ABOUT THE STUDY IN THE MAGAZINE  
(CONTINUE...)**

From: Chrizane van Zyl [<mailto:Chrizane.vanZyl@media24.com>]  
Sent: 02 February 2012 17:06  
To: Alpaslan, Assim  
Subject: Stay at home dads

Hi Nicky

Soos ons oor die telefoon bespreek het, wil ek graag so gou as moontlik in kontak met Chanaz kom om eers met haar te gesels oor haar studie en so myself voor te berei vir die onderhoud met die stay-at-home pa.

Ek glo ek kan die onderhoud vanuit die Kaap doen. Ons sal natuurlik foto's in Jhb doen en later gesels.

Ek wil graag die storie doen vir volgende week Donderdag se deadline, so dit sal ideaal wees as ons die wiel aan die rol sit.

Kan jy my intussen ook in kontak bring met die student wat die Gay/Lesbian studie doen? Eks altyd opsoek na storie idees om solank aan te werk.

Groete  
Chrizane van Zyl  
Huisgenoot/YOU Intern  
021 406 2775  
082 303 3344



**ADDENDUM 2.14: E-MAIL TO SUPERVISOR EXPRESSING CONCERNS  
REGARDING HUISGENOOT'S TERMS AND CONDITIONS  
FOR DOING THE ARTICLE**

**From:** Chanaz Mitchell JHB  
**Sent:** 07 February 2012 02:32 PM  
**To:** 'Alpaslan, Assim'  
**Subject:** Huisgenoot

Dear Prof,

I tried calling you as I need to discuss the article in the Huisgenoot urgently. There are factors that are making me feel uncomfortable and thus I would like to talk to you about these. Among these are:

1. Huisgenoot wants to take a picture of the couple – I contracted with the couple that pseudonyms will be used and hence confidentiality.
2. The couple that I thought we could use has moved overseas, the wife however has given me written permission to use part of the interview which I may need. I told Huisgenoot that perhaps we could use extracts, but they were not too comfortable with this because their angle is that they want to write from the dad's perspective and not necessarily research.
3. Finally, they want me to send a write up of my stats that I have of my literature review for them to publish in the article.
4. Chrizane suggested that perhaps they can try to find a couple via their Facebook and then use my stats.

Please advise.

Regards  
Chanaz

## **ADDENDUM 2.15: TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH JOURNALIST (STAY-AT-HOME HUSBAND) AS EXPERT**

Date: 11 May 2011

- How did it come about that you became interested in researching the stay-at-home husband?

It was about 12 years ago and at the time, there was a lot of buzz on the internet and in parenting magazines about men becoming primary caregivers to their children. It seemed like a relevant and interesting topic to pitch to magazine editors, so I did. The story went into a regional lifestyle magazine.

- What according to you are the reasons for husbands to become stay-at-home husbands?

In Canada, with equal pay for equal work being long established for women, they were equally capable of generating sufficient income to support their families. Therefore either spouse could be the breadwinner or the stay-at-home parent. At the time – and probably still – women were in a better position to get good jobs than men. It was a time when women were taking over work areas which traditionally had been the province of men. These jobs included newspaper/magazine advertising sales, corporate management and even carpentry & construction.

- Do you think men adjust very easily to this role and if not why not?

I think such arrangements were well discussed weighing the pros and cons before any changes were made. Of course, being a stay-at-home dad may well have been thrust upon some families if the husband lost his job. Another scenario might be a working wife being promoted to a better paying position, and it is feasible for the man to leave his job to be a fulltime parent. Also, some stay-at-home dads operated home-based businesses so they were still generating income. Other stay-at-home dads did home renovations at a fraction of the cost of hiring outside help. Therefore,

the men I interviewed were quite happy in their role reversal lifestyle. I suppose those who tried it and didn't like it had to make other arrangements.

In your encounter with stay at home husbands, what are the challenges that they are faced with?

The challenges of child rearing are the same for men as they are for women. There are good days and disaster days. There was no difference.

- Do families with stay at home husbands in your experience receive a lot of support from the extended family, community, society?

No, they received about the same amount of assistance as their wives had received – not much.

- In conducting the research with the stay at home husbands, what did their main responsibilities at home entail?

Child care, cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping – all the activities their wives would have been engaged in were they the primary caregiver.

- What according to you are the needs of a stay-at-home husband?

I was never a stay-at-home husband. I was a single dad during school breaks and summer vacations. However, as a parent, my duties were quite similar. I had to be responsible for my daughter's need, whatever they were. While at work, I had to arrange supervision for her, I prepared meals, made sure the house was clean and that there were always clean clothes available. I also spent time with my child, doing things together and engaged in her activities. I did all these things on my own, as most parents of either gender would do.

- What was your experience of being a part-time dad?

My experience was good. I loved being with my daughter. But when she stayed with me, she also had her own life. She had friends in the town I lived in so she was engaged in sleep-overs, play dates, going to the movies, etc. She also went to summer camp for 2 weeks each summer. This was always during her visits with me. She went to camp because she liked the experience and many of her pals also went to the same camp. Some evenings, we would watch TV together but at other times, she liked her alone time which was fine with me because I usually needed it too.

What were the benefits and challenges?

In some ways, being a part time dad was a good thing. Because our time together was limited, we both valued it more. I think I spent more quality time with my kid than I would have had I not been divorced. The challenges were adjustment of lifestyle but these were minor and became even less-so after I remarried.

- Any suggestions on how couples where the wife is working and the husband is a stay-at-home husband can be supported?

It is important that the extended family is supportive of this reversal of traditional roles. If they understand the husband has taken on a huge job as a caregiver, there will be no undercurrents that he is living off his wife. There is often the notion that a man supported by his wife is “no good” or lazy. But anyone who has looked after children and a household on an on-going basis knows being a homemaker is not an easy job and it is one which is scarcely acknowledged. Otherwise, a man needs the same support as his wife would if she were back doing the job. The job is the same no matter who does it. Child rearing is the responsibility of both parents so the husband and wife must work as a team to do the best possible job. The best way to achieve this is to help each other.

**ADDENDUM 2.16: LOSLIP PODCAST**

### **ADDENDUM 3.1: TRANSCRIPT OF THE LOSLIP CALL-IN PROGRAMME BROADCASTED ON RADIO SONDER GRENSE (ENGLISH)**

Hallo there and a warm welcome to Loslip, the last leg of the afternoon shift with me, Ian Wessels. You find us naturally, as always, between 100 and 104 FM country-wide. This afternoon we are talking about reversed roles. A few aspects about which we can talk about are how common it is. Look, traditionally the man is the breadwinner and the woman is the homemaker. These days it is very common that both of them work. But how common is it if the woman is actually the breadwinner and the man is the homemaker and what leads to this, why did it happen, is it opportunities that present themselves? What would have given rise to this? And then, the other question about which one can perhaps talk: For some people, especially people who we can say are relatively conservative about the traditional roles, many men would not for the world want to be seen as the homemaker. It's just not a manly thing to do. Whilst other men do not mind at all to help with washing the dishes, to wash and cook, you know to do the housework and all those type of things. So for some people it will surely affect your self-image if it, if it has to happen, but let us hear a bit what people say who are perhaps already busy with this at this stage. Has it affected the relationship between you and your wife in any way; your image of yourself?

Before we go to the lines let us look quickly at what Anonymous writes. "I am a homemaker for three years now. We took the decision after our second child was born. Although I was in a managerial position for 16 years, we decided that someone must be at home to see to the children's upbringing. As my wife's income was higher than mine, the lot fell to me. In the beginning it felt like long leave but now, after six months, I have realised it is permanent. We also no longer have a maid. I can just say that it is very hard work and not at all stimulating. I regard it as a sacrifice for and an investment in our children's future. I accept contract work from time to time which means that I see other faces for a week or two and when it comes to home I have much sympathy for people, men and women, who must stay at home the whole time. One can get fed up with your own home" says Anonymous from Pretoria.

Theo says "I am from Bloemfontein. I am a stay-at-home dad for eight years now. My daughter was born eight years ago when I and my wife decided that one of us must be at home to give attention and spend time with them. Life is full of bad things. Financially, it is tough but if I and my wife look at happiness, I would do it again. My day begins at 5 o'clock with picking vegetables. Then the wife drops the children at school. Then my very large vegetable garden and small scale vegetable farm, I work myself, hoe plants, water. We eat from the garden the whole summer and then I also freeze enough for the winter and make and preserve jam. One o'clock I fetch the children, then the housework begins, clean, wash the dishes, make the fire and food. I like healthy food which takes time. I am used to it now but it took time. It's very hard work but I would do it again for my wonderful wife and family life."

And then, I must surely give the name, it looks to me that John says "affirmative action and the placement of White men on the lowest level leads to White men no longer being able to be the breadwinner and then they are obliged to perform the woman's traditional role. This is my truth", says John from George.

It's definitely a factor, John, but the only thing that makes me wonder about it is this now not actually and we do not want to get involved in an affirmative action debate. It is a reality of our time in which we live but it is not as if White women can pick and choose between jobs. My own wife, amongst other things, her contract was also not renewed at one stage purely because the organisation for which she worked, said that their BEE targets require that they must appoint someone other than a White woman and did not renew her contract. So, it is implicit in your argument that White women get work easily, which is not necessarily so.

Let's talk with Johan from Newlands, what is your opinion Johan? Let me just get the right line here for you. Are you there? Here he is.

Johan: Hallo can you hear me?

Ian: We hear you, talk.

Johan: I just wanted to say, I was retrenched a little while ago, actually a few years, but the role at home is difficult.

Ian: Now before you were retrenched, were you a chap who helped was dishes and cooked and so on and what was your role then?

Johan: Ag, a guy helps where he can, you know, but now it is now actually full-time, but actually nice

Ian: Yes, but it's different, but difficult

Johan: Yes it is

Ian: Now tell us a bit about your adjustment. Are their children and so on involved? What does your day look like?

