

Expenditure patterns of kin foster parents in Lethabong Township, North West Province.

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Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Social Work at the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis, which I submit to the North West University, is a presentation of my own work. Where I have included inputs of others, I have made an effort to duly acknowledge this in the report. I have not yet obtained a degree based on this work.

**Date:** 16 March 2016

**Signature:**

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## **ACRONYMS**

AIDS : Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CSG : Child Support Grant

FCG : Foster Care Grant

HIV : Human Immune Virus

TB : Tuberculosis

SASSA : South African Social Security Agency

UNAIDS : United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS

UNICEF : United Nations Children's Fund

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study focused on how the foster parents in Lethabong utilise the foster child grant which they receive in respect of their foster children. Foster care is a temporary arrangement made to care for children whose parents are not able to care for them due to reasons such as death, imprisonment, divorce, alcoholism or any psychosocial challenge that makes it difficult to care for their children. The state steps in temporarily while reconstruction services or a suitable alternative placement is arranged. A grant is given to foster parents to provide for the needs of foster children as outlined in the Children's Act No 13 of 2005 as amended. This study explored the expenditure patterns of the foster parents and examined the perspectives of other knowledge holders who are in close proximity with the foster families. Emphasis is on how the above Act is implemented in terms of caring for children.

A qualitative approach was adopted to gather rich data and gain a deep understanding. A non-probability, purposive sampling was used for a sample of twenty participants. The criteria for selection included being a foster parent, foster child and lived in the selected area of study. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis was used.

The findings revealed that it is not only foster parents who make decisions about this grant but their foster children too. It appeared that there is consensus and cooperation between them, however, some key informants in the study disagreed. On the one hand, the key informants expressed a view that some foster parents do not spend the grant as expected and tend to misuse it. On the other hand, the foster parents indicated that the grant is used for the needs of their foster children but also for the children's wants as a form of positive reinforcement.

In addition, the parents stated that they fully comprehend that the grant is meant to assist in the upbringing of the foster children and not as an extra income to the parent or their households. These findings from the children and their parents reflect an acceptable way of living and of spending the grant. The foster care grant may be the only chance for some children to grow up within the family unit. This is due to the admission by some parents that they struggle to raise their own children without an income.

The study concludes that the grant be increased as the current amount does not meet all the children's needs social workers should intensify monitoring processes in order to curb the misuse of the grant.

# CHAPTER ONE

## ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction and background

There are times when biological parents are not able to care for their children due to a variety of reasons. As a consequence, those children require someone to care for them, preferably within the family setting although it is not always possible. In order to provide care, the children are placed in the care of foster parents. Foster care is a form of alternative placement that is regulated by law. According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013:2), based in the United States, “foster care settings include, but are not limited to, non-relative foster family homes, relative foster homes (whether payments are being made or not,) group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities and pre-adoptive homes”. The above mentioned Child Welfare institution has also indicated that in the year 2012 approximately 399,546 children were in foster care in the United States and that over a quarter were placed with kin.

According to Johnson and Dorrington and the United Nations Children’s Fund (as cited in Freeman and Nkomo, 2006:503), “large numbers of children are victims of the growing HIV&AIDS pandemic. Significantly more will become orphaned and made ‘vulnerable’ as a result of the disease”. Hall (2014:1) has also alluded to the fact that in South Africa “the number of Foster Care Grants (FCGs) remained stable for many years while foster care was applicable only to children in the traditional child protection system. Its rapid expansion since 2003 coincides with the rise in HIV-related orphaning and an implied policy change by the Department of Social Development (DSD), which from 2003 started encouraging family members, particularly grandmothers, caring for orphaned children to apply for foster care and the associated grant”.

In the United States and Hong Kong “foster care is said to provide residential family care to children under 18 years of age whose parents cannot adequately take care of them due to various reasons, so that they can continue to enjoy family life until they can re-unite with their families, join an adoptive family or live independently. Also,

foster parents receive a monthly allowance for the maintenance of foster children, (Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, 2014).

Foster care is therefore considered to provide a home environment that takes care and affords a child protection and nurturing. The South African Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended in Section 181 further outlines the purpose of foster care which is "to protect and nurture children by providing a safe, healthy environment with positive support, to "promote the goals of permanency planning, first towards family reunification, or by connecting children to other safe and nurturing family relationships intended to last a lifetime." Lastly, it is meant to "respect the individual and family by demonstrating respect for cultural, ethnic and community diversity".

Social workers are authorised officials who are expected to declare the child as one in need of care and protection before being placed in alternative care. Those who are in need of care and protection include, but are not limited to, those that are neglected, abused, abandonment or orphaned with no visible means of support, maltreated, exploited and living on the streets.

In South Africa foster parents receive financial assistance to care for the foster children. Since 1 April 2014, foster parents receive a monthly grant of R860.00 (Blacksash, 2014:1). This is in line with the Constitution of South Africa Section 27 (1996:11) that posits that everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance, and obliges the state to take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realization of each of these rights".

It has come to the researcher's attention, as a practicing Social Worker that the foster care grant may sometimes be used to support the entire family. It is against this background that this study was pursued to explore and understand the expenditure patterns of foster parents, to assess whether they are in line with the envisaged assistance as outlined in the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 and the Children's Act

38 of 2005 as amended. The study was conducted in Lethabong, Rustenburg in the North West Province, South Africa.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Orphaned children are placed in the foster care of their care-givers after being declared in need of care and protection as outlined in the Children Act 38 of 2005 as amended. The foster parents then receive financial assistance to meet the basic needs of the foster children. Some foster parents in Lethabong could be utilising the grant as extra income for themselves to do whatever they desire without using it for the foster child. It could be that they do not know and understand the main aim of the FCG by the way they make use of it.

Studies have been conducted on foster care some of which included the perspectives of social workers on related (kin) foster care, without foster children and foster parents as participants. Further, a study by Meintjies, Budlender, Giese and Johnson (2003:6) found that the purpose of processing foster care placements for orphans was reported by many service providers to be less about legalising the custody of the children than about accessing FCG to support them and households that they live in.

This particular study is different as it had both foster parents and foster children as participants to hear their opinions, attitudes and preferences about the FCG from their life experience. Foster children were able to reveal to the researcher what positive impact the FCG has had in their lives, whilst parents were also able to indicate whether their expenditure patterns are ideal or not for the positive upbringing of the children. Prospective foster parents have various motives for applying for foster care; therefore, they utilise the accompanying grant differently.

The study aimed to reveal whether the FCG, like Child Support Grant (CSG) was likely to cater for general household expenses rather than being spent solely to maintain the targeted child as has been found by Seyisi and Proudlock (2009:5). They conducted investigations in 2009 and compiled a report on the impact of the child support grant on children and their families when the grant lapsed. Their investigations indicated that

the CSG assists not only the children but their families too. Also, that the CSG actually assists families out of poverty as it was initiated as a poverty alleviation programme. This study therefore tried to find answers to the following research questions:

- What are the expenditure patterns of the foster parents in Lethabong?
- Are the foster parents in Lethabong employed?
- What was the motive for applying for foster care?
- What is the FCG used for?
- How do foster parents spend the FCG?

### **1.3 General aim of the study**

The aim of this study therefore, was to investigate how foster parents spend the FCG in Lethabong, North West Province.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The general objectives of the study were the following:

- To investigate the expenditure patterns of foster parents.
- To gather information on the socio-economic status of the foster families.
- To establish the views of the foster parents about the importance of the foster care grant in the lives of foster children.
- To explore the views of foster children on how the grant benefits them.
- To explore the views of key informants on the expenditure of the FCG.
- To propose recommendations to policy makers responsible for social assistance and social service managers.

### **1.5 Definition of terms**

The following terms are defined by the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 as amended as follows:

*Beneficiary*: means a person who receives social assistance in terms of sections 6, 7, 8, 9,10,11,12 or 13 of the Act.

*Child Support Grant:* means a grant made in terms of section 6 of the Act. It is received by a person who is the primary care giver of that child, subject to section 5.

*Child:* any person under the age of 18 years, according to Section 1 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

*Foster Child Grant:* means a grant made in terms of section 8 of the Act. Subject to section 5, a foster parent is eligible for a FCG for a child for as long as that child needs such care if: - the foster child is in need of care and he or she satisfies the requirements of the Child Care Act 74 of 1983.

*Foster Parent:* means a person, except a parent of the child concerned, in whose custody a foster child has been placed in terms of any law, or a tutor to whom a letter of tutorship has been issued in terms of Chapter iv of the Administration of estates Act, 1965( Act No 66 of 1965).

*Orphan:* a child who has no surviving parent caring for him or her, Section 1 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005.

*Social Grant:* means a child support grant, a care dependency grant, a foster child grant, a disability grant, an older persons grant, a war veterans grant and a grant in aid.

*Social assistance:* According to Aislinn, Zenobia, Lauren and Yuri (2008:1) "Social Assistance refers specifically to an income transfer provided by the government in the form of grants or financial awards to poor households or individuals".

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

### **1.6.1 Theory**

The study may show that orphaned children in the care of relatives are marginalized in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended as they are categorized with children in need of care and protection. Previous studies on FCG do not reveal the views of both the foster parents and children, on how it should or is being spent. The focus has been on whether or not children already in the care of relatives should be declared in need of care and protection. In addition, there has been a debate about what "visible means of support" refers to as stated in the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as

amended. New social work strategies may be developed based on the outcome of the study.

### **1.6.2 Practice**

The criteria that Social workers use for screening may be modified to also take into consideration the socio-economic factors of prospective foster parents. This is important considering that, if the grant is the only income for the family it might not be used for the best interest of the child concerned.

