

Female poverty in Diepsloot in South Africa

By

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my late father, Thomas Maphosa, who always believed in me. You were a source of inspiration. Rest in eternal peace!

DECLARATION

STUDENT NUMBER: 35863471

I declare that FEMALE POVERTY IN DIEPSLOOT IN SOUTH AFRICA is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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CLORIS NGWENYA

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DATE

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I am also grateful to all the single mothers heading households in the informal settlements of the reception area of Diepsloot who welcomed me into their homes and shared part of their lives with me, playing a very critical part of the study. I am quite overwhelmed by their unflinching desire to render me assistance. Thank you!

A big thank you goes to my family, especially to my husband, Amos Ngwenya for all the encouragement and support. You played a valuable role in enabling me to finish this work. To my children: my son, Bukhosi and daughter, Buhle for their patience when I could not attend to their needs.

SUMMARY

This study is focused on the topical issue of female poverty in South Africa. Specifically, the study is on how poverty has single mothers heading households in reception area of Diepsloot informal settlements and how they have been coping with poverty while at the same time trying to change their situation. The study is premised on a qualitative approach employing the use of snowball sampling to refer other single mothers resident in the reception area. Methodologically, the results are drawn primarily on interviews held with 30 women residing in the reception area of the informal settlements. The study selects 8 out of 30 case studies which stand out from the others in circumstances, challenges and livelihood assets. Each narrative has captured information on personal, family and community background; livelihood assets; challenges and coping mechanisms. What emerges from the results of all the interviews is a complex range of factors influencing and exacerbating these households' vulnerability and resilience to chronic poverty.

Key Terms:

Female poverty, female headed households, single mothers, informal settlements, circumstances, vulnerability, challenges, coping, resilience, survival strategies.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
DFID	Department for International Development
DOH	Department of Health
ECD	Early Childhood Development
GPS	Global Positioning System
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development
NDP	National Development Plan
NeGP	National eGovernance Plan
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UN HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WPSW	White Paper for Social Welfare

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CHAPTER1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

South Africa ranks among the most unequal societies in the world with a Gini coefficient deemed as one of the highest standing at 63.14 in 2009 (World Bank, 2012). Inequality in South Africa is generally understood as informed by race. This is because South Africa is emerging from apartheid. When a woman's race is included in her experience, in most cases, the double burden of gender and racial discrimination becomes quite evident. Although individual women's experiences may vary widely, in general, women as a whole fare far worse than men, ranging from the incidence of poverty to protection under the law, access to healthcare, and so on. Petersen, Krivo and Hagan (2006: 8) posit, "...racial inequality gives rise to the social isolation and ecological concentration of the truly disadvantaged, which in turn leads to structural barriers." Areas of particular concern may include disadvantages faced by minority women in the labour market, trafficking in women and race-based gender violence. Inequality and poverty in South Africa are not only informed by race, they are also informed by class and gender.

Gallagher (2010: 423) points out that, "The impact to both racial and gender-based discrimination, particularly in relation to access to education, resources and employment opportunities results in fewer life choices." In other words, racial and gender based discrimination lead to limited life choices for women. Women constitute a category of the poorest section of the South African society. This is partly because South Africa is a patriarchal society and partly because women constitute a majority of those people who lack employment opportunities and experience various other patriarchal-oriented forms of segregation that produce poverty. As a result, women tend to become vulnerable, marginalised and unfairly discriminated on a number of fronts.

According to the United Nations' Development Fund for Women report (2007), women fall short in many of the main indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that measure progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment. It is believed that there are more illiterate females than men. This can partly be the reason

why the gender gap in earning continues to persist, resulting in women becoming poorer. As Fontana and van der Meulen-Rodgers (2005: 334) argue, "Countries with greater gender inequality in rights and access to resources show evidence of higher female mortality rates, higher HIV infection rates, greater violence against women, lower-quality health outcomes for children, and more poverty." Ultimately it is the poor women that suffer the most.

It is important to note that poverty is still defined by skin colour in South Africa with blacks, particularly female headed households constituting the poorest layer. May (1998), cited in Mbuli (2008: 5), has the following claim about poverty "...while it is not confined to one racial group, it is, however, concentrated among Blacks." In the same spirit, The Human Development Report (2003) posits that, in 2002 the percentage of Blacks, Coloureds, Asians and Whites who were poor was 56.3%, 36.1%, 14.7% and 6.9% respectively. Poverty, privation and inequality in South Africa continue to reflect racial and gender inequalities. Moreover the gap in the cycle of poverty between men and women keeps on widening, hence the coin of the term "feminization of poverty" Pearce (1978: 28).

1.1 Problem statement

The concept of feminization of poverty is about the increasing number of females exposed to poverty. Feminization of poverty also means that women's identity is increasingly becoming synonymous with poverty. Trepper and Ambert (2014: 109) claim that "women are more affected by poverty than men...." Why this is the case is the problem under review in this study. Why have women-headed households become houses of hunger? What are the circumstances of these households? What mechanisms do they employ to escape their situation?

The incidence of female headed households is believed to have increased the world over. For instance, Lang (2007: 143) posit that, "There has been a rapid growth in the proportion of households that are female headed, and the poverty rate is much higher among these households than among married couple households." Similarly, Andersen, Taylor and Logio (2013: 312) reveal that "One of the greatest changes in

family life is the increase in the number of families headed by women. One quarter of all children live with one parent, the vast majority of whom (87 percent) live with their mother.” Furthermore, Mahajan (2014: 77) citing Statistics South Africa (2012), says the following about female headed households in South Africa, “In 2010/11, female headed households accounted for 39 percent of all households and about 43 percent of the total population in South Africa.”

The World Bank (1990) classifies South Africa as an upper middle income country. It is a country of stark contrasts with people living in poverty while others live in affluence and opulence. South Africa is Africa’s second largest economy (after Nigeria). Some consider it a shining beacon and the hub of innovation and economic development in the region, yet some of its inhabitants still live in extreme poverty, particularly women and children. In her study on poverty and inequality in South Africa, Woolard (2002) holds that a male headed household has a 28% probability of being poor whereas a de jure female head has a 48% chance of being poor, while a household with a de facto female head (where the nominal male head is absent) has a 53% probability of being poor. Furthermore, results released by Statistics South Africa in 2011 show that female-headed households are poorer than their male counterparts. 43, 8% of households in South Africa are female-headed. 22, 8% of these households fall into quintile 1, compared to 18, 1% of male headed households. Only 31, 1% fall into quintiles 4 or 5, compared to 45, 8% of the male-headed households. Poverty in South Africa has a strong gender dimension. It is believed to have a female face.

Interestingly, a study conducted by the World Bank (1995) entitled *Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa* reveals that households with many dependents are more likely to be poor. The study finds that the average household size among the poor is 5.9 compared to 3.5 among those that are not poor. In addition, the dependency ratio is more than twice as high among the poor than those that are not poor. This suggests that households that are poor are normally larger than those that are not poor. Worse still, the dependency ratio, by virtue of the increase in the number of household members becomes more than double that of the family that is not poor. There are however other studies that dispute this, revealing that male headed households are larger than female headed households (Grown and Valodia 2010: 152). On the other hand, United Nations (2010: 161) states that “Disparities in poverty for female and

male headed households are country specific.” This means that in some countries female headed households are more likely to be poor while in other countries male headed households are likely to be poorer.

There is a general belief that in South Africa women have mostly been disadvantaged because of patriarchy. Lerner (1986) claims that patriarchy has been passed down from generation to generation and people have been conditioned to believe that men are superior to women. This may be still happening in some cultures. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) report, poverty affects women differently than men. Women are believed to be economic actors. Feminists call this gendered exploitation of labour under the guise of globalization “the feminization of responsibility.” This means that women are responsible for most of the productive and reproductive care work. Women produce food for their families and assume the role of primary caretakers of children, elderly people and the sick.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report (1997) cited in the UNECA Report on the Status of Women in Africa states that, “the problem with the feminization of poverty is not so much the numbers of women who are poorer than men, but rather with the severity of poverty and the greater hardships women face in lifting themselves and their children out of poverty...” Female headed households normally plunge deep into poverty because of a lack of a support system or as a result of the “absentee” father syndrome. This is when the father is not present in the child’s life and probably does not even support the child. The child may know that he or she has a father but he is not visible in the child’s life. This is in terms of playing his role as the father of the child through support and guidance. Furthermore, they may be more vulnerable to exploitation and outside attacks perhaps because of a lack of the perceived protection that the “father figure” or male headship supposedly provides.

Worse still, some of the poor female headed households normally find it difficult to escape the cycle of poverty, resulting in the intergenerational transmission of poverty – poverty transmitted to the next generation. Garfinkel and McLanahan (1994: 205) posit that, “Most women headed families will experience heavy doses of economic and social insecurity, which are known to be harmful to children's future well-being.” When

a family experiences extreme poverty, it follows that the children or offspring will also be in extreme poverty. This normally becomes harmful to the future wellbeing of the offspring because they are the most affected. McLanahan (2009: 1) further states that “children who grow up in a household with only one biological parent are worse off on average, than children who grow up in a household with both of their biological parents...”

In view of the above, this study endeavours to investigate the extent of poverty among female headed households, in particular those headed by single mothers in the informal settlements of Diepsloot. The study attempts to find out whether these households comprise of large families as revealed by the World Bank above and also endeavours to answer the following questions: What is the major cause of female headed households sprouting in informal settlements? What livelihood assets do these households possess? What challenges do they face on a day to day basis? How do they cope with their situation? Do these households have social networks of support? The study also collects information on household structure, types and amounts of income the household receives as well as indicators of social capital and female heads' activities and time use.

1.2 Objectives

The primary objective of the study is to contribute to the understanding of the nature and severity of female poverty in the informal settlements of Diepsloot, Johannesburg. The study examines challenges and coping mechanisms employed by female heads of households to eke out a living and whether they are effective or not.

The objectives are as follows:

- a) To understand female poverty in Diepsloot informal settlements;
- b) To examine livelihood assets of female headed households in Diepsloot;
- c) To investigate challenges that single mothers heading households face and;
- d) To investigate coping mechanisms in dealing with poverty by female headed households.

1.3 Limitations to and scope of the study (demarcation of research)

Diepsloot is one of the newest informal settlements in Johannesburg. It was established in 1994 as a temporary reception area for those households that were evicted from Honeydew, Sevenfontein and Alexandra (Johannesburg Development Agency). Since then, it has grown and there has been a lot of development in the area including Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing as well as bond houses. Despite that, there is still a large number of informal shelters. The Development Programme for Diepsloot (2007) estimates that 60 000 people reside in 17 000 informal structures in the settlement. This translates into a population density of 1 076 people per square kilometre or 3.5 people per informal shelter.

The research study was carried out in the Reception Area of the informal settlements of Diepsloot, otherwise known as Extension One, which is situated to the north of Johannesburg. The "Reception Area" is unique in that it is characterised by informal shacks only. Mahajan (2014: 146) contends, "While shacks are a common feature in all areas, extensions 1, 12 and 13 comprise only shacks." Furthermore, there is no electricity and water and toilets are shared in the Reception Area. Residents use public toilets and public taps. Mapungubwe Institute of Strategic Reflection (MISTRA) (2013: 97) opines, "Most of the households in Diepsloot do not have electricity. Households with electricity are those found in the bonded housing section of Tanganani (Extension 3), whereas in Extensions 1, 12 and 13, where only shacks are to be found."

The population from which the sample is drawn consists of female headed households residing in the informal settlements. There are various types of female headed households but amongst these, single mothers heading households have been selected as the target group. The study only targets single mothers heading households, without a spouse or cohabitant. These are de jure heads of households. Dependent children in this study are unmarried children from the ages of zero to eighteen years. The study also classifies those adult children over eighteen years who are unemployed as dependents particularly if they depend on their mothers or guardians for their upkeep.

1.4 Importance of the study

The reduction of inequality and poverty is of paramount importance to the ANC-led government in post-apartheid South Africa especially if the government is to achieve the aim of the National Development Plan Vision 2030. According to the South African Government, the National Development Plan aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. It has been noted that the gender dimension of poverty and the economically disadvantaged position of single mothers heading households in South Africa receives less attention compared to poverty in general. It is my hope that the information obtained in this study will be used by policy makers, politicians, social development fraternity and other stakeholders, like the Commission for Gender Equality, to lobby for the betterment of female headed households. It is hoped that the study will enable them to design suitable strategies and policies to help this most vulnerable group. It will also help them understand more in terms of the livelihood assets and issues that single mothers heading households living in informal settlements face and how they try to overcome their situation.

Last but not least, as a social scientist working for an international non-governmental organisation, the researcher works with orphans and vulnerable children, implementing health, skills development and Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes in informal settlements in Soweto. It has been observed that most beneficiaries in the programmes are either orphan and vulnerable children or single mothers heading households. This then aroused my curiosity and interest in conducting an in-depth study into female poverty and how these families survive. Results from this study could also be used by the Non-Governmental Organisation fraternity, as well as the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities to attend to the needs of female headed households.

1.5 Chapter layout

The research is structured into six chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter constitutes the introduction of the study. It seeks to establish the rationale of the study. It examines the background to the research, the justifications, the objectives and general hypotheses to be employed in the study. It brings out the importance of the study and outlines the limitations to the scope of the study. The outline of the dissertation and contents of each chapter then follow.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter two presents the Literature review and theoretical framework. It consists of concepts, definitions, as well as existing theories related to female poverty, connecting the researcher to existing knowledge. The chapter introduces female poverty and describes it, explaining why the problem under study exists. Structural and cultural theories of poverty are discussed to situate and contextualise the study. In addition, various schools of thought within the feminist theoretical framework, namely liberal, radical and socialist feminism are discussed. In line with the above, the theoretical framework employed in the study is socialist feminism. The chapter also discusses various types of households with the intention to reveal characteristics of households associated with the gender of household heads, such as differences in dependency ratios and time constraints. Finally, the chapter discusses a number of concepts that contribute to the analysis of poverty from a gender perspective, such as inequality, vulnerability and exclusion or discrimination.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter three presents the research design and methodology. The study is predicated on a qualitative research methodology. The population is defined and the sample size generated. The study makes use of the case method to produce thick descriptions of the phenomena under study. Research techniques are explained as well as methods employed in data collection and interpretation.

Chapter 4: Presentation of the findings

The fourth chapter presents the findings. The chapter captures information about the single mothers heading households, livelihood assets, their circumstances, and challenges and coping mechanisms. This includes the general profiles of the respondents, information about their living conditions, income, dependency ratios, social capital and social networks of support. The plight of the single mothers heading

households is delineated. Included in the presentation are selected case studies of some of the single mothers heading households. In a nutshell, the chapter captures the voices of these single mothers about their plight and how they are containing their situation.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

Chapter five presents an analysis and discussion of the findings. The findings are derived from the interviews and the questionnaires. All the information that was gathered was tape recorded.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

The sixth chapter concludes the study. It provides an overview of the research findings and recommendations. It also provides a brief discussion of the implications of this work and for further research to deepen the analysis.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL ISSUES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

“Poverty is the worst form of violence.” - Mahatma Gandhi

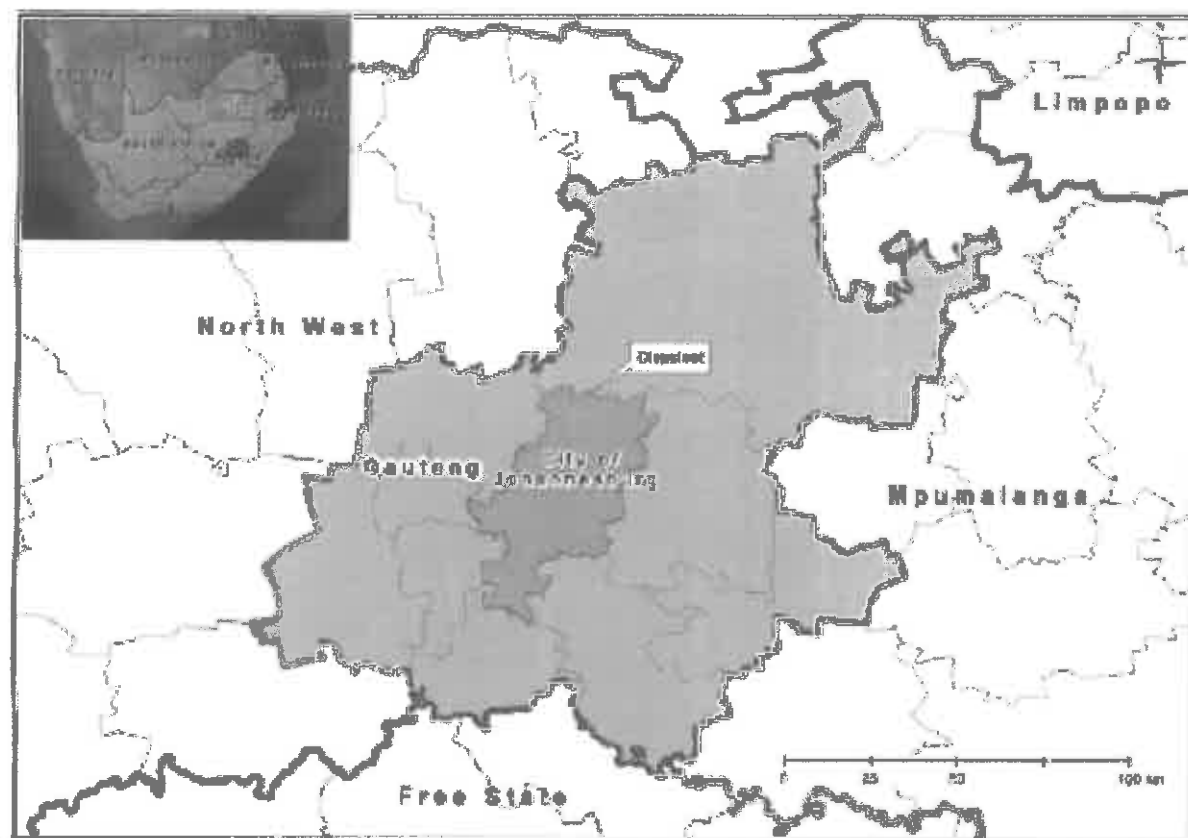
2.0 Introduction

This chapter covers a spectrum of issues that underlie the hypothesis of this study. It begins with a general description of the informal settlements of Diepsloot. For the purposes of this study, the terms informal settlement, slum and shack will be used interchangeably. The household is conceptualised and various household types delineated. Concepts and theories of poverty are discussed to try and identify some of the underlying causes of female poverty in the informal settlements of Diepsloot. Last but not least, some of the factors related to or leading to gendered poverty are also analysed.