Johan: Get up early, make school food for the children, drive children around, drive them to school, fetch in the afternoon, clean where I can, cook food.

Ian: And are you now a seasoned cook, look many men did not learn with Mom in the kitchen how to make a traditional bean stew and to make all the things. If you could now choose, does it work for you at this stage?

Johan: Man actually yes, it's nice, but it also becomes difficult at times

Ian: And who, who is talking as well so close to you? Is it one of yours?

Johan: Yes, I am sitting here with the grandchild

Ian: Now what does your wife say? I mean, does she not miss being mother and the time with the children?

Johan: Actually yes, mother is actually closer to the children than me.

Ian: Yes, it looks as if after all it works for you in a way. Thank you that you let us hear from you.

Come, let us hear what more people say. The number is 0891104553. Perhaps you are in one of those types of reversed roles in which the man largely plays the homemaker role and the woman is the breadwinner. We want to hear how it makes you feel, do you feel in a way inferior, do you feel it is just how they say it is formulated in the marriage, for better and for worse, do you just feel it is that you must do it, you are helping each other. You are still a team, even if the traditional roles are reversed a little bit. Does it affect your self-image in any way, what do your friends say if the guys are talking, say, over a weekend at a braai and ask how it's going at work and that type of thing? . Do you feel a bit excluded or how does it affect you? And naturally from the women's side also, that breadwinner role when you are at work and talking with colleagues and so on, is it easy to say my husband is a homemaker or do you feel just a small bit half ashamed to say it. Come, we want to hear how this affects you, how you see yourself and your self-image. 0891104553 is the number to dial. You can send E Mails from RSG's website



rsg.co.za and of course the SMS's, 33343 is the short number and if you have free SMS then this does not hold here.

Alwin says due to illness, he is sitting at home, fortunately my dear wife has a good income but I with my small pension, man the pots as I can cook. Surely therefore she manages the role shift relatively easily but fortunately no children which would attract more dirty looks. But he does have far fewer friends now, says Alwin.

Yes it is rather interesting. We want to hear how you experience this, there in your neighbourhood and all the structures with which a person talks with other people, do they look, are there dirty looks? 0891104553

Leon, you are a truckdriver. So you're surely now not the homemaker. You're surely not the homemaker if you are a truckdriver.

Leon: No man. Yes I, I also want to say something, a small contribution. I was also at home at one stage in 2006 where I climbed off but I do not believe that any truckdriver, for that matter will just do it. I must have sat for more than three months but then my wife said rather not, she must again come and take over and from then on I was again on the road

Ian: Now how easily did she take over again?

Leon: Say again?

Ian: How easily did she accept taking over again?

Leon: No, she had to just do it. I mean I was the only breadwinner at that stage. Then I just went and drove truck again. I am now still sitting on the road.

Ian: Yet people complain very regularly about the boss who is so unfair and everything at work, but the homemaker at least does not have that problem.

Leon: Say again?

Ian: Never mind, I see those background noises are rather bad but I think we got your your point. Let's hear what Gerrie says, he is in Kempton Park

Gerrie (Kempton Park): Hi, good afternoon this is Gerrie and I am a woman, hey.

Ian: I hear so, I must say I was a little surprised but I will accept it as such

Gerrie: You know what? My husband now performs that role also as a result not of retrenchment or whatever but a bit of politics at work. But yes I must say it actually took about 20 years that it took me to actually prepare him for these things. I don't believe that a woman's work is in the home and a man's work is outside. I feel one must do it together and that we applied this now for all the right reasons as he now

knows about everything. He can can make food well, wash the washing, dishes, clean the house. Yes and you know, yes and it is a great humiliation for men.

Ian: Now how does he accept it? I mean if it is humiliating for hom, then he surely does not enjoy it or how?

Gerrie: Um I don't think he really enjoys it, he tries to keep himself busy. It is a very great humiliation for a man, I think it hits a man's self-image to the knees and yes it cannot work for a man to say but I sit at home now and my wife is busy being the breadwinner day in and day out.

Ian: Do you get dirty looks as someone put it from friends and the community and the whole neighbourhood about this or not really?

Gerrie: Man, now we are not really people who mix in the neighbourhood, we are but we are all the years lone people and yes if we go to our friends, well they talk more about the event how it happened that he now sits in this position and that's frightening and I think it brings other people to the reality to see what everything happens in a company to get rid of, if I may mention it, a White man and how they can plot together and make up a good recipe that at the end of the day lets you defend yourself at the labour laws. That kind of stuff, you know, and how far it can go and it can go to a High Court so that they can put him back in his position. But what I actually wanted to say to you is also I comprehend and understand my husband. If I must go out and I see clients and I go to dangerous areas, then I phone him quickly and then I ask him what are you doing? Can I come quickly and pick you up? And so I still try that he keeps track with the outside world, what is going on, if I may say it like that.

Ian: Can I quickly ask you, Gerrie, do you sometimes miss that homemaker role, do you sometimes wish you could play that role rather than working full-time?

Gerrie: Um, yes you know, I would kind of really appreciate it as I just like to do other such things, you know, make little changes and all such little things and a man is, you know, a thing stands there and stands there and they do not have that initiative to use, and I don't say everyone, but few of them.

Ian: He stands there now, why would you move him now? Thank you that you phoned, hey.

Ian: Now talking of self-image, this is definitely a mortal blow for Gavin. He says he is no longer the head of the house after years of suppression and manipulation and

the important role that women have now obtained in South Africa, a man can no longer be the head of a house.

Ian: Wonder what the women will say about this. He says it's a Biblical disgrace. Come let's hear what Jan in Bellville says. Hallo Jan

Jan: Hallo Ian, yes, man thank you for the opportunity. I wanted to tell you I, as a result of the economic circumstances, I had to close my business. That's about 5 years ago and it's very, very difficult. The homemaking is not really so bad, the housework the cleaning is dreadfully bad but now yes a person can organise and live with it. But your self-image that's not something that you can just get back easily and quickly and it is a struggle every day to be a normal person again.

Ian: But let me ask, I want to hear, are there men who who feel that as homemakers it makes nothing of their self-image? Someone says here, guys, who is used to the traditional roles, for them it is very hard. But many modern men cook in any case at home and wash dishes, so for them it is not dreadful.

Jan: Yes but look, I am still nog skere, still from before the war type and the traditional type of guy and for me it was dreadfully hard, the adjustment. I tell you honestly it makes your self-image lie in shreds.

Ian: Now well, all the best to you there. Rudolph says I think this is very important that fellows who are homemakers let us hear from them so that we can break down the stigma of this, especially because it is going to happen all the more that men must stay at home. The same probably lies ahead for me this year but I am looking forward to the challenge. I just hope my wife is not going to be too strict a boss to work for.

Ian: Anonymous: Marriage is very beautiful for me, if we help each other there are not problems. My husband works abroad and comes home just twice a year. When he comes back he does everything in and around the house. I also work but do not complain as housework is every day and must be done. I feel special when my husband takes work out of my hands. We do not have children as yet but just a few days before 30 and still enjoy everything in life. I can say with pride that my husband helps me so that I do not have to do too much housework and that's for both of our convenience.

Ian: Let us hear what Danay in East London says. Hallo there..

Danay: Hallo Ian it's Danay from East London. I and my husband are married now about a year and it's wonderful to me to see how the role of the husband and wife have half merged and how the wife helps the husband outside and the husband helps the wife inside and how people support each other and if we look at how times have changed and how our mothers were in the kitchen and the dads were in the garden, it is really wonderful for me to see that many men put their egos aside and help their wives.

Ian: Yes, it is now not an easy thing to say, it does not affect all men's self-image. I think it's a question of person to person. We can also get an idea during the course of the programme how the men feel about this. It seems to me that the older men struggle with it, they struggle to distance themselves from the traditional role.

Danay: Yes, definitely

Ian: Oh well thank you that you let us hear from you. Stay well. Good.

Ian: Pieter says he has been at home for 16 years already due to affirmative action: My wife keeps the pot boiling, I manage the housekeeping totally and I do from buying the groceries to cleaning to gardening. If I must cut the grass I accept it as a given. Naturally, I feel stripped of my manhood and one's self-image receives a huge blow. And Elise says it's not easy for a man not be a breadwinner. They feel humiliated. My husband did not like it when I got a higher salary than he did until we were in the privileged position to be able to work together for extra income, he also worked but we shared the money.

Ian: I would have no problem if my wife earned more money than me. In this way, there is always someone to borrow from who hopefully will be sympathetic and have an open purse.

Wesley (Kempton Park): Good day Ian. I am still too young or it is before my time to be a homemaker as I am not yet married or something of that nature but I am in the privileged position in my business to have spare time during the day and a year ago I began swotting through the post with UNISA and I recommend this to all with whom I speak, especially people who spend time at home who have a few hours during the day to themselves to consider the option to go and study and not just to sit. Beneficial if one may perhaps later in your life if you must occupy a position with a specific qualification but even if it is just to do something interesting and develop

yourself. It's fairly simple and if a guy just purposefully puts in a few hours each day, it can only be beneficial.

Ian: They say how do you eat an elephant, bite by bite so if just little, little each day then you get there eventually.

Wesley: Yes, the time goes by so quickly, before you know you have climbed a mountain.

Ian: Very true, thank you man, all the best for the future.

Landi says I am a homemaker and I am this because of the Levites and all their things. See, my Eve became tired to be such a maker, then she locked me up made me stand against a wall, her sleeves rolled up and with her hands on her sides began to read to me about the bloody Levites. Now, let me now tell you one thing and assure you, my mate, if my Eve reads to you about the Levites you shut up and you listen in surrender and you ensure that you stay well read for long. Oh well, I now create the home every morning and yes I also begin to enjoy it now.

