Experiences of child heads of households in Emalahleni sub-district, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

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DECLARATION

I, **Lekate Magret Mahasha**, hereby declare that this dissertation for the degree of Master of Social Work at the North-West University (Mafikeng Campus) hereby submitted, has not been submitted by me erstwhile for a degree at this or another University, that it is my own project in design and execution, and that all materials or sources included herein have been duly recognised by means of a complete allusion.

LM Mahasha ..... 2017.10.02 .....

LEKATE MAGRET MAHASHA **Date**

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I give thanks, honour and praise to God Almighty first, for wisdom, guidance, strength and resilience He gave me throughout this journey.

Psalm 23:3

"He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as He has promised".

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- All children who took part in this research project; without whom this project would not have been feasible.

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of orphaned children heading households without adult care, support and guidance seems to be rapidly becoming a disturbing psycho-socio-economic reality in South Africa, and Mpumalanga Province is of no exception. The study sought to explore the realities of unaccompanied and unsupported child headed households as it is evident that this category of children is more precarious in the absence of designated adult figures. This study further aimed to understand the experiences and coping strategies or mechanisms of orphaned child heads of households with a view to make recommendations that can inform best practices, to the relevant agencies that are concerned with child protection services.

This study was carried out within a qualitative research design parameters and thus was phenomenological research, as the researcher describes the lived experiences and coping mechanisms of the orphaned child heads of households as described by the participants themselves. A case study research design was utilized for its advantage of enabling the researcher to concentrate on depth than breadth, acquire as much detail as possible its natural setting whilst enabling the study to be holistic from the possibility of investigating in depth the complexity and interconnectedness of relationships that define this phenomenon and can never be linear. It also enabled the study to make use of various sources and methods to attain a coherent theory that is a collection of concepts and propositions with an underlying world view that may arise and be a 'conceptual framework' to organize much in-depth information than what is available through other methods, such as surveys.

The study revealed that access to social grants is one of the dominant coping strategies of children living in child headed households. It further revealed that the majority of orphans opted to remain in households headed by children subsequent to rejection encountered from their extended families. It can therefore be concluded that the traditional safety net of providing care to orphans has broken down. The study highlighted the lived experiences of child headed households that affect them on their daily social functioning and that programmes addressing the needs of this sector of children need to be configured as a matter of urgency.

Special attention should be given to build capacity of social service practitioners on how to render effective child protection services to CHH by the directorate of child protection from both National and Provincial Department of Social Development such that the marginalisation of these future citizens is reduced.

Key words used in this study:

- experiences
- orphan child
- household
- child headed household
- unaccompanied child headed household
- unsupported child headed household

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CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The plight of orphaned children heading households without any adult care, support and guidance seems to be rapidly becoming a disturbing psycho-socio-economic reality in South Africa, and Mpumalanga Province is no exception. It is a reality that patterns of family compositions are steadily changing globally due to various factors. Verily ideas about what a family is, and who is the head of a family differ across cultures. According to Gladding (2002:5) historically it was the norm that a family consists of both parents and their children living in the same household. This is however no longer the case as customary forms of families have changed.

The conventional safety net such as adoption of orphans by extended family members and neighbours that used to be in place no longer exists. Gladding (2002:5) further asserts that the idea of the customary family which includes both parents and their children in the same home is becoming less prevalent due to abundant societal factors including amongst others: economic turmoil, high adult mortality rate associated with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic, urbanization, immigration, moral degeneration, the lost spirit of 'ubuntu', and the adoption of western norms and values by the black communities, among others.

The above said conception was also confirmed by Mkhize (2006: 25) when she asserted that inquiries about child-headed households point out that the blood relations are no longer the fundamental solution for orphans because the extended family ties have weakened and is no longer an option for orphaned children.

Illustratively, the preponderance of adults dying due to both natural and unnatural causes, leave in back generation of children to be fostered by their family relatives. According to the Avert Report (2009:1) in circumstances where the grandparents or relatives are not available or are already affronted with an encumbrance of caring for other orphans, some children are left on their own without any adult to protect their well-being. As a result, this led to the formation of a family structure recognized as a 'child headed household'. It is in this context that the study, which focuses on orphaned children heading households was conceptualised in order to describe their experiences, needs, the coping strategies, and the roles of different service providers.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the past decades, the residents of Emalahleni local municipality of Nkangala district in Mpumalanga Province, just like in other African communities, had a norm that following, the decease of the parents, the extended family members would assume parental responsibility over the orphaned children. It was, thus, peculiar for orphans to be left on their own lacking a person who has reached age of majority in the household to care for them. Noeth (2003:60) contends that in the 21st century; orphans in this local municipality are now left on their own in child headed households. It can be said that this status quo is subsequent to weakened extended family ties and the adoption of Western norms and customs by the African communities.

The main focus in this study is on unaccompanied and unsupported child headed households because the researcher is of the notion that children living in this type of household are the most precarious category of children as they have no adult figure to safeguard their well-being. These children furthermore do not get some material or financial support from and they hardly have any contact with their extended family members. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (2001:14)

asserts that the protection of human rights and provision of basic needs of child headed households therefore merit to be the primary focal point of all agencies providing child protection services, in order to assure that their constitutional rights are not infringed.

The reported cases from the Department of Social Development's branch offices (eMalahleni and Kriel), the Child Welfare Society, Ondersteuningsraad and the Christian Social Council in the Emalahleni Sub-district indicate that there is an escalating number of households which are headed by orphaned children beneath the age of 18 years that have resulted from the high death rate of parents. The statistics from the Nkangala Acting District Coordinator for Child Protection Services indicates that the said four agencies from April 2010 to April 2014 had approximately sixty child headed households.

The study answered the following research questions:

- What are the experiences of orphaned child heads of households?
- What are the needs of orphaned child heads of households?
- What are the roles of different service providers in alleviating the problems encountered by orphaned child heads of households?
- How do orphaned child heads of households cope with the effects of their situation?
- Are there policies and guidelines developed to address the phenomenon of child headed households effectively executed?

1. 3. AIM OF THE STUDY

This study intends to understand the experiences of orphaned child heads of households and coping mechanisms used with a view to make recommendations to relevant agencies dealing with child protection services.

The objectives of this study are:

- To describe the experiences of orphaned child heads of households.
- To describe the psycho-social, emotional and material needs of orphaned child heads of households.
- To identify the roles of social service practitioners in dealing with the apparent challenges and needs of orphaned child heads of households.
- To describe how the orphaned child heads of households cope with their challenges.
- To propose recommendations to policy makers on how to manage the phenomenon of child headed households.

The assumptions of the study are that:

- Child heads of households are the most precarious category of children.
- There seems to be no accurate statistics of children living in child headed households because social service practitioners do not yet comprehend the phenomenon of CHH fully.
- Social service practitioners are not yet practically implementing Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended and the National guidelines on the statutory service to CHH that is CHH are not yet designated.
- There are no specific programmes designed to meet the needs of CHH.

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is potentially significant in terms of three aspects, namely:

Policy: The existing gaps in legislation and policies developed to address the basic necessities of children in the Republic of South Africa, prompted the researcher to execute this study, in order to comprehend how the existing policies can be effectively implemented and deal with the plight of orphaned unaccompanied and unsupported child heads of households. Mogotlane, Chauke, Van Rensburg, Human and Kganaga (2008:99) found out that there are

no policies or enactments and prescripts which permit children heading households to apply for a foster care grant for themselves and simultaneously in respect of their siblings. Child heads of households therefore cannot access a foster care grant for themselves but only through a designated supervising adult. The outcome of the research may therefore contribute to the formulation or review of relevant policies and programmes which will cater for orphaned child heads of households.

Practice: Child protection is one of the cardinal services rendered by social service practitioners within the Department of Social Development and Child Protection Organizations. The researcher perceived that despite the fact that there are National and Provincial guidelines developed for child headed households, social service practitioners have not yet started with any noticeable implementation of guidelines in practice. Apparently, disposition of orphaned children in foster care and child and youth care centres is still preferred. The study may therefore empower social service practitioners with relevant data pertaining to their service delivery to orphaned child heads of households, as it is envisaged that the findings will also be published in academic journals, magazines, newsletters, and all other related media forums.

Knowledge: In the past decades growing numbers of studies focused on ascertaining experiences of child headed households in general but few on the orphaned unaccompanied and unsupported child heads of households. The following can be cited as examples Mkhize (2006); Masondo (2006); Nkomo (2006); Ibebuike et.al (2014); Van Dijk and Van Driel (2009); Maqoko and Dreyer (2007). The majority of these researchers focused on the causes, the support, the lived experiences and needs of child headed households. The study will also add to the existing collection of information on the experiences of orphaned child heads of households. The study may as well spur on other researchers to conduct further studies on the topic with an intention of confirming or disconfirming the current findings.

The rationale inspiring this study is also informed by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. For example Article 19 articulates that every child is entitled to the gratification of parental care and protection. In addition, Section 28 of the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 stipulates that every child has a legitimate right to family care and protection as well as education. Based on the aforesaid facts: how can orphaned unaccompanied and unsupported child heads of households enjoy parental care and protection?

This study is conducted with a basic aim of understanding the experiences and coping strategies adopted by orphaned unaccompanied and unsupported child heads of households in their everyday lives and making recommendations to pertinent government departments and agencies with the mandate to render child protection services, is therefore of high significance.

1.5. CONCEPTS CLARIFICATION

Babbie (2004:118) asserts that "conceptualisation is the process along which researchers classify what they mean when they use certain phrases". The following key concepts will be defined in this study:

1.5.1. Experiences

The concept 'experience' is defined by the Collins English Dictionary (1987:500) as a particular incident that a person has undergone. In this study, the concept "experiences" will refer to the totality of circumstances and feelings, both past and present that makes up a distinct quality of orphaned child heads of households. The rationale is that in actuality orphaned child heads of households have both past and present stories to tell about their lived experiences.

1.5.2. Orphan

Whiteside and Sunter (2000:80) define "orphans" as children beneath the age of 15 who have lost either parent be it mother, father or both. For the purpose of

this study, however, the concept of "orphan" will refer to a child aged 16 to 18 years who has lost either both his or her parents due to death or whose single parent is deceased and the other parents' identity as well as whereabouts are unknown and he or she is heading a household. The choice of this age category is informed by Section 137(1)(c) of the Children' Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

1.5.3. Child

The concept "child" is defined in Article 2 of The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child (1990:3) as every person beneath the age of 18 years. In this study, a "child" refers to a girl or boy aged between 16 and 18 years and is heading a household as a consequence of the death of the parents because Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended, stipulates that children aged 16 and 18 years can be declared heads of households.

1.5.4. Household

Weber (1978:359) defines "a household" as a communal unit that involves on-going and intensive social interaction which is based on loyalty and command. In this study, a household refers to a group of persons who share a common apartment and are involved in consistent and profound social interaction, which is based on compliance of an order.

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1.5.5. Child-headed households

Meintjes, Leatt and Berry (2007:1) define the concept "child headed household" as a household where all persons in the house are younger than 18 years old. In this study, the term of "child headed household" refers to an apartment in which the primary care giver is a child (a boy or a girl) aged between 16 and 18 years as a consequences of the death of his or her both parents or single parent.

1.5.6. Unaccompanied child headed household

Unaccompanied child headed household refers to an "apartment where there is no adult living in such an apartment (Germann, 2005:30)". In this study, unaccompanied child headed household will refer to a family which comprises of children only and do not have any contact with extended adult members.

1.5.7. Unsupported child headed household

Unsupported child headed household refers to " a household which has no connections with extended family members and majority of which receive support as well as occasional support from neighbours, local support groups or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's)(Germann, 2005:30)".

Chapter one: introduction, overview and rationale of the study

The chapter recapitulates: the research problem, meaning of research questions, motivation of the study, research approach of dissertation, limitations and key assumptions and value to be made by research. It also provides background to research.

Chapter two: Literature review

Chapter two presents the literature reviewed on the experiences of the child headed households. Its fundamental focus is on the problems experienced by the orphaned child heads of households, the coping strategies used or adopted by child headed households, roles of diverse service providers in South Africa to child headed households and the theoretical framework. The chapter further gives the viewpoints and sets parameters within which the research problem and

research questions are investigated. Of greater importance is an overview of all concepts and theories put into use in the study is given in this chapter.