Furthermore, social workers may find ways of intensifying supervision services, which are to be conducted on a quarterly basis. In this manner, the grant could be used for the best interest of the foster children as intended. The social work profession views people as knowers of their problems with immense potential to function well when assisted with the necessary resources.

Social workers may also recommend foster care only in cases where they are satisfied that the grant will be used to benefit the foster child. The presiding officers are the ones to grant the foster care application, they may do so after being satisfied that foster children will be cared for. Lastly, strategies may be developed to address the identified socio-economic challenges that contribute to misuse of the grant.

### **1.6.3 Policy**

This study may add to the body of knowledge with its findings being utilised by the policy makers to be aware of how the FCG is used and whether it benefits foster children. It could highlight policy changes or failure in implementing the policy.

### **1.7 Assumption**

The foster care grant is used as another form of income to cater for household needs of all family members.

## **1.8 Structure of the report**

**Chapter one** - Orientation to the study

**Chapter two** - Literature review and theoretical framework

**Chapter three** - Research methodology

**Chapter four** - Data presentation and analysis

**Chapter five** - Findings, recommendations and conclusion

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the literature review and the theoretical framework against which the study is based. The social security system, which has a social assistance programme component, will be thoroughly explained. The researcher further expounds on foster care as a form of alternative care and gives an overview of the numbers of children placed in foster care. Moreover, this chapter covers the foster care grant as a social assistance program for children in need of care and protection as described by the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. This Act together with other legislation on which foster care is based will be discussed.

#### **2.2 Literature review**

##### **2.2.1 Social security, a safety net for vulnerable groups**

Social security, as outlined in the South African Constitution (1996), is one of the rights enjoyed by South African citizens. It is also stated that it includes social assistance when individuals are unable to support themselves or their dependents. According to Goldblatt (2014:40) "South Africa's social security system has a relatively large social assistance component that is critical to poverty alleviation". The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) has defined social security as "policies which ensure that all people have adequate economic and social protection during unemployment, ill health, maternity, child-rearing, widowhood, disability and old age, by means of contributory and non-contributory schemes for providing for their basic needs".

A similar definition has been provided by the International Labour Organisation as cited in Patel (2007:123) which states that social security is "the protection which society provides for its members through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction or earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; the provision of medical care; and the provision of subsidies for families with children". Patel (2007:123) has found that

social security offers vulnerable individuals protection against an unacceptable standard of living by providing them with the necessary resources to meet their basic needs. It is further recorded in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) that poverty alleviation and income distribution are two of the spheres of social security.

Heintz and Lund (2012:8) have stated that “social welfare policies that emerged during processes of industrialization can be grouped into two categories (i) those that provide social security and insurance for employed workers and (ii) those that provide support for segments of the population who do not participate in the paid labour force - children, elderly people, and people with disabilities so severe that they cannot participate”. Some countries offer both and these may be funded privately or by the state.

Social security and social assistance are available in most developed and developing countries. According to Razavi (2011:6) it is not only in South Africa but also in countries such as Costa Rica and Chile where non-contributory pensions have been available through a means test. She further indicated that in other developing countries, which include Botswana and Namibia, citizens access them as a universal right. Moreover, Razavi (2011:6) has reported that since the 1990s, the cash transfers in Brazil are at the core of their social protection system. Subbarao, Bonnerje, Braithwaite, Carvalho, Ezemenari, Graham and Thompson, (1997:35) have observed that “social assistance cash transfers work best in countries with relatively little poverty”.

In Swaziland there is a provident fund and social assistance system in place. Civil servants contribute towards their provident fund whilst, like in South Africa, the government carries all the costs of the social assistance system, Social Security Administration (2013:175). An analogous system is operative in the Seychelles where the total cost of the social security system is funded through “ear-marked income tax”, (Social Security Administration, 2013:161). In contrast, the government of Rwanda does not contribute to its social insurance system. The self-employed people, the employer and insured people all make a contribution towards it, Social Security Administration (2013:150). Like in Rwanda, employed people and the employer fund the social security system with the exception of the self-employed, Social Security Administration (2013:135).

The inception of social security dates back to years preceding the 1994 Democratic elections in South Africa, in fact, even before the Second World War there were social security programmes in developed and developing countries. Social security was racially discriminative during the apartheid era and has gradually being extended to all races. According to Van der Berg and Bredenkamp as cited in Patel (2007:122) there has, however, been a paradigm shift as currently citizens of all races are able to benefit equally from the system with the focus being on the social assistance programme. Lund as cited in Patel (2007:122) identified South Africa as one of the countries with that British and European influence on its social security system.

According to Patel (2007:124), “social assistance is the most significant social security strategy and refers to a range of benefits in cash or in kind intended to provide protection for the most needy in society”. It is also “one of South Africa’s most effective poverty reduction programmes”, (Patel, 2007:126). Furthermore, social assistance programs have also been called safety nets by other authors.

Subbarao *et al.* (1997:2) have defined safety nets as “programs that protect a person or household against two adverse outcomes: chronic incapacity to work and earn (*chronic poverty*) and a decline in this capacity from a marginal situation that provides minimal means for survival with few reserves (*transient poverty*)”.

They further explain that “social assistance is given according to a household’s or individual’s income level or ability to earn income” (Subbarao *et al.*, 1997:35). In such an instance, a means test is used to determine whether one qualifies for that assistance or not.

According to the Department of Social Development Annual Report (2003) as cited in Patel (2007:128) it is indicated that social assistance provides a safety net for poor people by protecting them or their households against both permanent and temporary poverty. The South African government spends a large amount of money on social grants as has been noted by Leatte and Budlender (2006:2) that “the entire non-contributory cash grant system is funded from tax revenue”. There are different forms of social grants and they are paid to various groups of people. The social grants in South Africa are outlined in the Social Assistance Act (2004) as child support grant,

care dependency grant, foster child grant, disability grant, older person's grant, war veteran's grant and grant in aid. These "seven non-contributory and non-conditional cash grants constitute social assistance in South Africa, which goes directly to almost 25% of the population each month and indirectly assists many more" (Leatt & Budlender,2006:3).

In a report on Workshop on the Children's Bill, Lofell (2005:6) pointed out that foster care has vital implications for social security, for example, foster care grant. She stated that there should be financial aid offered to informal care givers in an attempt to relieve the foster care system, statutory social workers and the Children's Courts.

### **2.2.2 Foster care as an alternative placement**

Within the formal child care system in South Africa, foster care is normally considered to be the preferred form of substitute care for children who cannot remain with their biological families and who are not available for adoption. Foster care placement is a temporary measure of caring for children in need of care and protection, (Children's Act, 2005). It is the legal placement of children into the care of people who are not their biological parents. A foster parent is that person under whose care the child has been placed by the court. The reason for the placement may be that the child is orphaned, abandoned, at risk, abused or neglected.

This form of placement comes with a cash incentive to assist foster parents to meet the needs of their foster children and it is referred to as the foster care grant. This is one of the three social grants which are meant for the benefit of children in South Africa (Social Assistance Act 2014). Foster parents and foster children may not be blood relatives for the placement to take place, Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended (2010).

"A large number of children in the United States spend time in foster care separated from their parents. Unable to remain in the care of their parents as a result of abuse or neglect, these children are placed in various foster care settings, including with members of their extended family, with unrelated foster families, or in group homes" (Duncan and Argys 2007:114). Similar to the South African system, "care for foster

children is supervised by the state welfare agencies and is subsidized by the state” (Duncan & Argys, 2007:114).

### **2.2.3 The use of foster care grant**

The foster care grant is one of the three social grants meant for children. “Foster care grant is the oldest child grant in South Africa. For decades it assisted the small numbers of children who had been placed in foster care by the courts, and the number remained below 40 000 for many years. Ten years ago, when the HIV-related orphaning rates started rising rapidly, the use of the FCG changed” (Hall & Proudlock, 2011:2).

The Children Count of the Children’s Institute, University of Cape Town, has set out to explore whether the FCG should still form part of the protection system of children as was initially intended or be adjusted to form part of the poverty alleviation strategy, (Hall & Proudlock, 2011:1). In that way it would perhaps then be acceptable to make use of the FCG for general household needs.

Furthermore, Hall and Proudlock (2011:1) have also outlined that it is actually not clear on who the recipients of this grant should be. The Children’s Act 38 Of 2005 as amended Section 150 outlines that a child in need of care and protection is one that is orphaned or abandoned and does not have any visible means of support. Even with that said, children who have families caring for them still receive the foster care grant. This is evidence that if an orphan is in a family unit that family will surely care for him or her as has been done in the past before the initiation of the FCG.

Duncan and Argys (2007:115) further established that in some states there are variances in the amount of the foster care payment depending on the age of the foster children. What they found was that for younger children, two year olds for instance, the payment is much less than older children. “Allowing this estimate to vary by age indicates that increasing the foster care payment has a slightly larger effect on the placement stability of older children as compared to younger children” (Duncan & Argys, 2007: 115). It appears that families prefer to care for children when there is income. Fortunately for South African children, the amount of the FCG does not vary

according to age. According to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Pravin Gordhan, the foster care grant will be R860.00 from 1 April 2016, (Budget speech, 2016).

Freeman and Nkomo (2006:309) added that “given the people’s economic and social situation and their expressed need for assistance, it is clear that guardianship strategies and assistance is crucial. We are acutely aware that incentives of grants are open to abuse. However, in the desperate social and economic circumstances in which many people in Africa live, it seems that some children may only be incorporated into families if families are assisted to do so”.