2.1 General description of the Diepsloot informal settlements

According to Mapungubwe (2013: 53), Diepsloot “was established in 1995 as a transit camp for people who had been moved from Zevenfontein.” It is believed that these people were temporarily placed in the reception area. Mahajan (2014: 145) posits that Diepsloot has a “large influx of migrants (as far as Pakistan).” Diepsloot has now grown to become a vibrant neighbourhood which also houses migrants. Slum dwellers in Diepsloot are from within the borders of South Africa as well as from other African and non-African countries like Pakistan. There is a mixture of both local people and foreign nationals from Zimbabwe, Malawi, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan and Angola to name a few. Some of these foreign nationals are believed to be without proper documentation. For some undocumented reason, it is widely believed that there are more foreign nationals than local people residing in Diepsloot. According to Harber (2011: 128), the estimates he gets of the number of foreigners in Diepsloot cover “an impossible range – from 18 per cent of the whole area to 60 per cent of the reception area.” The reception area, also called Extension One is the target of this study and this is one area believed to have a greater concentration of foreign nationals.

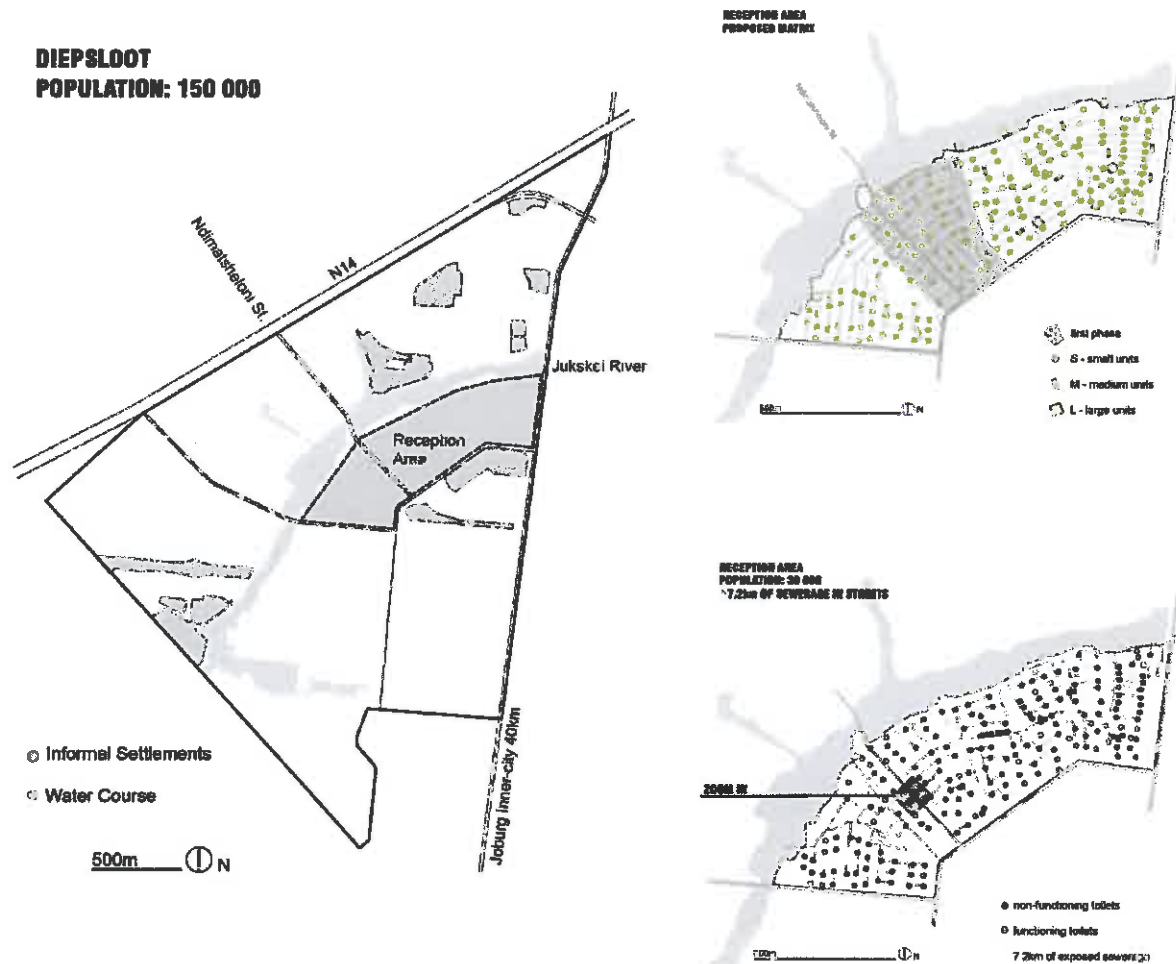
Figure 1: The Diepsloot area



Source: City of Johannesburg 2010

There is an estimated 300 units per hectare and this to some extent has led to the densification of urban poverty. As a post-apartheid township, Diepsloot represents the urban challenges facing the South African state on matters of housing, service delivery, and, perhaps, effective local governance. Worse still, the lack of proper housing (backyard shacks) and infrastructure, and high levels of unemployment illustrate the dire consequences. Mahajan (2014: 147) asserts that, informal dwellings are "...serviced through communal taps and toilets." However, the sanitation system is believed to be failing resulting in many kilometres of daylight sewage affecting the health of the inhabitants.

Figure 2: The reception area of Diepsloot



Source: City of Johannesburg, 2010

Informal settlements can be described as unauthorised housing units. They usually do not comply with the planning and building regulations of a country. UN Habitat (2003) considers and characterizes slums as substandard housing or illegal and inadequate building structures, lacking basic services, overcrowding and high density, unhealthy living conditions and hazardous locations, insecure tenure, poverty, and social exclusion. This is because in most cases, these slums are make shift shelters.

It is believed that informal settlement or slum conditions are normally caused by poverty and maybe inadequate housing responses. Slums and poverty are very closely related and in most informal settlements, absolute and relative poverty are well known features of urban life. UN-Habitat's The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on

Human Settlements (2003) estimates that there are nearly one billion slum dwellers globally. For many, these slums or informal settlements are not a joy to live in although they are found to be better shelters than living on the streets or under bridges. It has to be this way or nothing at all.

The Development Bank's Social Needs Survey (2008) cited in Harber (2011: 61) records that "70% of the houses in Diepsloot were informal, unemployment was 54%, 73% lived below the poverty line and HIV prevalence exceeded 50%." This evidence suggests that the majority of the houses in Diepsloot are informal shelters. These informal settlements, mostly believed to be measuring 3 metres by 2 metres are assembled from scrap metal, wood, plastic or cardboard and are characterised by serious overcrowding. In winter, the shacks are said to be extremely cold, while scorching hot during summer. In addition, unemployment at 54% seems to be a major concern. With more than half of the employable population not working, people, particularly youth end up indulging in social ills including drug and substance abuse, teenage pregnancies and criminal activity. Indulging in all this sometimes results in the youth contracting dangerous diseases like HIV and AIDS.

The informal settlements of Diepsloot display a true picture of urban poverty. Urban poverty is perceived by the World Bank (2000e: 3) as involving squalid living conditions, risks to life and wealth from poor sanitation. It also involves air pollution, crime and violence, traffic accidents and natural disaster as well as the breakdown of traditional family and community safety-nets. The Asian Development Bank (1999: 9) states that "urban poverty is often more harsher and extreme than rural poverty and has economic, health, education, human rights and psychological aspects all resulting in a poor quality of life." Diepsloot informal settlements are characterised by overcrowding and poor sanitation. Some toilets in the reception area are quite a distance and scary to visit for some residents, especially at night. Moreover, it is believed that more than half of these toilets in the reception area are not working. Only a few are still in good working order and these are shared by large numbers of families. There is also dirty water with a stench running through the informal settlements exposing children and residents to diseases. Diepsloot informal settlements are marred by a lot of criminal activity, violence, and, to some extent, xenophobic attacks. Other social ills plaguing the area include unemployment, and alcohol and drug abuse.

2.2 What is a Household?

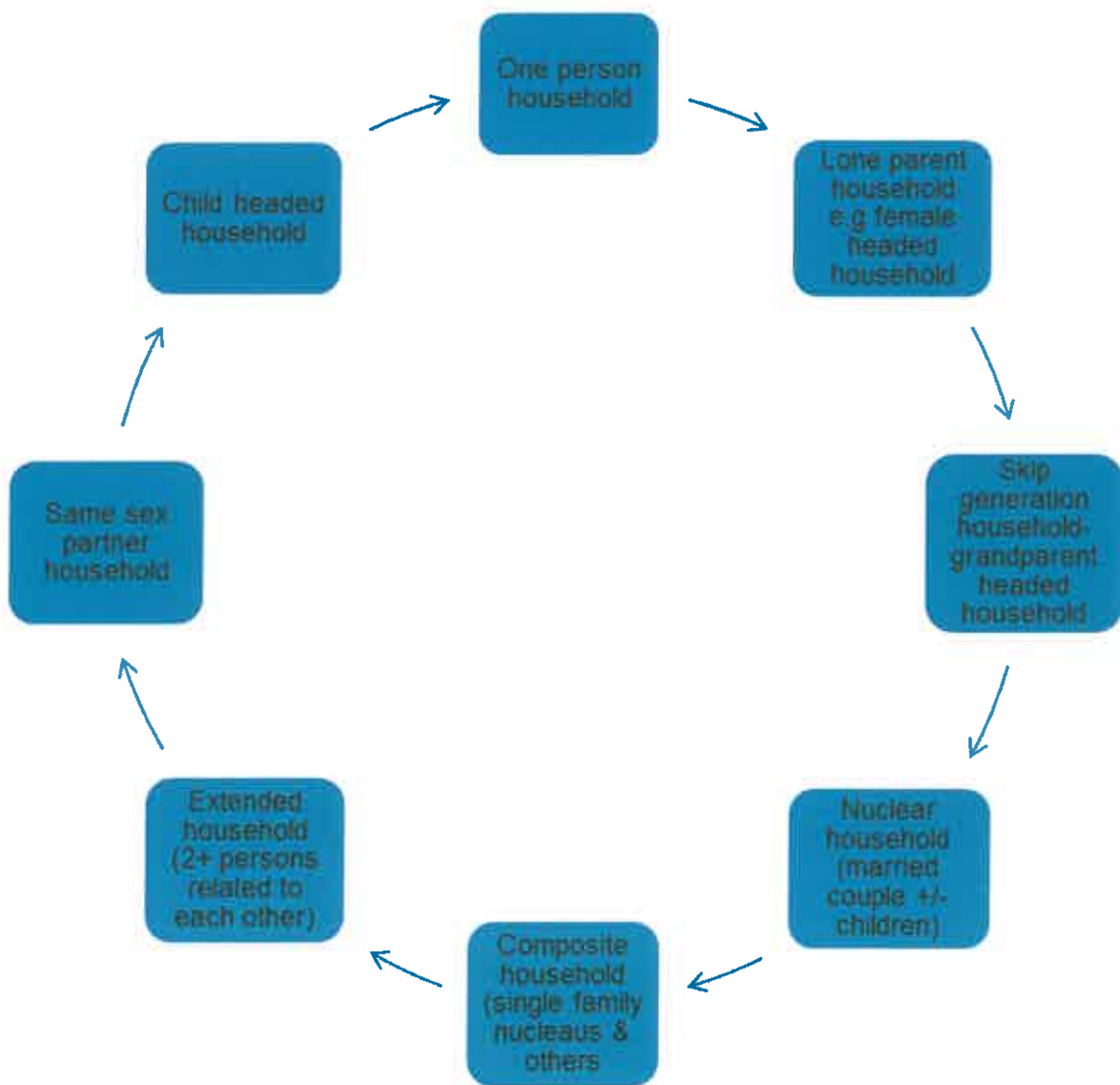
A household is in most instances taken to be synonymous with a family or homestead. A family involves people that are related while a household may comprise of people that are not necessarily related. As perceived by Keesing (1985: 267) a household is "the primary unit(s) in everyday production and consumption." Moore (1988: 54) on the other hand, has a broader definition as she perceives a household as "the basic unit of society involved in production, reproduction, consumption and socialization." Furthermore, Pessar (1988: 196-97) sums up the meaning of 'household' in her assessment of Dominican migrants to the United States as follows: "The household is the primary and basic unit oriented to the daily maintenance and reproduction of the members of a society. The activities in which it specializes in are reproduction, production, distribution, consumption, and socialization." Household consumption and production are common denominators in all the above definitions and they encompass all domestic costs for individual needs including food and lodging.

Most households have common elements of production, consumption and socialization but perhaps not all are involved in reproduction. A household does not necessarily consist of relatives (although in most cases, this is the case). In most households members usually share a common budget and eat together. It then follows that a household head is someone responsible for decision making in the family as well as economic support. Mencher and Okongwu (1993: 3) believe the components of headship are authority or power, decision-making, access to sources of economic support, and control over children. Blumberg (1993: 25) proposes that the main elements of a head of household consist of a lead role in decision making, control and allocation of income, and ownership or renting of living space. She also remarks that, in the case of woman-headed households, the oldest woman bears "the title of head even when she is not the main economic support of the household" (ibid: 36). This actually depends on the age and capability of the woman otherwise the elderly woman becomes a dependent herself if she is supported by elderly children.

In South Africa, just like in any other countries of the world there are households which do not conform to the "traditional" or normative pattern of a patriarchal family which includes a male household head, a wife, and perhaps children. This is evidenced by

the different types of households present in the country. Many women, some of whom have dependent children and elderly parents to provide for, live without a male partner, either by choice, from necessity or because of circumstance. According to Zuberi, Sibanda, and Udjo (2005) there are six types of households in South Africa; single parent, extended (direct) household with relatives, extended (composed) with both related and unrelated people, unrelated members only and one person household. Although I subscribe to the types of households as alluded by Zuberi et al above, in Figure 3 below I break them down into 8 types of households as follows:

Figure 3: Types of Households



The nuclear family is the most common kind of household comprising of a couple or pair of adults and a child or children. Bernades (1997) cited in Cooke and Philpin (2008: 14) claims that “despite enormous real world variation and diversity, the nuclear family remains the most common and popular image of a family.” Another common household type is the extended family which consists of at least three generations living together, incorporating grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. The one person household is quite common especially among youth where a person lives by himself or herself. A multi-person household or shared household is another type of household which consists of a group of people with no family relation living together like in a commune, unmarried or cohabitating. The same sex household could either be both male and females living together as husband and wife. Nowadays, it is very common for same sex partners to form families through marriage or cohabitation and they sometimes adopt children.

Another type of household that has sprouted mainly as a result of the HIV and AIDS epidemic is the child headed household, where the household head is a sibling or relative who is below the age of eighteen years. Evers and van Ommering (2011: 28) claim that “when the head is under the age of 18, the household is child headed.” There is also the skip generation household where the grandparent becomes the head of the household because the parent(s) of the child (children) have passed on or they are away or perhaps at work elsewhere. Joslin (2002: 171) claims that, “These older adults caring for young children form what are known as skip generation families....Today’s skip generation families are formed as a result of AIDS related illness and death.” Finally, there is the lone parent household sometimes referred to as single parent household where either the female or male heads the household, for instance the woman or female headed household.

2.2.1 The nature of Female Headship

One of the changes of family life that has been noted in the past years is the increase in the number of households headed by women. United Nations Development Programme (1998) refers to this type of household as “female maintained” and goes further to characterise it as those households, “... in which women are the primary

providers of the family." United Nations (1995a: 32) perceive female heads as "Women who are financially responsible for their families, who are the key decision makers and household managers, who manage household economies on behalf of an absent male, or who are the main economic contributors." A female headed household in a patriarchal culture like South Africa refers to either a de facto female head or de jure female head with or without children who leads and manages the household. Stiftel, Watson and Acselrad (2006: 338) contend, that in South Africa "prolonged men's absence from home while working in towns and mines... women who remained behind became de facto household heads... women had to make decisions that would customarily, be made by men... a number of women, including unmarried girls, bore and raised their children outside marriage..." According to Ruwanpura (2006: 19) de jure heads of households are those that are pushed "into assuming headship because of death, divorce, a legal separation from the male partner." This means that de jure heads of households are those females heading households like the single mothers heading households in the study whereas de facto heads of households are those females standing in for their husbands or partners who may be away from home due to various reasons. Some husbands or partners may be present in their homes but unable to provide for their families due to disability, incapacity or other reasons, so the wife steps in as head of the household to provide for the family. Female headed households constitute a heterogeneous group of households with different reasons for becoming female headed. Chant (1991: 10) notes that female headed households "are now around one-third of households worldwide."

Preston-Whyte (1988: 61) distinguishes two specific types of female-headed households: firstly, that in which the woman was widowed or deserted (that is, through accident or design), and secondly, that in which single women have established a household together (that is, through choice). Some of these women that have children and are not married simply because they chose not to get married and they actually enjoy heading their households. This study is based on these two types of female headed households alluded to above by Preston-Whyte. The two types of households described by Preston Whyte form the population in the study.