Chapter three: Research Methodology

This chapter consists of detailed description of the research design, population and sampling. The methods of data collection and ethical measures are also presented and discussed. It further describes the research methodology to be used in detail and justification thereof.

Chapter four: Results, discussion and interpretation

The chapter details the research findings. Inferences are then drawn from amassed data and connotations of the findings pertaining to theory at hand.

Chapter five: Findings, conclusions and recommendations

The chapter summarizes the research findings and all other factors thrown up by the study as it progressed in order to align it all the recommendations and conclusions to be reached. This chapter also provides a summary of the dissertation. It emphasizes the results obtained, the contribution made by the results and makes suggestions for further research in this area.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Varied studies that set parameters of this study and evidence the all assertions in relation to child headed families will be summed up briefly in the following section. Its main focus is on the dilemmas experienced by the orphaned child heads of households, their rights and needs, coping strategies, the roles and responsibilities of diverse service providers in South Africa to child headed households, policies, guidelines and Acts developed to address the plight of these children as well as the theoretical framework. This review serves a bigger context within which findings pertaining to the experiences of orphaned child heads of households as consequences of their parents' death due to neither natural nor unnatural causes are presented and discussed.

Lewis, United Nations Special Envoy for AIDS in Africa, states in the Avert Report (2009:2) that "the escalating adult deaths in so many countries means that the number of children orphaned daily is expanding exponentially". He further points out that as "the number of adults are dying, an escalating number of orphans will grow up in the absence of parental care, love and being deprived of their basic rights to food, shelter, health, education and normal childhood". Mr Madonsela, the then Director-General of Department of Social Development, in addition, stated in the National Guidelines for Child Headed Households (2010:1) that "the situation of child-headed households is not only inappropriate for children but also undermines their constitutional rights.

"The breakdown of the traditional family structure leaves the older siblings in the family with no option but to safe-guard the welfare for their siblings (Noeth 2003:61)".The phenomenon of child headed households means children beneath

18 years of age are obliged to perform the functions of heads of families prematurely, as they are without an adult figure to perform such functions. One can, therefore, deduce that these children encounter abundant challenges on their daily functioning as opposed to those in alternative care that is foster care, adoption and institutions.

The phenomenon of child headed households will be briefly considered from the international, national and local perspective in order to have a broader comprehension of the research subject. Poku (2005:68) asserts that "it was surmised that in the year 2005, there were approximately 20 million orphans worldwide, of which 12, 3 million were living in Sub-Saharan Africa and in 2013, the total numbers of orphans rose to 153 million".

Meintjes, Leatt and Berry (2007:2) state that "in South Africa by the year 2004, there were approximately 3,286,336 orphans and in 2005, the number rose to 3,360 505 of which 118,564 children were living in child headed households. They further alluded to the fact that by year 2012, the total number of orphans increased to 3,540 000, and the number of those staying in households headed by children increased to 148, 000".

Meintjes et. al. (2007:3) further indicate that Mpumalanga Province, by the year 2005 had a total of 247,393 orphans of which 5,945 were residing in households headed by children; and in 2007, the total number of orphans increased to 247,420 of which child headed households were approximately 9 000. The specific data on orphans living in child headed households in the country will be summarised in the table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1. Number and proportion of orphans living in CHH per province in RSA, 2014

PROVINCE	2014	
	NUMBER	percentage
Eastern cape	8 000	0.3 %
Free state	1 000	0.1 %
Gauteng	4 000	0.1 %
Kwazulu Natal	15 000	0.4 %
Limpopo	19 000	0.9 %
Mpumalanga	7 000	0.4 %
Northern Cape	1 000	0,2 %
North West	3 000	0,2 %
Western Cape	0	0 %
South Africa	54 000	0.3 %

Source: Statistics SA (2015) and general household survey (2014)

In a nutshell, orphans beneath the age of 18 years are left without an alternative upon the death of their parents, but to take the responsibilities of heading their households prematurely, despite of the reality that they are not emotionally or otherwise equipped to bear such responsibility. In this study, the main focus is on unaccompanied and unsupported child headed households because children living in these types of households seem to be the most precarious category of children whose basic needs as indicated in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs are not satisfactorily met. This theory will be discussed and interpreted in details later at 2.7.3 of this chapter below. The following section presents problems experienced by child heads of households.

2.2. PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY ORPHANED CHILD HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

In reality, every human being experiences some of the social, psychological, and economic and health related problems in life irrespective of his or her educational, socio-economic background, race, gender, sexual orientation and all. Orphaned child heads of households are therefore of no exception. This notion is confirmed by Louw, Van Ede and Louw (1998:353), when they assert that "the total number of children within a household and the ordinal position of a child in the family hold certain implications for his or her social character development". The next sub-section, presents some of the major challenges orphans heading households are confronted with in their daily lives; and they are as follows:

2.2.1. Economic hardship

In most instances following the death of the parents, the relatives step in and often take advantage of the orphaned children by taking possession of their parents' assets but serving neither material nor financial support for them. As a consequence, these children will be poverty stricken and their basic needs will not be adequately met. Poverty and economic deprivation can therefore drive orphaned children to the roadways to earn a living and sometimes to also commit crime in order to survive and maintain their siblings. This notion is confirmed by Van Dyk (2008:347) when she asserts that "variation in the family's frugality due to parents' death often spiral down into poverty and deprivation and children often lose their rights to the family land as well as homes".

The orphaned child heads of households are often helpless and cannot cope with their parental roles and responsibilities as they are still young and not yet emotionally equipped to deal with the life stressors such as the ones resulting from lack of income or poverty. Furthermore, the Nelson Mandela Children's

Fund Report (2001:14) asserts that these children encounter great physical needs related to the inability to get sufficient financial means to fulfil their physiological needs.

2.2.2. Psychological distress

Orphaned children often feel anxious, lack confidence and may also become depressed. Poku (2005:70) indicates that after the death of their parents, orphans experience stress since they feel helpless and develop a sense of uncertainty about facing the future on their own. Nkomo (2006:62) concurred with the perception by Poku (2005:70) when he pointed out that the study he conducted in Kwazulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces in 2006, revealed that psychosocial difficulties confronted orphaned children include: grief, loss of self, family and cultural identity. These children are also confronted with a situation of dealing with shame, stigmatization, abandonment, rejection and ultimately death.

Orphaned child heads of households are exposed to psychological stress which then becomes part and parcel of their social functioning from childhood into adulthood. The impact of their childhood psychological experiences may affect them later in their youth or middle adulthood stages. In practice, this implies that there is a greater possibility for orphaned children to exhibit certain behavioural problems when they are adults since they were not psychologically healed from the trauma they experienced while still young. This notion is confirmed by Van Dyk (2008:344) when she states that "the unsolved feelings of sadness, guilty and fear; perpetuated by the lack of empathy and chance for catharsis, shadow these children throughout their lives, with dire emotional and behavioural consequences".

2.2.3. Role changes or role reversal

In a well-functioning family setting, individual family members have a set of roles that are assigned to them. For example, the parent subsystem has to enact roles such as decision making, discipline, leadership, breadwinner amongst others. The lack of the parent subsystem in household headed by a child implies that these said roles must be carried out by children.

"Few children are born into pleasant and loving homes that provide excellent environments for growth and development. Some children pass successfully through the developmental stages of childhood and become well-functioning adults (Thompson, Rudolph and Henderson, 2004:5)". For children staying in child headed households, however, childhood is a period that is full of adversities and traumas that cannot be enjoyed as these children have to head households prematurely. These children experience role changes or reversal not by choice or love thereof, but they are forced by the unfortunate circumstances they find themselves in as their parents who were supposed to execute such roles and responsibilities are no longer there. The orphaned child heads of households are therefore still children who also need parental care, love, support as well as protection of their human rights.

The researcher is of the notion that the role changes or reversal of orphaned child heads of households is violation of their Constitutional rights as some of these rights are compromised because of drastic changes in child to adult roles at a premature stage. Furthermore, these children are in need of care and protection in terms of Section 150(2) of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended because they are the victims of child labour as they are compelled by poverty -stricken circumstances to seek employment or execute duties for which they will receive payment in return to meet basic needs of their dependants.

2.2.4. Limited education

It is a fact of life that the responsible child's own growth, education and all is stifled and disrupted as soon as they assume the role of caregiver and parent to siblings. For example, the orphaned child head of household has to ensure that the siblings have food on daily basis, school uniform, pay school fees and other basic needs. It should be taken into consideration that for a child head of household to perform the said roles, their own schooling will be disrupted and educational future be negatively affected as no child can handle the pressure of being an adult representative and a learner simultaneously.

The above said premise was confirmed by the UNICEF Report (2009:2) when it stated that "orphaned children may miss out an opportunity for school enrolment, have their schooling interrupted or perform poorly in school as a consequence of their adverse circumstances". Masondo (2006:36) concurs with latter notion by the UNICEF Report (2009:2) when he states that all his study participants had dropped out of school in order to provide for their siblings.

2.2.5. Increased child abuse and risk of HIV infection

The UNICEF Report (2009:2) asserts that "impoverished, lacking parents to educate, consider their best interests and safe-guard them, children living in child headed households face many forms of maltreatment and risk including becoming infected with HIV". Van Dyk (2008:343), in addition, indicates that these children can succumb to sexual abuse and child labour in order to meet their fundamental needs.

The practical implication of the above said reality is that many orphaned children in the said conditions may be compelled into abusive and risky duties including exchanging sex for basic needs; hence they are at an elevated risk of contracting

abundant sexually transmitted infections including HIV. In instances, where the parent was very ill being HIV positive, the child head of household is also at risk of contracting the virus because he or she had to be the caregiver to the dying parent without knowledge on how to protect himself or herself from being infected.

2.2.6. Lack of parental guidance, love, attention and affection

Children need a parent to provide them with love, care and guidance for their holistic development. For orphaned child heads of households, unfortunately, this seems to be a nightmare, as they have to grow up without parents to provide love, care and protection. Child heads of households as young as they are, instead, have to provide love, care and protection to their siblings because their parents who were supposed to do this are no longer there and left them to carry out their roles and responsibility at very tender age. Article 19 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) stipulates that "every child shall be entitled to the enjoyment of parental care and safe-guarding well-being". The researcher argues that while attempting to provide love, care and protection to their siblings, the child heads of households' own rights to receive love, care and protection from parents as stipulated in the said article are being compromised and violated.

Contrary to the provisions of Article 19 of the African Charter on the Welfare and Rights of a Child, the UNICEF Report (2009:5) states that young children may be left without responsive care, stunting emotional development and sense of well-being. The latter implies that orphaned child heads of households may experience loss of parental protection and guidance, which may be a leading factor to possible child abuse. These children may also lack emotional support, parental or family love as well as nurturing. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Report (2001:14) indicates that "children heading households experience the

fundamental need for parental attention, guidance, love, physical, social security and friendship". They also require non-discrimination and legal protection.

2.2.7. Discrimination and stigmatization

The researcher argues that few of the children staying in households headed by their less than 18 years of age siblings may experience different forms of discrimination and stigmatization depending on the cause of their parents' death, the perceptions and stereotypes of community system in which they abide. This fact is confirmed by Kanyamurwa and Ampek (2007:72) when they state that children heading households, experience pain of rejection by the society because their parents are HIV positive. The discrimination and stigma which were attached to their dying HIV/AIDS parents therefore descend to these children.

2.2.8. Domestic violence

The researcher contemplates that the siblings may not comply with household rules set by their child head due to the fact that they perceive him or her as a child as well and not entitled to parenting them. According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2004:244) children often affected by relationship violence between family members. In other words, child heads of households may experience violence with their siblings as a result of their unmet and unsatisfied survival needs, insufficient resources and their immaturity in enacting parental roles and responsibilities.

2.2.9. Criminal activities

Some children in child headed households may therefore resort in criminal activities in order to maintain themselves as well as their siblings. This impression is confirmed by Nicholson and Jefferson (2004:244) when they state that "criminality is one of the factors which is nearly common in child headed

families as they are poverty stricken and resort to engage in criminal behaviours to make ends meet".