Wynand says it's not easy to stay at home and play the role of housewife: I was at home for four months, was almost mad and yes I had to do the household tasks. It was very bad for me to think the friends and everyone know that I am at home and not working. It's part of life and I will never be able to play that housewife role. I just say a woman or a man who stays at home and plays housewife, you are good.

Sadie says homemakers can have a peaceful life and do things at their own pace. If husband and wife make a team together and it works, it does not matter who the one is who manages the housekeeping. The wife must just realise that the man is still the priest and authority in the home and respect this. Today people are much more considerate towards women as years gone by. Bravo for men who are not scared of life.

Ian: Maria there in Roodepoort we are visiting you, what do you say?

Maria (Roodepoort): Ian you know my father always said he never wanted to do a woman's work because a woman works 24 hours a day.

Ian: And did he then never take on a woman's work? I presume.

Maria: No he worked and then was on pension, he helped my mother but he never took over. He said he did not feel up to a woman's work as she works 24 hours a day and he was not up to that.

Ian: Do you think a man is generally not geared for that?

Maria: No he was not geared for that, not at all.

Ian: Now do you think you can put another gearbox in a person so that he will become geared for it or not really?

Maria: No it's not that easy. But my sons can do everything, hear, and I have taught them to make food, clean the house, wash the washing and iron, also to bake cakes, bake bread, everything

Ian: Yes but look there is a big difference between being able to do a thing and wanting to do it

Maria: Yes they do it if they don't have a choice, then they do it but they can do it, I taught them to do it. Because their father was in a wheelchair, I cared for him for 15 years and 5 months.

Ian: Maria thank you for letting us hear from you. Let's visit Johan in Pretoria. Hallo Johan

Johan (Pretoria): Hallo Ian

Ian: Yes, we are listening to you.

Johan: You know I am now also a homemaker in our home for the past 15 years. Due to medical circumstances, I lost my job about 15 years ago and I enjoy it enormously and my wife leaves the entire housekeeping to me and in response to what was said by those phoning in, I just want to say I am very proud of this. I'm very proud of what I do every day, I enjoy it, and it has done no damage to my self-image. In contrast, I am very proud of what I do every day and I tell this to all and anyone who wants to listen can talk to me about it. It's not something about which I need to feel ashamed and I think one can expect much so and especially if your wife stands by you and gives the space and the freedom to manage then it can work well. In our case, it works outstandingly and I hope it can continue for a long time.

Ian: Do you find that the community, friends circle and so on sometimes look at you skewed or frown over the roles or have they accepted it easily?

Johan: No they accepted it easily but all that I sometimes find and it's sometimes not so good for me, they ask what do you actually do the whole day to keep yourself busy.

Ian: Yes indeed they also ask that of teachers and housewives.

Johan: Yes and there's really not one moment in the day time to sit still and one is continuously busy the whole day because I plan, for example our meals three days

beforehand before I go and buy groceries, I make all the food, I manage the household. There's simply not time to sit and do nothing and other people can apparently not realise and understand this. That's all that I find.

Ian: Mmm I can imagine, yes. And do you ever miss it, would you ever want to be the breadwinner or have you now become yourself at home in the role that you do not care to carry on for the rest of your life basically?

Johan: Fortunately, I'm in the position that I receive reasonable pension at this stage so it's not that we are only dependent on my wife's income. I also make a financial contribution to the household and a fairly large contribution in that respect and yes, one thinks at times how it would be to go and work again where you get up every morning and climb in your car and drive to work and then only return in the evening, but at the moment I am happy with the situation as it is.

Ian: Johan I say thank you, best wishes for the future. We now visit Johan who is also a truck driver. Hallo there.

Johan: I just want to tell you I am a truck driver. 90 per cent of the times I drive, my wife rides with me but we are in the privileged position to be at home every weekend and then we literally do everything together. House cleaning, we begin for example with house cleaning. I begin naturally in the morning first with a cup of coffee for her, then I begin to clean the house first, then it is the dishes and washing the clothes and then at the end of the day we are together in the garden. If she gets a blister on her hand or whatever, she is together with me in the garden and so on. We literally together, we use the time to do everything together and I must honestly say to you, I cannot see that it can be a problem if it should happen, you know, that I should come to being in that position if I am no longer a breadwinner and I do the housework. I cannot see this because I am used to it that it can in no way be a problem or injure your self-image or ego and if one now loses a friend as a result it is not then worth the effort to have a friend.

Ian: Thanks hey, all the best and drive well. Hans in Thabazimbi we will talk quickly with you before we break. Hallo there.

Hans: Hallo. After 35 years, I say to you that I help her with the dishes and she helps me with the washing. And there is not a thing as man and woman roles, you have a joint commitment in life. So a man who tells me his little ego hurts does yet not have much to lose in this life and I tell you if both say don't look for a bargain, be a bargain

then no such thing exists as male and female roles or such like. You've taken on the yoke together, you pull it together

Ian: For better and for worse. Oh well, Hans thank you very much, short and sweet. Now let's read one or two contributions. Over the years we have had a traditional marriage, says Pat, but since a few years ago when my husband's work, who works for himself, began to decrease, we switched our roles. We are very comfortable with this, we understand each other because we have both worn that shoe on the other foot. Anne says she was also the breadwinner for many years because husband alone was not very fond of work. It was nicer for him to sit with his mates and play cards and braai. Well, he is now ex-husband, then for many years I was sole parent I overcompensated for many things instead of spending quality time with my children. Later at least I came to my senses and put things right. However, my children say they do not know why I ask for forgiveness as they say old Anna was anyway a much better mother as I could have been. I and husband 2 are at least in an equal partner relationship and it works very nicely as he is happy, not threatened at all.

Yes, we can talk then for another quarter of hour or so, dance then to just one small advert, but we dance back to talk here on Loslip about households in which the roles, the traditional roles, have been exchanged, where the wife is the main breadwinner and the husband is the main homemaker and we want to hear from men who are in that role. How does it affect you, is it something that you began to do easily because it works for your specific relationship? A few men said it is bitter, their self-image cannot handle it and then we had other men such as Hans who says look, if your little ego cannot take it then you don't really have anything to lose. So how do men and women accept it? Interesting that more men than women phone, they are probably at work. Let's begin with Pieter from Witbank. Hallo there.

Pieter (Witbank): Afternoon Ian. Man I have also now, it's now my 3rd year that I am a homemaker and I must tell you I have got unbelievable respect for women as it is now really not the easiest thing to stay at home and do all the work.

Ian: Are there some tasks that are more difficult for you than others? Because there are many things I will do in a house but dusting. You know I hate to rake in again a piece of fluff that has escaped. I will vacuum, I will wash the dishes, I will cook, I will do many things but dusting I hate.



Pieter: Yes the only thing that I put my foot down about, I don't iron. That I refuse to do but all the other things, I do and I also want to say like the other guy said, what bothers me is people who ask what do you keep yourself busy with. That I can't handle and it's generally the women who ask you. I don't think they think a man can do these things. I often think women look down on the husband who is at home more than your fellow men friends.

Ian: That's indeed an interesting remark. Would love to hear what other women, other men say about it. Thank you for letting us hear from you, hey.

Pieter: Thanks a lot.

Ian: Now that's interesting that women look down more on the husbands than other men do, let's hear what more men say about this. 0891104553. Elise from Pretoria, do you look down on husbands who work at home?

Elise (Pretoria): Hallo, you know I want to tell you my husband is now at home for quite a while. He was very ill for 15 years in much pain and he still occupied a good position. But I must say this man is so busy at home with work that he is so tired in the evening he is played out. He's very busy and we are already granny and grandpa so yes he's busy. He also builds here at the house himself. He is busy building a bachelor flat for our other son, So yes, he found it very difficult to get over it and I left him to calm down and I told him you know, you have a very important position in this home, you must support the children and me and he does it.

Ian: Good, thanks hey.

Elise: Thanks, ta ta.

Amanda says I was never cut out to be a homemaker. I work days. My husband is on pension and can make delicious food. A star for all those men who are homemakers, yes there are now naturally women not cut out for working at home but who rather want to work careers in the corporate world. Then someone says my husband would indeed want to be the homemaker, that woman who says her husband does not move things and if a thing stands there then it stands there. You must see my husband he shifts the house after work that I have bumped myself unconscious in the night when I get up. And you are mad about cooking it's nice except one never knows in what bedroom you are going to sleep tonight. Jannie from Deneysville, it's your turn.

Jannie (Deneysville): Hallo Ian, afternoon, I am 64 already. I was a tradesman, I had a big workshop with spray torches, welding machine, every thing and my wife is happily married. But after we retired, she often got half cross then she goes off to the children and you won't believe me she takes everything that was a pot, she leaves me just with the cast iron pots here and so I learnt with Amor's recipes to make food after I discharged the servants. Here I am now at the present moment busy preserving green mielies. Yesterday I preserved pears. I cook my own food, bake my own bread and do everything and I won't exchange it for nothing. The two servants we had, the one I told years ago you go sit and paid off but she still stays on the site and the other told, listen you just come here three days a week please and I enjoy it from the morning to the night. Plant my vegetables and everything, everything, everything. No, I think we baby boomers, our mothers brought us up right, all these old men in the 60s know how to clean house. Scrub and polish those wooden block floors. No, I think we men can do it, we are here an example I enjoy it from morning to night.

Ian: Well, hear, hear hey.

Kallie has been a homemaker for 3 years now. He says man, this homemaker is not easy, I am getting a headache now in the evening like my wife when I was still the head of the house, now we know what causes it.

Outshoorn's girl says: It's so old fashioned to think that a man and a woman have specific roles, each one must do everything. My old mother-in-law was against homosexual relationships, in her words who's the male and who's the female. So much ignorance meanwhile she sits squarely on the oppressed uncle old gentleman's head and he is a capable housewife.

Ian: Wonder about her question now.

Sandra says her husband enrolled in a restaurant school three years ago and we have picked up a lot of weight and now we go every morning to the beach to row away the rolls.