It can be easily understood that a divorce, rejection, separation or perhaps the birth of a child (in a case where the father does not want to take responsibility) causes a shock

to the family's economic status. The question is whether such a shock temporarily alters the position of the family in the income distribution or whether it inflicts permanent repercussions or economic damage resulting in female poverty. In light of the above, Campbell (1994: 55) asserts that "the growing number of female-headed families (is a) central feature of changing township family life." It has been noted that female poverty in the Diepsloot informal settlements perpetuates mainly because of migration, separation, abandonment, rejection, divorce and widowhood.

The majority of female headed households suffer from gendered inequality in most spheres of life. Although female headship is a common occurrence in most parts of the world today, the role of women is rarely seen in a similar light to that of male headship (Chant, 1997a). This suggests that women heading households will go out of their way to ensure that their families are well taken care of in spite of their meagre resources. The meagre income a woman gets is normally directed towards children's education, food, health and the general well-being of the family.

It is widely believed that female headed households fall under specific subgroups of the population that are stuck at the poverty level. Although these households are in poverty, some of them are supported by social networks such as kin groups, church groups and burial societies, rotating credit associations or stokvels. When one belongs to a social support network, the perception is usually that they are cared for and they have a support system. Support can be non-tangible, for instance emotional, as well as tangible - maybe in the form of food and clothing. It can also be financial or informational in the form of advice or other pertinent information. Companionship where one experiences a sense of belonging can also be a form of non-tangible support.

2.3 Poverty conceptualised

Poverty is a well-known phenomenon in our modern world and has a myriad of definitions. Zilova, Novotna and Joseph (2014: 173) believe that "Poverty is a social phenomenon impacting approximately one third of the population and it persists also in the nowadays economically developed society." This means that poverty affects a

third of the global population and even continues to affect those countries that have become economically developed. Poverty may mean different things to different people. To most however, the word propagates thoughts of Africa, with images of then drought stricken Somalia and Ethiopia. However, the phenomenon is not unique to Africa and other Third World countries. It exists in the developed world as well. The conditions of poverty faced by female headed households in particular are often the very conditions that make it difficult for them to climb out of poverty. These self-reinforcing, spiralling mechanisms or poverty traps force poor households to remain in poverty. As propounded by United Nations Development Report (UNDP) (2005), approximately 1.2 billion people, or one-fifth of the world's population, live in extreme poverty on less than US \$1 a day and 2.8 billion people, or almost half of the world's population, live on less than US \$2 a day.

Throughout the ages, people have attempted to better understand and delineate the poverty phenomenon. UNDP (1997:15) defines poverty as "the denial of the opportunities and choices most basic to human life, the opportunity to lead a long, healthy, and creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem, and respect from others." On the other hand, the Asian Development Bank (2002: xvi–xvii) affirms that poverty is increasingly seen as, "deprivation, not only of essential assets and opportunities, but of rights ... any effective strategy to reduce poverty must empower disadvantaged groups, especially women, to exercise their rights and participate ... in decisions that affect them." When people are in poverty, they have little or no resources. They are denied access to and have limitations to critical resources such as credit, land and inheritance. Poverty is the inability to achieve life's goals and the loss of hope. It is a family attribute. If a particular family is classified as poor, often children born into that family also become poor. Poverty is closely linked to inequality, social exclusion, deprivation, alienation, discrimination and marginalisation. In most cases, poverty and inequality accompany unemployment. The poor are normally relegated to the fringe of society.

Kotze and Cornwell (2011: 2) believe that poverty is associated with "illiteracy, illness and a short lifespan, exclusion from facilities, services and opportunities for decision-making, a lack of material assets, including credit, job opportunities and land."

Interestingly, psychologists define needs as states of deprivation. As such, I see poverty as being the deprivation of the basic human needs required for a standard measure of well-being; seeming to require more description. A need is a physical attribute which requires attention and gratification whenever it arises. It has been argued however that what one considers a need may not necessarily constitute a need to the other. One could therefore view poverty as the low quality of life and standard of living that results from the failure to gratify needs or the inadequate gratification of those needs. In Bridging the Gaps, the World Health Organization (1995) states that “The world’s most ruthless killer and the greatest cause of suffering on earth is extreme poverty.” The repercussions of poverty are severe and dire sometimes leading to extreme suffering or death.

The 20th century saw a number of conceptions of poverty emerge as a basis for international and comparative work. According to Townsend (1993) these conceptions depend principally on the ideas of subsistence, basic needs, and relative deprivation.

2.3.1 Subsistence Poverty

Subsistence poverty is often referred to as absolute poverty. United Nations (1995: 25) defines absolute poverty as “a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services.” Subsistence poverty is derived from the minimum requirements of subsistence. Although income is of importance, similarly there are other needs of utmost importance like safe water supply, good sanitation, health care, education, roads, information and social services. The lack of investment in these things leads people to absolute poverty. Families are considered to be in absolute poverty when their income does not allow them to survive above the poverty line. Subsistence poverty only acknowledges biological needs such as the need for food, water, clothing, and shelter. This is the standard of people at the very margin of society, a sense of misery and discomfort, for instance, people living on the streets.

2.3.2 Basic Needs Poverty

Basic needs poverty is an extension of the subsistence concept and it is consumption based. The International Labor Organization (1976) cited in Macpherson and Silburn (1998) perceives basic needs poverty as, "...the minimum standard of living which a society should set for the poorest groups of its people. The satisfaction of basic needs means meeting the minimum requirements of personal consumption: food, shelter, clothing; it implies access to essential services, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, transport, health and education." The idea behind the basic needs approach is that everyone should be able to pursue well-being. This notion works by identifying a bundle of basic consumption assessing whether the population has adequate access to it. The basic consumption package contains commodities that are universally needed, such as shelter, sanitation, clean water and food.

Streeten (1979) argues that this concept of poverty has superseded other earlier approaches by providing a more positive concept than the double negatives of eliminating or reducing unemployment, alleviating poverty, or reducing inequality. In view of this, the basic needs approach was quite significant in inspiring waves of policies that aimed at making public services much more reachable for the poor. However, the approach is believed to have failed to address the hierarchy of needs as propounded by Maslow (2012). This approach failed to address Maslow's hierarchy of needs because "many women living in poverty struggle to secure food and shelter for themselves and their families. Most of their energy and motivation is directed towards these activities leaving them with little energy or motivation to satisfy other needs such as belonging and achievement" (Rogers 2013: 190). All needs are spatially embedded, hence they vary in time and contexts.

2.3.3 Relative Deprivation

Relative deprivation refers to the discontent people feel when they compare themselves to others and perhaps realize that they have less of what they believe themselves to be entitled to than the people around them. Relative deprivation involves a comparison of the living standard and a social dimension of poverty. As

defined by Townsend (1993), people are relatively deprived if they cannot “obtain, at all or sufficiently, the conditions of life, that is, the diets, amenities, standards and services, which allow them to play the roles, participate in the relationships and follow the customary behaviour which is expected of them by virtue of their membership of society. If they are denied resources to obtain access to these conditions and to fulfil membership of society, they may be said to be in poverty." Relative deprivation is the experience of being deprived of something which one believes they should have or be entitled to. Relative deprivation focuses on isolation which results from impoverishment, for instance, when someone is unable to afford an item like a jersey or new clothes. Thomas (1994) posits that relative deprivation is not merely economic inequality or deprivation but is also a social condition, that is, a relation of isolation, subordination, dependence, or exploitation.

2.4 Theories of Poverty

There are a number of competing theories about the causes of poverty. This study discusses three theories of poverty namely individualistic, cultural and structural theories.

2.4.1 Individualistic Theories

The individualistic theory shares the assumption that poverty lies within an individual's weakness or failure. The belief is that poverty is a quality of the poor and the individual is responsible for their poverty situation. According to Monette, Sullivan, DeJong and Hilton (2014: 28) “the poor are undeserving people who suffer only from their own short comings.” They believe that the poor are poor because of individual characteristics such as laziness, low intelligence, poor education or lack of marketable skills. Poverty is an individuals' issue rather than one that has socioeconomic or structural roots, and it is the victims who should be blamed for their own poverty. In addition, the approach views poverty as being transmitted from one generation to the next (intergenerational transmission of poverty) because of a variety of psychological disabilities which keep the poor deep-rooted or trapped in poverty.

2.4.2 Cultural Theories

The idea of a “culture of poverty”, originally developed by the anthropologist, Oscar Lewis (Five Families, 1959) is another poverty dimension. In his study of Mexican and Puerto Rican communities, Lewis wanted to understand poverty from a cultural context. Lewis was mainly interested in how the poor adapted and coped with their poverty situation. His conclusion was that poverty just like any other form of cultural activity was socially organised. He then later argued that poverty needed to be understood in terms of a socialisation process.

The cultural theory believes that poverty is created through the transmission of beliefs, values, and skills that are socially generated although individually held. In contrast to the “individualistic” theories, individuals are not necessarily to blame for their poverty situation because they are victims themselves. They are victims of their dysfunctional subculture or culture. Royce (2015: 68) propounds that “cultural theories maintain that people are poor because they are lacking in qualities associated with job performance.” In other words, people are poor because they lack the psychological attributes, intellectual ability and moral commitments that enable economic achievements. The poor remain stuck in their poverty situation and fail to take advantage of the ever-changing opportunities as they present themselves.

2.4.3 Structural Theories

Structural theories advocate that poverty is a result of the complex operation of social forces. In this theory, causes of poverty are located in areas like the behaviour of governments as well as the wealth and economic changes of a country. According to Alcock (1997), social forces include actions of classes, groups, agencies and institutions that interact within a particular social and economic order. Since the interaction is so complex, it is possible that the manifestations of the outcomes may vary. Some structural approaches argue that poverty is a result of the failure of political action and decisions, from which policies meant to combat poverty, like social security, housing policy and health policy, fail to eliminate the problem (MacGregor, 1981, cited in Alcock, 1997).

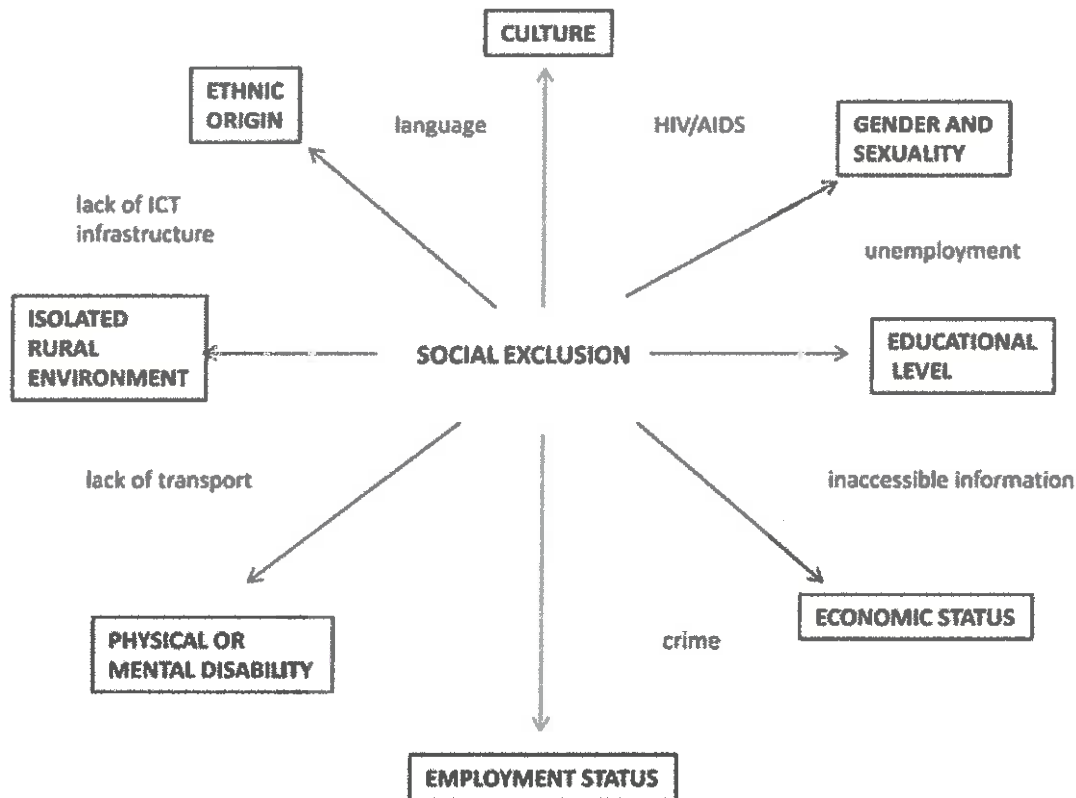
2.5 Social exclusion, alienation and discrimination

From a gender perspective, social exclusion is often discussed in tandem with poverty, alienation and discrimination. Social exclusion is one of the multiple dimensions that accompany poverty experienced by female headed households of Diepsloot. It focuses on the notion of how an individual is being excluded and addresses the lack of relations by that individual such as social support as well as participation in a number of social sectors. Eurostat (2010) perceives social exclusion as, "...a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination." Scarry (1985) on the other hand understands alienation in terms of the "loss of the world: the deprivation of durable material structures and lasting institutions that are the preconditions for political speech and action." Alienation, discrimination and exclusion can occur through social, economic and political structures and actions. As a result, such people tend to have low self-esteem and may also lack confidence.

Some female headed households in informal settlements are excluded because they suffer discrimination by others as a result of one or more of the following: social identity, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, caste, descent, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or even where they live, in this case in informal settlements. They are also excluded because they live in disadvantaged locations where it is difficult to have a voice or access services and to participate fully in the economic and political sphere. They may also be excluded from economic opportunities such as entering the labour market. These households normally feel isolated; left out or looked down upon. They may feel alienated, pushed aside and perhaps ignored at all social and political levels. Social exclusion results from being separated from that which allows one to flourish, to be whole or to live up to the possibilities of humanity. It relates to the inability for one to enjoy levels of participation in different areas that are usually taken for granted by society. Similarly to poverty, social exclusion is multidimensional and can result from unemployment, inadequate housing conditions or lack of housing, poor health, lack of education and gender or sexuality.

According to Stilwell and Munyua (2009), there are a number of factors closely related to social exclusion, some such being culture, HIV and AIDS infection, gender and sexuality, language, ethnic origin, unemployment and education. Poverty often creates a negative impact on one's self-confidence, which in turn further reinforces social exclusion of women living in poverty.

Figure 4: Factors related to social exclusion (adapted from Stilwell & Munyua 2009)



Social exclusion evidences how the problem of female poverty manifests people's creativity, uniqueness, resulting in them designing various coping methods to make their world a liveable one. Participation in any society may be measured in terms of the kind of social relationships one has such as membership in organisations, ownership of possessions or assets and perhaps the purchase of various services. Unfortunately these are all low or non-existent among poor people like female headed households of the Diepsloot reception area and one of the causal reasons for this may be poverty and gender inequality.

2.6 Gender Inequality

Gender inequality pervades most parts of the world and takes many forms. Male domination has not completely disappeared, it still exists in some patriarchal societies, although it may be under attack. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1997:39) postulates, “No society treats its women as well as its men.” In other words, in every society, community or class, the burden of hardship usually falls disproportionately on the women. Income inequality keeps on widening implying further social exclusion. Women are less likely to get formal employment and they do the larger part of work in the household. The International Labor Organization (ILO) (2009) estimates total worldwide female participation in the paid workforce at 40 percent, with generally a lower rate in the less developed countries (closer to 35 percent) and a higher rate in the more developed countries (closer to 45 percent in the OECD- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).

Women's realities in democratic South Africa are still determined by race, class and gender when it comes to accessing resources and taking up opportunities. It then follows that race; class and gender could be the main determinants for the prevailing inequalities which include social, economic and political inequalities. Most of these inequalities, although inherited from the apartheid era, still continue to persist. Unfortunately it is mainly the black woman that suffers the most, trapped in poverty. Thus DFID (2002) echoes this sentiment, saying: “Gender inequality is a structural impediment to poverty elimination. It is in everyone’s interests to remove it.” In other words, gender inequality is an undesirable element which slows down the process of poverty eradication. Since inequality in South Africa has strong racial and gendered underpinnings, women especially single mothers heading households usually find themselves in situations from which there frequently appears no exit or hope which usually produces a downward spiral.

2.7 Feminist theories

Feminism is defined as a socialist movement that addresses unequal gender roles. Hooks (2015: 1) defines feminism as “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation,

and oppression.” In other words, all sexist thinking and action is a big problem regardless of who perpetuates it. It is a theory which believes in equality between men and women in the economic, social and political spheres. It tries to address the impact of oppression on women. Various schools of thought have been generated within the feminist theoretical framework some such being liberal, radical and socialist feminism.

2.7.1 Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism claims that gender differences are not based in biology, that a man is different from a woman, but states instead that men and women are not different at all. They emphasize similarities between men and women rather than the average differences between them and attribute most of the personality and character differences between the sexes to the social construction of gender. McLaren (2002: 6) opines that Liberal feminism is characterised by “its focus on equality. Men and women are thought to have the same rational capacities.” Liberal feminists believe that if women are given the same political, occupational and educational opportunities as men, they will realize their true potential and be no longer subordinate to men. On this basis Liberal feminists believe that if men and women are not different they should be treated the same under the law. They advocate that women should have the same rights, education, work and opportunities as their male counterparts.