2.3. THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In the South African context, every child has fundamental human rights which are innate and needs to be protected, to ensure that such a child grow up as a healthy and well developed human being. These children are also entitled to the following rights as stipulated in Section 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996:

2.3.1. Right to name and nationality from birth

"This right does not only assures that children's births are recorded in the population register but also ensures that precarious children gain access to services and social security by being in possession of identification documents (National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households, 2010)". A caregiver, for example, needs a birth certificate to apply for a social gratuity in favour of a child, get the child registered at school, etcetera. In addition, Article 6 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) stipulates that "every child has a right to acquire nationality of a country of which he or she has been born if, at the time of his or her birth, he or she is not granted nationality by any other country in accordance with its laws".

2.3.2. Right to family care or parental care

In terms of Article 19 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) "every child shall be eligible to the enjoyment of parental care and safe-guarding well-being and whenever possible, have the right to grow up staying with his or her parents". Section 28(1)(b) of Act 108 of 1996, concurs with the said Article by stipulating that "every child is legitimate to family or parental

care or to suitable alternative care when taken away from the family context". The researcher believes that children living in child headed households are also entitled to this right despite the fact that they live all by themselves. Preserving child headed families therefore ensure realization of this right.

2.3.3. Right to basic nutrition, shelter, health care and social services

This right ensures that children growing up in child headed households have access to shelter, that is, in South Africa, the Department of Human Settlement, is obliged by this Constitutional right to provide housing for these children. Article 14 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child, stipulates that "every child shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical, mental and spiritual health". This implies that in ensuring full realization of this right, the government has to ensure the provision of pertinent medical and primary health care services, social services and adequate nutrition.

2.3.4. Right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation

"This right requires the government to take action positively to impede abuse as well as to assure protection in the context of legislative and policy protection (National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households, 2010)". Child protection is the responsibility of each and every adult who on reasonable grounds believes that a child is in need of care and protection and Section 110 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended, compels any person working with children to report child abuse cases.

2.3.5. Right to be protected from exploitative labour practices

Children living in child headed households have the right not to be required to do work or provide services that are unsuitable for a person of that child's age or

place at risk the child's welfare. Article 15 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) supports the latter notion when it stipulates that "every child shall be safe-guarded from all forms of economic exploitation and from performing any duty that is likely to be dangerous or interfere with the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development".

The researcher is of the opinion that in the absence of the parent subsystem, children staying in child headed households are faced with numerous unmet basic needs which could jeopardise their holistic development. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Report (2001:14) states that the needs of children living in child headed households include amongst others the following:

2.3.6. Physical and material needs:

These children need food security, housing, garments, bedding and health care services for them to develop and grow well like those raised by their parents or adults in functional families.

2.3.7. Intellectual or educational needs:

The National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) stipulates that children in child headed households have a right to education. Children of school going age must therefore attend school habitually and obtain obligatory assistance pertaining to their education. In realizing this right, these children need stationary, school fees, uniform and other material which will enable them to meet their educational needs.

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2.3.8. Psychological needs:

The researcher discovered from the literature reviewed, that one of the major roles and responsibilities of a child head of the household is parenting and

providing materials for the siblings; despite the fact that they are weakly equipped to provide such convenient parental guidance and discipline. They are therefore in dire need of psychological counselling which will enable them to emotionally deal with the effects of their plight.

2.3.9. Non-discrimination and legal protection.

Article 26 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child, 1990 stipulates that "countries are to direct their efforts towards the eradication of all types of discrimination". Children in child headed households are coequally authorized to non-discrimination and legal protection. The researcher realized from the literature reviewed that some of the fundamental and constitutional rights along with basic needs of children living in child headed households are violated and not met because of the unfavorable circumstances these children find themselves in.

2.4. THE COPING STRATEGIES OF CHILD HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Report (2001:26) states that the following were identified as some of the coping strategies or survival mechanisms of child heads of households in the study that was conducted on special needs of child headed households:

2.4.1. Odd jobs

The child heads are obliged to perform odd jobs such as cleaning automobiles, burnishing shoes or selling fruits and vegetables in order to receive cash. The child heads of households engage in the said duties in order to enact their adult role and responsibility of being breadwinners to their siblings.

2.4.2. Domestic work

According to the said report, few of these children avail themselves for domestic work in respect of neighbours to receive reimbursement (mainly food or money) in kind.

2.4.3. Begging

The said report states that many children living in child headed households survive by begging for food on a daily basis. It is further stated that food is in most cases given by parents of the children with whom they play.

2.4.4. Relatives

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (2001:26) states that most of these children rely on blood relations to help them with food and school necessities. In the preponderance of cases, the grandparents would apportion groceries with their orphaned grandchildren as and when they replenished supplies of same.

2.4.5. Church

The said report elucidates that many children would ensure of attending church services and then getting a platform to intercept the Pastor with requests for food. Religion then becomes their poverty alleviation strategy.

2.4.6. Engaging in early marriages

Teenage girls can be committed to premature marriages in order to endure and maintain their siblings. In the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Report (2001) for example, one teenage girl in the Northern Cape Province was

capable of pursuing her schooling through the financial support of her spouse.

2.5. ROLES OF DIFFERENT SERVICES PROVIDERS IN ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

It is evident from the literature reviewed, that in order to effectually deal with the plight and needs of child headed households, a multi-sectoral approach is of paramount importance. All the state departments, non-governmental organizations and civil society structures have mandates pertaining to children staying in child headed households. In this study focus is, however, on the mandates of few stakeholders which are considered to be the major role players by the researcher and they are briefly presented as follows:

2.5.1. The Presidency: Office of the Rights of a child

In terms of the Draft Policy Framework for Orphans and other Children made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (2005:14) the office of the rights of a child is responsible for:

- Developing societal framework for the improvement and coordination of children's rights.
- Mainstream a child-centered perspective to policy, planning, programming, and funding process in government.
- Monitoring and evaluation of children's rights delivery.
- Coordinate integrated children's policy implementation in government.

2.5.2. Department of Social Development

The role and responsibilities of the Department of Social Development as stipulated in the National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) include amongst others the following:

- Provide social relief of distress in a form of groceries, furniture, blankets and school uniforms.
- Render emotional and social support services to precarious children.
- Notify ill-treatment and taking advantage of children.
- Establish childcare forums at community level i.e these structures are intended at connecting precarious children to diverse pertinent services.
- Registration and funding of Non-Profit Organizations providing direct support and services to children.

2.5.3. Department of Education

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Education as outlined in the Draft Policy Framework for Orphans and other Children made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (2005:15) include the following:

- Provide erudite support for orphans and other precarious children.
- Develop and implement capacity building programmes for teachers to empower them to address comprehensively the needs of child headed households.
- Supply primary school nourishment programme and food fortification.
- Develop and implement appropriate life skills programmes.

2.5.4. Department of Justice and Constitutional Development

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development's roles and responsibilities as stipulated in the National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) include the following:

- Issue court orders for children in child -headed households.

- Appoint supervising adult for child-headed households.
- Safeguard the rights of children by prosecuting people who violate the rights of children.
- Administer guardianship fund and appoint legal guardians.

2.5.5. Department of Home Affairs

The National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) identified the following as some of the responsibilities of the Department of Home Affairs:

- Promote and facilitate the process of acquiring and providing documents such as identity documents (birth certificate, passport, ID book, and permits), death and marriage certificates.
- Supply mobile units or offices in communities for birth registration purposes to assure that services are easily reachable to the community members.

2.5.6. Department of Human Settlements

The role and responsibilities of the Department of Human Settlement as stipulated in the National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) include amongst others the following:

- Assure that the housing needs of child headed households are dealt with through low cost housing schemes.
- Supply housing, including shelter to precarious children.

2.5.7. South African Police Services (SAPS)

The Draft Policy Framework for Orphans and other Children made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (2005:17) stipulates that South African Police Services is responsible for:

- Investigate criminality against children.
- Eliminate the commission of crime against children.
- Refer children "in need of care and protection" and "in conflict with the law" to the Department of Social Development or to temporary safe facilities where possible and secure care facilities respectively.

2.5.8. Department of Labour

The Draft Policy Framework for Orphans and other Children made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (2005:17) asserts the responsibilities of the Department of Labour as follows:

- Shield the rights of orphans and other precarious children through the implementation of statute pertaining to children.

2.5.9. Non Profit Organizations, Faith Based Organizations and Community Based Organizations (NPOs, FBOs and CBOs)

The mandate of the NPOs, FBOs and CBOs regarding child-headed households as stipulated in the National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households (2010) is:

- Facilitate early identification of child headed households.
- Render psychosocial support services, spiritual guidance and enrichment as well as material assistance.
- Facilitate and promote child participation initiatives.

- Implement prevention programmes and community education campaigns.

2.5.10. Institutions of higher learning

"The institution of higher learning's roles and responsibilities include undertaking inquiries on the contributory determinants to the phenomenon of child headed households, on the impact of the Children's Act, on child headed households and where necessary to offer litigation services on behalf of these children (National Guidelines for Statutory Services to Child Headed Households, 2010)".

2.6. ACTS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS THE PHENOMENON OF CHILD HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

There are global, regional and national pieces of legislations, prescripts and instruments that are intended to deal with the needs of children including those living in child headed households. In this section, the researcher presents an overview of some of these existing legislations as well as how they do impact on the lives of children in South Africa and these instruments are as follows:

2.6.1. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

Article 28 of this Convention asserts that "all children have the right to education and this right has to be attained progressively and on a basis of equal opportunity". The researcher argues that for children heading households this right is not fully enjoyed as they are forced by their circumstances to drop out from school.

2.6.2. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child, 1990

This Charter calls for children's legal protection and distinctive care pertaining to physical, health, social and moral development. Article 20 of this charter states that "parents or guardians for the child shall have the fundamental responsibility of the upbringing and development of the child and shall have the duty to assure the best interest of the child are the basic concern at all times". It is the researcher's perception that the absence of the parental subsystem within the child headed household has limitations as far as these parental responsibilities are concerned because the child head of the household has to perform such roles without or with very scarce and limited resources.

2.6.3. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

Act 108 of 1996 is the supreme law in the Republic of South Africa and it clearly lays out the fundamental human rights of children. In terms of Section 28(2) of the said Act, a child's best interests are of paramount significance in every matter with regard to the child. The researcher contemplates the literature reviewed and find out that despite the fact that the Constitution spells out the children's rights, some of these rights are not progressively realised in children heading households.

2.6.4. Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended

This Act's main focus is on child protection and it also makes provision for children staying in child headed households. Section 137 of the said Act, stipulates clearly that a household can be recognised as a child headed household if the parent or the main caregiver of the household is terminally ill, deceased or has disserted the children; no adult family member is available to provide care for the children and it is in the best interests of the children in the households. This Act also led to the development of the National Guidelines for

Statutory Services to child Headed Household in April 2010. The guidelines stipulate exactly on how to go about in rendering services to the CHH.

2.6.5. Social Assistance Act No. 13 of 2004

The Social Assistance Act No. 13 of 2004 was promulgated in South Africa to provide social assistance in a form of grants to citizens or beneficiaries who are unable to support themselves and their dependants. This Act makes provision that the designated supervising adult can apply for the grant that is child support, care dependency, and foster on behalf these of children.

Despite the fact that this Act makes provision for children staying in child headed households, the researcher realised that some gaps exist as far as the grant application process is concerned. In terms of Section 137 of the Children's Act 38/2005, child head of must at least be 16 and below 18 years old. A child head of household cannot, unfortunately, in terms of the Social Security Act apply for a grant for his or her siblings and simultaneously his or her own grant despite the fact that she is also declared to be in need of care and protection and still entitled to receive such the grant. If the child heads of the households apply for a grant for his or her siblings, she forfeit her rights to her own to receive the grant as well, only the supervising adult can access the grant on behalf of a child head of households.

2.6.6. South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996

Section 3 of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 stipulates that "...every parent must ensure that every learner whom he or she has the parental rights and responsibilities to be present at school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven". The absence of a parent subsystem in a CHH leaves the children with no adult taking responsibility on their compulsory school attendance. This Act also makes provision for children

from the needy families to be exempted from paying school fees. In practice, children from child headed households receive free education due to their background information; therefore this Act ensures the realization of these children's Constitutional right to education.