Amanda says my husband had the opportunity to drop the children off at school in the morning and to help them with homework and sport after school. All I can say is he enjoyed it enormously. In the evening when I came home after work, I would be informed of all the gossip at school.

Pieter says it's nice, we swapped 100 per cent, no traffic in the mornings, no office politics, I can eat what I feel like, the maid does the cleaning and washing and I visit with my wife's friends.

Ian: Don't think that's what we actually had in mind with a homemaker, Pieter but I hear what you say with the office politics. Gertie in Pretoria, what do you have on your heart? Hallo.

Gertie: Hallo Ian, it's Gertie Brood from Pretoria, we're actually on the way to the Cape, we're here at Kimberley. I just want to tell you what I said to people when my husband went on early pension. Then the men also said: what do you now do all day? Then I always said to them he does all the things that you always say you have not got time for. Then they went quiet very quickly.

Ian: Oh well good, you must drive well, hear.

Gertie: Thank you

Ian: Another truck driver, Lökkie is this one's name, hallo

Lökkie: Ian I also just want to contribute. It depends from person to person if they are interested or not. Look, if I had to do it, I will blacken my soul at the end of the day. I can't sit still, I also helped the wife wash dishes and no, it's not for me.

Ian: Yes some husbands say they break most of the stuff then the wives take them off the dishes.

Lökkie: Yes, I can stand it for two minutes, then I'm fed up, then I rather go and do something outside.

Ian: But if there is now a man who is handy in the home, do you think it will denigrate his role or should he not feel bad about it?

Lökkie: No, as I said it depends if it is in your genes or not. Every guy has a career in life whether he likes it or not. He is going to do it or he is not going to do it. It's just a decision from person to person. I don't think it will damage his self-image or something like that. At the end of the day, it's just the interest.

Ian: Lökkie I say thanks to you, you must also drive well. Let's visit with Danie in Centurion.

Danie (Centurion): The topic is so interesting I will just start cooking. I am also at home. I still do private work here on my own and still run through the whole house. And I make food for the whole day and when my wife comes home in the evening,

everything is cooked and I am proud of it. It's a privilege to be able to do it for your wife especially for everything she has done for one over the years.

Ian: Does it not bother your manliness?

Danie: No it does not bother me at all. I am proud of it. Know that what is so nice is then we get guests and they come and eat with us in the evening, then they generally say to my wife, thank you very much, the food was good. Then my wife says don't thank me, thank him. See that dirty look that woman gives her husband. It builds your self-image. That's the truth it really is. I just think it's a privilege. We are already over 60 and my wife still works comes home six o'clock and I do not expect her to still make food. I work during the day, I make sure that I am home at four o'clock in the afternoon, I make us food then I make sure my grandson who lives with us is cared for and gets food. I also have the opportunity to go see my children if they play cricket or rugby and everything goes smoothly, it's so nice I will never again work for a boss ever in my life.

Ian: Yes, oh well strength, enjoy it. George says he manages the housekeeping for the past 6 months: I find it necessary to plan my day well. It's a pleasure to me but what he says is indeed a problem for him is there are not enough challenges. Yes, some people do enjoy solving problems and so on. Maybe just too much routine, the household tasks. Anonymous in Bloem, it's your turn.

Anonymous: Listen here Ian I just wanted to tell you I agree with the guys who said it definitely affects your self-image because it is so. It affects your self-image because you were used to doing your own thing, make your own thing if you will. Now you must ask how does our budget look, can I just buy a bit of that or may I do this as if you are pleading to make a living and I'm not shooting down because every house has a budget but that portion that you had to do as you wanted is no longer there so it affects your self-image and you know, yes it is just that it concerns you now, it affects you.

Ian: Now good, clearly you struggle still to adjust to it, I assume. Trudy in Witbank you're a lady, I presume.

Trudy (Witbank): Yes I am a lady

Trudy: I am very very proud of my son and my daughter-in-law. They take leave in turns to look after the children during school holidays and further their motto in the home is we are a team. The children also have their jobs and there is no such thing

that this is Mamma's work and that is Pappa's work, we are a team. It is a privilege to go to them at home.

Ian : Now thanks for that. Ryan in Krugersdorp you are surely going to be our last chat. Let's hear.

Ryan (Krugersdorp): Hallo Ian, it's Ryan here, yes as I say I am married to my wife 12 years already and since we were married my mother raised me right and I still make food for my wife and I enjoy it, yes it's very nice.

Ian: Does it affect the image of yourself in any way do you find people treat you differently?

Ryan: No, no I cannot say that, my friends who know me, they enjoy it when I begin making food. As long as my pots are empty, I'm happy.

Ian: Yes, yet it is interesting that it is now traditional that the woman must cook but if you go to the chef world then there are many men chefs. Look at all the television cooking series most of them are men, hey?

Ryan: That's right, yes it's right. I enjoy it I also work but I enjoy it more to cook.

Ian: No. now good then. I hope the people also enjoy eating it. It sounds to me your saucepans are empty, your pots are empty afterwards. Let's look at what one or two people say. Hanty says earlier someone said I like to bring about a bit of change and to shift furniture, because a man if a thing stands there, it stands there. It's more or less my view. Hanty says my husband shifts furniture round and round. Lidia also says I would give anything to be a homemaker but my husband, mister the entrepreneur thinks only business that I must keep going so she does not get the opportunity for that traditional homemaker thing. Danie says some people misunderstand it when a man is retired or when a man retires due to medical reasons it should not affect his self-image but when you were financially well off and now you are dependent on your wife's salary due to affirmative action or any other reason then your self-image suffers under this, it is humiliating. Yes it is probably so I think, especially if you made ample contribution, now then you half feel that you have let your wife down badly.

Northern Cape resident wonders if this phenomenon of male homemakers is rather a cultural thing or whether the broader group of cultures in our country and if some of them don't do it at all. Yes, we have hopefully got a bit of substance to think about

here and there. Thanks so much as always to all who participated and to Ina who answered the phones.

### **ADDENDUM 3.1: TRANSCRIPT OF THE LOSLIP CALL-IN PROGRAMME BROADCASTED ON RADIO SONDER GRENSE (AFRIKAANS)**

Hallo daar en baie welkom by loslip, die laaste been van die middag skof saam met my Ian Wessels. Jy kry ons natuurlik soos altyd tussen 100 en 104 FM landwyd. Vanmiddag praat ons oor omgekeerde rolle. So paar aspekte wat ons oor kan gesels hoe algemeen is dit. Kyk tradisioneel is die man mos nou die broodwinner en die vrou die tuisteskepper. Deesdae is dit baie algemeen dat altwee van hulle werk. Maar hoe algemeen is dit as die vrou nou eintlik die broodwinner is en die man die tuiste skepper en wat ly daar toe? Hoekom het dit so gebeur, is dit geleentheid wat homself voorgedoen het? Wat sou die aanleiding daar toe gewees het? En dan die ander vraag wat n mens miskien kan oor gesels vir sommige mense, veral mense wat redelik kom on sê konservatief is oor die tradisionele rolle um baie mans sal om der dood nie as die tuisteskepper gesien wou word nie. Dis net nie 'n manlike ding om te doen nie. Terwyl ander mans glad nie omgee om te help skottelgoed te was en te kook, jy weet die huiswerk te doen en al daai tipe van dinge nie so vir sommige mense sal dit nou seker uh jou selfbeeld afekteer as dit as dit so moet kom, maar kom ons hoor n bietjie wat sê mense wat dalk al daarmee besig is op hierdie stadium het dit enigsins die verhouding tussen jou en jou vrou geafekteer jou siening van jouself. Voor ons lyne toe gaan kom ons kyk gou wat skryf n anoniem: Ek is nou al drie jaar tuisteskepper ons het die besluit geneem nadat ons tweede kind gebore is. Hoewel ek n bestuurspos beklee het vir 16 jaar het ons besluit dat iemand tuis moet wees om na die kinders sê opvoeding om te sien. Aangesien my vrou se inkomste hoer as myne was het die lot op my geval. Aan die begin het dit vir my soos lang verlof gevoel maar nou omtrent ses maande het ek besef dis nou permanent. Ons het ook nie meer n bediende nie. Ek kan net sê dat dit baie harde werk is en geensins stimuleerend nie. Ek beskou dit as n opopferring vir en n belegging in ons kinders se toekoms. Ek aanvaar van tyd tot tyd kontrak werk wat beteken dat ek vir n week of twee ander gesigte sien en as dit by die huis kom en ek het baie simpatie mens mans en vroue wat heeltyd tuis moet bly n mens kan gatvol raak vir jou eie huis, sê anoniem van Pretoria. Theo sê, ek is van Bloemfontein ek is nou agt jaar 'n tuisbly pa. My dogter is agt jaar terug gebore waar ek en my vrou toe besluit het dat een van ons tuis moet wees om aandag en tyd saam met hulle te spandeer. Die

lewe is vol sleg. Geldelik is dit taai, maar as ek en my vrou kyk na geluk sal ek dit weer doen. My dag begin 5 uur met groente pluk, dan vrou aflaai dan kinders skool toe, dan my baie groot groente tuin en kleinskaal groente boerdery ek werk self, skoffel plante, maak nat ons eet die hele somer uit die tuin uit en dan vries ek ook genoeg vir die winter ek maak konfyt en lê in. Een uur kry ek die kinders dan begin die huiswerk, skoon maak, skottelgoed was, vuur en kosmaak. Ek hou van gesonde kos wat tyd vat. Ek is nou al gewoond daaraan maar dit het tyd gevat dis baie harde werk maar ek sal dit weer doen vir my wonderlike vrou en gesinslewe en dan sê, ek moet seker maar die naam gee, lyk my so John affirmative action en die plasing van blanke mans op die laagste vlak, lei daar toe dat blanke mans nie meer die broodwinner kan wees nie en hulle is dan verplig om die vrou se tradisionele rol te vertolk. Dit is my waarheid sê John van George. Dis beslis 'n faktor John maar die enigste ding wat my laat wonder daarvoor is dis nou nie eintlik en ons wil ook nou nie in n regstellende aksie debat betrokke raak nie. Dis 'n realiteit van ons tyd waarin ons lewe maar is dis ook nie nou eintlik dat wit vrouens kan kies of keur tussen werke nie. My eie vrou is onder andere haar kontrak ook op n stadium nie hernu nie bloot omdat die organisasie waarvoor sy gewerk het, gesê het hulle BEE targets vra dat hulle iemand anders moet aanstel as 'n wit vrou, en het nie haar kontrak hernu nie. So implisiet aan jou redenasie is dat wit vrouens maklik werk kry wat nie nou noodwendig ook so is nie. Kom ons gesels met Johan daar van Newlands wat is jou opinie Johan? Laat ek net vir jou n regte lyn hier kry. Is jy daar, daar's hy.