Liberal feminism's primary goal is gender equality in the public sphere. It views sexism as the blockage of women's career paths and it is viewed from an individual perspective. Hence Smith (2010: 100) contends that Liberal feminism assumes that “the key problem of gender inequality is the domination of institutions by men. Men control the economic sphere, the political sphere, the judicial sphere, the educational sphere, the medical sphere...” The theory is mainly concerned with visible sources of gender discrimination such as inequitable wage scales, and getting women into positions of authority in various professions including the private sector, government, and cultural institutions. The belief is that sexual exploitation can be eliminated by using the power of reason to gain mutual cooperation between male and female. Liberal feminists also focus on unequal rights and lack of opportunities to explain women's oppression. This school of thought emphasizes that the equality of men and women can only be through political and legal reforms. For example, affirmative action

calls for aggressively seeking out qualified people to redress the gender and ethnic imbalance in workplaces. What this means is that men should be encouraged to train for such jobs as nursing, teaching, and secretary, and women on the other hand for fields like engineering, plumbing, construction, and perhaps truck or bus driving. With a diverse pool of qualified applicants, employers can be legally mandated to hire enough workers to achieve and strike a reasonable balance in their workforce. They also need to pay them the same salary and give them equal chances to advance in their careers. Unfortunately liberal feminism could not overcome the prevailing belief that women and men are intrinsically different. It was in a way successful in proving that even if women are different from men, they are not inferior.

2.7.2 Radical Feminism

Radical feminists insist that women's oppression is the most fundamental form of oppression. Jagger and Rothenberg (1993) cited in Tong (1997) claim that women were historically the first oppressed group; that their oppression is widespread, existing virtually in every society; that women's oppression is the hardest to eradicate. They also affirm that their oppression causes so much suffering to its victims although it may go unnoticed and that their oppression provides a conceptualised model for understanding other forms of oppression.

According to Rich (2014: 18) "Radical feminism attempted to combat patriarchal (male/anti-woman) dominance in all of its manifestations – both in the realm of politics and in personal experience." In other words, Radical feminists saw evidence of male dominance in the home as well as in the large social world. Radical feminists are against the notion of a patriarchal society where men have all the power and dominate women. The theory questions why women should adopt certain roles like caring for the children and the sick, cooking and the like based on their biology, just as it questions why men adopt certain other roles based on gender. Radical feminists emphasize the personal notion that the biological makeup of women is used to exploit them as producers of children and objects of sexual gratification.

Radical feminists emphasise the control of women's reproductive role by men as being the root of patriarchal oppression (Rich 1977 cited in Denny 1994). Radical feminism

attempts to draw lines between biologically-determined behaviour and behaviour that is culturally determined. This feminist theory emphasizes male oppression of women as the major problem as it cuts across boundaries of race, class and economic class. The theory seeks to abolish patriarchy and it is intent on social change. It states that the attitudes of men need to be changed and equality should be made manifest between men and women. The focus is mainly on cultural awakening rather than scholarly debate.

2.7.3 Socialist Feminism

Socialist feminism incorporates tenets from both liberal and radical feminism. It argues that both liberal and radical feminists need to give greater emphasis to an economic understanding of women's oppression. It focuses on how power has been denied women because of their class position. Harding (2004: 56) says that Socialist Feminists believe that "a primary condition for the adequacy of a feminist theory... is that it should represent the world from the standpoint of women." The socialist feminist theory analysed the connection between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in society, such as racial discrimination, class and economic injustice. The theory tries to integrate the radical feminist analysis of patriarchal power relations and the Marxist analysis of capitalist class and property relations. It believes patriarchy to be inseparable from capitalism since they are in a mutually reinforcing relationship. It also suggests that capitalist production is shaped by the forces of male dominance. In addition, it criticizes the family as a source of women's oppression and exploitation.

Evidence suggests that socialist feminism fought for years to create a more equal society that did not exploit the poor and powerless female like capitalism did. Socialist feminism also focuses on the sexual division of labour. Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010: 879) opine that "Its aim has always been about liberation and the end of oppression." Male superiority enables them to work, hunt, fight, and conquer nature, while female fragile nature is responsible for the performance of menial tasks. Women are portrayed as a "weaker sex". Patriarchal dominance is established and maintained by a gender-segregated society which assigns particular roles and tasks to women and others to men. This means that the role of "homemaker" is played by women while the role of "breadwinner" is played by their male counterparts. Women's

domestic chores are not valued and as a result they do not receive any economic remuneration. Also society expects women to shoulder most of the regular chores of the house.

2.8 Feminization of Migration

The movement of people to other places or other countries in search for a better life, livelihood and refuge is ancient and common. According to Hawkesworth (2006: 14), "Some 60 million women, drawn predominantly from poor nations, constitute a mobile labour force criss-crossing the globe in search of a livelihood." People migrate within their own countries, from rural to urban areas (internal migrants) and across borders (international migrants) in search of better livelihood. The United Nations Human Development Report (2009: 25) contends, "Approximately half of all international migrants today are women." This means that more women are now migrating independently in search of jobs and better livelihood.

Most women from the semi-periphery or periphery, who migrate to other countries, usually get employment as vegetable or fruit Vendors, general workers or domestic workers, and nannies or sometimes engage in sex work. Part of the reasons leading to this is that they would not be in possession of legal documents to be in the country in the form of passports and those with passports may not even have work permits. This hinders these foreign women from seeking proper employment as the work permit is a requirement in most work places in South Africa. As a result they end up seeking low paying jobs where the employers are not fussy about proper documentation and this normally puts them in a disadvantaged position which in some cases leads to female poverty. Hence Chavez (2012: 172) states "Undocumented immigrants working in informal jobs, such as housecleaning or landscaping are not as affected by regulations that require workers to show identification before being hired."

2.9 Feminization of Poverty

Many theories explaining poverty are gender-blind. The social division of gender is normally ignored and gender differences in the causes, extent and experience of poverty are often absent in such theories. Many people have attempted to better

understand the poverty phenomenon. One of the most recent ways to explain poverty has been through linking and establishing correlations between gender and poverty. With this came the realisation that throughout history, female poverty rates have surpassed male poverty rates in virtually every society (Casper et al 1994).

According to Madeiros and Costa (2008: 1) "feminisation" can be used to indicate a gender-biased change. This change is related to gender imbalances. Feminisation is an action or a process of becoming more feminine. It means giving something a feminine appearance. The term "feminisation of poverty" was first used in the United States and was strongly influenced by that country's experience. It was coined by Diane Pearce in a 1978 article in Urban and Social Change Review. In this article, Diane argued that poverty was rapidly becoming a female problem and that women accounted for an increasingly large proportion of the economically disadvantaged (Pearce 1978:28). Northrop (1990: 145) echoes Pearce, noting that in 1976, two of three poor adults were women; that female-headed families were increasing rapidly, and that the number of poor female-headed families doubled between 1950 and 1974. This evidence shows that feminisation of poverty is a process which takes time. Madeiros and Costa (2008: 5) propound, "Feminisation of poverty...is related to two negative phenomena, poverty and gender inequality." This is a brief way of describing feminisation of poverty since these are the two main components of the process. It is believed however that the term did not immediately receive the attention it needed then, but was seen to be given attention at a later stage.

Bridge (2001: 1) asserts that feminisation of poverty has been used to show three things: "that women have a higher incidence of poverty than men; that their poverty is more severe than that of men; that there is a trend to greater poverty among women, particularly associated with rising rates of Female Headed Households." Feminisation of poverty is a change in poverty levels mainly biased against women or female-headed households. It is an increase in poverty due to gender inequalities. This is because in households where there are married couples, it is believed that both male and females experience poverty or lack of it thereof, at the same time whereas in female headed households, females tend to experience higher rates of poverty. Moreover, in these households, it is not only the females that experience poverty disproportionately, but children as well. According to Thomas (1994), the "feminisation

of poverty" approach sees gender as an important determinant in explaining and perpetuating women's poverty.

Killick and White (2001) quoting from ILO (1985) say "The greatest burden of poverty in Africa is carried by the women. It is they who suffer first, and most, from the distance between their homes and clean water, the lack of efficient tools and the knowledge to use them, poor health facilities, and absence of social and public services. The problem of women's development is thus inextricably bound up with the problem of African poverty, and it cannot be solved outside the attack on that poverty." In the same breath, UNDP (1995: 4) claims that "Poverty has a woman's face - of 1.3 billion people living in poverty, 70 percent are women." These statements suggest that there are more women than men who are poor in the world. Poverty is worse for those households headed by women and perhaps without support systems or other social networks of support.

Moffitt (1990) echoes this, stating that poverty among female headed households is generally more severe than poverty in husband-wife families. Supporting this claim, Duncan, Smeeding and Rodgers (1993) also support the above statement, when they state that both single women and women heading families are more likely to experience transitions into low-income quintiles than married couples. Weiss (1994) believes that on average, the married poor move out of poverty, while the single parent poor does not. In a husband-wife family, the two can work together in a bid to pull themselves out of poverty unlike a single parent family like a female headed one where the household head struggles alone to provide for the family. Thus poverty is manifested by too little food, large numbers of children, inadequate and crowded shelter, and finally, exclusion from community self-help structures.

Tiexara and Chambers, (1995: 23) state that "Some of the poorest and unhappiest people are unemployed or casually employed women with children. These are widows, mothers deserted by the fathers of their children, grandmothers struggling to support abandoned children and women looking after other people's children, all without support from fathers or maintenance grants from the state." Escaping the cycle of poverty for a single mother heading a household is not easy and some may lose hope of their situation ever changing for the better. Lovell, Hartmann and Williams (2008)

point out that single mothers face a double jeopardy of lower earnings and more financial stress from parenting. The major problem is the support system since the father figure is absent in most of these households. It is also of paramount importance to delineate the causes of poverty.

2.10 Causes of female poverty

2.10.1 Governance

Politics and corruption can contribute to poverty in a country. It may be political in the sense that political power may be disproportionately centralized. This may happen in countries with one major political party which is responsible for decision making in most areas of the country. Gonzalez (2014: 129) has this to say about Bolivia, "In a country where most of the population lives in poverty, Bolivia is not showing any signs of improvement... This has generated a spread of new ventures across the country but the lack of leadership in the government has impeded progress." This usually produces development problems like severe poverty and underdevelopment. Development problems can take the form of lack of infrastructure and housing, bad roads and perhaps lack of proper governance policies. Other countries can be affected by colonial histories like in the case of South Africa that was affected by the Apartheid system.

Corruption can also place a very heavy cost on any society. It can be like a cancer which is very destructive. It can result in a country's economic problems especially when politicians abuse the tax payer's money or use it for their personal benefit and gain. Mbaku (2010: 102) posits that "In many countries, civil servants are known to have refused to perform their regular duties in anticipation of bribes from citizens who desperately need those services." Corruption is believed to have the capacity to render any type of society unstable or insecure especially in countries where it is endemic.

2.10.2 Illiteracy among women

It is estimated that of the 960 million illiterate adults in the world, about two thirds are women. Women constitute the majority of the world's illiterate accounting for 64% of the global illiterate who can neither read nor write (UNESCO, 2006). Women who are educated normally find it easier to send their children to school than those that have no education at all. The reason being that one that has attained some kind of education may value education better than one that does not have it. Hence UN (2005: 11) echoes that children with educated mothers are more than twice likely to be at school compared to those whose mothers are without formal education. However, in many parts of the world, some people are still believed to not value education. This may be a result of the fact that they are not educated themselves and hence consider education of less importance.

2.10.3 Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap reflects inequalities that affect mainly women. It is believed that globally the share of women in wage labour has increased tremendously. Moreover, more women are believed to occupy positions of power including in politics. Some governments now have women occupying political positions. In spite of all these gains, men still seem to earn better salaries than their female counterparts, even in situations where they hold the same positions which require the same qualifications and experience. Kabeer (2003) citing UNDP (1995) reported that women's wages were on average 75% of male wages. This reflects a huge pay gap which is a result of gender inequality. This could result in female poverty.

2.10.4 Low skilled jobs

The majority of women with fewer skills and low education engage in low skilled jobs such as domestic work. According to the City of Johannesburg (2010: 36), of the 93,973 women working in private households 9% constitute the employed population in the city. In addition, the overwhelming majority (97%) are African women, for whom domestic work provides the main source of income. Because women, particularly

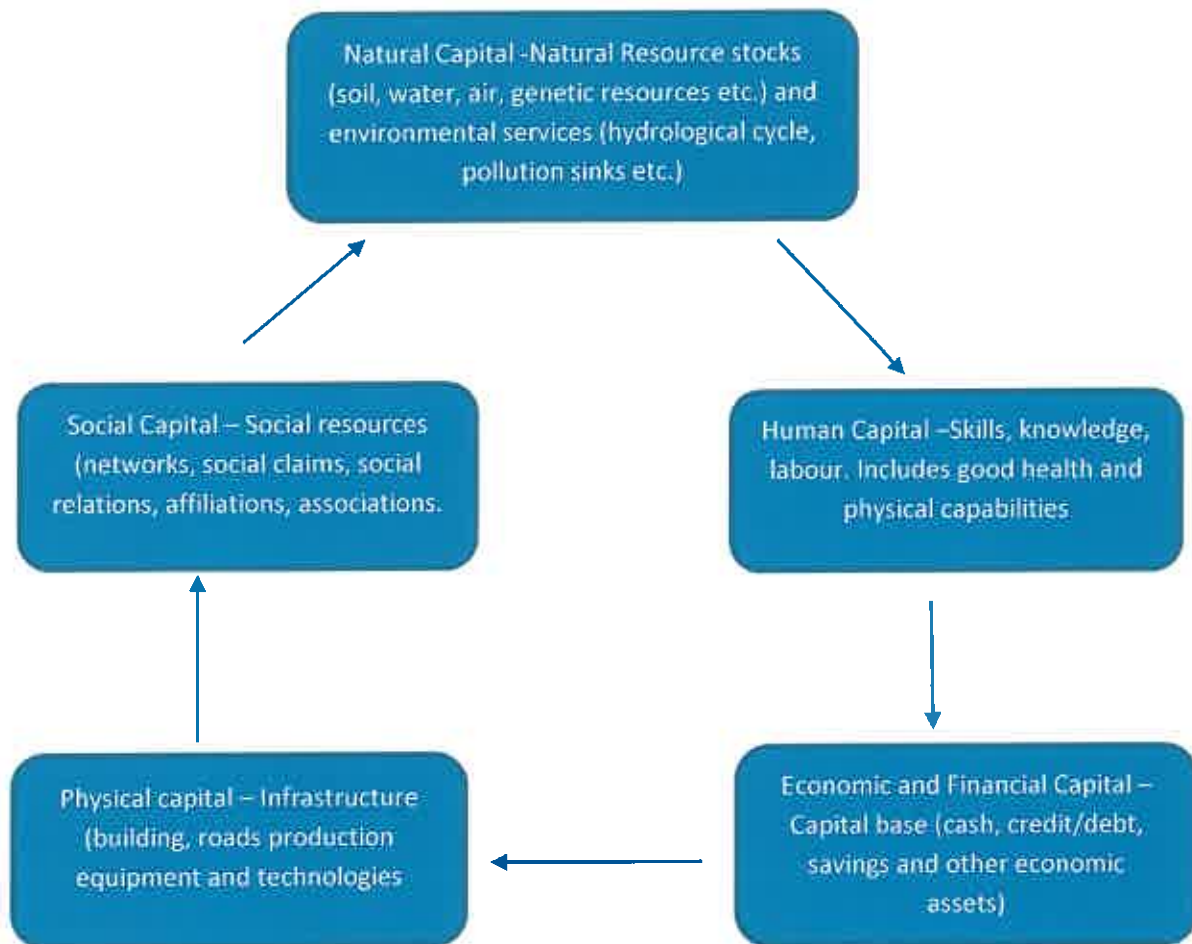
those heading households need to fend for their families, they engage in domestic work to eke out a living. D'Amico (1993: 83) claims that women are often "powerful domestic figures by default rather than by design". In other words, it is quite natural for women to perform domestic tasks.

2.11 The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

Smith (2014: 78) citing Tellantine (2001) opines that sustainable livelihoods refers to "the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. In this framework, the priorities of the poor are the starting point." Rakodi and Llyod-Jones (2002: xx) propound that the livelihoods approach aims "to put people and the households in which they live at the centre of the development process, starting with their capabilities and assets, rather than their problems." This means that the livelihoods or people are the starting point and they have to stress short term satisfaction of basic needs as well as their long term security. Although people are the starting point, the approach does not compromise on the environment. The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach's main aim is that of reducing poverty. Abdulai (2014: 42) states that in the sustainable livelihoods framework, "the need to understand the variables affecting poverty from the perspectives of the poor people is crucial... the poor people understand poverty in a much more complex way than development professionals." In other words, the poor understand their poverty situation better than anyone else because they are experiencing it.

According to Morse and McNamara (2013: 28) the "SLA is an example of the "multiple capital" approach where sustainability is considered in terms of available capital (natural, human, social, physical and financial) and an examination of the vulnerability context (trends, shocks and stresses) in which these capitals (or assets) exist." The principal capital assets of sustainable livelihoods suggested by Morse and McNamara (2013) after Scoones (1998) are presented in figure 5 below:

Figure 5: The five capitals of Sustainable Livelihood (after Scoones 1998) - Adapted from Morse and McNamara (2013)



According to Smith (2014: 136) social capital in the sustainable livelihoods framework is defined as “the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihoods.” Such social capital usually develops through activities of networking such as stokvels and burial societies. They can also develop as a result of membership of formalised groups and through relations of trust and exchange. Human capital is the skills, knowledge and good health to enable people to achieve their livelihood objectives. Physical capital includes affordable transportation, adequate shelter and sanitation and a clean water supply. Natural capital is the natural resource base from which people derive their livelihoods such as water purification. Finally the economic and financial capital are the financial resources that people can access like cash.