2. 7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Marilyn, Simon and Goes (2011:1) theoretical framework convinces the reader that the type of study the researcher proposes is not grounded entirely on the researcher's personal gut feelings or assumptions but rather informed by established theory and empirical facts obtained from credible inquiries. Based on the aforesaid background information, the researcher will base the study on three theories, namely: role theory, eco- systems' theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

2.7.1. Role theory

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The researcher deems this theory is appropriate in this research project as it assisted the researcher to effectively comprehend and analyse the lived experiences, needs, roles and responsibilities of service providers, policies and legislations developed to address the plight of orphaned child heads of households. Payne (2005:168) states that "role theory is about our connections with others, how expectations and reactions cause us to retort in characteristic ways". How this theory is applicable to the issue at hand of child headed households; will be explored briefly here. This will be achieved with reference to the following five concepts which are considered by the researcher to be salient aspects in role theory:

2.7.1.1. Role set

The Psychology Dictionary defines role set as assortment of individuals and their corresponding roles which associate and interrelate purposively with the holder of a specific role, defining and imparting the ways of thinking or behavioural patterns suitable to that role. Role set therefore refers to set of roles associated with a single social stratum. The researcher is of the opinion that in a family system, each subsystem has a role set. The parent subsystem for instance, is leaders, socialization agent, role models, decision makers, breadwinners, discipline enforcers and the like. The child subsystem also has its own role set and child heads of households are of no exception. In the context of children heading household, according to Mkhize (2006) the said roles of parents are now assigned to the child head of the household due to the absence of the parental subsystem.

2.7.1.2. Role demands

Sheafor, Horejsi and Horejsi (1994:289) state that role demands refers to the specific knowledge, values, skills, physical and mental abilities and other attributes necessary to perform a particular role successfully. In this study for example, child heads of households need to possess certain skills and knowledge such as conflict management, housekeeping and decision making for their families to be functional.

2.7.1.3. Role expectations

Sheafor, Horejsi and Horejsi (1994:289) assert that role expectations have a normative or evaluative character an individual is expected to behave in particular ways. The researcher argues that role expectations are beliefs concerning the qualities, characteristics and behaviours suitable to a certain role. The child heads of households by virtue of their social stratum in society, they

have expectations associated with their stratum. For example, the child heads of households are expected to provide physiological needs such as food, clothes, water, instil societal norms and values, discipline, support financially and emotionally the siblings.

2.7.1.4. Role conflict

This refers to a tension among roles connected to a single status (New Dictionary of Social Work, 1995). Sheafor et.al (1994:289) differentiated between intra-role and inter-role and they indicated that the former exist when a person is caught up in a circumstance where two or more sets of expectations are allotted to a single role; while the latter refers to incompatibility or clash between two or more roles. The child head of a family, for instance, may be in a stressful position in fulfilling her or his role as a breadwinner to the siblings and at the same time attending school and studying in shaping her or his own future, because these roles are incompatible with each other.

2.7.1.5. Role incapacity

"Role incapacity means the client may not possess the necessary ingredients for the role he is expected to enact (Payne, 2005)". The researcher holds that role incapacity refers to inability to perform a role, perhaps due to lack of skills and experience, emotional immaturity and resources. For an example, the child head of household may be unable to perform her or his role as a breadwinner due to the fact that she or he is unemployed or unable to provide emotional support to the siblings as according to Van Dyk (2004) despite the fact that orphaned children are heading households and executing adults roles, they are not yet emotionally equipped to enact such roles.

In a nutshell, the roles of the orphaned child heads of households change drastically from the one of children to those of adults in the absence of the parent

subsystem. An application of the role theory in the context of child headed households therefore enabled the researcher to comprehend how role reversal influences the holistic development of the child heads of households.

2.7.2. Eco-system's theory

The eco-system's theory is appropriate in this study as it elucidates the need to perceive people and environments as a unitary system within a particular cultural and historic context. Payne (2005:150) asserts that the eco-system' theory is based on the concept that humans are interdependent with each other and their environment. Human beings as they are moving through their own uncommon life course, they experience life stressors, transformation, events and issues that distort their fit with the environment. In this study, child heads of households' lived experiences and needs cannot be addressed and met in the absence of focusing on the environment in which they function. The interaction between child heads of households and their environment is therefore reciprocal as they influence one another.

Cummins, Sevel and Pedrick (2006:37) maintain that "the assumption of goodness of fit between a person and his environment provide a lens through which to appraise the extent for which a person's adaptive behaviours promote growth and health". It is envisaged that through this perspective the experiences, the needs, the coping strategies and roles of service providers on orphaned child heads of households will be adequately described and explored.

2.7.3. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Briefly, Maslow's hierarchy of needs represented above, is instantly related to knowledge and growth through encouragement. In order for children to prosper at school, for example, they must be encouraged to study hard. When all levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are met, children are at their full potential for learning (McLeod, 2007). The higher up in the hierarchy a child is, the more levels that are met, the better the motivation and therefore the enhanced learning that the child will experience.

From the literature reviewed, it can be deduced that the basic needs of the orphaned child heads of households are never adequately met as they are faced with various challenges that all relate to the basic needs level. This theory then provides appropriate responses to the research question: what are the needs of orphaned child heads of households? Steinberg (1999:82) states that Maslow insists that the most of all the basic needs are related to the physical well-being or survival of the individual. Physiological needs include food, water, air, shelter,

clothing, sleep just to mention a few. Safety and security needs include health, family, property, a job, and a feeling protected against the bodily harm.

Love and belonging needs such as friendship, family, intimacy and sense of connection are on the third level of the Maslow's pyramid of needs. "The need to be reputable and important is the next in the hierarchy. When these needs are not satisfied the person feels helpless and inferior (the National Guidelines for statutory Services to Child Headed Households, 2010)". The self-actualisation needs that are creativity, morality, acceptance, inner potential are activated when all the needs are satisfied.

2.8. SUMMARY

In a nutshell, this chapter presented literature reviewed in the context of children staying in households headed by children. Its main focal point was on the experiences of these children, their rights and needs, the coping strategies, the roles of different service providers in addressing their plight and lastly the theoretical framework which is based on three theories, namely role theory; ecosystem's theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a detailed narration of the method and design that was used within the research study. It also provides in-depth discussion on the following aspects which are salient in a research project:

3.2. DERMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken at Emalahleni local Municipality, within the Nkangala district of Mpumalanga Province in the Republic of South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2011) the said municipality is almost 267 700 hectares in extent, of which approximately 39 % is developed. It comprises of three towns namely: Witbank, Kriel and Ogies. There are also farms, formal and informal settlements which fall within this municipality. Statistics South Africa (2011) further asserts that the population of Emalahleni is estimated at 395 466, people are relatively poor with almost 57% no income at all, with low educational level as the majority of people have only grade 12 or less.

The justification for the choice of this local municipality for the study is based on the fact that according to Social Pension System (SOCPEN) this sub-district is the second highest with 2 736 children placed in foster care in the district. According to the database of CHH obtainable from the district coordinator for child protection; there are sixty children living in child headed households at this district and eMalahleni sub-district is the highest. The researcher chose to execute the study on the experiences of orphaned child headed households at this sub-district because as a social worker she realised from her caseload that the numbers of these children seem to be escalating and they also seem to be the most precarious category of the client system. The day to day interaction by

the researcher with these children has therefore motivated the former to execute this qualitative research.

3.3. RESEARCH METHOD

The study was administered within the qualitative paradigm, since it focused on the quality of the information gathered from the participants pertaining to their experiences, feelings, and views as well as felt needs. Marlow and Boone (2005:07) confirmed the notion that qualitative research method is a non-numerical examination of phenomena focusing on the underlying meaning and patterns of relationships. In other words, this method makes use words for presentation and analysis. The study therefore did not focus on the quantity of the results, instead, it focused on the quality of the information gathered from the child heads of households pertaining to their experiences views as well as felt needs. The next sub-section presents the research design used and it is as follows:

3.3.1. Research design

The research design adopted for this study is phenomenology. It was deemed to be relevant because it helped the researcher to describe the lived experiences and coping mechanisms of the participants. This notion is confirmed by Creswell (2014:14) when he stated that the phenomenological researchers describe the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants.

The researcher adopted the case study research design, since the purpose of this study was to gain greater insight and comprehension of the experiences and coping strategies or mechanisms of an individual child head of a household. According to Bryman (2012:66) case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of single cases. Creswell (2014:14) in addition, asserts that case studies

are a design of inquiry in which the researcher develops a detailed analysis of a case, event, activity, process or one or more individuals and the researchers collect detailed information using a variance of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time.

Babbie (2014:318) point out that the chief purpose of a case study can be descriptive or explanatory. The researcher concurred with the notion by Babbie (2014:318) as the objectives of the study was to describe the experiences, the psycho-social, emotional and material needs of orphaned child heads of households. The study was also aimed at explaining the roles of social service practitioners in dealing with the apparent challenges and needs of orphaned child heads of households. The researcher was able to attain the aim of the study which was to understand the experiences and coping strategies or mechanisms of orphaned child heads of households through studying individual cases of orphaned child heads of households.

3.3.2. Population and Sampling

In this study, the population referred to sixty child heads of households who are recipients of child protection services and found in the database of child heads of households at Emalahleni Sub-district and seventy-two social service practitioners working for the Department of Social Development and three Child Protection Organizations, namely: Child Welfare, Christian Social Council and Ondersteuningsraad in Emalahleni Sub-district.

There were two categories of samples that is a sample which comprised of ten orphaned child heads of households (males and females) aged 16 and below 18. The other sample contained of twelve various social service practitioners rendering child protection services on a daily basis. This number of participants enabled the researcher to comply with the principle of individualization, as it was possible for the researcher to also preserve the uniqueness of each household.

The concept of sampling was discussed with reference to the following salient aspects, namely:

3.3.2.1. Sampling type

Non-probability sampling was appropriate for the study and the sample was purposely selected. This study therefore purposefully selected orphaned child heads of household from Emalahleni Sub-district to participate in the research. Purposive sampling technique is likely to enable the researcher to get the opinions of the participants, to choose participants that are knowledgeable about the issue under research as is part of their personal experiences.

3.3.2.2. Sampling Size

The first sample category consisted of ten orphaned child heads of households and currently receiving child protection services; while the second sample comprised of twelve social service practitioners who rendering child protection services is their key performance area as per their job descriptions. Only ten participants were interviewed despite the initial plan of interviewing twenty participants. It was unnecessary to continue with interviewing because saturation point was reached at tenth participant. This stance is confirmed by Creswell (2014:189) when he articulates that the idea of saturation refers to discontinuing collecting data when the categories or themes are saturated: when collecting fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties.

3.3.2.3. Sampling Criteria

The eligibility criteria for child participants in this study were as follows:

- eMalahleni Sub-district residents,
- orphaned children heading households,
- aged 16-18 years,

- Recipients of child protection services from Department of Social Development, Child Welfare Society, Christian Social Council and Ondersteuningsraad.

The researcher ensured that only orphaned child heads of households meeting the above said eligibility criteria were selected and participated in the study. The rationale was to contextualize the study and describe their experiences as well as coping strategies within the context which they are functioning.

The eligibility criteria for social service practitioners were as follows:

- Registered as a child and youth care worker, social auxiliary worker or social worker with South African Council for Social Service Professionals (SACSSP),
- Rendering child protection services,
- Employed by Department of Social Development, Child Welfare Society, Christian Social Council and Ondersteuningsraad and stationed at eMalahleni Sub-district.

The rationale to select the service practitioners meeting the above eligibility criteria was based on the fact that by virtue to rendering child protection services, these practitioners are most suited to provide the researcher with the realities within their service delivery pertaining to children heading households as they are the ones expected to render services to these children. In addition, the researcher, was under the impression that these practitioners were the most suited to identify their building capacity needs in relation to services to child headed households.