Johan: Hallo kan jy my hoor?

Ian: ons hoor jou gesels maar...

Johan: Ek wou net sê, ek is geretrench so rukkie terug eintlik n paar jaar maar die rol by die huis is moeilik.

Ian: Nou voor jy geretrench was, was jy 'n ou wat help skottelgoed was het en gekook het en soaan en wat was jou rol toe?

Johan: ag 'n ou help waar jy kan, jy weet, maar nou is dit nou voltyds eintlik, maar eintlik lekker.

Ian: Ja, maar dis anders maar, maar, moeilik

Johan: Ja dit is

Ian: Nou vertel ons n bietjie van jou aanpassing. Is daar kinders en so aan betrokke? Hoe lyk jou dag?



Johan: Vroeg opstaan, skoolkos maak vir die kinders, kinders rond ry skool toe, in die middag gaan haal, maak maar skoon waar ek kan, kook kos

Ian: en is jy nou al 'n gesoute kok, kyk baie mans het nou nie saam met ma in die kombuis geleer hoe om die tradisionele boontjie bredie en al die goed te maak nie. As jy nou kan kies werk dit vir julle op die stadium?

Johan: man eintlik ja, dis lekker, maar dit raak ook maar party keur moeilik

Ian: En wie, wie praat ook so daar naby jou? Is dit een van joune?

Johan: Ja, ek sit hier by die kleinkind

Ian: nou wat sê jou vrou? Ek meen, mis sy nie die ma wees nie en die tyd met die kinders nie?

Johan: eintlik ja, moeder is maar eintlik nader aan die kinders as ek.

Ian: Ja, dit lyk dit werk darem op n manier vir jou. Dankie dat jy van jou laat hoor het. Kom ons hoor wat sê nog mense die nommer is 0891104553 dalk is jy in een van daai sort van omgekeurde rolle waarin die man die tuisteskepper rol grootliks speel en die vrou die broodwinner rol. Ons wil graag hoor hoe laat dit jou voel, voel jy op n manier minderwaardig, voel jy dit is maar net hoe sê hulle dit in die huweliks formulier, "vir botter en vir wors". Voel jy dit is nou maar dat jy dit moet doen, julle help tog mekaar? Julle is steeds n span al is die tradisionele rolle so klein bietjie omgeruil. Affekteer dit enige manier jou selfbeeld, wat sê jou vriende, as die ouens nou praat sê nou oor n naweek by n braai en vra hoe gaan dit by die werk en die tipe dinge? Voel jy bietjie uitgesluit of hoe raak dit jou en natuurlik van die vrouens se kant af ook, daai broodwinner rol as jy nou by die werk is en gesels daar met kollegas en so aan, is dit maklik om te sê my man is n tuisteskepper of voel jy so klein bietjie, half skamerig om dit te se? Kom ons wil hoor hoe afekteer dit jou, hoe jy jousef sien en jou selfbeeld, 0891104553 is die nommer om te skakel. Eposse die kan jy stuur vanaf RSG se webwerf [rsg.co.za](http://rsg.co.za) en natuurlik die sms'se33343 dis die kort nommer en as jy gratis sms het dan geld hulle nou nie hieso nie

Alwin sê: Weens siekte sit ek by die huis, vroulief kry gelukkig n goeie inkomste maar ek met my pensioentjie be-man die potte want ek kan kook, seker daarom dat sy die rol verskywing relatief maklik hanteer maar gelukkig geen kinders wat nog meer skewe kyke sou ontlok het nie. Maar hy het wel veel minder vriende nou sê Alwin.

Ja dis nogal interssant ons wil graag hoor hoe ervaar jy dit, jou sosiale samesyn daar in jou buurt en al die strukture waarmee n mens moet ander mense praat, kyk hulle, is daar skewe kyke 0891104553?

Leon, jy's n siel op n wiel. So jy's seker nou nie die tuisteskepper nie. Jy's seker nie die tuiste skepper as jy 'n siel op 'n wiel is nie.

Leon: Nee wat, man ja ek, ek wil ook ietsie sê, bydraetjie ek was ook op 'n stadium by die huis in 2006 waar ek afgeklim het maar ek glo nie enige siel op wiel vir dit sommer wil doen nie ek het seker oor drie maande gesit toe het maar my vrou gesê nee wat sy moet maar weer kom oorvat en van daarvan af toe is ek maar weer op die pad

Ian: nou hoe maklik het sy weer toe oorgevat?

Leon: Sê weer?

Ian: hoe maklik het sy toe weer daai oorvat aanvaar?

Leon: Nee, sy moes dit maar gedoen het, ek meen ek was die enigste broodwinner op daai stadium gewees. Toe het ek maar weer gaan trok ry, laat ek nou nog steeds op die pad sit.

Ian: Mense kla tog baie baie gereeld oor die baas wat by die werk wat so onbillik en als is maar die tuisteskepper het darem nie daai problem nie.

Leon: sê weer?

Ian: Toe maar ek sien daai byklanke is n bietjie kwaai maar ek dink ons het jou punt gekry. Kom ons hoor wat sêGerrie, hy is in Kempton Park

Gerrie (Kempton Park): haai goeie middag dis Gerrie en ek is 'n vrou hoor.

Ian: Ek hoor so ek moet sê ek was bietjie verbaas maar ek sal dit so aanvaar

Gerrie: Weet jy wat? My man voltooi nou daai rol ook as gevolg van nie n retrenchment of wat ook al nie maar 'n bietjie politiek by die werk. Maar um ja, ek moet sê dis eintlik so 20 jaar gevat wat dit my gevat het om hom eintlik voorberei het vir hierdie dinge. Ek glo nie daaraan dat n vrou se werk is binnes huis en n man se werk is buite nie, ek voel n mens moet dit saam doen en dat ons dit toegepas het, nou vir al die regte redes gebeur want hy weet nou van alles, hy kan goed kos maak, wasgoed was, skottelgoed, huis skoon maak, ja en weet jy ja en dit is n groot vernedering vir mans.

Ian: nou hoe aanvaar hy dit? Ek meen as dit vir hom n vernedering is dan geniet hy dit seker nie of hoe?

Gerrie: Um ek dink nie hy geniet dit rerig nie, hy probeer homself besig hou. Dit is n baie groot vernedering , ek dink dit slaan n man se selfbeeld op die knie en ja dit kan nie werk vir n man nie om te sê maar ek sit nou by die huis en my vrou is dag in en dag uit besig om die broodwinner te wees nie

Ian: Kry julle skewe kyke soos iemand dit gestel het van vriende en die omgewing en die hele buurt daarvoor of nie juis nie?

Gerrie: Man ons is nou nie juis mense wat meng in die buurt nie ons is maar, ons is nog al die jare alleen mense en um ja as ons by ons vriende kom , wel hulle praat meer oor die aangeleentheid oor hoe dit plaasgevind het dat hy nou in hierdie posisie sit en dis skrikwekkend en ek dink dit bring ander mense ook tot die realiteit om te sien wat kan als in n maatskappy gebeur om ontslae te raak van n as ek dit mag noem, wit man en hoe kan hulle tot sameswering kom en n goeie resepie aanmaak laat jy op die einde van die dag gaan jouself verdedig by die labour laws, daai tipe van goed, jy weet en hoe ver dit kan gaan en dit kan gaan tot by 'n hooggeregshof sodat hulle hom kan terug sit in sy posisie maar wat ek eintlik vir jou wou sê is ook ek het begrip en ek verstaan my man. As ek moet uitgaan en ek sien kliente en ek gaan na gevaarlike areas toe dan bel ek hom gou-gou en dan vra ek hom wat doen jy? Kan ek jou gou kom optel? En so probeer ek nog steeds dat hy in die buite lewe samelewing track hou wat aangaan as ek dit so mag noem

Ian: Kan ek gou vir jou vra Gerrie, mis jy soms daai tuisteskepper rol, wens jy soms jy kon die rol liever vertolk het as om te werk voltyds?

Gerrie: um weet jy ja, ek sal dit nogal rerig waardeur want ek hou van net ander dinge doen, jy weet bietjie veranderings aanbring en al sulke goeitjies en n man is. Jy weet n ding staan daar en staan daar en hulle het nie daai initiatief om te gebruik om te, en ek sê nie almal nie, maar min van hulle.

Ian: Hy staan dan nou daar waarvoor wil jy hom nou skyf? Dankie dat jy gebel het hoor.

Ian: Nou so van die selfbeeld gepraat, dis definitief vir Gavin n doodskoot, hy sê hy is nie meer die hoof van die huis nie, na jare van onderdrukking en manipulering en die belangrike rol wat vrouens nou in Suid Afrika gekry het kan n man nie meer die hoof van n huis wees nie.

