

**THE LEARNING CHALLENGES OF FEMALE
HEADS OF CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS IN
THE KHARIEP DISTRICT**

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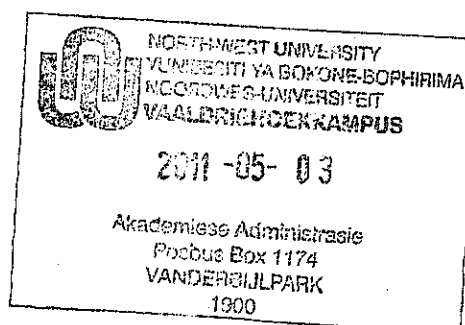
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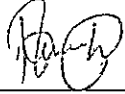
Promoter: Prof MM Grosser

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DECLARATION

I, Lepheana Alice Mamotsheare, declare that THE LEARNING CHALLENGES OF FEMALE HEADS OF CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS IN THE XHARIEP DISTRICT is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Signature

Date

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Lerato Lepheana, and my son, Thato Lepheana, who offered me unconditional love and support throughout the course of this study. I also dedicate this work to my mother, Corina Lepheana, who supported me all the way since the beginning of my studies.

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ABSTRACT

In this study the learning challenges faced by Black orphaned girl learners in the Xhariep District who head households, were explored.

A literature study was undertaken to highlight the causes, magnitude and effects of child-headed households and to establish the learning challenges in general experienced by learners who head households. Important prerequisites for effective learning such as parental expectations, self-esteem, goal orientation, school attendance, positive attributions, motivation, need fulfilment, self-regulation, self-efficacy, cognitive development, parental involvement and socio-economic factors were explored. The literature review informed the conceptual framework of the study, and provided the framework for designing interview questions that were used to gain a deeper understanding of the learning challenges experienced by Black girl learners who head households.

By means of qualitative, phenomenological research, one-on-one interviews were conducted with a convenient sample of a purposively selected group of 10 Black girl learners at Secondary School Level who head households in the Xhariep District of the Free State Department of Education.

The interpretation of the data revealed various learning challenges which are experienced by these learners due to their unfavourable circumstances as heads of households. The interview data revealed that the girls who took part in the study experience a lack of basic needs such as food and money and love and belonging. Furthermore, they experience emotional problems due to the death of their parents and the stressful situation of having to cope with numerous responsibilities at home and school. Due to the mentioned problems, the participants experience learning challenges related to irregular school attendance, difficulty in coping with and concentrating on their schoolwork, poor achievement and low self-esteem. According to the responses of the learners, it is difficult to be a child and a parent at the same time, having to account for all the responsibilities of being a learner and

accomplishing the parental role. This study is concluded with recommendations to teachers on how to assist Black girl learners who head households in the Xhariep District.

Key words: child-headed households, orphanhood, learning challenges, need fulfilment.