3.4. Data collection

Data was sought through literature review and interviews. The following section briefly presents the said data collection instruments utilised in this study:

3.4.1. Review of secondary literature

The researcher perused abundant books, magazines, pamphlets, journals, policies, Acts, Frameworks, guidelines and articles in order to get guidance on gathering pertinent data on the problem under discussion; based on the fact that Creswell (2014:25) emphasised that literature review assists to determine whether the research topic is worth studying, and it serves views into ways in which the researcher can limit the scope to a needed area of research. The researcher managed to gather in-depth information pertaining to the experiences of the orphaned children heading households by reviewing existing literature on this concept.

3.4.2. Interviews

The data from the selected participants was mainly gathered through semi-structured one to one or face to face interviews; since De Vos et.al (2005:287) stressed the fact that interviewing is the predominant instrument of collecting data in qualitative research. Semi-structured interviews were used because of its advantage of being flexible and allowing participants to exchange and share their experiences with the researcher.

The child heads of households were able to give a fuller picture about their everyday life experiences, needs, coping mechanisms and their perceptions on the roles of different service providers. Social service practitioners were also able to provide and share their views on the phenomena of child headed households, their practical experiences pertaining to these children and to identify their capacity building needs that will enable them to render effective and efficient services to this client system. The researcher sought permission from both the child heads of households and social service practitioners that the interviews with them be audio-taped and in instances were permission for audio-taping was not granted extensive notes were taken.

3.5. Data analysis

Thematic analysis was adopted as it allows the researcher to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes within the collected data. Data collected was analysed following the steps proposed by De Vos et.al. (2005:334). The following aspects were therefore taken into cognisance when analysing data:

I. Managing or organising data

   An inventory of the field notes was done that is the researcher had to check whether everything concerning the data is complete. The data was organised into cards.

II. Reading and writing memos

   The replicas were read various times in order to identify repetitious ideas. Key concepts were then written in the margin of the transcript.

III. Generating categories, themes and patterns

   Prominent themes, repetitious ideas and patterns of beliefs that are held by the participants concerning the subject matter under study were identified.

IV. Coding the data

   There was generation of categories, themes and sentences were marked with abbreviations of key words.

V. Writing the report

   The data was presented in a form of quotations.

3.6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitation in this study was as follows:

- Some of the potential participants were reluctant to participate in the research project. In addressing this limitation, potential participants were assured of the principle of confidentiality, anonymity and non-disclosure.

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.7.1. Consent for conducting the study:

The researcher sought consent for conducting the study from:

- North West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory committee (NWU IRERC) (Annexure B).
- Department of Social Development in Emalahleni Sub-district, Child Welfare Society, Christian Social Council and Ondersteuningsraad (Annexure C).
- Case managers of child heads of households from the above said Child Protection Organization and Department.
- Social service practitioners.

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It was critical to get ethical clearance as Pilot and Hungler (1999:701) stressed that ethics is a system of moral values that is concerned. It is therefore pivotal for researchers to anticipate and address ethical issues from the conceptualizing process of writing the proposal to reporting the findings. The issue of informed consent and principles of research were also given high priority in this project in order to ensure that the researcher abides with the ethics of research and does not violate the rights of the study participants.

3.8. SUMMARY

The methodology that is adopted was seen as relevant for this qualitative study which focused on comprehending the experiences and coping mechanisms of children heading households. The subsequent chapter, which is chapter four will presents the results obtained from the data amassed and analysis process.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study was to comprehend the lived experiences and the coping strategies or mechanisms of orphaned child heads of households with a view to make recommendations to relevant agencies dealing with child protection services. This chapter centered mainly on the results, discussion and interpretation of the data collected from the participants.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

A total of ten orphaned children who headed households were deliberately chosen to take part in this study. The next sub-section presents the demographic data of these children as follows:

4.1. Demographic data of orphaned children heading households

Participant number	Gender	Age	Age commenced to be head of household	Grade	household size	Biological child of head of household
1	Female	18	16	11	4	No
2	Female	18	15	09	4	Yes
3	Female	17	14	12	5	Yes
4	Male	17	15	10	3	No
5	Female	18	15	12	4	Yes
6	Female	18	14	10	2	No
7	Female	18	16	11	2	No
8	Male	16	13	11	2	No
9	Female	18	16	Dropped	9	Yes
10	Male	16	15	Dropped	3	No

Age of child participants: the age of participants ranges from 16-18 years because Section 137(1)(c) of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended, stipulates that a household can only be considered as a child headed household if the main caregiver is 16 and below 18 years. From the dispersion of the age of participants in the table above, it is therefore evident that all the participants met the requirements of a child headed households.

Age commenced to head households: according to the dispersion of score above, some of the participants commenced being heads of households while they were less than 16 years of age, of which was contrasting with what is stipulated in Section 137(1)(c) of the Act 38 of 2005. This also implies that these children were at risk to more precarious circumstances at an early stage.

Gender: both female and male orphaned children carried the roles as well as responsibilities of their late parents and headed their families. They also provide care to their younger siblings because there is a change in the patterns of gender and of a family care. Germann (2005:90) points that in majority of African countries afore of the outbreak of HIV/AIDS pandemic, majority of girls as compared to boys provided care to their younger siblings.

Educational status: from Table 4.1 above it is evident that eight out of ten child participants were attending school, and two had dropped out. These two participants who dropped out from school alluded to the fact that they were compelled by their circumstances of being heads of the households, to abandon their education in order to fend for their siblings. This fact was supported by Nziyane (2010:106) when she stressed the fact that educational standing and academic performance of children heading households is also pivotal in determining their level of empowerment and life skills knowledge as well as determinant of their future career opportunities.

Household size: the total number of children in a household headed by a child is important to the study as it shows the extent of the burden the head of the household is bared to with regard to the caring of the younger siblings and effects of their experiences and how to impact on their coping strategies. This notion was also highlighted by Van Dyk (2008:345) when she points out that although children heading households find themselves assuming the above said adults' roles and responsibilities, they are, however, not yet emotionally and physically mature to fulfil such roles and responsibilities.

It is imperative for the researcher to clearly mention that the total number of children indicated in Table 4.1 above includes the children who are heading households as well their biological children where applicable. It is evident from the dispersed scores in this table that the study participants are from households which comprise of two to nine members. The study revealed that 40% of the participants had children of their own, before their 18th birth date. This finding is supported by Mogotlane, et. al (2008:146) when they assert that the minimum number of persons sharing a household in their study was four, and many of these were siblings and own child of the head of the household.

4.2.2. The demographic data of social service practitioners

A total number of twelve social service practitioners rendering comprehensive social work services to children and their families on a daily basis participated in the study. The demographic data of these social service practitioners concentrating mainly on their gender and qualifications is depicted in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Demographic data of social service practitioners

Participant	Gender	Qualifications
A	Male	BA in Social Work
B	Female	BA in Social Work
C	Female	BA in Social Work
D	Female	BA in Social Work
E	Female	BA in Social Work
F	Female	BA in Social Work
G	male	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work
H	Female	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work
I	Female	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work
J	Female	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work
K	Female	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work
L	Female	NQF 4 certificate in social auxiliary work

Gender: the Table 4.2 above illustrates that out of six social workers and six social auxiliary workers who participated in the study, only one from each category was a male and the rest were females. The unequal distribution between the genders suggests that social work is a female dominated profession.

Qualifications of social service practitioners: all service practitioners had relevant minimum qualifications to be registered with SACSSP in their respective fields and can be in a statutory position to render child protection and family preservation services to children including those living in child headed households.

4.3. OVERVIEW OF THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

The results on the experiences of orphaned child heads of households are categorised into central themes, sub-themes and categories which are illustrated in Table 4.3 overleaf beneath. Following is Table 4.3 in which the researcher

summarised three themes and sub- themes as well as categories which emerged from data gathered from the research participants.

Table 4.3 Themes, sub themes and categories which emerged from data analysis process

Sub themes	categories
1. Orphaned children took over responsibilities as heads of households	• Children as housekeepers • Children as breadwinners • Children as decision makers • Children as instillers and maintainers of discipline amongst siblings
2. Orphaned children living without adult and/or parental figure	• Insufficient food supplies • Educational related difficulties • Unsafe living conditions • Sexual abuse and exploitation • No adult advocacy
3. Orphaned children experienced psychological distress	• Disruption of normal childhood • Inability to cope with the life stressors • Difficulties in conflict management among siblings
1. Fear to loss parent's inheritance	• Child heads of households prefer to remain in their parents' house an safeguard their late parent's property
2. Rejection by extended family members	• Children living in child headed households are rejected by extende family members • Orphaned children heading households do not want to disrupt thei extended family members' social functioning
3. Casual labour by child heads of households	• Child heads of households engaged in temporary jobs in order to receiv cash or food or other basic needs.
4. Sexual exploitation and abuse	• Child heads of household are deceived and forced to engaged in sexua activities with older men in exchange of basic needs such food, clothe etc. • Child heads of households as victims of teenage pregnancy
1. Social grant as the main survival mechanism for children heading households	• Heads of households or extended relatives receive Child support o foster care grant to meet their daily basic needs

2.	Faith based organizations, neighbours, NGO's and social service practitioners as main providers of resources/care to orphaned children heading household	• Child heads of household beg food and basic resources from neighbour: and church members in order to cope. • Children staying in child headed households get assistance from schoc feeding scheme and social service practitioners for their survival.
1.	Practical implementation of guidelines for statutory services to child headed households	• Programmes and support structures aimed at addressing problem: experienced by CHH • Intensify in service training of social service practitioners on the practica guidelines for statutory services to CHH • Handling of statutory cases of child heads of households by socia service practitioners
2.	Practical suggestions by social service practitioners in improving situation of CHH	• Bereavement counselling of orphaned children living in child headec households under adult supervising adult • Identification, profiling and development of data base of children headin households • Identify, assess or screen and develop a database of supervising adults • Appointment of social work manager specialising in coordinatin services to CHH at district level

In the remnant of this chapter, the emanated themes, sub-themes and categories as reflected in Table 4.3 above will be presented, deliberated and confirmed with the complementing excerpts from the interviews conducted with the participants. These themes, sub-themes and categories will also be compared with available relevant literature reviewed on the research problem. The researcher will commence by presenting the response of the child participants and followed by those of social service practitioners.

4.3.1. Child participants' responses

4.3.1.1. Theme 1: Realities of orphaned child heads of households

These realities will be interpreted in details in the following sub-section, considering specifically the three sub-themes which emerged from the participants' responses:

- Orphaned children assumed responsibilities as heads of households
- Orphaned children lacking adult and/or parental figure
- Orphaned children experienced psychological distress

The three sub-themes mentioned above will be presented and discussed as follows:

4.3.1.1.1. Orphaned children assumed responsibilities as heads of households:

This study revealed that following the decease of the parents; the eldest child took over parental roles and obligations for the younger brothers and sisters and become a head of the household. This finding is confirmed by Sloth-Nielsen, (2004:4) when they assert that children under the age of 18 years are called upon to perform caregiving responsibilities to their siblings as well as terminally ill parent(s). The researcher postulates that caring for a dying parent that is bathing, cooking, cleaning and providing food is emotionally and physically strenuous to the children heading households.