Ian: Wonder wat sal vrouens daarvoor sê. Hy sê dis n bybelse skande. Kom on hoor wat sê Jan in Belville. Hallo Jan

Jan: Hallo lan, ja man dankie vir die geleentheid. Ek wou vir jou sê ek is as gevolg van die ekonomiese omstandighede moes ek my besigheid toemaak. Dis so 5 jaar gelede en dis baie baie moeilik. Die tuisteskepping is seker nou nie so erg nie, die huiswerk, die skoon maak is verskriklik erg maar nou ja daarmee kan n mens reel en lewe, maar jou selfbeeld is nie iets wat jy sommer gou maklik terug kry nie en dit is maar elke dag n stryd om weer normal mens te wees.

Ian: Maar kom ek vra, ek sal graag wil hoor. Is daar mans wat wat voel dat as tuisteskeppers is dit maak aan hulle selfbeeld niks nie? Iemand sê hier ouens wat die tradisionele rolle gewoon is, vir hulle is dit baie erg maar baie moderne mans kook in elk geval by die huis en was skottelgoed so vir hulle is dit nie verskriklik nie.

Jan: Ja maar kyk ek is nog skere nog van die voor oorlog se soort en die tradisionele tipe ou en vir my was dit verskriklik erg, die aanpassing. Ek sê vir jou eerlik waar dit laat jou selfbeeld in skerwe lê.

Ian: Nou maar sterkte vir jou daar, Rudolph sê ek dink dis baie belangrik dat manne wat tuisskeppers is hier van hulle laat hoor so dat ons die stigma daarvan kan afbreek veral omdat dit al meer gaan gebeur dat manne by die huis moet bly, dieselfde le waarskynlik hierdie jaar vir my voor maar ek sien uit na die uitdaging, ek hoop net nie my vrou gaan n te kwaai baas wees nie om voor te werk nie.

Ian: Anoniem die huwelik is vir my baie pragtig as ons mekaar help is daar mos nie probleme nie, my man werk in die buiteland en kom net twee keur per jaar huistoe wanneer hy terug keur doen hy alles in en rondom die huis. Ek is ook werksaam maar kla mos nou nie want huiswerkies is alledaagse en moet gedoen word, ek voel spesiaal as my man werk uit my hande neem. Ons het nog nie kinders nie maar net n paar dae voor 30 en geniet nog alles van die lewe. Ek kan met trots sê my man help my sodat ek nie te veel husiwerk hoef te doen nie en dis vir ons altwee se gerief.

Ian: Kom ons hoor wat sê Danay daar in Oos London. Hallo daar.

Danay: Hallo Ian dis Danay van Oos London. Ek en my man is nou omtrent n jaar getroud en dis vir my wonderlik om te sien hoe die rol van die man en die vrou half saamgesmelt het en hoe die vrou die man buitekant help en die man die vrou binnekant help en hoe mens mekaar ondersteun en as ons kyk na hoe die tye verander het en hoe ons ma's in die kombuis was en die pas in die tuin is dit vir my regtig wonderlik om te sien dat baie mans hulle egos op sy sit en hulle vrouens help.

Ian: Ja dit is nou dit is nie n maklik ding om te sê dit afekteer alle mans se selfbeeld nie, ek dink dis n kwesie van persoon tot persoon ons kan ook deut die loop van die program n idee te kry hoe voel die manne daar oor dit wil my voorkom dat die ouer mans sukkel daarmee, hulle sukkel om afstand te doen van die tradisioneele rol

Danay: Ja, definitief.

Ian: Nou toe, dankie dat jy van jou laat hoor het ne. Mooi bly. Goed.

Ian: Pieter sê hy is al 16 jaar by die huis weens regstellende aksie. My vrou hou die pot aan die kook, ek hanteer die huishouding in die geheel en ek doen van groceries koop, kos maak tot skoon maak tot tuinwerk. As ek moet gras sny dan aanvaar ek dit as n gegewe. Ek voel uiter aard gestrope van my man wees en n mens se selfbeeld kry n geweldige knou en Elise sê dis nie maklik vir n man om nie die broodwinner te wees nie. Hulle voel verneder. My man het nie daarvan gehou toe ek meer salaris as hy gekry het nie tot ons in die bevooregde posisie was om saam te kon werk vir ekstra inkomste het hy ook gewerk maar die geld het ons saam gedeel.

Ian : ek sal geen problem hê as my vrou meer geld as ek verdien nie. Op die manier is daar iemand om van te leen wat hopelik 'n simpatieke oor en n oop beursie sal hê.

Wesley (Kempton Park): Goeie dag Ian. Ek is nog te jonk of dit is nog voor my tyd om n tuisteskepper te wees want ek is nog nie getroud of iets van die aard maar ek is in die bevooregde posisie om in my besigheid spaar tyd te hê gedurende my dag en ek het so n jaar terug begin swat deut die pos deur unisa en ek beveel vir almal aan wat ek mee praat veral self die mense tyd by die huis spandeer wat n paar uur deur die dag vir hulle self het om die opsie te oorweeg om te gaan studeer en nie net te sit nie voordelig as n mens miskien later in jou lewe as jy n pos moet beklee met n spesifieke kwalifikasie nie maar al is dit net om iets interessants te doen en om jouself te ontwikkel, dis redelik eenvoudig en as n ou net doelgerig elke dag 'n paar ure insit dan kan dit net voordelig wees.

Ian: Hulle sê mos hoe eet jy n olifant, so happie vir happie so as jy elke dag net so bietjie, bietjie dan kom jy uiteindelik daar.

Wesley: Ja, die tyd gaan so gou verby, voor jy weet het jy al n berg geklim.

Ian: Baie waar, dankie man, sterkte vir die toekoms.

Landi sê ek is n Tuisteskepper en ek is dit van wee die levite en al hulle dinge. Sien my Eva het moeg geraak om so n skepper te wees toe het sy vir my op sluit vir my staande gemaak teen n muur, haar moue opgerol en met hande op die sye vir my van die bleddie leviete begin lees. Nou laat ek nou vir jou een ding vertel en verseker my maat as my Eva vir jou van die levite lees dan shut up jy en jy luister met oorgawe en jy sorg dat jy vir lank belese bly. Nou ja ek skeep nou elke more die tuiste en ja ek begin dit ook nou geniet.

Wynand sê dis nie maklik om by die huis te bly nie en die rol van huisvrou te speel nie. Ek was vir vier maande by die huis amper mal gewees en ja toe moes ek die huis takies doen, dit was vir my baie erg om te dink die vriende en almal weet dat ek by die huis is en nie werk nie. Dis maar deel van die lewe en nooit sal ek daai huisvrou rol kan speel nie. Ek sê net n vrou of n man wat by die huis is en huisvrou speel, julle is goed.

Sadie sê tuisteskeppers kan n rustige lewe hê en doen dinge op eie pas. As man en vrou n span saam maak en dit werk maak nie saak wie is die een wat die hushouding behartig nie. Die vrou moet net besef dat die man is nog die priester en gesag van die huis en dit respekteer. Vandag se mans is baie meer bedagsaam teenoor vroue as jare terug. Bravo vir manne wat nie bang is vir die lewe nie

Ian: Maria daar in Roodepoort ons kuier by jou, wat sê jy?

Maria (Roodepoort): Ian weet jy my pa het altyd gesê hy wil nooit n vrou se werk doen nie want n vrou werk 24 uur ' n dag.

Ian: En het hy toe nooit n vrou se werk gevat nie? Neem ek aan.

Maria: Nee, hy het gewerk en was toe op pension, hy't my maar gehelp maar hy het nooit oorgevat nie. Hyt gesê, hy sien nie kans vir n vrou se werk nie want sy werk 24 uur n dag en hy sien nie daarvoor kans nie

Ian: Dink jy mans is oor die algemeen nie gerat daarvoor nie?

Maria: Nee hy was nie gerat daarvoor nie, glad nie.

Ian: Nou dink jy n mens kan n ander ratkas in sit sodat jy gerat raak daarvoor of nou nie eintlik nie?

Maria: nee, nie so maklik nie. Maar my seuns kan alles doen hoor ek het hulle geleer hulle kan kos maak huis skoon maak wasgoed was en stryk ook koek bak, brood bak alles.

Ian: Ja maar kyk daar is n groot verskil tussen n ding kan dit doen en n ding wil dit doen

Maria: Ja hulle doen dit as hulle nie n keuse het nie dan doen hulle dit maar, hulle kan dit doen ek het hulle geleer om dit te doen. Want hulle pa was in n ry stoel gewees, ek het hom vir 15 jaar en vyf maande opgepas.

Ian: Maria dankie dat jy van jou laat hoor het. Kom ons kuier by Johan in Pretoria. Hallo Johan

Johan (Pretoria): Hallo Ian

Ian: Ja ons luister vir jou.

Johan: Weet jy ek is nou vir die algelope 15 jaar ook n tuisteskepper in ons huis. Weens mediese omstandighede het ek my werk so 15 jare gelede verloor en ek geniet dit geweldig baie en my vrou laat die hele huishouding aan my oor en na aanleiding van wat die in- bellers gesê het wil ek net sê ek is baie trots daarop. Ek's baie trots op wat ek elke dag doen, ek geniet dit, en dit het my selfbeeld geen skade aangedoen nie, in teendeel ek is baie trots op wat ek doen elke dag en uh ek vertel dit vir almal en enige een wat wil luister kan met my daaroor praat dis nie iets waaroor ek skaam hoef te wees nie en ek dink n mens kan baie verwag so en veral as jou vrou jou bystaan en die ruimte en die vryheid gee om dinge te hanteer dan kan dit goed werk. In ons geval werk dit uitstekend en uh ek hoop dit kan nog lank so aanhou.

Ian: Vind jy dat die gemeenskap, vriende kring en so aan soms n bietjie skeef kyk, of frons oor die rolle of het hulle dit maklik aanvaar?

Johan: Nee hulle het dit maklik aanvaar maar al wat ek partykeer vind is en dis vir my nie partykeer so goed nie. Hulle vra wat doen jy die nou eintlik die heel dag om jousef besig te hou.