2.12 Social Assistance System in South Africa

According to the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:49) social security is defined as: "A wide variety of public and private measures that provide cash or in-kind benefits or both, never developing, or being exercised only at unacceptable social cost and such person being unable to avoid poverty and secondly, in order to maintain children." The social assistance programme of South Africa is internationally recognised as a poverty alleviation measure. This programme, which includes grants, is intended to ensure that people living in poverty are afforded access to basic services.

In South Africa, the current social assistance system takes the form of social grants. These social grants are paid in terms of the "Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004. The four main social grants are for the aged, the grant of the disabled, the foster child grant and the child support grant" (Riedel 2007: 71). The grants were introduced as one of the most effective poverty reduction strategies. They are publicly funded through the tax system. Traditionally the grants had been open to South African citizens only but "the Government has been obliged by the courts to extend the payments of grants to permanent residents and refugees" (Handmaker, de la Hunt, and Klareen 2011: 192). This means that the programme was initially designed for South African citizens only but a court case was won against the Government of South Africa obliging it to extend the service to both South African permanent residents and refugees. However, the care giver and the child must be both resident in South Africa. The Department of Social Development is responsible for the payments, a service that they have outsourced to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The Child Support Grant and Foster Care Grant are discussed in more detail below.

2.12.1 The Child Support Grant

The Child Support Grant is an important instrument of social protection in South Africa reaching over 10 million South African children each month (Department of Social Development, South African Social Security Agency and UNICEF, 2012 cited in Drolet 2014: 55). The Child Support Grant was introduced because of the realisation that children were disproportionately represented among the income poor. According to Langford, Cousins, Dugard and Madlingozi (2014: 258) the Child Support Grant was

introduced in 1997 to provide social assistance to the country's vulnerable children. It initially covered only children younger than seven years of age thus leaving many children living in poverty without financial support. In 2005, the Child Support Grant was extended incrementally to children younger than fourteen years of age and then to 18 years in 2010. The grant is payable to the child's primary care giver who qualifies on the basis of a means test. The grant is primarily accessed by women thus displaying a very important gendered dynamic.

2.12.2 The Foster Care Grant

According to Jorens (2013: 112) foster care refers to "a temporary alternative care arrangement for children deprived of a family environment." The affected children are placed in the care of unrelated individuals awaiting reunification with their families. Garcia and Moore (2012: 310) opine that "The foster child must be orphaned; abandoned; or deemed neglected, abused or at risk." The foster parents are normally screened and monitored by social workers. The foster parent is appointed by the court and receives a monthly grant.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter has covered considerable ground, using a number of areas that are different but related to the study. The chapter has given a general description of the informal settlements of Diepsloot as well as factors that could lead these households to settle in the area such as female migration, government initiatives and feminisation of poverty. Poverty, its concepts and theories have been delineated from a gender perspective including some feminist theories most pertinent to this study. Some causes of female poverty in the South African context have also been outlined. Social exclusion and the factors leading to it have been explained and the importance of social protection mechanisms in combating social exclusion has been highlighted. Last but not least, the chapter discusses the Sustainable livelihood approach and describes its five capitals.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter the research design and methodology used in the study is described. The study is predicated on a qualitative research methodology. The case method is employed to produce thick descriptions of the phenomena under study. The instruments used to collect the data are also described in detail as well as how the findings are presented and analysed.

3.1 Research approach and design

This study is predicated on a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research as defined by Tutty et al. (1996) is the study of “people in their natural environments as they go about their daily lives. It tries to understand how people live, how they talk and behave, and what captivates and distresses them... it strives to understand the meaning people’s words and behaviors have for them.” It is an umbrella term referring to several research strategies that share certain specific and common characteristics. Merriam (2009: 5) states that, “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences.” Braun and Clark (2013) point out that qualitative research uses words that are written or spoken language and images as data, it also generates thick descriptions and tend to take longer to complete because it is interpretative and has no formula.

A qualitative epistemological approach backed up by qualitative data collection tools is used. This means that the study critically investigates the origin, nature, methods, human knowledge and its validity. In this instance, the qualitative epistemological approach indicates if there is or there isn’t female poverty in Diepsloot informal settlements based on the knowledge and information that is collected. The qualitative epistemological approach also answers questions such as how, what and when. Davids, Maphunye and Theron (2005: 37) believe, that, “poor people have their own understanding and interpretation of their social reality, and this is often removed from

the outsider's perspective and the jargon sometimes used by academics, politicians and consultants whose knowledge of poverty often comes from books, television, documentaries, newspapers and questionnaire interviews with the poor." It is for this reason that this approach was chosen.

In a bid to explore the uniqueness of female poverty in informal settlements of the Diepsloot area, I employed the use of the case study method. Simons (2009: 3) defines a case study as "the study of the singular, the particular, the unique." Yin (2013: 120) provides a more comprehensive definition when he says that a case study is an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context may not be clearly evident." It then follows that a case can be a person, an organization, an event, or action, existing in a specific time and place.

The case study produces thick descriptions of the phenomena under study. Yves-Chantal (2010: 2) states that the main advantages of case research are that "it can produce an in-depth analysis of phenomena in context, support the development of historical perspectives and guarantee high internal validity which is to say that the observed phenomena are authentic representations of reality." In other words, the case study method is adaptable to both the researcher as well as to the context in which it is employed.

A sample size of 30 interview participants was generated. The sampling phase was defined by those areas in the reception area deemed as having a greater number of female headed households and then divided into strata. The mode of sampling employed was non probability sampling, in particular, snowball sampling where there were referrals by other single mothers heading households in the area. The five single mothers heading households who were involved in the pretesting of the questionnaire were requested to refer other mothers heading households in the reception area.

A standard questionnaire and interview schedule were developed to gather data in the identified area. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005: 148) hold that when a new instrument is developed, it is vital that it be tested before it is administered to the actual

sample. A pilot study (pre-exercise) was conducted with five participants who met the sampling criteria and who also formed part of the main study. Pre testing of the questionnaire and interview schedule was done to test the data collection tool for errors so as to allow for the necessary adjustments before the commencement of the fieldwork (Holland and Blackburn, 1981). The following phase was an investigation of the circumstances, livelihood assets and coping strategies employed by the single mothers heading households. The study embarked on gathering primary data through interviewing households headed by single mothers in reception area of the informal settlements of Diepsloot.

3.2 Research Techniques

The study also made use of secondary literature in the form of published books, dissertations, journals, online articles and reports. The population from which a sample was drawn was the single mothers heading households who were not living with spouses or cohabitants. According to Best and Kahn (2001:13), the term population refers to “any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher.”

The sampling technique employed was a non-probability technique, namely snowball sampling. Babbie (2011: 180) considers snowball sampling as “a non-probability-sampling method, often employed in field research, whereby each person interviewed may be asked to suggest additional people for interviewing.” In snowball sampling, respondents can be asked to refer other people with the qualities needed. For instance, in this study, single mothers heading households were asked to refer other households headed by single mothers in the area. This was done after the researcher had struggled to get the buy-in of some of the respondents. Some of the respondents seemed either suspicious, untrusting, scared or even not interested in participating in the study in spite of the numerous visits that had been made to their homes to cultivate trust. The researcher ended up making use of some single mothers heading households whom she had already interviewed to either accompany her to these households or refer others who were in the same situation as them. Babbie (2011) adds that snowball sampling is appropriate when the members of a special population are difficult to locate, which is quite true with this type of population. Snowball sampling

was the best technique for conducting a study such as this because the researcher had the freedom to choose whoever was available for inclusion in the sample, including friends who were easy to locate and convenient to the study. The available household representatives were screened and their participation was requested in the study. As a result, the use of snowball sampling yielded a high response rate of a sample size of 30 participants.

Semi structured interviews were also used to collect data. Mitchell and Jolley (2013: 302) affirm that the “structured interview allows the investigator to ask additional questions to follow up any interesting or unexpected answers to the standard questions.” An interview protocol rooted in the literature was developed to act as a guide for the semi-structured interviews. Tutty et al (1996) holds that in the semi-structured interview, predetermined questions or key words are used as a guide, and they are asked in an open-ended manner that suits the flow of the interview. Weiss (1994: 1) notes that interviews “...can inform us about the nature of social life. We can learn about... cultures and the values they sponsor and about the challenges people confront as they live their lives. We can learn what people perceived and how they interpreted their perception...” This type of interview is open and allows new ideas to be brought up during the interview depending on what the person being interviewed says. Most of the interview questions asked were the same for each person interviewed, although additional questions were asked of individual participants where there was need to probe further.

The study utilized what Rubin and Rubin (1995) call cultural interviews which they perceive as “hearing how people see, understand and interpret their world.” Robson (1993: 218) notes that the researcher initiates the interview “for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation.” The method enables the interviewer to modify the line of inquiry, if necessary, as well as clarify and follow up interesting responses. Robson (1993: 230) propounds that in the cultural interview method, the interviewer is free “to modify the order of the questions based on perception of what seems appropriate in the context of the conversation.” This implies that the interviewer has leeway to change the wording of questions, amplify them and leave out particular questions, which seem inappropriate or include others,

which are appropriate to a particular interviewee. This was done with a view to gaining insight into the respondents' circumstances.

The interviews were arranged between the interviewees and researcher at their homes and they were tape-recorded for later transcription. Multiple interviews were planned with each participant in order to provide more in-depth data collection and opportunities for follow-up. The goal was to interview approximately n=30 single mothers heading households. The interviewer completed the questionnaire as she interviewed the respondents and where there was need to probe to elicit more information or get clarity on a point of interest, this was done. Oppenheim (1992: 100) views the questionnaire as "any data collection instrument encompassing checklists, attitude scales, and projective techniques and rating scales" while Boyd (1981: 323) considers the interview as "a personal face to face interaction between the researcher and the respondent."

Manual data analysis was employed using grouping and tabulation to analyse the questionnaire data and the recordings and transcripts from the depth interview in the initial stages. This was done to establish the underlying acts, meanings, relationships, and settings of various factors that influence female poverty. Lastly, data triangulation was used to establish the validity of the qualitative study. It was also used to analyse and cross reference the data obtained from the questionnaire, the depth interviews, with secondary data sources on the subject. This means that each set of data was first analysed individually and then links and correlations were established across the units of data.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Collecting data usually raises concerns from many respondents. In social research, it is of paramount importance to have high regard for the privacy of the respondents as well as to respect them as individuals by not subjecting them to unnecessary research (Goddard and Mellville 2001: 49). Consent was sought from all identified participants and those who were not interested or who refused were respected and not bothered. As a result, the study ended up being conducted with 30 consenting participants.

Social researchers have an obligation to ensure that the health and wellbeing of the respondents is always safe-guarded. Respondents have a right to informed consent. Babbie (2011: 480) contends, "...subjects must base their voluntary participation in research projects on a full understanding of the possible risks involved." Kvale (2007: 27) concurs, saying, "informed consent entails informing the participants about the overall purpose of the investigations and the main features of the design as well as possible risks and benefits from participation in the research project." All the respondents voluntarily participated in the study. They were also informed that they had a right to withdraw at any time. In addition they were told to freely state if they were not comfortable responding to certain questions. Care was also taken not to harm them and the researcher made sure that they were respected as individuals. The respondents' identities were protected and their responses kept anonymous and confidential.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter covered research design and methodology. The study employed qualitative research methodology. A non-probability sampling technique, namely snowball sampling was employed. A questionnaire and interview schedule were developed. The sample size comprised of 30 single mothers heading households in the reception area of the informal settlements of Diepsloot. Permission was also sought from the respondents to conduct the study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter ponders the findings from the analysis of the case studies. The general profiles of the respondents are captured. Information about their living conditions, income, dependent ratios, livelihood, challenges and their survival strategies as well as their networks of support is also captured. In a nutshell, the chapter brings out the voices of the voiceless single mothers heading households about their plight and how they are containing their situation.

Thirty mothers heading households who reside in the reception area of the Diepsloot informal settlements were interviewed. They were all presented with the same questions in the same manner by the researcher, except where there was a need to probe further. Two research tools were administered, the questionnaire as well as the interview schedule. All the participants' responses were tape recorded for future transcription. The questions on both the questionnaire and interview schedule were translated into a language that suited the respondents as most of them seemed quite comfortable conducting the interviews in their mother tongue. A few however seemed comfortable conversing in English. The participants were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and that their assistance in the study would be of great academic benefit to the researcher. Respondents were also told that they could withdraw at any time during the interview process if they so wished.

The five single mothers heading households who were part of the pilot study referred other single mothers heading households in the reception area. The researcher introduced herself to forty three participants including the five mothers already mentioned above and unfortunately thirteen mothers totally refused to be interviewed. When asked why they refused, reasons given ranged from that they did not have time to engage with the researcher as they were busy to that they did not feel safe as they felt that I was an outsider, which of course I was at first. In my attempt to get as much information as possible, I visited the reception area a number of times during the week as well as at weekends. This was also done in a bid to cultivate trust amongst the participants as some of them seemed quite suspicious. Table 1 below shows a

summary of the demographic profiles of the single mothers heading households who participated in the study.

Table 1: A summary of demographic profiles of women who participated in the study

Case No.	Age	Type of Employment	Level of Education	No. of people in the household	Access to social grants	Total Household income
1	59	Paraffin and broiler vendor	Grade 7	3	No	R2700.00
2	45	Fat cook vendor	Grade 7	8	No	R2900.00
3	46	Domestic Worker	Grade 7	6	Yes – 3 children	R2430.00
4	39	Domestic Worker	Form 4	10	No	R3600.00
5	42	Domestic Worker	Form 2	7	No	R5400.00
6	50	Unemployed	None	9	Yes- 8 children	R2480.00
7	48	Cleaner	Grade 8	6	Yes-4 children	R3740.00
8	37	Sex Worker	Grade 7	5	Yes -4 children	R3840.00
9	19	Shop Assistant	Grade 10	5	Yes -1 child	R1200.00
10	33	Domestic Worker	Form 2	5	No	R1400.00
11	31	Works for Cooperative	Matric	4	No	R3000.00
12	31	Vendor	Grade 10	4	No	R1000.00
13	43	Vegetable vendor	Grade 7	6	No	R1200.00
14	30	Vendor	Form 4	6	No	R2200.00
15	33	Domestic /Sex worker	Grade 11	6	No	R3500.00
16	47	General Worker	Grade 9	5	No	R2100.00
17	35	Works for Cooperative	Matric	5	No	R3000.00
18	56	Unemployed	None	4	No	R1000.00
19	39	Unemployed	Grade 7	4	No	R1000.00

20	54	Domestic Worker	Grade 7	7	No	R3500.00
21	43	Small spaza owner	Matric	8	No	R3000.00
22	50	Domestic Worker	Form 2	6	No	R3020.00
23	27	Domestic Worker	Grade 9	6	Yes – 3 children	R3070.00
24	52	Small spaza Owner	Form 4	6	No	R2000.00
25	52	Unemployed	Grade 5	5	No	R900.00
26	30	Domestic Worker	Form 4	6	No	R4500.00
27	51	Unemployed	Grade 2	4	No	R930.00
28	30	Works for Cooperative	Matric	5	No	R3000.00
29	47	Small spaza shop Owner	Matric	6	No	R3090.00
30	55	Vendor	Form 2	5	No	R2000.00

4.1 Social and Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study found that the single mothers heading households belonged to a wide age range from 19 years to 60 years. The majority of the respondents were middle aged single mothers from between the ages of 31 and 60 years accounting for twenty five of the thirty women that were interviewed. Five of the respondents were between the ages of 19 and 30 years. Regarding marital status, the study found that the respondents were mostly widowed or abandoned by their husbands or partners. Fourteen respondents had never been married, five respondents had been widowed while the remaining eleven had been living with a partner and they either broke up or were abandoned. None of the women in the sample was married or living with a partner (cohabitating) at the time of the study.

The study also attempted to probe into the routes leading to female headship and explored if the single mothers became the heads of their households by choice or circumstance. From the qualitative data, an inference was drawn that the women in the study had become heads of households not voluntarily but due to adverse situations like abandonment, separation, widowhood and divorce. Seven mothers

heading households said that they had separated from the fathers of their children because they were subjected to domestic abuse and/or violence. Eighteen of the respondents had between three and five children, six had either one or two children while the other six had more than five children. Three respondents said that they were also taking care of their relative's children who had either passed away or whose mothers were out at work somewhere as live-in domestic workers or relatives who were living elsewhere, in some cases with boyfriends. Others stayed with relatives like cousins, nephews, sisters and brothers. Another five respondents claimed that they lived with their grandchildren or other younger relatives that were in their care.

The study also identified various types of households. It was noted that most of these households were of an extended family nature (that contains other family members like brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews, aunts etc.), while others only had a single generation. There were 8 households that comprised of single generation households while 19 households were of an extended nature comprising of a mother, child or children and other relatives or friends. The important role of elderly female heads of households in raising their grandchildren is stressed by the existence of skip-generation households. They represented 10% or 3 of all female headed households in the study. This may be a consequence of HIV and AIDS, but could also be due to the fragmentation of families through labour migration and family dissolution perhaps under the strain of poverty and unemployment. For some, it was a result of criminal activity.

The study noted that there were 9 Domestic Workers, 5 unemployed mothers, 3 General Workers, 3 mothers who worked for a Corporate while 10 had their small enterprises or were vendors including 3 sex workers. In most of these households a minimal number of people were in full time employment. This raises serious concerns about the vulnerability of female headed households to poverty and hunger. Many studies have linked the presence of employed individuals in households to improvements in living conditions.

The ages of the dependents ranged from new born to twenty six years of age. This is because those adult children or relatives of the household head who were older than

eighteen years of age but not working and dependent on the head of the household were also classified as dependents in the study. Sixteen adult children or relatives from thirteen households were engaged in waged labour with the majority of females working as live-in domestic workers or part time domestic workers who did piece jobs. There were a few full time domestic workers who only came home on Fridays or Saturday morning and went back to work on Sundays. Some came home only twice a month as they had to work every second weekend then go off on the next one.