The study's findings confirmed the literature reviewed above as far children's care-giving roles and responsibilities are concerned. This can be supported by the following two excerpts from the child participants: *"every morning before we leave to school, I must bath my younger brother, assist him to dress up, prepare breakfast and lunch for him" " every morning I have to packed my child's bag, prepare breakfast for him, bath him and take him to his grandmother for day care while am going to school, after school I must first via my child's grandmother house to fetch him..... I also have to provide care to my siblings.....is very tough for me to do all these things".*

It is evident from the excerpts above that, children heading households have to perform care-giving roles and responsibilities daily just like adults do under normal circumstances. The absence of the parent sub-system therefore exposes the eldest child to circumstances which may be detrimental to his or her physical, emotional and social well-being as he or she is forced to provide care to the younger siblings despite the fact that he or she is not sufficiently equipped to

care for others. It is worth noting, that in an attempt to provide care to their younger siblings or sick parent(s), these children are deprived of time to enjoy their normal childhood development. One of the child participants expressed his views that: *" I do not have time to play around with my peers as I have to carry out all adult responsibilities, if I waste time playing, no one will prepare meals for my siblings or clean our house"*

The study revealed that some of the child heads of households are able to make effective decisions which cannot be made by their peers who are not in the similar circumstances. The following verbatim quotation from a 17 year old child participant pertaining to decision making process can support the said study finding: "*.... when my mom passed on after being ill for a very long time... I looked at her body lying on the bed, and..... thinking what to do with her corpse. I had no choice but to go out to my late mom's friend to inform her that mom is no longer alive. After I informed her, she asked me what we are going to do now?. I immediately said I must just ask my school teachers and church pastor to assist us.....it was not easy for me at all, being a child I was forced to do all the necessary arrangements for my mom's funeral.*"

The following verbatim quotation shows how children heading households make effective decisions in order to be in a position to play their parental roles to their younger siblings: "*I had to decide and learn every role that my mom used to play. For example I had to visit the SASSA office to administer the child support grant on behalf of my siblings, as it was stopped because my mom passed away, and opt to lose mine because I was told that I cannot receive a grant on my behalf instead I must ask an adult someone to apply it for us. ....I thought asking someone that I do not trust might also delay the process...".*

The following citation encapsulates the child participants' psychological distress and suffering he went through as he carried out his responsibilities as a head of his household upon the death of their mother: *"After the funeral it was still upon my shoulders that my two little siblings have food on a daily basis..... I had to ensure that there is paraffin or coal and food to be prepared in the evening"*. The findings of the study revealed that the eldest child amongst her role set as head of the family is that of a breadwinner. This finding is

supported by Noeth (2003:61) when he indicated that the older siblings in child headed households need to get some form of income to provide food and clothing for their brothers and /or sisters. The researcher deduced from the verbatim quotations mentioned above that children heading households have a role set which is far bigger than their emotional, physical, psychological and financial capacity as well as maturity.

4.3.1.1.2. Orphaned children living without adult and/or parental figure:

This sub-theme deal with the difficulties that orphaned children heading households are confronted with as a result of living on their own without any adult or parental sub-system. This study confirmed the findings from the reviewed literature that children in child headed households' basic life needs for food, garments and money for subsistence formed a main challenge that affected their day to day lifestyle. Majority of these children expressed their difficulties in relation to basic needs with the following excerpts: *"Most of the time, our groceries get finished before the next pension pay day (foster care grant).... We then have to ask food from the school's nutrition programme""We do not have clothing and food, our social worker gives us food parcels and school uniform"."I only receive the child support grant for now, I cannot buy food, pay for school development fund, but my social worker has written a letter to school to explain our situation and we no longer expected to pay" " we eat at the safe park and the drop in center".*

The study finding can be supported by the fact that insufficient food supplies were identified by Mogotlane et. al (2008:164) as one of the dominant challenges faced by children in child headed household. The study laid open that the Department of Social Development and Child Protection organizations play a crucial role in supplying orphaned children with food parcels and other basic needs such as clothing; thus relieving the neighbours and relatives where applicable.

The study also confirmed the literature reviewed that Faith Based Organizations and Non-governmental organizations, do carry out their mandate of providing psychosocial relief, spiritual care and material assistance to orphans and precarious children. It is also evident from this study's findings, that SASSA plays a critical role in assuring that the most precarious members of the society easily access social grants which in most instances is the sole source of income for the household.

Educational related difficulties: the study's findings concur with the literature reviewed on child headed households that these children encounter difficulties such as inability to pay the school developmental fees, buy supplementary stationary, poor performance and failure as well as school dropout. One of the two child participants, who dropped out from school, confirmed this finding as follows: *"my mother passed away while I was writing examinations, her death affected my school performance badly... I failed, and dropped out to find some ways to support my little brother".*

One of the child participants expressed his experience, emotional burden he had to carry out when his parents passed away and how the latter's absence affected his education: *"I was so stressed, had mental illness and my performance dropped as I could not concentrate at school".* This study finding can be supported by Maqoko and Dreyer (2007:719) when they state that the pressures related to care-giving responsibilities of can cause children to drop out of school.

Unsafe living conditions: the finding of this study concur with the conclusions by Nziyane (2010:150) below in that children originating from child headed households are most precarious to criminality within their communities which may jeopardize their physical, psychological and social well- being. The absence of the parent sub-system exposes such children to unsafe and unconducive living conditions. Some of the child participants in the study verified the findings from the literature reviewed above by expressing their feelings and experiences regarding their living conditions and safety as follows:

"We were staying in mud house, which was dilapidated, with no glasses on the windows, falling thus the door was no longer to be locked, one day we received food parcels from the social worker, and packed them in the cupboard, the following day, after school we found that some of our groceries is missing, one neighbor said she saw another guy going out with some plastic bags ...."

According to Steinberg (1999:84) Maslow contends that all human beings need to feel secure and free from danger. The researcher argues that it is a norm in most societies that a parent sub-system is responsible to fulfil the safety and security needs of families. In families which there are no parent sub-system, the child sub-system especially the one heading the household must be responsible to safeguard the well- being of the younger siblings. These children also cannot adequately satisfy the safety and security needs of their family members including those of theirs due to the fact they are still children who still need to be loved, cared of and protected.

Advocacy: this study found out that orphaned children heading households live without adults to advocate for them. This finding can be substantiated by Germann (2005: 324) when he state that orphaned children in his study lived lacking adults to play an advocacy role for them. *"my father was working at Highveld steel for than twenty years, we have been struggling since he passed on more than four years ago struggling to access his provident fund because as children alone without any older person to give us guidance on how to go about in claiming his money"*

Some of the child participants laid open how the circumstance of living without an adult or parental figure forced them to turn to neighbours or strangers for advocacy regarding their inheritance from the deceased parents. These children expressed themselves as follows: *"..... I had to disclose all confidential information to one man who offered to assist us, he seems to have connections with some people so that we can access the pension fund, but he seemed to have robbed us some money..... I once received a letter from the provident and the amount this man disclosed to us and the one on the latter that I had are totally different" "My uncle claimed*

all my parents' pension fund and gave us nothing....." It is evident from the cited excerpts that some children residing within child headed households are financially insecure, not because their parents did not invest some money for them, but because they do not have an adult figure who can assist and play an advocacy role on their behalf.

The study also revealed that as desperate without parental care as they are, children living in households headed by children turned to untrustworthy adults for assistance and in the long run, they lose their inheritance as some of these adults asked to provide support and guidance, take advantage of these precarious children and access the estate of the late parents for themselves. This finding is can be supported by Ibebuike et. al (2014:71) when they identified administration of and personal use of the children' grant by a third party as one of the sub-categories under the theme: resources poor communities' perceptions about child headed households.

4.3.1.1.3. Orphaned children experienced psychological distress

This study validates the literature reviewed that children in child headed households suffer from psychological stress. The following two categories which emerged under the sub-theme orphaned children experienced psychological distress will be briefly discussed as follows:

Disruption of childhood: One of the child participants expressed how she experienced the reversal of roles with the following excerpt: *"since my mother passed away, I have no time to hang around with my peers as I always have to be at house and carry out my mother's activities*". This study finding can be confirmed by Germann (2005:327) when asserts that the study he conducted laid open that majority of the children heading households experienced a psychological distress due to the innumerable difficulties with which they were encountered.

Inability to cope: *"Taking a deep breath----as a growing girl (teenager), I felt lost since my mother was not there for me to discuss growing up challenges such as menstrual cycle challenges, bodily changes etc. I could not cope at all, instead I had to learn and take advices from friends, some of which I realized later on that they were not good at all..... "*. This verbatim quote from one of the child participants reflects the inability to cope by these children. This study revealed that these children need psychological counseling by pertinent practitioners in order to cope with abundant life stressors and they lack role model in their everyday lives.

4.3.1.2. Theme 2: Psychosocial problems and fears experienced by child heads of households

The study confirmed the literature reviewed that children living in child headed households encounter abundant psychosocial problems and fears in their lives. In the next sub-section the researcher will discuss the four sub-themes identified from the research participants and they are presented as follows:

4.3.1.2.1. Fear to loss parent's inheritance

The study findings confirmed the literature reviewed that orphaned children do not want to lose their parents' inheritance or property, hence they prefer to remain on their own without any adults in their parents' houses after the latter death. This notion is supported by Germann (2005:94) that one of the identified strengths of child headed households during the UNICEF conference in Namibia in 2002 was that the property or assets is protected and remains an asset for the children. This finding can be supported with the following verbatim quotations from the child participants: *"we prefer to remain in my mother's house since we are scared that should we be removed to alternative care, other people might give themselves our yard and we lose everything"*.

4.3.1.2.2. Rejection by extended family members

This study revealed that majority of the child participants, opted to remain in households headed by children because they were rejected by their extended family members. This finding is confirmed follows: *"after the death of my parents, our relatives showed no interest in providing care to us. They last came to our home on the funeral of my mother, since then they never discussed anything about us, we only meet them on the streets around the location".* The latter study findings can be supported by Foster et.al (2005) when they assert that few orphaned children live in child headed households because there were no blood relations wishing to take up the responsibility for caring them. It is also evident from this study that the traditional safety net of providing care to orphaned children has broken down.

4.3.1.2.3. Casual labour by child heads of households

The study confirmed the findings in the literature reviewed that orphaned children heading households are obliged to engage in casual labour at an early stage in order for them to cope and survive. The following verbatim quotation can substantiate this study findings:" *during weekend I had to do temporary jobs that is washing blankets, curtains and bedding, ironing, spring cleaning for my neighbor and she will pay me with some money and sometimes with groceries... my younger brother use to open a gate for our neighbor who own taxis every night at seven and he was paid R 20-00 per week".* Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (2001:14) concur with the study findings when stipulates that children living in households headed by children have to engage in odd jobs as such as selling vegetable, polishing shoes and extra as their coping strategy.

4.3.1.2.4. Sexual abuse or exploitation

The outcomes of this study are consistent with the literature reviewed as it proofed that some of children in CHH especially girls are prone to various forms of sexual abuse. The excerpts below substantiate the study findings: One of the

child participant expressed her feelings and bad experience regarding sexual abuse as follows: *"(taking a deep breath and eyes filled with tears) a year after the passing on of my mother, a certain guy broke into our house (did not have burglar bars) at night... pointed me with a knife and raped me... and broke my virginity. The other child said "I had to sacrifice my feelings and comprise many things and engage in unprotected sex just because that is what my boyfriend wanted.....i got pregnant unintentionally.... ".* The said study findings can be supported and confirmed by Ibebuike et. al (2014: 75) when they alluded to the fact that the participants in their study in Soshanguve, experienced sexual exploitation.

4.3.2. Social service practitioners' responses

The following sub-section presents the discussion and results from the social service practitioners in relation to the sub-themes identified in Table 4.3. It is worth mentioning that there were questions in the interview guide for social service practitioners which were almost the same as the ones on the schedule for child participants as the aim was to determine social service practitioners' comprehension of the phenomenon under study, hence only few themes emerged from both the categories of participants.

4.3.2.1. Theme 1: Realities of orphaned child heads of households

The social service practitioners were asked to clarify from their perspective how children undertake adult responsibilities. One of the social workers confirmed that: *"the most common problems experienced by child heads of households is poor parenting as they are also children and cannot enforce discipline to younger siblings" "lack of respect from the siblings seems to be the most common problems experienced by child heads of households".*One social auxiliary worker expressed her views as follows in relations to problems experienced by children heading households: *"these children have huge responsibilities……".* Some of the social service practitioners confirmed as follows: (referring to common problems

associated with housekeeping roles)"*The child heads of households do not have leisure time to spend with their buddies because they have to take house responsibilities and give parenting skills to their siblings NB: they do not know and some they also need to be provided with such skills too"*

The study showed that from their day to day interaction with orphaned children, social service practitioners are able to observe and become aware that these children lack access to basic needs such as food, clothing, school uniform, furniture and toiletries. When responding to the question "what are the priority needs of child heads of households" most of the social service practitioners alluded to the fact that these children need financial assistance which will enable them to buy groceries, clothing, toiletries and school uniform.