Ian: Ja dit vra hulle mos vir onderwysers ook en vir huisvrouens.

Johan: Ja en daars regtig nie een oomblik van die dag tyd om still te sit nie en mens is aanmekaar die heel dag besig want ek beplan byvoorbeeld ons etes drie dae vooruit ek gaan koop al die kruideniersware, ek maak al die kos, ek bestuur die huishouding daar is eenvoudig nie tyd om te sit en niks doen nie en uh ander mense kan dit blykbaar nie altyd insien nie en verstaan nie. Dis al wat ek vind.

Ian: Mmm kan nogal dink ja. En mis jy dit ooit, sou jy graag die broodwinner wou wees of het jy nou self tuis geraak in jou rol dat jy nie omgee om vir die res van jou lewe basies daarmee aan te gaan nie.

Johan: Gelukkig is ek in die posisie dat ek 'n redelike pension ontvang op hierdie stadium so dis nie dat ons net van my vrou se inkomste afhanklik is nie. Ek maak ook 'n finansiële bydrae tot die huishouding en n redelike groot bydrae in daardie verband en uh ja n mens dink partykeer daaraan hoe sal dit wees om weer n werk te gaan doen waar jy elke oggend opstaan en in jou kar in klim en werk toe ry en dan in die aand eers terug kom, maar op die oomblik is ek gelukkig met die situasie soos dit is.

Ian: Johan ek sê vir jou dankie, sterkte vir die toekoms, ons kuier nou by Johan, hy is ook n siel op n wiel. Hallo daar...

Johan: ek wil net vir jou sê ek is n siel op wiel. 90 persent van die kere ry my vrou saam met my maar ons is in die bevoordige posisie om elke naweek by die huis te wees en dan doen ons letterlik alles saam. Die huisskoon maak, ons begin byvoorbeeld met die huisskoon maak, ek begin natuurlik eers in die oggend vir haar 'n koppie koffie, vir haar dan begin ek met die huis eers skoon maak, dan is dit weer die skottelgoed en die klere se was en dan die einde van die dag is ons saam in die tuin as sy nou n blaas op die hand kry of wat ook al sy is saam met my in die tuin en so aan doen ons letterlik, gebruik ons nou die tyd om alles saam te doen en ek moet eerlik vir jou sê ek kan nie sien dat dit n problem kan wees as dit moet gebeur jy weet as ek in daai posisie moet kom as ek nie meer die broodwinner is nie en ek die huishouding doen kan ek nie sien omdat ek gewoon is daaraan dat dit enigsins n problem kan wees of jou selfbeeld of jou ego te knak nie en as n mens dan nou n vriend verloor asgevolg daarvan is dit mos nie die moeite werd om mos n vriend te he nie.

Ian: dankie hoor, sterkte en mooi ry. Hans in Thabazimbi ons praat gou met jou voor ons wegbreek. Hallo daar

Hans: Hallo. Na 35 jaar sê ek vir jou ek help haar met die skottelgoed en sy help my met die wasgoed. En daar is nie n ding soos man en vrou rolle nie, jy't 'n gesamentlike commitment in die lewe. So 'n man wat vir my sê sy ego-tjie kry seer het tog nie veel om te verloor in hierdie lewe nie en ek sê vir jou as altwee sê don't



look for a bargain be a bargain dan bestaan daar nie so n ding soos manlike and vroulike rolle nie of sulke goed nie. Jy't saam die tuig gevat, jy trek hom saam.

Ian: Vir botter en vir wors. Nou toe. Hans baie dankie man, kort en kragtig kom ons lees net so een of twee bydraes. Ons het al die jare n tradisionale huiwelik gehad sê Pat maar serdert n paar jaar gelede toe my man wat vir hom self werk se werk begin afneem het, het ons rolle omgeruil. Ons is baie gemaklik daarmee, ons het begrip vir mekaar omdat ons albei daai skoene aan die ander voet gehad het. Anne sê sy was ook al vir baie jare die broodwinner want Man een was nie baie lief vir werk nie. Dit was lekkerder vir hom om saam met die maats te sit en kaart speel en braai. Wel hy is nou eks man, toe was ek vir jare alleen ouer ek het geover kompenseer vir baie goed in plaas van kwaliteit tyd met die kinders te spandeer, ek het later darem tot inkeer gekom en dinge reggestel. My kinders sê egter hulle weet nie hoekom ek vergifnis vra nie want hulle want ou Anna was onder andere n baie beter ma as ek kon gewees het. Ek en man 2 is darem in n equal partner relationship en dit werk baie lekker want hy voel gelukkig glad nie bedreig nie.

Ja ons kan dan nog so n kwart-uur gesels. Dan is daar net een advertensietjie, maar dans ons terug om te gesels hier op Loslip oor huishoudings waarin die rolle, die tradisionele rolle omgeruil is, waar die vrou die hoof broodwinner is en die man dan die hoof tuisteskepper en ons wil graag hoor van mans wat in daai rol is. Hoe affekteer dit jou, is dit iets wat jy maklik begin doen het want dit werk vir julle spesifiek verhouding? Paar mans wat gesê het dit is bitter, hulle selfbeeld kan dit nie hanteer nie en dan het ons nou ander mans gehad soos Hans wat sê kyk as jou ego-tjie dit nie kan vat nie dan het jy nie juis iets om te verloor nie. So hoe aanvaar mans en vrouens dit? Interessant dat daar meer mans as vroue bel, hulle is seker by die werk. Kom ons begin by Pieter van Witbank. Hallo daar.

Pieter (Witbank): Middag Ian. Jong ek het ook nou, dis nou my 3rde jaar dat ek n tuisteskepper is en ek moet vir jou sê ek het ongelooflik respek vir vrouens gekry want dit is nou regtig nie die maklikste ding om by die huis te bly en al die werk te doen nie.

Ian: is daar sekere take wat vir jou moeiliker is as ander? Want daar is baie goed wat ek sal doen in 'n huis maar vee. Weet jy ek haat dit om n dons wat ontglip het weer in te hark. Ek sal stofsuig, ek sal skottelgoed was ek sal kook. Ek sal baie goed doen maar vee verpes ek.

Pieter: Ja die enigste wat ek my voet neer gesit het, ek stryk nie. Dit weier ek om te doen maar al die ander goeters, dit doen ek en ek wil net soos die ander ou ook sê die ding wat my die meeste pla is mense wat vir jou vra waarmee hou jy vir jou besig. Dit kan ek nou nie hanteer nie en dis die vrouens wat dit gewoonlik vir jou vra. Ek dink nie hulle dink dat n man hierdie goeters kan doen nie. Ek dink baie keer die vrouens sien meer neer op die man wat by die huis is as wat jou mede mans vriende dit doen.

Ian: Dis nogal n interssante opmerking. Sal graag wil hoor wat sê ander vrouens ander mans daarvan. Dankie dat jy van jou laat hoor het ne.

Pieter: Baie dankie.

Ian: Dis nou interessant dat vrouens meer neer sien op die mans as wat ander mans dit sal doen kom ons hoor wat sê nog mense daarvan. 0891104553 Elise van Pretoria, sien jy neer op mans wat by die huis werk?

Elise (Pretoria): Hallo, weet jy ek wil vir jou sê my man is nou n geruime tyd by die huis. Hy was baie siek vir 15 jaar in baie pyn gewees en hy het nogal n goeie posisie bekle. Maar ek moet jou sê hierdie man is so besig by die huis met werk dat hy so moeg is in die aand, sy go hang uit. Hy's baie besig en ons is al ouma en oupa so ja hy is besig. Hy bou ook self hier by die huis hy is besig om n so n jongmans woonstel vir ons ander seun te bou. So ja hy het dit baie moeilik gekry om oor dit te kom, en ek het hom gelos dat hy rustig word en ek het vir hom gesê weet jy, jy het n belangrikke posisie in hierdie huis, jy moet die kinders en vir my ondersteun en hy doen dit.

Ian: Nou maar goed dankie hoor.

Elise: Dankie, tata.

Amanda sê ek was nog nooit uitgeknip vir n tuisteskepper nie. Ek werk bedags. My man is met pensioen en kan heerlik kos maak. 'N sterrietjie vir al daai manne wat tuisteskeppers is, ja em daars nou natuurlik vrouens ook nie uitgekip is vir tuis werk nie maar liever loopbanne in die korporatiewe wêreld wil werk, dan sê iemand my man sal wel graag die tuiskeper wil wees daai vrou wat sê haar man skyf nie goed nie en as n ding daar staan dan staan hy. Jy moet my man sien hy skyf die huis na werk dat ek myself al katswink gestamp het teen die meubels as ek in die nag opstaan. En jy is mal oor kook, dis lekker behalwe dat n mens nooit weet in water slaapkamer jy vanaand gaan slap nie. Jannie van Deneysville, dis jou beurt.

Jannie (Deneysville): Hallo Ian, middag. ek is al 64. Ek was n ambagsman gewees ek het n groot werkswinkel met spray torchers, welding machine alles ek en my vrou is gelukkig getroud maar na dat ons afgetree is, kort kort raak sy half kwaad is dan gaan sy af na die kinders toe en jy gaan my nie glo nie sy vat all wat n pot is sy los my net met die cast iron potte hierso en so het ek geleer met Amore se resepte om kos te maak nadat ek die bedienes afgelaai het. Hier is ek op die huidige oomblik besig om groen mielies in te le. Ek het gister pere ingele. Ek kook my eie kos, bak my eie brood ek doen alles en ek veruil dit vir niks nie. Die twee bediendes wat ons gehad het, die een het ek al lank al gesê gaan sit jy en afbetaal, maar sy woon nog op my perseel en die ander vertel, luister hier jy kom net drie dae n week aseblief en ek geniet dit van die van more tot vanaand. Plant my groente en alles, alles, alles. Nee ek dink ons baby boomers, ons mas het ons reg groot gemaak, al hierdie ou manne in die 60's weet hoe ons huis skoon gemaak het. Daai blokkies vloere skrop en gepolish. Nee ek dink ons mans kan dit doen ons, hierso is n voorbeeld ek geniet dit van more tot aand.