There were however very few households that had adult male income earners. Some of the respondents alluded to the fact that their adult male children had left to start their own families or that they had left to find their own places or to rent elsewhere. There were seven households with ten adult males of which only four were working. One of them was a security guard, one was a general hand while the other two were gardeners. It was noted that those that still stayed with their adult male children were very happy to be staying with them as they felt more secure than those households that did not have an adult male child or relative residing with them. The absence of an adult male member in the family usually increases the risk of insecurity for the female heads.

The education levels of the females heading households were also quite low. Most of the elderly respondents (37 percent or 11) had never been to school or had only gone up to grade 7 level while 63% or 19 had been educated up to secondary school level although a significant a number mentioned that they did not complete matric or pass it. None of the respondents had reached university or tertiary level. A number of studies have proven that there is a strong relationship between the level of education and the standard of living in South Africa.

Older children were all found to be attending school except for six out of twenty who had dropped out of school because of pregnancy. It was also found that a significant number of children, particularly preschool age children (11 of 39 children, aged between one and six) did not attend early childhood development centres. The reason given for the non-attendance was the unaffordability to pay school fees. A number of early childhood development centres (ECD) have sprouted in areas near the reception

area and although some of the owners receive government subsidies, they still charge parents school fees. Six participants said that their children did not pay school fees at the ECD centres that they attend.

4.2 Livelihoods

On employment, half of the respondents said that they were working, most of them as part time domestic workers. Seven had their small enterprises which ranged from fruit and vegetable vending, selling second hand clothing, poultry farming (rearing chicken for meat and eggs), small spaza shops, selling paraffin, selling pillows and fat cakes (amagwinya). Three respondents were members of a cooperative that manufactures a range of up-cycled corporate gifts and bags and a fair-trade range of promotional and corporate clothing. Five of the respondents were unemployed. All the respondents said that they possessed cell phones because they considered them a basic need in that they needed them for communication with family and others.

There were no professionals that took part in the study. The domestic workers in the study worked in nearby Centurion, Midrand, Bryanston, Randburg or Sandton. The study then probed further to find out why they could not engage in full time employment and most said that they had to look after their children and therefore could not afford to sleep away from home. The reasons cited by most respondents were the recent double murders of children in the reception area in Kanana Street (The Star October 15, 2013). According to the paper, two small girls who were cousins were found murdered in one of the nearby public toilets. Other respondents said that a man was also recently found in the nearby area dead with a number of stab wounds. These incidences instilled fear in many mothers and they felt that they had to sleep in their homes every day to ensure that their children were safe. They said that their children were vulnerable and worse still most of their shacks were not secure enough to keep away criminals. They said that although their doors could be locked or had locks they were not secure enough and anyone with an ulterior motive could easily break them down.

Some of the respondents said that part time domestic jobs paid better than full time domestic work as they received R150.00 per day. They said that full time domestic jobs paid from R1, 000.00 to R2, 500.00 per month depending on a number of factors and perhaps the kind of person one was working for. Those that ran their own enterprises said that they were happy to be home or close to home all the time because that gave them a chance to check on their children from time to time. Others expressed problems with getting employment, saying that they had been trying in vain.

4.2.1 Income and expenditure

Since South Africa is a patriarchal society. Gender composition of the households may be a significant factor in determining the financial situation of the family. Males have better opportunities in income generation. Banos, Fox and Mendoca (1997) assert that the absence of a male member in the family and the lower earning power of women also led to poverty in female headed households. Having no adult male member in the family may lead to lower income of households, resulting in poverty.

The study found that 14 out of 30 households had a total household income of 3000 rand or more per month. Those who worked as part-time domestic workers from Monday to Friday and/or even on weekends earned R150.00 per day translating to R750.00 per week if they worked five days and 3000 rand if they worked for a month. One of these mothers worked every day so that she could get more money (R4, 500.00 per month). There seemed to be little or no rest for this single mother. The bright side of it is that at the end of the day it all seemed to pay off as she appeared better off than other single mothers heading households although there was a huge price to pay in that she never got any rest. This shows that some mothers heading households are time poor as they have little or no time for leisure activities. Thus Buvinic and Gupta (1997) opine that "Substitution of work for leisure to achieve a certain level of consumption in female-headed households may signify the perpetuation of poverty into the next generation."

Six respondents earned between 2000 and 2999 rand per month and these included those mothers who were involved in full time domestic work, the paraffin, fat cook and vegetable vendors as well as some mothers who were in receipt of Child support

Grants of R310.00 a month per child. Eight respondents earned between 1000 and 1999 rand per month. Two mothers said that they earned less than 1000 rand per month. In addition, six of the respondents received Child Support Grants of 310 rand per child as social security and these received remittances for one to eight children. However, although there were a number of skip generation families and mothers caring for other children that were not theirs, none of the mothers was in receipt of the foster care grant.

Five out of thirteen respondents with young children did not receive any child support grants. When asked why they were not benefiting from this system, these respondents were evasive. One reason for this could have been the fact that they were foreign nationals without proper identity documents. Another could have been sheer ignorance or lack of transport money to go to the government offices to apply for the grants, or maybe they had challenges with the application process. The other two mothers with small children said that they were going to apply for the grants for their children.

None of the respondents was in receipt of Child Maintenance remittances. The study found that respondents felt that going through courts to apply for child maintenance was a laborious process. They also claimed that they had never seen any social workers or community development workers in the area who could assist them with this. Community development workers are supposed to be a link between the government and communities. Their role is to help community members to improve their living standards and change their circumstances by making the poor aware of their constitutional rights such as their right to basic service delivery including social grants. They also assist community members to understand how they can participate in development plans for their communities.

The participants were also asked if they had savings accounts and only half of the respondents said that they had bank accounts. They had opened accounts with banks such as Capitec, the Post Office and FNB. Some of them said that they had Mzansi accounts. The study found that these mothers had opened accounts because they were working full time and it was an employee requirement. The six respondents who

were recipients of Child Social grants had SASSA cards that they got from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). They used these cards to access the grants monthly from any ATM where normal bank charges apply. These mothers withdraw the monthly grants free of charge from designated merchant shops like Pick n' Pay or Shoprite.

Other respondents, especially domestic workers said that they get their salaries from FNB via the e-wallet system or Nedbank via a system called send-imali. These are systems that allow people to send money to anyone with a valid South African cell phone number, even if they don't have a bank account. The money is transferred instantly. The respondents receive messages (smses) on their cell phones. They then dial certain numbers to generate a once off pin to access their funds at any FNB or Nedbank ATM because these are card less transactions. The down side is that if they do not access their funds within seven days, the money is automatically returned to the senders. The system does not allow them to withdraw part of the money. They need to withdraw all the money. The other half of the respondents said that they did not think it was important to have a bank account because the money that they earned was immediately used for household purposes and they did not see the need for opening a bank account for which they would be charged for transactions made.

The study then sought to find out if the participants were saving money or not. The majority of the participants did not save any money. They said that saving money was for those people that could afford to and those who were earning enough. They said that saving money was not an option for them. Six of the mothers who responded in English said that they saved through stokvels but it was not easy as they had to forgo a number of basic items necessary for the household, including skipping meals to raise the required amount. The study established that most mothers heading households found it very difficult to eke out a living especially those that did not have a working adult child or adult relative residing with them. Their meagre earnings were always insufficient.

On the number of meals per day, all the participants said that they normally have two meals per day, except for some domestic workers who said that they sometimes eat

thrice especially when they are at work. A twenty four hour dietary recall strategy was administered to ascertain the food and beverage consumption during the previous day or the preceding twenty four hours. The intension was to ask the participants to recall what they consumed in the last twenty four hours. Answers given would then inform the study on whether their immediate need for food was covered and adequate. None of the respondents said that they had tea and bread in the mornings. The few that said that they sometimes have morning tea were mostly domestic workers who drank it at work. Twenty respondents said that they eat something every morning with the majority saying that they eat pap with green vegetables or eggs in the mornings and this keeps them strong the whole day. The other ten said that they do not usually eat in the mornings; they normally have lunch and supper. On average respondents only had two meals per day.

4.2.2 Living Conditions and access to services

Living conditions and access to services were areas where considerable disparities were found. The lack of access to services as experienced by the poor often contributes to the difficulty entailed in moving out of poverty. It was noted that twenty six of the households under investigation lived in two roomed dwellings while the other four only occupied a single room. Twenty one participants “owned” their own shacks while only nine were paying rent of around 200 rand per month. Some of those who were renting claimed that they had built their own shacks within Diepsloot reception area and the Red Ants (a notorious security firm that is usually hired by the government to evict people from where they will be believed to be occupying space illegally) had destroyed their shacks. This resulted in them moving to rent other shacks within the area. The number of years of occupancy of the participants ranged from two years to twenty years. The average number of people occupying the small shacks was five. The rooms were very small and quite dark. The rooms had no windows or any kind of ventilation except for the doors.

The study found that those who “owned” their own shacks were either moved from Alexandra or Sevenfontein soon after independence or they got them as pass on shacks from relatives or friends who had since moved to other places. It was also

discovered that some of the respondents had bought the informal shacks from relatives and other people that could have been selling for various reasons at the time. On the reasons given for relocating and settling in Diepsloot, the study revealed that most respondents had migrated from the rural areas to the urban areas (internal migration) while others were foreign nationals (international migrants) in search of better economic environments. Findings also reveal that most of those female headed households that had moved into the reception area soon after the year 1994 had been promised RDP housing which they are still waiting for up to now. However, there were some who had moved in as recently as the previous year.

The study found that the participants lived in an area that was lacking in a number of services. Although there were quite a number of public toilets in the area, the majority of them were not working and the participants said that no effort was being made to repair them or bring them back to good working order. Because of this, they used other toilets which may be a bit of a distance for them and perhaps quite scary especially at night. There was no electricity in the area save for a minimal number of streets with street lights. All the participants used public taps. The mothers said that they kept gallons and buckets to store water. None of the households had electricity except for those that had solar panels whom other residents went to when they needed to charge their cell phones. They used firewood and paraffin stoves to cook and they normally ate before it got dark so that they use minimal lighting. They lit their homes with paraffin lamps and candles.

Figure 6: Picture of informal settlements in the reception area of Diepsloot



4.2.3 Heating, lighting, water and sanitation

The study found that there is no electricity in the reception area of the Diepsloot informal settlements except for street lights. This means that the respondents cannot use items like electric stoves, electric heaters, or electric lights. They cannot use anything that uses electricity to function. The study found that most of the mothers heading households use paraffin lamps for lighting and paraffin stoves or firewood for cooking and heating. Respondents however lamented that it had become quite expensive to use paraffin because they bought it from informal traders within the reception area who also buy it from retailers and other places and put a mark-up on the price. Those using firewood to cook said that they got the firewood from the nearby areas or they bought it from the retailers. They claimed that buying firewood was cheaper than buying paraffin. According to them paraffin had become unaffordable and firewood lasted longer.

On water and sanitation, the respondents stated that they used public toilets which were scattered all over the reception area. The study learnt that although there were so many of these public toilets, the majority of them were not functioning and had since been closed down. The study found that four toilets were shared by families residing in the two rows where they were built translating to around forty households or around two hundred people. The respondents claimed that residents met and divided themselves into two groups, contributed money and bought chains and padlocks after which a duty roster was developed so that people could take turns to clean the toilets ensuring that they are kept clean all the time. There were people that were selected to keep keys and whoever wanted to use the toilets had to go and get keys from the nominated people. Other people were also free to make their own copies of the toilet keys. Others claimed that the local municipality brought non-flush portable toilets which were placed by the roadside as a response to the failing toilet system. Residents were encouraged to use them only as urinals as they quickly filled up. The municipality takes time to service them.

Respondents also claimed that they got water from common taps. This is where they got water for domestic purposes including water for cooking, drinking and bathing. All the respondents stored water in their small shacks. They had a number of buckets or gallons, all full with water. However, it was noticed that there were peak hours when getting the water from the taps and it was quite common to find a very long queue of people waiting for their turn to get water especially in the late afternoon, just before it got dark and sometimes in the mornings. Most of the taps were continuously running causing stagnant water, stench and breeding mosquitoes. None of the households under investigation had their own bathroom and as a result children and adults had to bath in their shacks.

4. 3 Survival strategies

4. 3.1 Social networks of support

4. 3.1.1 Relatives and community support

According to Schmidt (2005: 23) women survive on social networking, especially in the context of poverty. The majority of the respondents (25) said that they had relatives living close by or at least in some areas in Diepsloot. The other five of the thirty respondents said that they did not have any nearby relatives although they all mentioned that they had other people that they were quite close to in nearby areas or neighbours that they got along well with. On getting support from relatives, some of the respondents said that they sometimes got food from relatives while others said that they sometimes borrowed money from their neighbours and relatives. However, a few (8) said that it was not easy to borrow money from their relatives. Their relatives usually thought that they would not be able to pay back the money so they normally asked their friends or neighbours to help. Six respondents said that they left their young children in the care of relatives when they went to work as part time domestic workers. Other participants said that they got companionship from their relatives and neighbours who laughed with them and this made them think less about their problems. They said that they appreciated having their relatives close by because whenever they had challenges or problems they shared them with their relatives who always gave them a listening ear. Four of the twenty five respondents with relatives close by said that there was no difference whether they had relatives close by or not as they did not get along with them.

4.3.1.2 Burial Society Membership

The majority of the respondents (21) said that they were members of a burial society and they contributed 50 rand per month. They said that it was important that when they or any member of their family passed on, they were buried with dignity. They said that they did not want to be buried like paupers. Joining the burial societies enabled them to be buried back in the villages where they came from. A few who ended up admitting that they were foreign nationals said that it was important that when they died they were buried in their countries where their souls could rest in peace. Although the remaining nine respondents would have loved to be members of a burial society, they said that they could not afford the monthly contributions because there were many other important things that they urgently needed money for. They said that they would rather spend that money on consumables and other basic necessities.

4.3.1.3 Stokvel membership

Only ten of the participants claimed that they were members of a stokvel. A stokvel is a savings or investment society to which members regularly contribute an agreed amount and from which they receive a lump sum payment at the end of the year. There are other forms of stokvels where people contribute money to buy groceries at the end of the year and then share them amongst members. None of the respondents said that they belonged to a grocery stokvel. When asked why, they said that they did not have the patience to wait for a whole year for groceries when they needed them now. Others were more worried about the possibility of something bad happening to them during the course of the year and losing out in the end. They said that people could not be trusted.

Eight of the respondents said that they contributed 1000 rand per month and they were in groups of six. They claimed to receive lump sums twice a year when it was their turn. Two respondents said that they contributed 300 rand per month and they were also in groups of six each receiving lump sums of 1500 rand twice a year. Another point that was raised by the respondents who were members of stokvels was that the contributions enabled them to buy tangible things like beds, cupboards, wardrobes and other household items which they took to the villages or their countries of origin. The other twenty of the respondents were not members of any stokvel simply because they could not afford to part with any money for such purposes or even raise this amount.

4.3.1.4 Church attendance

On church attendance, nineteen of the respondents said that they were members of some church. All these respondents belonged to African independent churches and they referred to their churches as "churches of the spirit". These were mainly Zionist or Apostolic churches such as Apostolic Faith Mission, Twelve Apostolic Church and Zion Christian Church (ZCC). These churches make use of faith healing in most cases using water and revelation through prophecy and members usually wear ritual garments which are mostly white, green or blue in colour. They also have food taboos, for instance, abstaining from pork. Most of these churches have no property of their

own but tend to hold services in hired class-rooms, halls, or even outdoors. It is believed that these churches appeal more to the poor and to those with relatively low levels of formal education. When asked why they attend these churches, the respondents alluded to the fact that they got comfort from the churches as well as faith healing. Others said that these churches were a refuge from the trials and tribulations of the outside world and that they helped them cope with many challenges that came their way. They received a lot of support from the churches and they felt at home and closer to God. Some of them said that they had made a lot of friends in church who supported them in many different ways. The remaining eleven respondents did not go to church because they did not have the time and some of these were those that were engaged in domestic work.

4.3.1.5 Political Party membership

On membership in political parties, none of the respondents interviewed said that they belonged to any political party. They all seemed apolitical. The study probed further to find out their reasons for this and they said that they did not see what they could benefit from being members of some political party as political parties showed a bit of care only towards election time and after that they tended to forget about the people they were supposed to represent. The study found that respondents did not care about who was leading the country. Instead they seemed more worried about their own means of survival.

4.4 Voices of the voiceless

Alcock (1993: 4) propounds that poverty, like beauty, is contained only in the eye of the beholder. The respondents in question differed from each other not only in their current socio-economic circumstances or status, but also in their own backgrounds and circumstances. The following eight case studies of the single mothers heading households residing in the informal settlements of the reception area of Diepsloot were selected from the recordings of the 30 participants. They were tape recorded at the time of the interviews and then the interviews were then transcribed. These eight case studies were chosen because the information furnished by the participants in question stood out from the others in their circumstances. Their information differed in many

ways from the other participants. Each narrative has captured information on personal, family and community background; livelihood assets; challenges and coping mechanisms.

4.4.1 Case Study 1: Anna (59 years)

Anna was educated up to grade 7. She used to work as a petrol attendant but retired at age 55 due to ill-health. She was moved from Alexandra to the reception area by the government in the year 2000. They had been promised RDP housing. She lives in a two roomed shack with her daughter who works as a Domestic Worker and her 4 year old granddaughter. Her two sons live elsewhere.

She is a paraffin and broiler vendor. "I earn a living through rearing broilers and selling them. At night I put them in that big net cage and they sleep in my kitchen. I also sell paraffin because everybody here in the reception area needs it for lighting and heating." She makes 2000 rand per month and her daughter earns 1700 rand meaning that their household income amounts to 3700 rand.