Women sustain a burden due to the consequences of past policies, where men would be employed in various industries and women remained at home to raise children and build the home. Cultural practices, such as patriarchy, also reinforced the exclusion of women in economic activities, (White Paper on families in South Africa, 2012:23). It appeared to the researcher that the socio- economic status of some women is being improved by the social grants, especially the CSG and FCG, as they no longer have to be solely dependent on men for financial support in the household. Women can make decisions with the income that they have.

Lofell (2005:6) indicated that there is a need to avail another form of financial assistance for informal caregivers to alleviate the burden from the foster care grant. Increases in the number of foster care grants per province were greatest in those with large numbers of orphaned children which are the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. However, by 2009 the foster care system itself was struggling to keep pace with the number of FCGs due to the required initial investigations and reports by social workers and court-ordered placements through a Children’s Court.

Hall and Proudlock (2011:1) stated that “South Africa has the largest social grant system in Southern Africa with child grants alone reaching nearly 11 million children in 2011. In the context of high HIV prevalence and rising numbers of orphans, the use and function of the various child grants needs to be reconsidered”. Moreover, they added that the FCG was initially introduced as part of a child protection system unlike

the CSG which was more of a poverty alleviation strategy. It is further explained that the FCG was to be given after the foster parent and child had appeared before a Magistrate of the Children's Court and issued with a court order to be submitted at SASSA. The children in this study are not abused or neglected children as described by Hall and Proudlock (2011:1) but orphans who have lost either one or both biological parents to death.

According to the then Minister in the Presidency Mr. Collins Chabane (2013:29-32) "South Africa still ranks among the most economically unequal societies in the world". He added that in order to address the high poverty and inequality in South Africa the government came up with the social assistance support to provide appropriate social assistance to eligible beneficiaries. In fact, he indicated that the number of grant beneficiaries was largely due to the introduction of the CSG in 2008".

#### **2.2.4 Keeping children in the family unit**

According to the White Paper on Families in South Africa (2012:34), "the White Paper for Social Welfare is the first overall social welfare policy under the 1996 Constitution and it reaffirms Government's commitment to securing basic welfare and human rights and active citizen participation in promoting human well-being. Its stated vision is to reform the apartheid era residual social welfare system and to bring it in line with the new constitutional framework and binding international laws. The White Paper for Social Welfare's developmental paradigm aims to guide the implementation of pro-family policies and services in the country".

Around the world children are placed in foster homes to enable them to grow in families even in the absence of their biological parents. Foster care placement is a measure that was initiated to assist children to grow up in families with people to care for them. According to Zeihl (as cited in the White Paper on Families in South Africa, 2012:5), a family was stated to be an important segment to a functioning society. It is vital to establish good foundations in the family for its members to be able to socialize and play their expected roles in society.

During the time when the CSG lapsed when the children turned 18 years old, their care givers indicated that this lapsing meant, amongst others, that families could not

meet the expense of electricity and water, could not afford transport fare to seek employment and that grandparents would have to make use of their old age pension to care for their grandchildren, (Seyisi & Proudlock, 2009:5). This study explores whether the same could be said about the FCG.

Further, the White Paper on Families in South Africa (2012:7) outlines that the “five major social assistance programmes in the country focus only on specific individuals, namely: older persons (The State Old Age Pension), people with disabilities (The Disability Grant), and children (the Child Support Grant, the Foster Care Grant and the Care Dependency Grant)”. Furthermore, it should be noted “that the needs of such individuals may not necessary be congruent with those of the family unit (White Paper on Families in South Africa, 2012)”.

In addition, it is stated in the White Paper on families (2012:7) that “past and present poverty analyses and strategies of intervention have also primarily concentrated on households, thereby causing policies to overlook intra-family dynamics in the country”. Where members of a household do not have sufficient income, it may be difficult for the foster parent to direct the FCG, which may be the only source of income, to that child’s needs. This is due to the fact that the needs of that child “may not be congruent with those of the family unit” White Paper on families (2012:7).

The UN framework for alternative care of children (2010) outlines the guidelines for providing alternative care and emphasise the principles of necessity and appropriateness. It must be necessary to place a child in foster care, and the child should only be placed in alternative care that suits his/her individual needs and situation. It means the social workers should ensure that these two principles are adhered to when placing a child in foster care as an alternative care.

The guidelines emphasise that lack of income or resources, or conditions directly related to poverty, should never be the only justification for removing a child from parental care, or for preventing a child in alternative care from being reunited with his or her family. Such conditions are signs that the family needs support to meet its responsibilities.

### **2.2.5 The number of children in foster care**

This study was informed by the high growing rate of foster care cases that are increasing in South Africa, as demonstrated by the literature sourced from the SASSA (SASSA, 2014) database particularly in the North West Province. Makiwane and Berry (2013:4) have indicated that there is an urgent need to introduce family-friendly policies in South Africa that will reduce the level of poverty among children and enhance intergenerational wealth creation.

It is not only children from abusive parents who are placed in foster care but also those who are orphaned as stated in Section 150 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. Their number has been stated to continuously grow due to, amongst other reasons, the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Foster children are placed with parents that may have their own biological children, however, in some instances foster children are placed with grandparents whose biological children are adults and live in their own homes with their families.

There has been a significant increase in foster care cases in South Africa. This was due to the inclusion of orphans from the year 2003, which was necessitated by an increase in deaths of parents due to HIV and AIDS. This shows that more foster parents applied for and received the FCG. Furthermore, the caseload of social workers and the Children's Courts escalated. Hall (2014:1) states that in South Africa by March 2014 the number of FCGs had increased by over 50,000 per year from the time orphans were brought into the foster care system.

By the year 2010 the number of children receiving the FCG in the North West province was 38 656 and 40 726 by March 2014. The increase is also noticed in the UK through Farmer and Moyers' (2008:13) findings of the study on "Kinship care", which reveal that the UK "government statistics show that there has been a steady rise in the numbers of children in care in England who are fostered with family and friends.

The SASSA Social Grants Statistical summaries of the year 2014 in South Africa are explained as follows:

Fact sheet issue no. 8 of 2014, 31 August 2014, provided statistical summary of social grants in all provinces of South Africa as at 31 August 2014. Social grants mean the

Old Age Grant (OAG), War Veterans grant (WVG), Disability grant (DG), Grant in Aid (GIA), Child Support Grant (CSG), Foster Child Grant (FCG) and Care Dependency grant (CDG). In the particular case of the North West Province, the August 2014 table showed that there were 43, 053 registered FCGs with SASSA and 778,784 registered CSGs. The previous month, July 2014 there were 42,766 registered FCGs with SASSA. The Kwa-Zulu Natal province had the most number of beneficiaries of social grants by 31 August 2014. It is not only the FCG but almost all the beneficiaries of the other grants are highest in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

**Table 1: Total number of social grants by grant type and region as at 31 August 2014 Region**

|              | <b>OAG</b> | <b>WV<br/>G</b> | <b>DG</b>     | <b>GIA</b> | <b>CDG</b>  | <b>FCG</b>  | <b>CSG</b>     | <b>Total</b>   |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>EC</b>    | 522,051    | 53              | 181,26<br>3   | 13,94<br>9 | 18,60<br>5  | 122,2<br>35 | 1,828,45<br>4  | 2,686,61<br>0  |
| <b>FS</b>    | 179,021    | 6               | 77,778        | 1,666      | 6,240       | 42,80<br>5  | 644,503        | 952,019        |
| <b>GP</b>    | 462,384    | 93              | 113,13<br>5   | 2,481      | 15,81<br>0  | 59,44<br>6  | 1,603,27       | 2,25,628       |
| <b>KZN</b>   | 620,107    | 47              | 294,41<br>1   | 33,53<br>0 | 35,94<br>2  | 134,9<br>89 | 2,731,39<br>7  | 3,850,42<br>3  |
| <b>LP</b>    | 424,818    | 27              | 92,889        | 15,26<br>1 | 12,87<br>2  | 63,32<br>5  | 1,669,83<br>6  | 2,279,02<br>8  |
| <b>MP</b>    | 220,831    | 16              | 78,719        | 4,190      | 9,174       | 36,66<br>1  | 1,013,91<br>4  | 1,363,50<br>5  |
| <b>NC</b>    | 77,875     | 10              | 49,329        | 5,827      | 4,707       | 15,22<br>9  | 283,448        | 436,425        |
| <b>NW</b>    | 228,057    | 12              | 85,795        | 6,097      | 8,741       | 43,05<br>3  | 778,784        | 1,150,53<br>9  |
| <b>WC</b>    | 281,983    | 109             | 153,96<br>6   | 10,83<br>1 | 11,54<br>1  | 30,67<br>8  | 904,118        | 1,393,22<br>6  |
| <b>Total</b> | 3,017,127  | 373             | 1,127,2<br>85 | 93,83<br>2 | 123,6<br>32 | 548,4<br>21 | 11,457,7<br>33 | 16,368,4<br>03 |

More and more relatives and non-relatives are left to care for orphaned children as it can be seen by the FCG beneficiaries' increase. The case load of social workers is increasing as they have more investigations to conduct and reports to compile and present in Court. In fact, the courts are also placing many children in foster care as a consequence of this increase. Social workers end up focusing most attention on foster care related cases as opposed to other types of cases.