Ian: Nou ja, hoor, hoor ne.

Kallie is nou al vir 3 jaar n tuisteskepper. Hy sê, jong hierdie tuisteskepper is nie maklik nie ek kry nou kopseer in die aand soos my vrou toe ek nog hoof van die huis was, so nou weet ons wat dit veroorsaak

Outshoorn se meisie sê: Dis so uit die oude doos om te dink dat n man en n vrou het spesifieke rolle, elkeen moet alles doen. My ou skoon ma het dit teen die homoseksuele verhoudings, uit haar woorde wie's die mannetjie en wie's die wyfie soveel onkunde in tussen sit sy vierkantige op die onderdrukkte oom oubaas se kop en hy is n knap huisvrou.

Ian: Wonder nou oor haar vraag.

Sandra sê ek het haar man drie jaar gelede by n Restuarant skool ingeskryf en ons het baie gewig opgetel en nou gaan on elke oggend strand toe om die rolle weg te roei

Amanda sê, my man het die geleentheid gehad om die kinders by die skool af te laai in die oggend en hulle na skool met huiswerk en sport gehelp. Al wat ek kan sê is hy het dit terdee geniet. Saans as ek na werk by die huis kom was ek ingelig van al die skinner nuus van die skool.

Pieter sê dis te lekker, ons het 100 persent geswop, geen verkeer in die oggende nie, geen kantoor politiek nie, ek kan eet waarvoor ek lus het, die bediende doen die skoon maak en die was goed en ek kuier met my vrou se vriendinne.

Ian: Dink nie dis heeltemal wat ons in gedagte het met n tuisteskepper nie Pieter maar ek hoor wat jy sê met die kantoor politiek. Gertie in Pretoria, wat het jy op die hart? Hallo.

Gertie: Hallo Ian dis Gertie Brood van Pretoria, ons is eintlik oppad Kaap toe, ons is hier by Kimberley. Ek wil net graag vir julle sê wat ek vir die mense gesê het toe my man op vroeë pensioen gegaan het. Dan het die mans ook gesê wat doen jy nou die hele dag? Dan het ek altyd vir hulle gesê hy doen al die goed wat julle altyd sê julle het nie tyd voor nie. Dan was hulle baie gou gou stil.

Ian: Nou maar goed, julle moet mooi ry hoor.

Gertie: Dankie

Ian: Nog n siel op n wiel, Lokkie is die een sê naam, hallo

Lokkie: Ian ek wil ook net bydrae. Dit hang maar van person tot person af of hulle die belangstelling het of nie. Kyk as ek dit moet doen sal ek my siel verswart op die einde van die dag. Ek kan nie stil sit. Ek het die vrou ook gehelp met die skottelgoed was en nee dis nie vir my nie.

Ian: Ja party mans sê hulle breek meeste van die goed dan haal die vrouens hulle van die skottelgoed af.

Lokkie: Ja ek kan dit twee minute gestaan, dans ek gatvol. Dan gaan doen ek liever iets buite

Ian: Maar as daar nou n man is wat handig is in die huis dink jy dit sal afbreek doen as sy rol of hoef hy nie sleg te voel daaroor nie?

Lokkie: Nee, soos ek gesê het dit hang af of dit in jou gene is of nie. Elke ou het n beroep in die lewe of hy daarvan hou of nie. Hy gaan dit doen of hy gaan dit nie doen nie. Dis maar n besluit van person tot person. Ek glo nie dit sal sy selfbeeld afbreek of so iets nie of afkraak of iets van die aard nie. Dit is maar net die belangstelling aan die einde van die dag.

Ian: Lokkie ek sê vir jou dankie, jy moet ook mooi ry. Kom ons gaan kuier by Danie in Centurion.

Danie (Centurion): Die onderwerp is so interessant ek begin sommer kos maak. Ek is ook by die huis, ek doen nog privaat werk hierso so op my eie en hardloop nog die

hele huis deur. En ek maak kos vir die dag en as my vrou in die aand by die huiskom is als gekook en Ek is trots daarop. Dis n voorreg om dit te kan doen vir jou vrou vir al swat sy oor die jare vir my gedoen het.

Ian: Pla dit nie jou man wees nie

Danie: Nee dit pla my glad nie. Ek is trots daarop. Weet wat so lekker is dan kry ons gaste en dan kom eet hulle die aand by ons dan sê hulle gewoonlik vir my vrou, baie dankie die kos was lekker, dan sê my vrou vir hulle, nee moenie vir my dankie sê nie sê vir hom dankie. Sien daai vuilkyk wat daai vrou vir haar man gee. Dit bou jou selfbeeld so op. Dis die waarheid, dis regtig dit is so. Ek dink net dis n voordeel. Ons is al oor die 60 en my vrou werk nog kom by die huis ses uur en ek verwag nie dat sy moet nog kos maak nie. Ek werk deur die dag ek sorg dat ek vier uur by die huis is in die middag, ek maak vir ons kos, dan maak ek seker my kleinseun wat by ons bly, dan sorg ek dat hy kos kry. Ek het ook die geleentheid om vir my kinders te gaan kyk as hulle krieket of rugby speel en alles loop vlot dis te lekker, ek sal nie weer vir n baas ooit in my lewe kan werk nie

Ian: Nou ja toe. Sterkte geniet dit. George sê hy behartig die afgelope ses maande die huishouding. Ek vind dit nodig om deur my dag goed met beplanning te kom. Dis n plesier vir my maar wat hy sê vir hom tog n problem is, is daar is nie genoeg uitdagings is nie. Ja party mense hou mos daarvan om probleme op te los en so aan. Dis miskien net te veel routine die huishoudelike take. Anoniem in bloem dis jou beurt.

Anoniem: Hoor hier Ian ek wou net vir jou sê ek stem saam met die manne wat gesê het dit afekteer definitief jou selfbeeld want dit is so. Dit afekteer jou selfbeeld want jy was gewoond om jou eie ding te doen, jou eie ding te maak as jy wil, nou moet jy vra hoe lyk ons begroting, kan ek bietjie dit koop of mag ek dit doen as of jy soebat om n bestaan te maak en ek skiet nou nie af nie want elke huis het n begroting maar daai deel wat jy gehad het om meet e maak en doen soos wat jy wil is nie meer daar nie so dit raak jou selfbeeld en jy weet ja dit is maar nou net so dat dit raak jou, dit afekteer jou.

Ian : Nou maar goed duidelik hy sukkel nog om daarmee aan te pas neem ek aan. Trudy in Witbank, jy's n dame neem ek aan.

Trudy (Witbank): Ja ek is n dame

Trudy: Ek is baie baie trots op my seun en my skoondogter hulle neem om die beurt verlof om na die kinders om te sien gedurende skool vakansies en verder is hulle leuse in die huis, ons is n span. Die kinders het ook hulle take om te doen en daar is nie so ding dat dit is mamma se werk en papa se werk nie, ons is n span. Dit is n voorreg om by hulle aan huis te kom.

Ian : Nou maar goed dankie daarvoor Ryan in Krugersdorp jy gaan seker ons laaste geselsie wees. Kom ons hoor

Ryan (Krugersdorp) :Hallo Ian, dis Ryan hierso, ja soos ek sê ek is al twaalf jaar getroud met my vrou en sederdien ons getroudis het my ma my reg groot gemaak en ek maak nou nog vir my vrou kos en ek geniet dit ja, dis baie lekker.

Ian : Afekteer dit enigins die beeld van jouself, vind jy mense behandel jou anders?

Ryan: Nee, nee ek kan nie dit sê nie, my vriende wat my ken, hulle geniet dit as ek begin kos maak. So lank my kos potte leeg is, is ek happy

Ian :Ja dis nogal interesants dat dit nou tradisioneel is dat die vrou moet kook maar as jy nou na die chef wereld toe gaan dan is daar baie manlike wat chefs kyk nou net na al die televisie kook reeks, die meeste van hulle is mans ne?

Ryan : Dis reg ja dis reg ek geniet dit ek werk ook maar ek geniet dit meer om te kook.

Ian : Nee, nou goed dan. Ek hoop die mense geniet di took om te eet. Dit klink my jou gestrolle is leeg, jou potte is leeg na die tyd. Kom ons kyk nog wat een of twee mense sê. Hanty sê, voer het iemand gesê ek hou daarvan om bietjie verandering te bring en om meubels te skuif, want n man as n ding daar staan dan staan hy daar. Dis min of meer my seining ook maar Hanty sê my man skuif meubels rond en rond en rond. Lidia sê ek sal wat wil gee om n tuisteskepper te wees maar my man meneer die entrepreneur dink net besigheid uit wat ek aan die gang moet hou so sy kry nie kans vir daai trasionele tuisteskepper ding nie.. Danie se sommige mense verstaan verkeerd wanneer n man afgetree is of wannen n man aftree weens mediese redes af is behoort dit nie sy selfbeeld te afekteer nie maar wanneer jy finansiell heel goed daaraan af was en nou op jou vrou se salaris aangewese is weens regstellende aksie of enige ander rede dan nou daaroor dan ly jou selfbeeld, dit is vernederend. Ja dit is sekerlik so ek meen veral as jy ruim bydrae gemaak het, mens dan half nou voel dat jy laat jou vrou in die steek.

Noordkaap lander wonder of hierdie finomeen van manlike tuisteskepper liewer n kulturele ding is of al die wyer klomp Kulture van ons land of sommige van hulle dit ook doen of hulle en of sommige van hulle dit glad nie doen nie. Ja, ons het hopelik so bietjie stof tot na denke so hier en daar gekry. Baie dankie soos altyd aan almal wat deelgeneem het en Ina wat die fone geantwoord het