Her main challenges are the lack of electricity and the manifestation of rats in the area. "It is worse for people like me because my shack does not have windows so it is extremely dark in here and the light from the lantern cannot reach everywhere." She also laments over her ill health which resulted in her early retirement and that there is no hospital in the reception area. She constantly has to travel to Extension 2 to access health services and travelling also costs her money which she claims not to have. She also says that sometimes business does not do so well and she really struggles to get money to put food on the table.

She is a member of the local Apostolic Church and the church has helped her in many ways to cope with her illness. Other members visit her and also pray for her. She is also a member of the stokvel and they contribute 1000 rand per month. She is also a member of the local burial society.

4.4.2 Case Study 2 - Tebogo (45 years)

Tebogo moved from Alexandra to the reception area. She lives with her five children and two grandchildren. She was educated up to grade 7 and she worked so many years as a Domestic worker. Her first daughter works as a domestic worker too. Tebogo now sells fat cooks for a living. She does not receive any child maintenance nor child support grants. None of her children share a father, each of them has his or her own father. "None of the fathers of my children support them through maintenance or otherwise and neither do I receive any child support grants from the Government."

They all live in a small two roomed shack without windows. She says "It is so dark inside." She is neither a member of any stokvel or of any burial society. She is a member of the Zion Church and this is the place where she gets "comfort as well as spiritual healing and deliverance."

4.4.3 Case study 3 – Tebatso (46 years)

She said that they were moved to the reception area from Sevenfontein in 1999 and they have stayed in this shack ever since. She lives with her four children and granddaughter. She did not seek work opportunities after the death of her husband because her children were still small and there was no one to take care of them. She said that her daughter gave birth to her grandchild at the age of fifteen and has since refused to go back to school. Tebatso works in Centurion as a domestic worker.

She receives child support grants for her last three children to the tune of 930 rand. She no longer receives a grant for the first one because although she is under eighteen, she is now a mother herself. She attends the Twelve Apostolic Church and the church has helped her in so many ways. She is a member of the local burial society. She is also a member of a stokvel where they contribute 300 rand every month. She attends the Zion church for divine intervention as well as comfort and support. She says "They also pray for me when I am faced with problems and other challenges. I feel safe and closer to God when I go to church."

When asked about the challenges that she faces as a single mother heading a household, she said that there was a huge security problem. She said “People are found murdered in the reception area almost every day. This is because it is a dark city and darkness promotes criminal activity.” Another problem that she alluded to was that of her fifteen year old son. She said “My major problem is that my fifteen year old son started indulging in nyaope a year ago and he is a loose cannon. No one can tell him anything. I have tried talking to him about his behaviour and what it will lead to but it is the same as talking to a rock. I have failed as a parent when it comes to this particular child and I honestly do not know what to do.”

4.4.4 Case Study 4 - Siphwe (39 years of age)

They are a family of ten, from Zimbabwe. “We lived in Zimbabwe before we came here but we cannot reveal this to anyone as we are scared of falling prey to xenophobic attacks. We are only telling you this because you promised that you will not disclose this information to anyone else. Foreign nationals get killed every day here.” She lives with her three children, her sister and her children as well as a brother. They occupy a two roomed shack and pay 200 Rand per month.

She was educated up to form four level which is equivalent to matric level. Both Siphwe and her sister work as Domestic Workers while their brother works as a part time gardener. Both sisters do not receive maintenance or grants for their children. “I have been disappointed by my 16 year old daughter who is pregnant and is no longer attending school as she will be soon giving birth. I took her to the house where she says her boyfriend stays and the boyfriend denied responsibility. The boyfriend is a security guard and is much older than my daughter.”

The two sisters are members of the local burial society and they contribute 50 rand each per month. “All the members of our burial society are Zimbabweans. The society covers my burial and that of my children. My sister is also a member and her children are also covered.” They also attend the Johane Masowe Church every Friday evening. “The apostles have helped me in a number of ways. I find comfort in church. Sometimes God speaks to us through the church leaders and they tell us what we

need to do to avoid bad things happening to us or to enhance the current standard of living. They also prophesy and we also receive faith healing” she says.

She said that their main challenges are that of overcrowding in the two roomed shack, financial problems and rats as well as living in fear of xenophobic attacks. They try to overcome this by working so hard to garner more finances.

4.4.5 Case study 5 - Christina (42 years)

Originally from Malawi, they are a family of seven. She stays with her children, her sister and the sister’s children. She says “I stayed with the father of my last three children for close to five years until he was murdered in 2008 at the time when there was xenophobia in South Africa. Since then life has never been the same for me and my children. We struggle from day to day.” They all share a two roomed shack. She said that she “was educated up to secondary education but had to drop out of school when I became pregnant with my first child. I then had to stay at home and after a few months got married to the father of my child... I was the fourth wife and it was not easy because we used to fight with the other wives.”

The two sisters work as domestic workers and their combined income is 5400 rand. They are both members of a burial society. She said that the challenges that they face are that “we are too crowded in this shack. We never bath a whole body as we do not have big dishes and even if we had them they would take up most of the space in the room. As a result we bath just half the body. Worse still the shacks are rat infested.” Another problem that she mentioned was that of money which she has to “share between South Africa and Malawi every month. I then have to forgo many things to also cater for those that are outside the country. Security in this place is also a big concern because there is a lot of criminal activity in the area. People are killed here every day and we are always scared especially when we hear gun shots as there is no “adult male figure” that we live with.”

4.4.6 Case Study 6 - Nomfundo (50 years)

She came from the Eastern Cape Province. She was called for a job in Johannesburg. Her husband had left Eastern Cape to look for a job in the mines in 2000 and never went back home. "I worked as a general worker, sweeping the roads in Johannesburg Central Business District. It is then that I looked for my own place to stay and one of my friends at work told me that there was a shack in Diepsloot. I rented a shack on the other side of the road for a while until I met the father of my last three children".

She had six children from two different partners, but only four are surviving. She lives with her last three children and five grandchildren. The nine of them occupy the two roomed shack. She says "I had three girls but two of them passed away. They were ill for quite some time. The surviving one works for a non-governmental organisation in Tubatse, Limpopo as an Administrator and she is a lesbian and quite open about it. It breaks my heart whenever I think about it and I am so scared most of the time because her friend who was also a lesbian was murdered here in the reception area...I have to take care of my grandchildren because I am all that they have since their mothers are no more."

She receives child support grants for five of her grandchildren and her three children totalling 2 480 rand. She says "I am not working, so this is all the income that we receive as a family every month." She is not a member of any burial society or stokvel nor does she belong to any church. She says that they have very good neighbours who are quite supportive and she hopes to see more Non-Governmental Organisations having a presence in the reception area to help people like her.

4.4.7 Case Study 7 - Malebo (48 years)

She is originally from Limpopo and had five children, but only three are surviving. She said "My first son was murdered here in Diepsloot at the age of twenty five while he was fighting with some boys who had stolen his cell phone. A few years later my daughter was also murdered by her live in boyfriend at the age of twenty four. He hit her with a hammer on the head and she passed away on the way to hospital. The painful part is that in both instances, the perpetrators did not pay for their sins and they are walking the streets as free men. We were told that the dockets disappeared and

the cases were dismissed just like that.” Her late daughter left two young children whom she is now taking care of.

She receives Child Support Grants for two children and her two grandchildren. She also works as a cleaner for one of the cleaning companies in Pretoria and earns 2 500 rand per month meaning that the total household income comes up to 3740 rand every month. She is a member of the local burial society and also attends the Zion Christian Church (ZCC). She says that violence has claimed the lives of her children and lives in fear as the reception area is a very violent place. She gets comfort from church members that she prays with.

4.4.8 Case Study 8 - Gaugetswe (37 years old)

She has four children and receives child support grants for all her children amounting to 1 240 rand. She laments that the child support grants that she gets have never been adequate to cater for her and the children. She said “I was very unfortunate in life because all the people that fathered my children were married to other people and only came here when they had a chance.” She is employed as a sex worker after spending a number of years not working. She said that the job changed her life for the better. “Finding a job has been a nightmare for me, so I sometimes spend my time playing cards with other women. It is a betting game starting from 2 rand. I have had my fair share of winnings and the games keep me going and sane. At least I get money to buy beer from playing cards but then beer has gone up.” She says that the money that she gets varies from 600 rand per week to 1600 rand depending on how busy the week has been.

The challenges she cited were that the place is quite crowded with no water and electricity. She said that she has already done something to overcome her dire situation of lack of money by becoming a sex worker. She has no support system as she says that she does not get along with her siblings.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter has shed some light on the circumstances, livelihood and challenges that the mothers heading households experience. These households face a number of challenges: from the low quality of housing, low income and a lack of a number of other basic necessities. Lessons from the findings of the case studies will be delineated and this is what constitutes the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

Chapter five presents the analysis of the findings and the discussion. The findings suggest that the livelihoods of the single mothers heading households in Diepsloot informal settlements are a litany of injustice. The overwhelming impression is that of a vicious cycle of poverty and lack of basic needs, including rights of tenure, allied with the poor quality of their dwellings, and an inability to access various crucial services. This is in the context of a lack of outside help either from family, community, the municipality or government. What emerges is that the households being investigated are vulnerable and insecure. They are locked in chronic poverty which they in turn pass on to their offspring. The poverty faced by the respondents is mainly profiled by unemployment and casualised labour. The homes are overcrowded and, worse still, not maintained. Poor health interacts with their poor housing conditions. The most basic forms of energy are used and the families are split, with no “father figure” present.

5.1 Poverty as a vicious cycle

This study shows that poverty begets poverty. This means that there is an interrelationship between cause and effect. The large number of people in most of the female headed households, at an average of 5 members per household, partly confirm what the World Bank suggested above that these households comprise of large families. Although some of them have a total household income of more than 3000 rand, they still live on less than \$1.25 meaning under that they are living below the poverty threshold. The majority of these women have very low education levels. This means that they get low paying jobs or no jobs at all and have very little capital to use on themselves and their families and the cycle goes on. Hulme and Shepherd (2003: 405) state that a key defining feature of “chronic poverty” is its extended duration, and people who experience “significant deprivations for a period of five years or more are more likely to remain poor for much of their life course and pass on their poverty to subsequent generations.” Chronic poverty is a part of these female headed households of which for most there seems little or no hope for escape.

For some, the fact that their children have also become domestic workers or are engaged in low paying jobs or even not employed means that there is the intergenerational transmission of poverty. For instance, Anna's daughter (case study 1) and Tebogo's daughter (case study 2) are working as a domestic workers. As such, it can be concluded that poverty is not a result of individual or social character deficiencies but rather of the way society is structured against these people. By no fault of theirs, people fall into poverty traps where they find it difficult to engineer a pathway out and as a result find themselves socially excluded, alienated or discriminated against.

5.2 Lack of paternal support

Children of the single mothers heading households in Diepsloot informal settlements lack paternal support. O' Laughlin (1997: 9) notes that, "When women are de jure heads of households... they miss the labour of men, regular wage remittances, and legal access to resources in patriarchal systems of local authority. Thus these households would most certainly be poor." The children live with their mothers who take care of them without a male or father figure to provide guidance and security. Chant (2007: 2) claims that the "absence of the male figure in the female-headed households exposes these households to lack of protection." The fathers of the children did not play any meaningful part in the children's lives either economically or otherwise. Most of the children, particularly male children did not have a father figure to look up to. The mothers faced the burden of bringing up children alone without any support from the fathers of the children and this results in severe poverty.

In addition, most of the mothers lacked ties with their ex-partners relatives. Thus Bibars (2001: 67) opine, "Households headed by females with dependent children experience the worst afflictions of poverty ... Female-headed households are the poorest." Studies have shown that marriage enhances household income and wealth and promotes the well-being of spouses and children (Weeks, 2002). Results of the study have shown that the situation of single mothers heading households in the reception area is dire. They have less income, less food and are lacking in so many things.

5.3 Security and domestic abuse

Security proved to be a concern to the majority of the households, especially those that did not have an adult male member residing with them. This led to these households living in perpetual fear of criminals in the area. For instance, Christina's husband (case study 5) was murdered during the 2008 xenophobic attacks. Sipiwe, case study 4, from Zimbabwe lived in fear of being attacked by virtue of being a foreign national. A number of mothers especially, those that came from foreign countries seemed to be living in fear of being attacked. Many referred to the 2008 xenophobic attacks and that they did not want to fall prey to the attacks as they thought that they could be attacked anytime. They were very conscious of this. They also cited a number of incidents which involved criminal activities near their places of residence. It was also noted that there were many predators in the area and the women felt that there was a huge need for them to protect their children and for some, this determined the kind of work they engaged in.

The issue of domestic violence was also brought up by the respondents a number of times. Some of the single mothers heading households and/or their children had been physically abused, in some cases the attacks resulted in death. For instance, Malebo's daughter (case study 7) was murdered at the age of twenty four by her live-in boyfriend who hit her on the head with a hammer. This was seen to have brought about feelings of bitterness, umbrage and pique in the women. It was noted that some of these women had not yet healed from these traumas.

5.4 Time Poverty

The analysis of the study shows that most of the single mothers heading households in the study were time poor. They rarely had time for leisure activities or even time for themselves. Some of them worked almost every day in a bid to get more money to support their families. As a result children in these households lacked the parental input which they needed in order to thrive both at school and as individuals. Hence ECLAC (2004b: 18) opine that single mothers heading households are forced into single handed management of a multiplicity of tasks including income generation,

housework and childcare and this further compromises economic efficiency and wellbeing.

5.5 Lack of housing, secure tenure and health risks

The temporary placement of some of the households in the reception area had been a lifetime experience of waiting. However, others, especially those in possession of registered documentation proving ownership still lived in hope of someday being moved into RDP housing. To a large extent, these findings confirm the need for support programmes that will allow RDP placement perhaps considering economic status, number of children, age and even gender.

Most of the shacks did not have windows and people lived in darkness in day and night. As a result, most of the shacks were found to be rat infested and the problem is that rats are notorious for devouring clothing. In addition, most of these families did not control these rats as they deemed the whole process expensive and a waste of money which in any case they did not have. This was found to be a huge health risk which could result in these families contracting diseases like Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), Murine Typhus and Rat Bite Fever (RBF) some of which can be deadly (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention).

In addition, the constant flowing of water from the taps breeds mosquitoes and as a result the shacks become mosquito infested which in turn results in residents contracting malaria (not only female headed households but all residents were affected). Hence the Department of Health (2007) states that informal settlements can be associated with social fragmentation that may increase the likelihood that individuals are at higher risk of HIV and AIDS and this is because the population in these areas includes work-seekers, temporary workers, and migrant labourers. This assertion proves to be quite true of the area under investigation.

The respondents lived in poor environments due to high population density and a lack of water and proper sanitation. The housing they built in slums was overcrowded, dark, without ventilation and in very poor condition. Most of the shacks had no proper

cement floors. In addition, some of the occupations of the respondents involved risks to their health such as rearing chicken for eggs and meat and staying with the fowls in the same room overnight to protect them from theft and cold weather (case study 1). Although research has shown that chicken lice cannot infect humans, however they can cause a lot of discomfort.

Eviction was an experience of many of these single mothers heading households particularly those that came after people had already been placed. This resulted in them incurring costs of relocation, costs which dug deep into their meagre pockets. This created broken communities as well as financial costs of building or moving to rent another home elsewhere and also destroyed traditional relationships among poor people living in slums. Sometimes these evictions were violent especially where the Red Ants were involved. As a result, this kind of situation resulted in unwillingness to improve the respondents' living conditions especially because they found themselves in situations which they viewed as very insecure.

In the shacks and squatter camps of the reception area, family members lived in close proximity to each other. Living quarters in all the households in the study were shared by all, and the young ones are exposed to the lifestyle, attitude and habits exhibited in the household. As a result, young ones end up emulating behaviours of elder members of the household. This usually becomes a problem if the behaviour emulated is a bad one, for instance, teenage pregnancy, drug and substance abuse in the form of nyaope or wunga – an officially illegal drug, highly addictive and destructive whose ingredients are believed to comprise amongst others a cocktail of anti-retroviral drugs, milk powder, rat poison, bicarbonate of soda and pool.

5.6 Lack of access to basic services

Access to basic services plays a significant role in determining the well-being of an individual or household. Access to clean water and sanitation are particularly important as this has been shown to be closely associated with the health status of households, particularly young children. In addition, housing, water, sanitation, a clean environment, food security and poverty are generally considered some of the most

important social determinants of health. Hence Unifem (2009) echoes, "the provision of basic services such as adequate housing, water, sanitation, refuse removal and energy are of particular importance to women due to their roles as mothers, housekeepers and caregivers." The female headed households in the reception area lacked access to basic services like water, sanitation and refuse removal. Dirt was found everywhere in the reception area since there is no waste removal system. People just threw anything on the roads. All the households under study were energy insecure. Without electricity, these people were at a disadvantage in nearly every aspect of their lives. Having electricity means the ability to study at night and get an education. It also allows people to charge or power their cell phones, which are being used across the world for communication. The lack of electricity or power has been cited by various authors as one of the largest barriers to overcoming poverty.

The single mothers heading households in the reception area used shared public toilets with other residents and although they had cleaning rosters, the toilets were constantly dirty and there was a permanent stench perhaps because those who cleaned them rarely used detergents. The toilets were shared amongst different types of families. Some users may not even treat the toilets like their own by virtue of them being public and this poses health risks to other users.

Results from the study also suggested that most single mothers heading households in the informal settlements of the reception area did not benefit from the services of the Municipality and in particular, the community development workers or social workers. As a result some of the mothers could not apply for social grants. The United Nations (2003) propounds, "the urban poor are trapped in an informal and "illegal" world ... in slums that are not reflected on maps, where waste is not collected, where taxes are not paid and where public services are not provided." There is a lack of public services. These include postal services (they do not receive mail in their shacks as they do not have addresses) as well as no police services in the area. The nearest police station is in Extension 2 and it is quite a distance from the reception area. Moreover, the location of the reception area cannot be traced through advanced technology like the Global Positioning System (GPS) meaning that for some it is easy to get lost when going to these homes.