In his introduction, Makgatho (2010:iii) states that "the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is increasing with an immense percentage leaving pressure on the grandparents as primary caregivers and the main supporters of orphans in the families". Many parents are passing away leaving their children with relatives to take care of and protect them. The deaths of the parents of orphaned children have been caused by various illnesses which include cancer, Tuberculosis (TB) and AIDS which is one of the worst in the world. "The UNAIDS declared in 2006 that South Africa's AIDS epidemic, one of the worst in the world, shows no evidence of a decline" UNAIDS (as cited in Van Dyk, 2008:8).

Moreover, Mabuza (2013:3) states that the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town has shown that in the year 2011 there were more than one million orphans living in poverty with relatives, these orphans grow up with grandparents, uncles, sisters and other extended family members and this number is increasing rapidly. In addition, Toreman (as cited in the White Paper on families in South Africa, 2012:20), has outlined that skip-generation households have often been described as "fragile" largely because the grandparents in the households often simultaneously struggle with their own personal health, custodial matters, financial constraints and obligations as well as the psychosocial and behavioural issues they face with their grandchildren. Foster children also coerce their foster parents to misuse the grant.

### **2.2.6 The legislation governing services for Children**

In South Africa, like many other countries, specific legislation that outlines caring for these children is in place, that is, the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended and the South African Constitution which is the supreme law that protects children. The South

African government has had to intervene due to the increasing number of children that need care and protection. This intervention has come by putting in place measures in the form of policies and legislation, to focus on the best interest of the children. The Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 as amended regulates social grants such as the FCG that is paid to foster parents. Social assistance refers “specifically to an income transfer provided by the government in the form of grants or financial awards to poor households or individuals” (Aislinn, Zenobia, Lauren & Yuri, 2008:1).

The South African Constitution is the supreme law of the country and is concerned with the rights of the citizens, (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996). “The cornerstone and the premise for all policies and legislation in the South African democracy are entrenched in the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, which enshrines the rights of people in the country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996). Furthermore, the right of access to social security and social assistance is crucial to the realisation of other human rights.

The South African Constitution (1996), Section 27, outlines that this right pertains to ‘everyone’, which includes children. Section 28(1) (c) also guarantees every child the right to social services. The term ‘social services’ refers to a group of services such as, basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care, education, social security and social welfare services, and family care or alternative care. The Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 provides for three types of social grants intended for the benefit of children: the Child Support Grant (CSG), the FCG and the Care Dependency Grant (CDG). For children from poor families, these grants are important to ensure their basic survival and their enjoyment of such other rights as the rights to education, to an adequate standard of living and to be protected from exploitative labour practices” (Mirugi-Mukundi, 2010:7).

The Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended, Section 167, highlights three forms of alternative care, namely: foster care, child and youth care centre following an order of a court in terms of this Children’s Act or Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 and temporary safe care. Section 167 of the same Act explains that foster care is a form of alternative care and that children may be placed with relatives or people with whom

they are not related to. Section 171 states that “a child is in foster care if the child has been placed in the care of a person who is not the parent or guardian of the child as a result of an order of the Children’s Court or a transfer.” Furthermore, the same Act defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years.

The Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended which came into effect on 01 April 2010 had contrasting provisions regarding the principle of the foster care grant leading to various interpretations by magistrates. Some magistrates would not place orphans in foster care if they had already been in the care of relatives, reasoning that those orphans were not “without visible means of support” as outlined in Section 150 (1) (a) of the above mentioned Act, (Hall & Proudlock, 2011:2). Freeman and Nkomo (2006:504) also note the confusion stating that “Questions around who constitutes an orphaned or vulnerable child are complex and no internationally accepted agreement is yet in place”.

The screening of foster parents is conducted by social workers. This process includes both home visits by the social worker and office visits by the potential foster parent. Also, the prospective foster parent needs to be, amongst others, mentally and physically stable to be entrusted with the care of the foster child. The Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended (2005:126), further suggests that some of the aspects that should be taken into consideration during the screening are the cultural, religious and linguistic background of the prospective foster parent and child.

According to the SASSA (2013) the FCG can be accessed by children and their care-givers residing in South Africa. When applying at SASSA, the care-giver should have a court order from the children’s court indicating foster care status. She or he should be a South African, a refugee or a permanent South African resident. If approved by SASSA, the grant is then paid into a bank account, including Post-Bank or cash payment at designated pay points.

## **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.3.1 The Eco-systems perspective**

The combination of the ecological perspective and the systems theory brings about a perspective that focuses on the way individuals interact with environmental forces. This perspective is a base for the Life Model which “suggests that the nature of the transactions between people and their environments is the source of human needs and social problems” (Du Bois & Miley, 2008:64). The environment can enable one to cope with social problems or not to be able to function well. Payne (2005:143) has explained that the systems perspective is concerned with individual’s adaptation with their social environments.

This perspective maintains that one’s background has a great influence on their view of the world and reaction to it. Taking this perspective into consideration, the respondents were likely to have behaved in a manner that had largely been constructed by their environment. This illustrates that individuals are dependent on their environment. This perspective also gives the impression that the respondents were likely to have similar expenditure patterns as they were from one environment. Perhaps even if not entirely the same, there were traces of commonality.

Moreover, this demonstrates that the respondents were likely to spend the foster care grant in a manner that assists them to cope with their environment. Individuals are influenced by their environment and their environment in turn is influenced by them. The foster parents were shaped by their surroundings and behaved in a manner that has come about as a consequence of the environment of Lethabong.

The social resources that are available to the foster parents have the ability to limit or maximise the opportunity of foster parents to spend the foster care grant in an acceptable manner. The ecological perspective also suggests that the environment has the capability to eliminate or generate the foster parent’s ability to cope with the usage of the grant.

In this study, an exploration was made which revealed the extent to which Lethabong shapes the behaviour of the foster parents there. The failure or success to use the grant for the benefit of the foster child can be attributed to the environment being

supportive or non-supportive. It is further imperative to understand the environment so as to understand the foster parents in Lethabong.

Ambrosino, Heffernan, Shuttlesworth and Ambrosino (2008:60) indicate that critics of this perspective argue that it is complicated as it encompasses everything, thus making it simple to neglect other important features. The critics maintain that the perspective focuses on the wider community ignoring the psychosocial aspect of the individual.

### **2.3.2 The Strengths Perspective**

This perspective is concerned with strengthening the potential of individuals. It perceives individuals as having the strength to enhance their functioning in the society or to learn such ways. In line with the research to be conducted, the foster parents can be recognised as having the strength as they have cared for orphans even before there were financial implications attached to it. They have the ability to interact in a productive manner with their environment and be able to utilise the grant in the best way possible for the child concerned.

Also, foster parents have the strength to modify their environment to make it suitable for their children. Hence there would be mobility within the family after the death of a biological parent. That is, the orphan moves in with other relatives or the relative joins the child concerned at their parent's house. In addition, when there is financial support in the form of the grant they are capable of putting it to use for the benefit of foster children. This perspective emphasises the strength of individuals to be good and do good. In actual fact, people are viewed as good and able to have good relations with the environment.

The strengths perspective gives the impression that the foster parents can be taught how to spend the grant in an event that they may be misusing it. Further, that they would be able to learn with ease. This is due to the premise that they have the strength to improve their situations. This perspective suggests that when individuals are offered the necessary support they can manage to meet their needs and have good relations with their environment.

The basis of this perspective is that the foster parents have the strength to nurture foster children with the foster care grant more when the foster parents are being offered support in this regard. The foster parents do not need to be instructed to utilise the grant in a particular way as they know the most important needs of the foster children and how to meet them. It further suggests that the foster parents have good intentions in respect to the grant, that is, they do not aim to misuse it. The role of the Social Workers in these circumstances is to offer support and work together with the foster parents so as to enhance their inherent strength.

Ambrosino, *et al.* (2008:72) emphasise the importance of seeking, acknowledging and respecting the strengths of individuals and their community. It is essential to know the talent and the abilities that people possess so as to develop them further. The foster parents are viewed as people with potential and positive attributes to be entrusted with the care of the foster children. Furthermore, this perspective articulates that both the foster parents and the Lethabong environment have positive resources that can be tapped into to enhance development and growth.

## **2.4 Summary**

The social security system is available in many parts of the world and not just in South Africa. Many governments worldwide take responsibility to ensure that their citizens are taken care of. The foster care grant forms part of social assistance which is a component of the South African social security system.

The literature study further demonstrates that foster care is therefore an old practise that has been taking place around the world and not just in South Africa or Lethabong. It is a legal placement meaning that it is not haphazard and privately done by individuals but formally structured and involves state institutions. This system promotes family as opposed to the institutionalisation of children who cannot live with biological parents.

Social workers seem to be the gate keepers to the system as clients come into contact with them prior to their court appearances. Their work load and that of the Children's Courts is escalating due to the inclusion of orphans into the foster care system which

was not initially meant for them. Informal care-givers of orphans should have a monetary incentive separate from the foster care grant if they are to be assisted by the state. Further, legal placement should not form part of the criteria for receiving that incentive.

It can be seen from the theoretical framework that individuals are connected to one another and are inclined to adapt similar patterns of behaviour when in the same setting. The foster parents' expenditure patterns came about from their similar socio-economic statuses and beliefs about raising children. Furthermore, foster parents can be assisted to maximise the grant by utilising support of social workers and social auxiliary workers.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The research methodology is important because it provides a procedure or framework on how the research or study was to be carried out. A qualitative approach was adopted to get a deep understanding of the participants' perceptions and uses of the FCG. This approach is supported by Babbie and Mouton (2010:270) that "a qualitative research methodology is focused on developing social phenomena. It offers advantages to the researcher as it required one-on-one interaction with the participants. The researcher was able to gather rich data from the foster parents and children themselves. They were viewed as the knowledge holders and were central to the whole study process in order to achieve the objectives of the study.