Following are verbatim quotes by the social service practitioners in relation to basic needs of orphaned children: *"these children need monthly income which will help them to have food and items such as school uniform, shoes, stationary ...." "They need food and clothes as some go to bed without anything to eat". "some dropped out of school at an early age since they do not get support from other family members, so that they can find jobs to be able to support their siblings".* Some of the social service practitioners confirmed the findings from the literature reviewed that majority of orphaned children in child headed households, are living in conditions which are very poor. *"Housing is one of their priority needs" "these children are living in poverty stricken and poor conditions which are not conducive for their social functioning"*

Some of the social service practitioners concurred with the perceptions of the child participants pertaining to adult advocacy by expressing their views as follows: *"some community members turned to use the opportunity to abuse child heads of families because there is no adult figure, they can do anything they want without respecting them " "one of the priority needs of child heads of households is assistance with ownership of estate" .*

Some of the social service practitioners contend that: *"these children have to be responsible people without enjoying their youth". "They do not have enough time to play with their peers because they have to carry out household responsibilities"* These verbatim quotes illustrate how

the social service practitioners view the plight of children heading households and confirmed that the normal childhood of these children is disrupted by their role reversal.

4.3.2.2. Theme 2: Psychosocial problems and fears experienced by orphaned children

The literature reviewed indicated that child headed households emerged because orphaned children would like to preserve their parents' families and protect their late parents' property. It is evident from the study's findings that though many of orphaned children are placed in foster care with their extended family members or placed in child and youth care centers; there are some who are disowned by their relatives and are obliged to remain in households headed by children.

The social service practitioners related their professional experience and expressed their views pertaining to absorption of orphaned children by extended family members as follows: *"majority of these children do not want to be removed to alternative care following the death of their parents because they would like to take care of their parents' property" "they experience stigmatisation and been rejected by their families including extended family members"*. One social service practitioner said that one of the most priority needs of child heads of households is a family support. She expressed her views as follows *"the child head of households need support from their family members because they are children too"*.

4.3.2.3. Theme 3: Coping strategies or mechanism of child head of households

One of the social service practitioners confirmed the reality that children living in child headed households perform some certain tasks for adults within their neighborhood as their coping strategy. She expressed her views as follows *"in*

order to cope with lack of daily basic needs, they work in other people's fields, herding other people's goats, etc. Some especially male child heads may steal people's property and sell them to be able to have money..... ". The latter verbatim quotation by one of the social workers concur with the notion by Nicholson and Jefferson (2004:244) when they state that criminality is one of the dominant factors in child headed families as they are poverty stricken and resort to engage in criminal behaviours to make ends meet.

Social service practitioners in this study confirmed with the findings from the literature that different government departments, CBO's and FBO's play a crucial role in meeting the basic needs of child heads of households *"cope through the support by the schools and provision of food by CBO such as drop in centers"* This study revealed that child heads of households are unable to cope with their situation and they can survive through psychosocial support they receive from relevant service practitioners. This is confirmed by some of the social service practitioners with the following excerpt: *"counseling and emotional support by social workers are some of the coping strategies of child heads of households".*

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4.3.2.4. Theme 4: Comprehension and interpretation of Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended by social service practitioners in their everyday service delivery

Theme 4 focuses mainly on how social service practitioners comprehend and practically interpret Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended and handle statutory cases of child headed households. The following sub-themes emerged during interviews with relevant social service practitioners:

4.3.2.4.1. Practical implementation of guidelines for statutory services to child headed households

The study revealed that despite the fact that the National Guidelines for statutory services to CHH was drafted and approved in April 2010; social service practitioners are not yet practically implementing the said guidelines. Some of the social service practitioners alluded to the fact that they do have child headed cases but they do not know precisely how to handle them. For example, some said *" I just follow same foster care placement process like in granny placement, that is I look for a relative interested in caring for the children although not staying with them, screen her and if she is suitable to be foster parent, place the children in foster care".*

4.3.2.4.2. Programmes and support structures aimed at addressing problems experienced by CHH

It is evident from the data collected from the social service practitioners that children living in CHH benefit from Early Childhood, HIV and AIDS, social relief of distress, life skills programmes which are monitored by social service providers from the Department. These children also receive services from support group, home base care, drop in center, psychosocial support and family preservation. It is worthwhile mentioning that both service practitioners from the Department of Social Development and child protection services have identified the same programmes and support services to these children. The researcher therefore deduces that there is close working relationship, open communication of policies and programmes between the department and CPO's.

4.3.2.4.3. Practical suggestions by social service practitioners in improving situation of CHH

The following were some of the practical suggestions by social service practitioners in improving the situation of CHH:

- Intensify in service training of social service practitioners on the practical guidelines for statutory services to CHH
- Active participation by children during the identification and recognition phase of CHH
- Bereavement counselling of orphans living in child headed households
- Community mobilization activities with a view to improve services' visibility and the community's obligations towards orphans.

It is evident from the above suggestions, that in order to render holistic effective and efficient services to CHH, social service practitioners need to be capacitated on this phenomenon to enable them to be in a better position to follow all the necessary steps which are stipulated in Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

4.4. SUMMARY

Children heading households experience challenges as they have to assume roles and responsibilities that they are not mature enough for. They find themselves being isolated, rejected and struggle to raise the socio-economic challenges they are faced with. Ibebuke et.al (2014:62) articulate that child headed households are recognized as a social problem as their needs are not sufficiently fulfilled.

The following chapter will outline in depth the research conclusions, guidelines and recommendations made from the research results and findings on the experiences of orphaned child heads of households.

CHAPTER FIVE
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This last chapter concludes the study by demonstrating how its aim was attained and recommendations made. The following sub-section glances into re-stating the limitations of the study and this can be presented as follows:

5.2. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The one limitation in this study was mainly that some of the participants were reluctant to participate in the research project for varied personal reasons and prior bad experiences from such and thus had to be assured of the principle of confidentiality, anonymity and non-disclosure.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions pertaining to the research aim, objectives and assumptions are discussed briefly in the following sub-section.

5.3.1. Research aim:

The aim of the study was realized in that the study identified and highlighted the experiences and coping mechanisms of children heading households.

5.3.2. Research objectives:

In the following sub-section, the researcher will re-state the formulated research objectives and indicate how each was reached, and these can be presented as follows:

5.3.2.1. To describe the experiences of orphaned child heads of households

The first objective was to review literature to describe the experiences of orphaned children heading households. Abundant challenges and difficulties encountered by children heading households were discussed to describe the lived experiences of these children. Having identified the causes and effects it was critical to also understand the phenomenon of children heading households in relation to their experiences. This objective was therefore attained.

5.3.2.2. To describe the psycho-social, emotional and material needs of orphaned child heads of households

The concept of need was unpacked and emphasis was placed on the distinct types of needs, namely physical and material, intellectual or educational, psychological, non-discrimination and legal protection. This study has shown that children heading households have special needs which they should attain in order to enhance their social functioning, thus this objective was reached.

5.3.2.3. To identify the roles of social service practitioners in dealing with the apparent challenges and needs of orphaned child heads of households

The study showed that both government departments and non-governmental organizations have a crucial role to play in meeting the needs and addressing abundant challenges encountered by children heading households. This objective was therefore realised as it is evident from both the literature reviewed and results from the participants that it is the mandate of social service practitioners to render effective services to orphans and precarious children.

5.3.2.4. To describe how the orphaned child heads of households cope with their challenges

This objective was attained as the results of the study made it clear that those children heading households developed some strategies in order to cope with their everyday challenges. The literature reviewed and the study results highlighted amongst others the following; run errands for neighbours, odd jobs and begging as coping strategies children heading households develop in order to enhance their functioning.

5.3.2.5. To propose recommendations to policy makers to manage the phenomenon of child headed households

It is proposed in the following sub-section below that: local municipalities prioritize the housing needs of child headed households. There is a need of further research to be conducted on this category of orphaned children that is unsupported and unaccompanied children heading households. The findings and recommendations of the study would contribute towards development of relevant programmes aimed at enhancing the social functioning these children, has been achieved.

5.3.3. Assumptions of the study

The following assumptions were made and they were confirmed by the literature reviewed, study results and findings of the study:

- Child heads of households are the most precarious category of children.
- There are yet no accurate statistics of children living in child headed households because social service practitioners do not yet comprehend the phenomenon of CHH.

- Social service practitioners are not yet practically implementing the National guidelines on the statutory service to CHH that is CHH are not yet designated.
- There are no specific programmes designed to meet the needs of CHH.

5.4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Subsequently to the death of the parents; the eldest child undertake parental roles and responsibilities for the younger siblings and become a head of the household. The inquiry also disclosed that the eldest child carries the encumbrance of providing care to the younger siblings and own child where applicable on a regular basis.

- The children heading households are able to make effective decisions which cannot be made by their peers who are not in the same situation or circumstances. This means that due to the fact that their roles have drastically changed from been children to those of parents or adults, these children's mental capacity and thinking develops quicker than their age and peers.

- It is the responsibility of the child head of the household to bowdlerize the house and ensure that necessary maintenance is done where is due. This finding made it clear that children living in households headed by children do not have plenty time to execute their childhood roles with their buddies due to role reversal and adult responsibilities they have to execute.

- The eldest child in a household headed by children amongst her or his role set as head of the family is that of a breadwinner. The younger children living in child headed households also perform certain tasks for neighbours in order to get cash or food and satisfy their daily basic need for food as set in the physiological level of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

- Some younger siblings of child heads of households do not easily accept discipline and execute instructions set by the child head of the household because they never received necessary psychosocial recuperative support and debriefing following the death of their parents.

- The Department of Social Development and Child Protection Organizations play a crucial role in providing orphaned children with social relief of distress in a form groceries, school uniform, blankets, clothing and burial assistance; thus assuaging the neighbours and relatives where convenient.

- The Department of Education is one of the Departments that play an essential role in providing orphaned and precarious children including those living in child headed households with nutrition food on a daily basis through the school feeding scheme programme. This Department is therefore addressing the inadequate food supplies gap which the most precarious and needy children are faced with on a daily basis.

- SASSA performs critical functions in ensuring that the most precarious members of the society access social gratuity which in most instances is the sole source of emolument for the household.

- These children turn to strangers or untrustworthy adults for assistance and in the long run, they lose their inheritance as some of these adults asked to provide support and guidance, take advantage of these precarious children and access the estate of the late parents for themselves.

- The majority of orphaned children opt to tarry in households headed by children because they are rebuffed by their extended family members.

5.5. CONCLUSIONS

The following sub-section briefly glances into the conclusions reached at by the researcher based on the aforesaid study findings, and these can be presented as follows:

- The researcher concludes that although child heads of families are required to provide care to their siblings and their own biological children they are not yet emotionally equipped to provide such care as they are still children who also need parental love, care and affection.

- The researcher concludes that social grants seem to be the main reservoir of income for the most of households headed by children and these grants are insufficient to meet all the households' needs adequately as the cost of living is too high.

- The study revealed that child heads of households must be, amongst others, breadwinners. The researcher concludes that in reality households headed by children are characterized by stunting hunger, malnutrition and lack of basic needs. It is therefore evident that although child heads of households are expected to play the role of being breadwinners, they cannot adequately enact such roles due to their level of maturity, lack of relevant skills and scare resources as well as opportunities.

- The researcher deduced from the verbatim quotations mentioned in the preceding chapter that some of the child participants have a role set which is far bigger than their emotional, physical, psychological and financial capacity, maturity and development.

- The conclusion which can be drawn from the study finding that orphaned children heading households often turn to strangers for assistance; that some of these

children struggle financially; not because their parents did not invest money for them, but because they do not have an adult figure who can assist and play an advocacy role on their behalf.

- The researcher also concludes that younger siblings in households headed by children should be involved in decision making process implicating their lives, that is child participation seem to be crucial. This will address the challenge that these younger siblings do not easily accept discipline or carry out tasks assigned to them by their elder siblings heading households.

- It is evident from this study that child heads of household are deceived and forced to indulge in sexual activities with older men in exchange of basic needs such food, clothes etc. Based on this research finding, it can be concluded that these children need psychological counseling and recuperative support by pertinent practitioners in order to cope with numerous life stressors.

- The study revealed that despite the fact the National Department of Social Development has developed and conducted training to social service practitioners in provinces on National guidelines for statutory services to CHH; some of these social service practitioners are not yet conversant with these guidelines. The researcher therefore concludes that some of the social service practitioners do not designate CHH based on the following observations: there are no specific programmes designed to meet the needs of CHH and there is no grant designed for designated CHH.