With none of the respondents having medical aid, evidence from the study revealed that the respondents and their families endured a lot of pain in a bid to avert the long queues at the local clinic where they had to walk quite a distance as it was located in extension 2. Respondents visited the clinic only when it was something very serious which could be life threatening. This proved to be quite dangerous especially due to the fact that they may not know the extent of the seriousness of the situation, which could potentially lead to death.

5.7 Limited Education

The role of education in eradicating female poverty, in close co-operation with other social factors is very critical. Education plays a very significant role in any societal progress or development. The analysis revealed that the single mothers heading households all had lower levels of educational attainment. Woolard cited in Mbuli, (2008: 6) supports this when he echoes that, in 1998, 58% of adults with no education were poor; 53 % of adults with less than seven years of education were poor; 34% of adults with incomplete secondary schooling were poor; 15% of adults who had not completed secondary school were poor, and only 5% of adults with tertiary education were poor. This assertion shows that education can be a pathway out of poverty and in the case of these single mothers under study, if they had better educational qualifications they would be in a position to get better paying jobs and not be trapped in poverty.

In addition, the importance of early educational intervention in the form of early childhood education seemed not very well appreciated. This is because there were a number of preschool going age children that were not attending Early Childhood Educational Centres. This could be attributed to the fact that these mothers did not know that the Department of Social Development provides funding to the ECD centres to cater for children from poor families. Early childhood educational intervention promotes the cognitive growth and development of a child.

Teenage pregnancies also seemed to be quite high resulting in school dropouts. For instance, Tebatso's daughter (case study 3) dropped out of school at the age of fifteen when she became pregnant and refused to go back to school. According to Handa

(1996), older children were considered an asset to a woman or a mother because they would support her as well as lessen her future dependence on a spouse or partner. Educated girl children rarely leave their mothers to suffer. They normally support them the best they can.

Moreover family interactions for instance, mother–child closeness was lacking in most of these households under study as the mothers seemed more concerned about survival than being close to their children or investing. The mothers said that they could not assist with home schooling because of lack of resources like tables and lighting. The study realised the need for the female heads of the households to encourage their children to attend school as well as support them with their school work which could in turn help them to perform better. Their educational achievements may help them break the cycle of poverty.

5.8 Lack of human capital

43% of female headed households do not hold a single employed person in South Africa (Statistics South Africa: 2010). Men always find ways of earning a living while women have to care for children, the disabled and the sick. The analysis of the findings however revealed that child care was the highest obstacle to entry into the labour market for some female headed households. Quite a significant number of single mothers heading households fell in this category. They either had young children or grandchildren that they needed to take care of and as a result found it impossible to seek employment. This kind of situation puts single mothers heading households in a disadvantaged economic position. Hence Anjaria (2006: 78) propounds, “women...had the primary role in caring or offering personal services and only a secondary role in financial provision to families.”

The respondents in the study occupied jobs in the informal sector with unskilled labour, irregular income and long hours as well as low–paying jobs. Most of them were daily workers, today they have a job but the next day they may be jobless. The study also suggested that the single mothers heading households faced difficulties in balancing work and private life and this often led to them engaging in part-time work and taking career breaks. There were also self–employed labourers in the informal sectors, such

as small vendors who sold items like fat cakes (amagwinya), cigarettes, fruits and vegetables, paraffin and broilers. The majority of the respondents were women in the survivalist, or poor end of poverty who were independent traders, who worked for themselves and who rarely employed others and worked in harsh physical conditions. Lund (1998: 30) says, "The working conditions of street traders are precarious, as they endure a harsh physical environment, and limited or no infrastructure."

The mothers heading households in question also referred to the stigma that was attached to their condition. When they borrowed money from others, other people were not willing to lend them simply because they were judged according to their poverty situation. Thus Rakodi (2002: 10) highlights that the sustainable livelihood approach recognises that the poor may not have cash or other savings, but they have other material or non-material assets, such as their health, labour, their knowledge and skills, their kinship and friends, as well as the natural resources around them.

5.9 Social Capital

Numerous studies have demonstrated that having a network of supportive relationships contributes to psychological well-being. When you have a social support network, you benefit in many different ways. The analysis shows that some respondents were interested in acquiring social capital by investing time and money in various local associations such as stokvels, churches, burial societies and card playing. A fair number of respondents received some form of assistance from neighbours, friends, colleagues and relatives. Spending time with other people be it in church, burial society or stokvel helped ward off loneliness. Respondents felt that they belonged somewhere. They had a sense of belonging. The mere fact of knowing that one is not alone goes a long way toward coping with stress related issues. Social networks of support also increased a sense of self-worth of the participants. Having friends or church members and other acquaintances reinforces the idea that you're a good person to be around. People like having you around and they like spending their time with you. Their social networks shared information with them, advice, guidance as well as other types of assistance. The respondents experienced feelings of comfort especially knowing that they had other people to turn to in their time of need.

Besides having kin as networks of support, the respondents also had fictive kin based on the places where they came from, be it a particular country or a district in the rural areas. This type of network became social capital in the context of migration to the city. There was provision of migration related information and adaptation to city or slum life, through provision of initial accommodation and employment information.

5.10 Social ills

Some of the children of the single mothers (youth) indulged in social ills such as drug and substance abuse including nyaope. For instance, Tebatso (case study 3) had a fifteen year old son who was indulging in nyaope and the mother said that she felt hopeless. A number of households also had young mothers in their early teens who had dropped out of school because they had become pregnant, for instance Siphiwe's daughter (case study 4). Her daughter got pregnant whilst at school and when she took her to the boyfriend's house, who was much older and working as a security guard, he denied responsibility. As a result, the majority of these young girls could not go back to school as they had to take care of their children. This resulted in some of them seeking domestic work to earn an income to support their children. What this means is that single mothers heading households sometimes failed to bring up their children in the proper manner perhaps because they got so occupied with many other things including the numerous challenges that they faced. The danger is that younger children tend to emulate the behaviours that are exhibited by elder children thinking that it is the right behaviour and as a result some of them may end up indulging in these social ills.

5.11 Attitudes of the poor women to their poverty situation

The study noted that the poor mothers heading households had accepted their situation as breadwinners of their families and they were not blaming anyone for their situation. Whatever challenges came their way, they faced them head on. They were not angry at all with their situation. All the participants in the study felt that their situation of poverty was caused by circumstance rather than individual control. They said that they were in this kind of situation because of issues beyond their control.

Some even went on to say that it was God's way of doing things. In other words, they attributed their situation to certain factors beyond individual control or initiative. This is in sharp contrast to Oyen et al's (1996: 232) opinion that "poverty in South Africa is a political issue." None of the participants attached any political meaning to their understanding of poverty or to their poverty situation. There was a wish for better livelihoods, RDP housing and assistance from a number of sources. Others did not expect any help and acknowledged the need for self-reliance.

5.12 Survival strategies

The choices of survival strategies were strongly determined by the level of human capital in the household. Because the households under study had fluctuations in income, the respondents tried to maintain a minimal level of consumption for their members. All households under study spent a large proportion of their income (at least three quarters) on food. When business was not so buoyant, some respondents (particularly those that were involved in their own small businesses) reported spending as much as 90 per cent, or even 100 per cent, of their income on food. The response to the poverty situation was mainly passive through the reduction of household consumption as well as income diversification through participation in some income-generating activities. It was the general view of all the respondents that they wished to do at least one income-generating activity, provided it gave them enough cash to meet all household needs. Although most of the mothers either ran their own small enterprises or were in some form of part time or full time employment, there were others that solely depended on government grants.

Another notable strategy employed by the respondents was that of card playing and betting. Some of the mothers heading households had become accustomed to this kind of coping mechanism in a bid to garner finance. The problem is that one does not win all the time and when they lose, the whole family loses and it also becomes addictive.

Self-reliance was a common theme throughout their stories. All the respondents wished to find additional sources of income or better work. A minimal number of the mothers had resorted to prostitution as a way of escaping poverty. The problem as

propounded by Brown (2005) cited in Beard et al. (2010: 4) is that, "prostitution is often transmitted from parent to child in some cases as a family tradition or because of real or perceived lack of options." There is always a danger of children emulating the behaviour of their parents or those older than them. It is even worse when girl children grow up to become prostitutes like their mothers. Some of the damages instilled by parents can be irreversible and, worse still, there is the problem of HIV and AIDS.

5.13 Conclusion

This chapter has shed some light on the current state of female poverty in the reception area of the informal settlements of Diepsloot. The single mothers heading households in the study have been locked in chronic poverty for some time and it is difficult to escape from it. Although the mothers devise various methods of coping with their poverty situation, very few manage to move out to the next level.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The six chapter concludes the study. It provides a concluding overview of the research findings and recommendations made in the study. It also provides a brief discussion of the implications of this work and for further research to deepen the analysis.

6.1 Conclusion

The findings of this report strongly support the contention that inequality and the resultant relative deprivation are important factors to take into account in the future planning for South Africa. Diepsloot informal settlements are densely populated with people, particularly single mothers heading households living in appalling conditions. Based on the findings and discussion presented above, it is clear that female poverty has a huge presence in the reception area of the informal settlements of Diepsloot and it is chronic. Most female headed families comprise of large families, they are vulnerable, insecure and poor. They are not poor because they want to be poor, it is mainly by circumstance. The majority of single mothers heading households are caught in the cycle of poverty. Although these women employ various strategies to deal with their situation, only a small figure is able to find themselves in a much better situation.

It is estimated that women constitute 52% of the South African population and females head about 43.8% of households and that a significant number of these households are caught in poverty. The concern is how these female heads fare in terms of livelihoods including living conditions, access to basic services and whether they benefit from social networks of support. The positive side is that all the households under study seemed to be benefitting from one or more of the networks of support which in turn makes them develop a sense of belonging and perhaps to some extent security. At least they have someone to talk to or turn to in their time of need which is of paramount importance as sharing yields better feelings.

All in all, this was quite an insightful study. The study has attempted to provide an overview of some of the most relevant gender sensitive-indicators. Many more have however been left untouched, perhaps for other researchers to analyse. The researcher believes the study warrants a follow up on a full scale basis as this one had some limitations beyond her control. The effects of female poverty in the informal settlements of the Diepsloot area warrant immediate anti-poverty policies specifically focused on female headed households. Households remain the primary agents for socialisation of children. Household based care is more important for the provision of care and support particularly to vulnerable groups like female headed households. This analysis confirms that the burden of caring and support is disproportionately carried by female headed households, who are themselves economically famished.

6.2 Recommendations

A number of international commitments aimed at promoting gender equality and development to reduce poverty and vulnerability have been made by South Africa. The problem is that not much work has been done to assess their appropriateness or to monitor their impact on vulnerable groups like female headed households. There should be monitoring of programmes and projects aimed at reducing vulnerability otherwise impact would not be realised. Hence Buijs and Atherfold (1995: 1) posit that “interest in and concern about households and families largely or solely supported by women is not only theoretically significant but is directly related to some of the major economic and policy issues confronting developing countries today.”

Social welfare grants should be done away with as they create dependency and laziness on the part of the recipient. The California Department of Social Services (1996: 1) concurs, “Welfare today is no longer a rational system and is widely recognised as being broken. It discourages work, it creates long term intergenerational dependency even for able body adults; it supports out of wedlock births and it contributes to family breakdown by discouraging marriage and the formation of two parent families. These outcomes were never intended. Nevertheless, the welfare system has created a level of dependency far greater than anticipated by the designers of the system.” Some women are believed to deliberately have children so that they can receive child grants and eke out a living instead of going out to find jobs

especially if they are able bodied and fit to work. Systems that promote dependency should be done away with and people should be encouraged to fend for themselves and their families. Perhaps in the beginning, the government could give these mothers grants for a certain period, maybe five years after which they can be left out to fend for themselves. There are some countries in the world that do not have the social security system, even for the sick and the elderly but people always find a way to make a living in spite of the hardships that they face.

The RDP housing selection process has serious loopholes. There is a lot of corruption involved and some very deserving people lose out. Various stakeholders including members of the civic society and single mothers heading households need to be involved. These low cost houses should not come free to those that are married. Instead married beneficiaries should contribute in one way or another, perhaps through putting up a small deposit.

The study also recommends that more be done in assisting families headed by single mothers. The activities of the Department of Social Development and Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities need to be more impactful. Social workers and community development workers or the local municipality need to be more visible in the area to assist these families and give advice and assistance where needed. Development should be forced onto these households so that they can be empowered to fend for their families. These Departments could allocate more grants to give to development organisations to improve the poverty situation of these families. More Non-governmental organisations can also be encouraged to start life changing programmes in the reception area mainly targeting this most vulnerable group. They can be encouraged to start cooperatives and engage in various activities that include sewing, baking and gardening so that they can sell and share profits and in this way they can earn a living at the same time developing their skills.

Parenting courses can also be offered to the single mothers heading households so that their parenting skills can change for the better. In addition, there should be monitoring and accountability through constant visits. Development agencies need to draw up legally binding agreements with the beneficiaries so that they become more serious about whatever they engage in.

Another way of empowering the households in question is to include them as groups or cooperatives in the newly launched jobs fund so that they can also benefit and transform their lives. This will enable these women to be trained in various disciplines and get proper employment. It is my take that this may go a long way in thwarting poverty and dependency.

To conclude, there is female poverty in the informal settlements of the reception area in Diepsloot and it is chronic. The municipality and government's efforts need to be more visible. Systems need to be put in place to deal with criminal activity as it is a crime stricken area. Women heading households need to be empowered to fend for their families rather than rely on state grants.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHY

1.) Gender:

Male
Female

2.) Age:

Below 18
18 – 30
31 – 40
41 – 50
50 and above

3.) Marital status:

Never married
Living with a partner
In separation
Married
Divorced
Widowed

4.) Household composition by family:

Relationship	Age	Gender	Income earner

Key:

S - Son D - daughter Ni - niece Ne - nephew M - mother
F - Father B - boyfriend G – girlfriend Gr – grandmother Gf –
grandfather O – other

5.) Education

No Education	
Primary Education	
Secondary Education	
Tertiary/University Education	

SECTION B: ECONOMIC INFORMATION

6.) What is your occupation?

Unemployed	
Full time Domestic	
Piece job (Domestic)	
Vendor	
Professional	
Other. Please specify	

7.) What is your income per month?

Less than R1000	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1001- R2000	<input type="checkbox"/>
R2001-R3000	<input type="checkbox"/>
R3001+	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.) What do you spend the money on?

Food	
Clothing	
Transport	
Rent	
School fees	
other	

9.) How many meals do you have per day?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

10.) Do you have a bank account?

Yes
No

11.) Do you benefit from social grants?

Yes
No

9a.) If yes, what type of grants do you receive?

Child support grant	
Disability Grant	
Older persons grant	
Foster child grant	
Other. Please specify	

12.) Do you receive child maintenance?

Yes
No

13.) What do you use this money for? (Child Maintenance and grant)

.....
.....

SECTION B: LIVING CONDITIONS

14.) No. of rooms in dwelling:

1
2
3+

15.) Do you own the shack or pay rent?

Own
Rent

16.) How long have you been living here?

Less than a year
2-5 years
6 to 10 years
11 +

17.) Do you have electricity?

Yes
No

18.) Do you have toilets?

Yes
No

SECTION C: SOCIAL NETWORKS OF SUPPORT

19.) Do you have any relatives living close by?

Yes
No

20.) Do you get any help from your kin/family/friends/neighbours/etc.?

Yes
No

21.) If so, how do they help you?

Food	
Money	
Childcare	
Companionship	
Other. Please specify	

22.) Are you a member of a burial society?

Yes
No

23.) Are you a member of a stokvel?

Yes
No

24.) Do you attend any churches?

Yes
No

25.) Do you benefit from NGO activity in the area?

Yes	
No	

26.) If yes, in what form?

.....
.....

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- a) Why did you move to Diepsloot?
- b) Where did you stay before moving to Diepsloot?
- c) How did you end up heading your own household?
- d) Name three priorities that you spend your income on
- e) What do you normally cut back on when money is not enough?
- f) What did you eat yesterday?
- g) What challenges do you face on a day to day basis?
- h) How do you try to overcome these challenges?
- i) What kind of assistance do you think would be most helpful to you and others like you?
- j) What are your short and long term plans to improve your situation?
- k) Any additional comments?

APPENDIX C: DECLARATION TO THE PARTICIPANTS

To: The Participant

As a requirement of a Master of Arts in Development Studies degree with UNISA, I am conducting a study on Female Poverty in Diepsloot. I am mainly concentrating on the informal settlements and in particular the Reception area. My interest is on single mothers heading households who are neither cohabitating nor staying with a partner.

In view of the fact that you are well-informed about the topic, I hereby request you to participate in the study. Should you agree to participate, you would be requested to participate in a face-to-face interview which will be arranged at your convenience. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped. The recorded interviews will be transcribed word-for-word. Your responses to the interview will be kept strictly confidential. Should you feel uncomfortable with the audio-tape I am prepared to take notes during the interview. The audio tapes, transcripts and/or notes of the interviews will be destroyed on the completion of the study and your name will not be used anywhere in the study.

Please note that participation in the research is completely voluntary. If in agreement kindly sign the informed consent document below, indicating your willingness to participate. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours faithfully

Cloris Ngwenya

APPENDIX D: DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT

I, of

(Residential Address)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Hereby consent voluntarily to participate in the above mentioned project and that the above-mentioned information was explained in a language understandable to me.

.....

Signature of participant

.....

Date