Phenomenology research design was used to be able to probe deeply to get participants' perspectives regarding how they spend the FCG. Creswell (as cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont, 2009:270) "regards a phenomenological study as a study that describes the meaning of experiences of a phenomenon, topic or concept for various individuals", the phenomenon in this study being the spending of the FCG. Multiple participants who have experience in spending the FCG were identified and their attitudes and feelings about it were deeply explored. In addition, participants included those who have observed the spending from outside the foster families. The study may be regarded as applied research as it is descriptive in nature. The feelings and attitudes of foster parents, foster children and key informants regarding the FCG is described in detail. Also, the way they spend the grant is fully outlined.

#### 3.2 Demarcation of the study

The study was conducted in Lethabong Township, Rustenburg in the North West province. It is approximately 48Km from Rustenburg town. "Lethabong was established in April 1982 and consisted of 200 families. These families lived in Brits, from an area called Majakaneng where they were forcibly removed by the then Apartheid government to Lethabong. The predominant residents were Setswana

speaking. The area is demarcated into two wards, Ward 27 and 28". Currently the residents are of different ethnicity groups.

Lethabong has four primary schools and two secondary schools. There are also two clinics, a community hall, a police station and shops for the convenience of community members. Community members are employed in neighbouring towns, namely: Rustenburg and Brits in various occupations. Some are employed at mines, as domestic workers, as Expanded Public Works Programme officials, in farms and in shops. The area is developed, as almost all households have electricity and access to water. In an interview with the ward councillor at Lethabong in 2013, she stated that most of the youth are politically active, with the predominant political parties being the African National Congress and the Economic Freedom Fighters.

Most of the older persons do not have any formal education whilst some of the youth have dropped out of high school due to financial constraints. The poverty levels are high due to a lack of sustainable employment. In addition, there are households that are solely dependent on social grants in this area.

According to the Department of Social Development, Rustenburg Service Point (2014) by August 2014 approximately 750 children were in kinship foster care in Lethabong, whilst a very low percentage was in non kin foster care. These are children who have been placed in foster care as a result of deaths of both parents or of the one known parent. These foster children have not been abused or neglected by their parents to be placed in foster care, but were regarded as orphans and in need of care and protection.

### **3.3 Population and sampling**

The population of the study was the foster parents and foster children in Lethabong, Rustenburg, who are recipients of a foster care grant as outlined in the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. There were 750 children who received foster care grants in Lethabong between January 2012 and December 2014 who are placed with relatives. The study focused on the numbers as recorded by the Rustenburg Service Point office.

Data was sought from key informants who included two social workers, three social auxiliary workers who are servicing Lethabong and four school teachers working in that area. The Social Auxiliary Workers were found in the DSD office whilst teachers were found in the schools attended by foster children. There are also children who are in foster care but not receiving the associated grant, they were omitted from the study.

The sampling procedure used was purposive sampling which forms part of the non-probability sampling method (de Vos, 2009:201). Black (as cited in Maree, 2010:295) has stated that “purposive sampling involves the researcher hand-picking the participants based on exact characteristics in order to develop a sample that is large enough yet possesses the required traits”. This sampling procedure was utilised for foster children, foster parents and key informants. In this study, the sample was chosen from children and foster parents that are related and received the grant.

The sample was selected from foster families that reside in Lethabong who are in kinship foster care. Maree (2010:79) has defined sampling as a process of selecting a portion of the population relevant for the study to be conducted. The size of the sample was twenty foster families who were hand-picked from the population, specifically those in related foster care. Their names were accessed from the foster care files from the DSD, Rustenburg Service Point office. Every fifth file, until the required number was reached, that had the required characteristics was chosen for the study.

The researcher selected twenty foster children who were between the ages of fourteen and eighteen who were able to read and write. The duration of their foster care placement was over a period of one year between January 2012 and December 2014. The selected sample needed to meet the following criteria:

- Participants must be foster parents to kin children as the study does not cover non kin.
- All participants must reside in Lethabong, Rustenburg, unless they were key informants.
- Participants must be receiving the FCG unless they were key informants.
- Participants must be able to understand Setswana or English.

Neuman (1997:331) explains that “qualitative researchers emphasise the importance of social context for understanding the social world, hence, the study was conducted in an area in-which the contemporary phenomenon takes place, Lethabong. The participants were provided with the opportunity to express attitudes regarding the FCG for the researcher to get an understanding of the meaning they attach to this phenomenon. The explorative nature of this approach assisted the researcher to collect rich data from those experiencing the phenomenon first hand.

### **3.4 Data collection techniques**

One-on-one semi-structured interviews with all participants and focus groups with foster children and with foster parents were utilised. The researcher facilitated discussions with four focus groups at different times. These focus groups comprised of two groups of ten foster parents and two groups of ten foster children. The researcher had an interview schedule of pre-determined questions to guide her during the one-on-one interviews. The interview helped the researcher to source rich descriptive data from the participants through probing, as has been advocated for by Maree (2010:87).

Further, the researcher conducted the one-on-one interviews in the homes of the foster parents. This is a place known to the participants therefore, they were comfortable. Not only that, but it was easily accessible for both the researcher and the participants. Comfort is an important factor to consider. A comfortable participant who does not feel threatened is likely to give the required information.

As stated in Maree (2010:90) with the focus group the researcher aimed to collect rich data with participants assisting one another to recall forgotten experiences. Further, the researcher discovered aspects of the topic that she had not anticipated or did not access during one-on-one interviews. Participants met at a common place and at the same time for the focus group interview. The children were placed in one group whilst the parents formed another group. A document study of the foster files was conducted by the researcher. However, their process notes, which form part of official documentation, did not provide data on how the grant had been utilised.

### 3.5 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis has been described by Patton (as cited in De Vos, 2009:333) as a conversion of the collected data into the study findings. The researcher went through this process by following data analysis steps as set out by De Vos et al. (2009:334):

a) Planning for recording of data

The researcher hand recorded the data collected during interviews and focus groups as this technique was suitable for data analysis. Recording was done with a pen and paper on a clip board in the presence of participants. Great consideration was taken in relation to the comfort of participants with this method as De Vos *et al.* (2009:335) have indicated that recording of data may be disruptive to the participants. For this reason, the researcher was cautious when recording data not to interrupt participants. The participants were informed of the data recording technique prior to the commencement of the collection of data.

b) Data collection and preliminary analyses

According to Patton (2002) (as cited in De Vos, 2009:336), the process of data analysis commences during data collection in a qualitative study and this has been reported to improve the quality of both processes. This is evident as the researcher developed certain ideas from participants while collecting data that were later utilised as themes during data analysis. Furthermore, when compiling the report it became necessary to revert to participants to fill the gaps that had emerged and to further enrich the data.

c) Managing data

This step was crucial to undergo as it assisted the researcher to divide data and assess whether it was complete or not. Creswell (as cited in De Vos *et al.*, 2009:336) has referred to it as the beginning of data analysis outside the setting of data collection. The researcher organised her data in different plastic pockets with different colours for easy recovery when making reference to it. This systematic compilation of handwritten notes in the plastic pockets enabled the

researcher to get immersed in the collected data and there by familiarising herself with it.

d) Reading and writing memos

The researcher repeatedly read the interviews that she had conducted with foster children, foster parents and the key informants. This enabled her to get to know and fully comprehend the data that had been collected. In addition, notes from the focus group further provided in depth understanding as she read them several times. Moreover, the researcher made notes on the margins of her note pad to remind her of the central idea of a particular piece of the data. These key words on the margins have been advocated for by Creswell (as cited in De Vos *et al.*, 2009:337) saying that they assist with the exploration of ones' database.

e) Generating categories, themes and patterns

The steps of data analysis in a qualitative study are not entirely separate and successive; hence the generation of categories, themes and patterns has been emerging in past steps. This is supported by Maree (2010:99) who explained that data analysis in a qualitative study is a back and forth course of steps that are intertwined.

The researcher divided the data into categories based on what was emerging as commonalities amongst the participants. The beliefs, words repeatedly used and common perceptions guided the researcher to categorise the different data from foster parents, foster children and from the key informants. Following the categories, smaller segments of data formed themes which are later explained in the report.

f) Coding of data

This step of data analysis comprised of the researcher grouping the themes and categories using different codes. "Coding is the process of reading carefully through your transcribed data, line by line, and dividing it into meaningful analytical units" (Maree, 2010:105). The researcher coded parts of the data which were similar and significant by using coloured pens to put asterisks. Data from foster children, foster parents and key informants about a particular feeling, perception or belief was coded the same. Reading through the data enabled the researcher to carry out this step.

g) Testing emergent understandings

During this step, the researcher juxtaposed the collected data and her research questions. This was intended to assess whether she had collected data relevant for the study. Furthermore, she assessed whether the understanding that she was developing about the expenditure patterns of foster parents indeed had some relation to the data at hand. Marshall and Rossman (1999:157) (as cited in De Vos *et al.*, 2009:338) noted that during this step “the researcher begins the process of evaluating the plausibility of his developing understandings and exploring them through the data”.

h) Searching for alternative explanations

When searching for other explanations of the data, the researcher found that foster parents could be caring for foster children as an insurance to receive the same care in the future. Older persons may be nurturing the young ones for selfish reasons and not genuinely to provide care. Also, adults find it pleasant to have children around them to run errands for them and as security, because there is safety in numbers.

i) Writing the report

In conclusion of the data analysis process is the writing of the research report. The meanings that have been attached to the collected data are presented to the reader in the final written report. The researcher reports the findings of the study comprehensively in the following chapter which is “data presentation and analysis”.