- The study revealed that the preponderance of orphaned children opted to remain in households headed by children because they are repudiated by their extended family members. It can therefore be concluded that the conservative safety net of providing care to orphaned children has disintegrated. It can also be concluded that children do not want to lose their parents' inheritance or property; hence they

prefer to tarry on their own without any adults in their parents' houses after the latter's death.

5.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are made with reference to four aspects which are considered to be salient in any research process; namely: (1)social work practice (2) social work education, (3) social policy and (4) further research.

5.6.1. Recommendations for social work practice:

Based on aforesaid study results and findings; the following recommendations for social work practice are made:

- The study made it clear that orphaned children in households headed by children are surviving in unsafe conditions with dilapidated housing as the main challenge they are confronted with. It is against this research finding that it is conferred that local municipalities are to treat as most important the housing needs of child headed households. Social workers must perform an advocacy function in ensuring that municipality prioritizes the households headed by children in attaining houses.

- Home based care services need to be intensified and overseen by social workers in order to assure that vigorous services are rendered to terminally ill parents and relieving children the load of caring for their sick parents as well as siblings.

- It is imperative that the Department of Social Development set in place effective strategies which social workers should use to recognize orphaned children living in CHH instantaneously following the decease of the uttermost parent to expedite

the designation of such households before these children are falling into the cracks and not in reception of any pertinent statutory services.

- Capacity building and community awareness crusades about the frailty or feebleness of CHH are highly suggested in order to halt the issue of non-acceptance by relatives. The suggested capacity building and awareness crusades should also intended at infusing the spirit of "ubutu" amongst African societies and moral generation values, to capacitate locale to take responsibility in absorbing orphaned children into extended families as it used to be in the past decades.

- It is also recommended that Department of Education secures school psychologists and social workers who will render effectual psychosocial support services to learners on a full time basis and avoid inability to cope and poor performance at schools.

- Social relief of distress budget within Department of Social Development and SASSA be always made available and prioritize to CHH and address their basic needs. Social service providers within the said sector need to be more effective and implement the guidelines and ensures that required groceries or school uniform is delivered within 48 hours as stipulated in the guidelines for social relief of distress.

5.6.2. Recommendations for social work education:

Social work education is crucial in social service practitioners' lives both at institutions of higher learning and at work environment, in order for them to keep abreast with the new developments within the profession. Based on the above mentioned study inferences, recommendations pertaining to social work practice are as follows:

- Social service practitioners seem not to be adequately capacitated on the implementation of Section 137 of the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 as amended;

it is suggested that the Department of Social Development as a leading department in providing prevention and protection services to orphans and precarious children, augment and oversee continuous professional development operations or programmes for practicing social service practitioners which will converge on the CHH phenomenon.

- The South African Council for Social Service Practitioners to arrange and facilitate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training activities which will ensure that social service practitioners are well conversant with suitable enlightenment and skills to remedy and prevent the effects of the CHH phenomenon.

- It is also critical that institutions of higher learning, that concentrate on providing accredited training for social service professionals, propose modules focusing on CHH. It is envisaged that such training will improve the knowledge of social service practitioners and they will be able to easily render quality child protection services to orphaned children living in CHH when they are in practice; thus breaching existing gap.

5.6.3. Recommendations for social policy:

The following recommendations regarding social policy are made:

- The Social Assistance Act (Act No 13 of 2004) be assessed to put in place a social grant that will adequately try to satisfy the basic needs of designated child headed households. The gratuity should be paid out to the child head of the family and she or he should also receive such a gratuity on his or her respect, without a supervising adult. Should this kind of a gratuity be implemented, the prevalent challenge of supervising adults not using the foster care or child support grants for the benefit of the orphaned children living in CHH will be minimized; thus social functioning of these children improved. Should designated

child headed households receive a grant, the likelihood is very high that social service practitioners will confidently follow necessary steps stipulated in the National Guidelines for Statutory Services to CHH and designate identified orphaned children as CHH as they will be aware that their basic needs will be meet through the grant unlike in the current situation.

5.6.4. Recommendations for further research:

The following are the recommendations made by the researcher pertaining to further research:

- The study was conducted in an urban community of Emalahleni sub-district in Mpumalanga province of the Republic of South Africa. Based on the inferences made above it is highly recommended that a further research be conducted on this category of orphaned children especially in rural communities with a view to determine whether their realities are the same as the ones of the study participants.

- It will also be beneficial to conduct a similar study which will converge mainly on the dominant challenges hindering child protection organizations and the Department of Social Development from sufficiently meeting the needs of child headed households.

- Further research on capacity building needs of social services practitioners pertaining to rendering sustainable and effective services to orphaned children in child headed households is recommended. This will enable these practitioners to be well capacitated and be experts in rendering child protection services to children living in child headed households.

5.7. MAIN CONCLUSION

The study explored and interrogated the lived experiences of child headed households that affect them on their everyday social functioning and ascertained that development of specific programs intended at addressing the needs of these children by pertinent institutions is a matter of urgency, lest society inherits a generation of marginalized citizens. Special attention should be given to building the capacity of social service practitioners on how to render effectual child protection services to CHH by the directorate of child protection from both Provincial and National Department of Social Development.

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ADDENDUM A

AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

1. In your own words, can you describe or define to me what do you comprehend about the term 'child heads of households.
2. What would you say are the most common problems experienced by child heads of households?
3. In your opinion, what are the priority needs of child heads of households?
4. Can you kindly mention and discuss briefly the coping strategies of child heads of households.
5. What is the attitude of community members towards child heads of households?
6. What kind of support do community members give or provide to child heads of households?
7. What programmes and support structures are in place in your department/organization to address the problems experienced by child heads of households?
8. What are the major challenges preventing your department/organization from meeting the needs of child heads of households adequately?
9. In your view, what could be done to improve the situation of child heads of households?
10. What are any other views do you have regarding the matter of child heads of households in your sub-district?
11. What are your capacity building needs that will enable you to render effective and sustainable services to child heads of households?
12. How do you handle statutory cases of child heads of households?

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ADDENDUM B

AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ORPHANS HEADING HOUSEHOLDS

1. Can you tell me about yourself? Please just give a description of your family background, your likes or dislikes and your future aspirations.
2. When did you become the head of your family?
3. Can you describe your thoughts and feelings concerning taking the responsibility as the head of your household? N.B. I wish to hear both negative and positive sides
4. Can you describe how other people perceive a young orphaned child carrying the responsibility of being the head of the households?
5. What kind of support do you receive from your community members and different organizations?
6. In your opinion, how can communities and different organizations/departments support child headed households.
7. Which part of the experiences as the head of a household, do you regard as most challenging?
8. Can you please describe in detail how you deal with the above said challenges?
9. In your own words can you describe what life is for a young orphaned child heading a household? that is what does this means to you.

ADDENDUM C

Private Bag X 7213
Witbank
1035
21 July 2015

The Acting Child Protection Co-ordinator
Nkangala District
Private Bag X 7213
WITBANK
1035

Dear Ms V.I. Maduma

REQUEST FOR ACCESS TO INTERVIEW ORPHANED CHILDREN HEADING HOUSEHOLDS AT EMALAHLENI SUB-DISTRICT

The undersigned social work supervisor is currently studying towards obtaining the Masters Degree in Social Work in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences at the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University. As an academic prerequisite for the attainment of the said degree, I am involved in a mini-dissertation under the supervision of Professor BMP Setlalentoa.

My study focuses on the experiences of orphaned children heading households in Emalahleni Sub-district. I am hereby asking permission to carry out this research within the jurisdiction of your Department, to invite and interview orphaned children heading households who are under the care of your Department to participate in this research.

The study will involve in-depth and audio taped interviews with interested and selected participants. A professional debriefing session will also be held with the participants, where required. All the collected data will be kept confidential and participants' identities will also remain anonymous as this study is just for academic purposes.

As a professional social worker and of course as a researcher, I therefore declare to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the prospective participants. The participants will be expected to give their informed consent for participation in a written format.

The findings of this study will be utilised to formulate recommendations which will assist policy makers in developing programmes and policies that will cater for the majority of the needs of the orphans living in child headed households.

It will be highly appreciated if you can indicate your response to allow the undersigned to access orphans heading households at Emalahleni sub-district by completing the attached form.

Your positive response and cooperation in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

LM Mahasha

Ms Lekate Magrett Mahasha
Social work Supervisor –DSD Emakhazeni sub-district
Masters Degree in social work candidate

ADDENDUM D

CONSENT TO ALLOW THE RESEARCHER TO ACCESS ORPHANED CHILDREN HEADING HOUSEHOLDS AT EMALAHLENI SUB-DISTRICT

I, ----------being the manager of ----------
----------have read and comprehend the contents of the request letter to allow Ms Mahasha as a researcher to access orphans living in child headed households in areas within the jurisdiction of----------at Emalahleni Sub-district. (Please make a cross on the bolded option 1 or option 2 below and put your signature under the crossed option only)

Option 1:

I accept and give consent to allow the researcher to access orphaned children living in child headed households, depending of course on the consent of individuals participating.

Signature:----------
Date:----------

Option 2:

I do not accept and give consent to the researcher to access orphaned children living in child headed households,for the following reasons:

- ----------
- ----------

Signature:----------
Date:----------

ADDENDUM E

Private Bag X 7213
Witbank
1035
21 July 2015

Dear Prospective participant

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH ON ORPHANS HEADING HOUSEHOLDS

The undersigned social worker is currently studying towards obtaining the Masters Degree in Social Work in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences at the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University. As an academic prerequisite for the attainment of the said degree, I am involved in a mini-dissertation under the supervision of Professor BMP Setlalentoa.

My study focuses on the experiences of orphaned children heading households in Emalahleni Sub-district. I am hereby asking permission to conduct an interview with you as a head of a household.

The study will involve in-depth and audio taped interviews with all interested and selected participants. A professional debriefing session will also be held with the participants, where required. All the collected data will be kept confidential and as a participant, your identity will remain anonymous as this is just for academic purposes.

As a professional social worker and of course as a researcher, I undertake to respect your rights, needs, values and desires as the prospective participant. Each participant is expected to give his or her informed consent for participation in a

written format. It should be noted that this research is for academic purposes, as a result there is no remuneration you will get after participating. It is hoped that you will also learn a lot from the researcher.

The findings of this study will be utilised to formulate recommendations which will assist policy makers in developing programmes and policies which will cater majority of the needs of the orphans living in child headed households.

It will be highly appreciated, if you can indicate your response by completing the attached consent form.

Your positive response, cooperation and participation are highly appreciated in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

Ms Lekate Magrett Mahasha
Social work Supervisor –DSD Emakhazeni sub-district
Masters Degree in social work candidate

ADDENDUM F

CONSENT BY CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH ON THE EXPERIENCES OF ORPHANED CHILDREN HEADING HOUSEHOLDS AT EMALAHLENI SUB-DISTRICT

I, ----------have read and comprehend the contents of the request letter to participate in a research to be conducted by Ms Margaret Mahasha as a researcher on the experiences of orphans heading households at Emalahleni Sub-district.

I, hereby consent to participate.

Signature: ----------

Date: ----------

ADDENDUM G

CONSENT BY SOCIAL SERVICE PRACTITIONERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH ON THE EXPERIENCES OF ORPHANED CHILDREN HEADING HOUSEHOLDS AT EMALAHLENI SUB-DISTRICT

I, ----------(social service practitioner) have read and comprehend the contents of the request letter to participate in a research to be conducted by Ms Margaret Mahasha as a researcher on the experiences of orphans heading households at Emalahleni Sub-district.

I, hereby consent to participate.

Signature: ----------

Date: ----------

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Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee
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Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT

Based on approval by the Human Resource Research Ethics Committee, Mafikeng Campus, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: Experiences of child heads of households in Emalahleni Sub District, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.

Project Leader: Dr BMP Setlalentoa
Student: LM Mahasha

Ethics number: NWU-00291-15-A9

Approval date: 2015-07-20 Expiry date: 2020-07-19 Category N/A

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC:
  - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project,
  - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-RERC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC retains the right to:
  - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
  - withdraw or postpone approval if:
    - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
    - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-IRERC or that information has been false or misrepresented,
    - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
    - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Linda du Plessis

Prof Linda du Plessis
Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)