### **3.6 Ethical considerations**

Ethical clearance was sought from the North West University Ethics Committee, NWU-00266-15-A9 (Annexure I) and the North West Province, Department of Social Development, (Annexure J). Consent was sought from participants as it was important to do so to ensure that their rights are protected (Annexure G). According to Bless (2000:101) “the respondents must be assured that the information given will be treated with confidentiality, they must be assured that the data will only be used for the stated purpose of the research. In general social scientists should accept responsibility for protecting their participants”. In order to adhere to ethics principles, the following aspects were given attention.

### **3.6.1 Anonymity and confidentiality**

Ahead of conducting an interview, the researcher explained to all participants the purpose of the interview, how long it would likely take and assured them that the information shared would be confidential, that is, it would not be shared with anyone. The researcher did not put the names of the participants on the data collected. The researcher was obliged to safe guard the information given to her by the participants.

### **3.6.2 No harm to participants**

The researcher did not knowingly inflict any form of physical or emotional pain on the participants.

### **3.6.3 Informed consent**

The participants knew what it is that they were signing up for as they were well informed prior to the study. The researcher gave the participants all the necessary information about the study before they agreed to participate. Foster parents were requested to give consent on behalf of their foster children who are under eighteen years of age to participate in the study.

### **3.6.4 Voluntary participation**

The researcher reminded the foster parents that participation is voluntary, that they were not forced to participate. Further, that even if they had initially agreed to be involved, they could withdraw at a later stage. Participants signed a form of consent prior to the commencement of the interview. The researcher ensured that they really understood that it was entirely up to them whether or not they participated.

### **3.7 Limitations of the study**

Participants may have feared losing the grant and gave false information to the researcher. Even though the researcher explained that this would not be the case, it should not be overlooked that they may have been an element of scepticism from the participants.

### **3.8 Summary**

In this chapter the research methodology was extensively explained and the researcher explained the research design that was followed. Also, it was indicated where the study took place and who the participants were. This chapter further saw the detailed process of data analysis that the researcher followed to transform data into findings. The ethical considerations and limitations of the study were also highlighted.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The main aim of data presentation and analysis is to provide understanding into the perspectives of foster children and foster parents regarding the phenomenon being studied. Engel and Schutt (2014:9) noted that “Social work researchers study different phenomena, social conditions, effects of different programs and intervention methods”. The key findings in relation to the research questions and objectives are also discussed. The researcher did this by presenting the demographic profile of the participants, by conceptualising the collected data, and discussing themes as they emerged from the responses during the interviews and focus groups.

#### 4.2 Demographic profile of participants

The race of all the participants was Black South Africans and two were Colored. The children were aged between fourteen and eighteen years old whilst the ages of the adults ranged between nineteen and above fifty years old. Their home languages were Setswana and IsiXhosa. The following table depicts the demographics of the foster parents:

**Table 2: Demographic profile of the 20 foster parents**

| <b>Demographic Factor</b> | <b>Sub-category</b> | <b>Number of foster parents</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Gender<br>(Adults)     | Female              | 18                              |
|                           | Male                | 2                               |
| 2. Race                   | Black               | 19                              |
|                           | Coloured            | 1                               |
| 3. Age                    | 19-29               | 6                               |
|                           | 30-39               | 6                               |
|                           | 40-49               | 1                               |
|                           | 50+                 | 7                               |
| 4. Nationality            | South African       | 20                              |
| 5. Ethnic group           | Tswana              | 16                              |

|                               |                      |    |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----|
|                               | Xhosa                | 3  |
|                               | Colored              | 1  |
| 6. Preferred language         | Setswana             | 17 |
|                               | IsiXhosa             | 1  |
|                               | English              | 2  |
| 7. Level of education         | No formal education  | 3  |
|                               | Primary              | 4  |
|                               | Secondary            | 13 |
| 8. Type of employment         | Unemployed           | 16 |
|                               | Pensioners           | 2  |
|                               | Domestic worker      | 1  |
|                               | Counsellor           | 1  |
| 9. Reason for fostering       | Death of parents     | 20 |
| 10. Years of fostering        | Less than four years | 9  |
|                               | More than four years | 11 |
| 11. Number of foster children | 1 Child              | 13 |
|                               | 2 Children           | 5  |
|                               | 3 Children           | 1  |
|                               | 4 Children           | 1  |
| 12. Number of own children    | None                 | 4  |
|                               | 1 Child              | 7  |
|                               | 2 Children           | 5  |
|                               | 3 Children           | 2  |
|                               | 4 Children           | 2  |

Eleven foster parents had been receiving the grant for over four years whilst, nine had less than four years. It was crucial to have participants who had been recipients for a duration exceeding a year to ensure that rich data on their expenditure patterns is collected. Four foster parents communicated that they did not have children of their own. The remaining sixteen had children of their own; however, some were reported to be adults and did not live with their parents anymore.

In all but one case of more than one foster child per foster parent, all foster children were siblings. In the other case, the two children's mothers were sisters. All the foster children in the study are related to their foster parents by blood, that is, kin foster care. Foster parents were sisters, aunts, brothers and grandparents of the foster children. Thirteen foster parents reported that they had one foster child each, five had two foster children each and the remaining two had three and four foster children respectively. For the purpose of the study only one child per foster parent was interviewed.

### **4.3 Themes**

The participants of the study who were interviewed were foster parents, foster children and the key informants were two social workers, three social auxiliary workers and four school teachers from schools in Lethabong. The themes that emerged from the interviews and focus groups were as follows:

#### **4.3.1 Interviews with foster children**

##### **4.3.1.1 Foster children have an influence on their foster parents' expenditure patterns**

Foster children, like foster parents, are at the core of the study. They experience the phenomenon being studied first hand. They offer an in depth insight on the expenditure patterns of their foster parents. These children live with foster parents and are able to see where the money goes, depending on their age. Not only do foster parents spend the grant, children also make use of it themselves. One foster child revealed the following:

*“My mother (referring to foster mother) buys me school uniform and pays for other things needed at school. Sometimes we go on educational trips and she pays for me to go. She also gives me lunch money occasionally when I do not want the feeding scheme food”.*

A teenage foster child reported this:

*“Sometimes I want shoes or clothes and ask my foster parent to give me money. If she has it, she gives me or tells me when she will be able to give me. Foster parents*

*must also buy us the things that we want with our money, not only school things. Yes, school is important because we get education, but we want other things too.*

It was evident that in certain households both the foster children and their foster parents make decisions about the grant together. Another foster child stated that:

*Foster parents should also save money for us every month. They should not use all the money on food and electricity.”*

Another expressed:

*“Both me and my mother decide how to spend the FCG. It is not her decision alone or mine alone”*

When the foster care placement is granted by the Children’s Court Presiding Officer, foster parents are advised to open a savings account for their foster children for future needs when the grant would no longer be available. It appears that this resonates with other foster parents whilst it seems to be an impossible task for some.

The foster parents and the foster children in this study were blood relatives. Their relationships varied from grandparents, uncles, sisters and aunts. They seemed to have good relationships in their foster families as they did not report any complaints during interviews about the other. Moreover, some of the children referred to their foster parents as “my mother”. This indicated that there was a good relationship between them and that they have a sense of belonging in their homes.

Furthermore, the foster children were in the care of and had lived with the foster parents even prior to the foster care placement. Thomas and Philot (as cited in Brown, 2014:11) have also acknowledged the existence of this form of care stating that “it is generally agreed that human beings have been ‘doing’ foster care, in the sense that adults have cared for other people’s children, when those children have not been able to live with their birth parents, for millennia”.

The expenditure patterns of the foster parents in Lethabong demonstrate that the basic needs of the foster children are being taken care of. These include shelter which the majority of the foster parents regarded as important and further explained that the provided grant should assist in that regard. In addition, food, clothes, toiletries and education were included in the list of needs of foster children. The foster parents

acknowledged that when they buy groceries with the grant, other family members also benefit from it. Two key informants added that foster children do not only need material things but also love and a sense of belonging.

Social Workers reported that they render quarterly supervision to foster families by conducting home and school visits. On the one hand, they visit homes to assess the living conditions of the children and how the grant is spent. After all, “the focus in social work has always been on how social security is used optimally for the benefit of individuals and families” (Patel 2007:148). On the other hand, the school visits enable them to consult the children without the interference of their foster parents.

Also, they have an opportunity to assess the academic progress of the foster children at the schools. Brown (2014:195) has also explained that “social workers in the field of foster care assess, support, supervise and help develop foster carers, enabling them and contributing to them making positive changes for children and young people for whom they care.” This service is rendered to also ensure that the foster child is still indeed in the care of the foster parent with whom she or he was placed.

Social workers are the custodians of the Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended. This is the Act that outlines what a child in need of care and protection is. It is the legal framework against which foster care rests. Further, it describes foster care placement as an alternative care for children who cannot be in the care of their parents. As custodians, social workers are expected to consider the best interest of the child at all times in matters that concern the child.

By rendering quarterly supervision and staying in contact with the foster parents, social workers also evaluate whether the best interest of the child still prevails in the placement. Brown (2014:195) has found that “foster carers and social workers together can make a difference to the foster children’s lives”. It is therefore, crucial that a good rapport is established and maintained by them.

#### **4.3.1.2 Foster children say the grant benefits them**

The children that participated in the study revealed that the FCG benefited them. Others indicated that it is their foster parents who decide on how it is spent and some reported that they both make that decision. Regardless of who is the decision maker,

they reported that they all benefit. When foster children were asked whether the grant benefits them they said “yes”. One responded:

*“Yes it benefits me because it helps to buy me uniform.”*

Another said:

*“Yes, it buys me food and clothes”*

Others did not state specific items that depicted how the grant is beneficial to them but gave a general indication that it is of value to them. They responded as shown below:

*“Yes all that I need is given to me.”*

Another answered:

*“Yes, I am being taken care of with the money and I’m always provided with what I need.”*

and

*“Yes, I get what I need.”*

The children mostly referred to clothes, food and school requirements as items that the grant is spent on for their benefit. They all explained that their foster parents use it for them. It appears that being in foster care is in the best interest of these children. A similar view is shared by Brown (2014:195) who has observed that “foster care can make a profound beneficial difference to the lives of children in public care”.

#### **4.3.2 Interviews with foster parents**

The researcher was able to gather rich data from foster parents as they were at the core of the study like their foster children. Brown, Sebba and Luke (2014:14) also consider foster parents in the same light explaining that “as the key players in foster care it is valuable to garner their opinions. Their perceptions inform fostering services and social workers about areas of strengths in their social work provision, and where they could develop further”.

#### **4.3.2.1 Reasons for being foster parents**

Foster parents reported that subsequent to the deaths of the parents of their foster children, they were left to care and provide for them. In other instances, the deceased parents were the only employed people in the household and there was no income above and beyond theirs. In contrast, some biological parents were unable to provide for their children even when they were still alive. During the study, foster parents indicated that they needed an income to cater for the orphans that they lived with hence they approached the social workers for assistance with the grant. They referred to it as a “grant for orphans”. One remarked:

*“I am unemployed, how would I take care of her without the grant for orphans? I needed the grant to help me.”*

The state of being unemployed and the need for extra income appeared to be a great motivation to apply for the FCG. Swanepoel and De Beer (2006:6) have explained the aspects around unemployment as follows:

“Unemployment is both cause and a result of the poverty situation in which people find themselves. It is a cause, since without a job a person has no income and cannot pay for proper housing, food, medical care and education for him/herself and his/her children. It is a result because poor health caused by an unbalanced diet, poor housing and lack of appropriate education (all on account of poverty) prevents a person from finding and keeping gainful employment”.

Another parent responded as follows:

*“I applied for the grant because I am taking care of an orphan and needed money.”*

Foster parents reported that they applied for the grant for orphans and did not realise that foster care on its own was a form of alternative placement for children in need of care and protection. It can be said that they were in foster care as a result of needing the grant, not for the desire to legalise living with the child. When asked why she applied for foster care as she was already caring for the child, the foster parent explained:

*“A care giver from the home based care told me that I could apply for the grant for orphans as I lived with one. When I went to apply for it the social worker asked me*

*where the child's father is and I said I do not know. His mother did not tell me before she died, he is an orphan!"*

Another shared:

*"I have been living with my foster child from when she was born. Even her mother lived at home with us. I applied for the grant for orphans because I needed more money to buy what she needed for school".*

In some households, the death of a parent meant that there could finally be extra income as the care-giver could not receive this grant with the parent of the child still living with them in the home. It was clear that foster parents knew more about the grant than they did about the placement itself. They understood that with the children's parents dead, they qualified for a grant.

The study also revealed that foster parents knew about the grant from others within the community. They indicated that they knew others who had been recipients before them and enquired from them. Further, the nurses at the local clinic were also said to have introduced other foster parents to the grant. As clients visit the clinic they indicate that they are advised to apply for the grant if they are care-givers of orphans.

In addition, there are Community Health Care Workers (CHWs) from the local Home Based Care who render services to vulnerable groups, including orphaned children, by conducting home visitations. Foster parents reported that when the CHWs find orphans in the home, they refer the clients to the office of the social worker for the grant application. The CHWs and the nurses play a broker role by linking the clients with various resources. "Many community organizations and faith-based organizations perform this role effectively at the local level" (Patel 2007:148).

Patel (2007:148) has furthermore noted that "social workers in different settings spend much of their professional time in helping clients apply for social grants and access social relief". When the main aim and focus is on the FCG and not the legal placement

of children with care-givers, it seems that indeed social workers are assisting clients to apply for a social grant.

#### **4.3.2.2 Raising orphaned children**

Foster parents reported how challenging it was to raise children who are not their own. They stated that orphans seem to have a way of manipulating their care-givers and expect to receive everything that they want. Further, that it is not an easy task to discipline a child who makes remarks about being an orphan. One foster parent said:

*“You do not know how to handle a child that you did not give birth to. She will remind you each time you want to discipline her that you are talking to an orphan. These children think that they are special and should not be treated like those with living parents.”*

Another parent remarked:

*“Mine has left home and I do not know where she has gone to. She does not want to be reprimanded; she goes and then comes back whenever she wants!”*

They indicated that it takes a lot of patience to be a care-giver to an orphan as they seem to require delicacy. Furthermore, foster parents pointed out that their foster children ultimately appear to receive better treatment as compared to other children in the family whose parents are still alive. This is due to the much softer hand used on them as opposed to those with parents.

#### **4.3.2.3 Matching the standard of living of other children with living parents**

Most of the foster parents communicated that they use the grant in a manner that will make their foster children also look like children living with their parents. They indicated that even though their foster children may want expensive items, they bought them just so that they do not feel unloved because of their status. A female foster parent remarked:

*“I do not want him to see himself as different from his peers. I try not to make him look different from others so that he also knows that he is loved.”*

It seemed that not only do foster children pressurize their foster parents, but parents also put some pressure on themselves as they strive to match the standard of living of other children who are not orphans.

#### **4.3.2.4 Foster children's needs versus their wants**

Foster parents pointed out that the needs of foster children cannot be met solely with the grant. They explained that the children need so much more than the grant can cover. Moreover, they reported that not only basic needs but also wants of the children cannot be met. They did, however, understand that the grant is meant to meet basic needs more than it is meant to cover the children's wants. Some foster parents explained that when the child has been behaving and performing well at school they allow the child to buy what s/he wants as positive reinforcement. This way, the child is encouraged to be good. The following was said by two foster parents:

*“Sometimes it is good that they want something you agree with, that way it is easy to get it.”*

*“I let my foster child buy what she wants when she has performed well at school or behaves well at home.”*

Moreover, some foster parents reported that they usually have to take a harsh stand against other wants of the children. They pointed out that if they do not put their foot down, the child tends to take advantage and want to use the grant for wants as opposed to needs.

#### **4.3.2.5 Educational needs of foster children**

The issue of education was very prevalent during the study. Foster parents could not adequately emphasise the importance of school attendance by their foster children. Not only the attendance, but the school uniform was also raised as an important issue. Some attributed their ability to put their foster children in school to the FCG. They indicated that without such assistance it would be difficult to meet the children's educational needs. According to the Economic Policy Research Institute (2003) as cited in Leatt and Budlender (2006:5) “grants assist in overcoming financial barriers to school attendance, in terms of fees and other costs- school supplies, uniforms and

transport etc.”. The statement below was made by an older person who is also a foster parent.

*“The grant helps our children to get better education than us. We could not go to school because there was no money for that. They are lucky now because there is the FCG.”*

#### **4.3.2.6 Biological fathers of foster children**

Foster parents reported that the motivation for fostering was due to the death of the parents of the children concerned, hence referring to them as orphans. Although, three foster parents indicated knowledge of their foster children’s deceased biological fathers, other foster parents alleged that they did not know the identity of the fathers of the children that they were caring for, thus resorting to the application of the FCG after their mothers died.

Budlender and Lund (2012:144) have noted that the typical state in South Africa is that children do not live with their biological fathers. Foster parents further stated that they were in need of financial assistance to care for the children concerned and found that the FCG would be of great help. It was clear to the researcher that foster parents do not know about their legal duty to care for these orphans if they are biological siblings or grandparents. When asked about the knowledge of legal duty one expressed shock: *“He is my brother but if I do not work how will I take care of him? It was our mother that was employed and could provide, I cannot. I need the grant to raise him.”*

An elderly foster parent could not believe how she was supposed to raise her grandchild on her old age grant:

*“I pay for burial societies, electricity and buy food, how will I also pay for school fees and buy her clothes? These children nowadays wear expensive clothes and do not understand when you say there is no money. Her mother did not leave any money for her upbringing, I do not know who her father is, what will I do?”*

#### 4.3.2.7 Pattern of expenses

Foster parents' insight in the study provided rich data as they were viewed as knowledge holders. Their experiences were indispensable for the purpose of acquiring the much needed data. The researcher considered various aspects of their lives in order to comprehend their expenditure patterns. The study covered those different aspects for in depth information.

Foster parents reported that they build their foster children corrugated iron rooms so that they may have own bedrooms. The family home may not always have adequate space for all to live in. They added that it is not right for a foster child not to have own bedrooms and beds while receiving a grant. They viewed shelter as a need that ought to be met using the grant. Swanepoel and De Beer (2006:5) have observed that some people's shacks may be habitable whilst others may not be properly built due to poverty. They also observed that people in rural areas are secluded from services which are essentially in the urban areas, thus not have proper housing. Shacks are a viable option as there is not sufficient time and financial support for proper housing.

Two foster parents stated that they were extending their houses, using the grant, for the benefit of the foster children too. The researcher pointed out that in the event of their deaths, their biological children will not consider that the FCG was used in the building and the foster children will not benefit. One remarked:

*"My children and foster children are both aware that the FCG is being used for extending my house. My children will not kick them out saying it was my house and not the foster children's home. We all agreed."*

Another foster parent could not understand how a foster child could not own a bed. She believed that a bed is one of the important belongings that the foster child should have. She expressed the following:

*"How can a person receive the grant and not buy a bed for her foster child? What does she do with the money? The child must have a bed to sleep on."*

It seems that the advice that social workers give is taken into consideration. The statement below indicates this:

*“When I started with this grant, the social worker who was assisting me said I should ensure that my foster children have a place to sleep. I have bought beds and cupboards for them with the grant.”*

Out of the twenty foster parents who formed part of the study, sixteen were not employed whilst two were recipients of the old age grant. One of the employed two reported that she is a domestic worker and receives a wage of R1500.00 monthly. She reported that even though it is not much, together with the social grant it helps her to meet her household needs. The other foster parent indicated that she receives a monthly stipend of R2500.00 from her job as a counsellor. It was crucial to establish the socio-economic statuses of the foster parents in understanding how they utilise the grant.

Three foster parents indicated that they were cohabiting whilst one stated that she was married. They reported that they had some financial support from their partners. This support was supplementary to the FCG and they said it helped to meet their household needs and those of the foster children. One foster parent was widowed and the other fifteen indicated that they were single. The single foster parents stated that they carried the household's financial burden alone and that social grants are very helpful in this regard. One responded:

*“I do not have anyone helping me with the children. We depend on the grants to buy food and other things that we need.”*

For the unemployed foster parents the grant is seen as a life line. The foster parents seem to not know how they could afford to raise the foster children if there was no grant. One parent made it clear that she would not be living with the foster child if there was no money to assist in his upbringing. She said:

*“I struggle to raise my child as I am unemployed. His father does not assist me financially. The only thing that I have is the grants, the child support grant and the foster care grant. I use both for the household for all of us to benefit from. It is our income. I would not be staying with him if we did not receive his grant.”*

Other unemployed foster parents said:

*“Sometimes you cannot help but use the grant for all at home. If you use it for electricity, you cannot say it is only for the foster child, it also helps others in the household. The grant helps the foster child and others. It is not easy when there is not much income to use the grant only for the foster child. I think that it is okay as long as it also benefits the foster child.”*

and

*“I do not work, we depend on the grant for everything. I think it should be increased because right now it does not meet all the needs of the foster child”*

Another foster parent explained:

*“I use it for food, electricity, clothes and school things. I combine it with the child support grant of my child to cater for all of us.”*

Further, it seemed that most of the foster parents had some level of education whilst three indicated that they had never had any formal education due to financial constraints. For this reason, some foster parents stated that they are happy to be receiving the FCG as they will be able to educate their foster children. Others expressed their delight as follows:

*“The grant will make it possible for us to take our foster children to school. We do not have money.”*

*“I did not go to school! Things will be different for my grandchild; he will be able to get an education. I have observed him and seen that he really likes school and studies hard unlike his sister. I worry about the bad friends that he has as they might derail him from his school work. The grant is helping him very much.”*

When asked about the importance of the grant in the lives of their foster children and whether they consider their children’s needs when spending the grant, the foster parents answered as follows:

*“Yes the FCG is important in the lives of the foster children as it is their income that sustains them. I consider what my foster children need and use the grant accordingly. Usually I use it for food, clothes, toiletries and school needs.”*

A parent that fosters a girl child explained:

*“Yes the grant is important in the lives of foster children because we can buy what the child needs. I use it for groceries, clothing, electricity and cosmetics for her. When spending the grant I consider her needs first, I know that it is meant for her. I also know that I should focus on her needs than her own wants that may not be important.”*

Another responded as follows:

*“I usually use the grant for food, clothes, funeral policy, cosmetics, electricity, water and stationery. I know that the FCG is meant to take care of the foster child not parent. So I first check what they need before using it. I think they also need to have own furniture, like beds, cell phones, pocket money for school and to do their hair. We use the grant for these that I have mentioned.”*

The study also revealed that foster parents want their foster children to be much more educated than themselves. They want the foster children to be a generation that does not live in the poverty trap due to lack of education. It seems that the parents’ lack of education is the driving force behind them using the grant for educational purposes.

The lack of job opportunities was indicated to be the cause of foster parents relying on social grants as a source of income. They expressed that they face financial difficulties due to unemployed. They further indicated that an extra child in addition to their own, causes a financial burden that makes it difficult to meet basic needs. Furthermore, foster parents expressed gratitude for the social grants that they receive as they assist them in a great way.

Lastly, it appeared that foster parents have similar patterns of spending the grant. Their patterns can be juxtaposed to each other and reflect numerous similarities. Regardless of how they prioritise the children’s needs, they all seem to want to do the best for their foster children.

#### **4.3.3 Interview with key informants**

Key informants were interviewed as observers of the phenomenon being studied. They included four school teachers, three social auxiliary workers and two social workers. The social workers and social auxiliary workers were included to provide information on the kind of services that the families receive as outlined in the Act.

The teachers were included because their insight was deemed crucial as they interact with foster parents and foster children regularly. For this reason, the researcher could gather rich data from their participation. The following are themes that emerged from data collected from them:

#### **4.3.3.1 *The FCG meets the needs of foster parents and not those of foster children***

Some of the data collected from the key informants showed that foster parents were believed to put their needs before those of the foster children. Social workers conduct home and school visits and see foster children and their homes. One social worker remarked:

*“Some children do not have school uniform but they receive the FCG. You would find that their foster parents use it for liquor and renovating their homes saying they are doing it for the foster children”.*

Not only social workers, one teacher indicated that she sees foster parents not investing in their children’s education but in liquor for themselves. She further expressed her hurt in the way some foster parents spend the grant. A primary school teacher stated the following:

*“I think that they use the FCG to buy food, clothes and some liquor.”*

Key informants, like foster parents, also held education in high regard. It was highlighted as one of the top priorities in the list of how the grant is and should be utilised. One key informant said:

*“The grant should be spent on educational needs of the children.”*

Two teachers further indicated that foster children do not only need food and shelter. They also highlighted a need for love, care and belonging.

A social worker revealed that parents were not trained as foster parents prior to the commencement of the foster care placement. They simply visited the office of the social workers and applied for the FCG. The social workers successively conducted their investigations for compilation of their professional reports to be presented before a Children’s Court Presiding Officer. On their reports, social workers recommended

that the children be declared in need of care and protection in terms of Section 150 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. In addition, a foster care grant is then recommended in terms of Section 8 of the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004.

#### **4.3.3.2 Foster parents are responsible with the FCG**

There were participants who indicated that foster parents were not utilising the grant in a responsible manner and for the best interest of the foster children. In contrast, others believed that the parents were doing what is expected with the grant, that is, caring for foster children. One social worker explained:

*“Foster parents use the grant for food and clothes. They consider their foster children’s needs when making use of the grant. Foster children do not only need clothes and food but care and support too. I recommend that the FCG be used to further education of the foster children and the family should provide for the current basic needs like food and clothes.”*

The social worker was of the opinion that even though foster parents were doing well with the grant, there was still room for improvement. Another informant, a social auxiliary worker, who works mainly with foster care placement extensions, also expressed her belief that the expenditure patterns of foster parents reflect responsibility. She answered:

*“Foster parents spend the FCG on school items, groceries and food. They assess the needs of the foster children and spend the grant accordingly.”*

It seems that the expenditure patterns of the foster parents are considered to be a result of the children's needs. Foster parents do not use the grant for what they want but what is in the best interest of the children.

#### **4.4 Summary**

In summary, it can be said that foster children are not voiceless in this phenomenon under study. They influence the expenditure patterns of their foster parents by also making inputs on how the grant should be spent. They have also indicated that the grant benefits them, contrary to the allegations made by some of the key informants.

Some foster parents have expressed the difficulties that are associated with this system. They indicated that orphans tend to be troublesome and display uncontrollable behaviour. It seems that some children do not appreciate the trouble that their foster parents go to in an attempt to provide the best for them. Most of the foster parents in Lethabong are unemployed and rely on social grants for survival.

Unemployment has been highlighted as a motive for applying for the grant in question, with unmarried foster parents indicating that they do not have assistance from partners. The foster parents are mainly aware of the grant as opposed to the foster care status, which in fact is the one enabling them to access the grant. They cited that a need for financial resources to cater for the needs of the children that they were caring for caused them to apply for the FCG.

There is no training that foster parents undergo to be foster parents. They are relatives of the foster children in the study and had been their care-givers even prior to the foster care placement. The lack of foster parent training and focus on foster care as a form of alternative care may be the reason for individuals associating the foster care system with money rather than with care for vulnerable children in a protection system

Material items are linked with an expression of love as foster parents find themselves making certain purchases to appear to be loving to their foster children. Buying clothes, shoes and hair maintenance are perceived as signs of love to the foster children thereby influencing foster parents to spend on them.

This chapter also revealed that foster parents do not have a high educational level and therefore, wish to educate their children. They expressed great appreciation for the grant as it will assist children to get out of the poverty trap through education. Both foster children and parents attributed the expenditure of the grant towards education.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a discussion of the research objectives and a summary of the main findings that resulted from the study. The researcher also presents her conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the study.

#### 5.2 Discussion of findings

The research objectives were reached and are discussed as follows:

##### 5.2.1 Objective 1: To investigate the expenditure patterns of foster parents

The researcher did not only interview the foster parents to gain an insight into their expenditure patterns, key informants were also interviewed. Key informants included social auxiliary workers of Lethabong and school teachers. They may not live with the foster families but have close contacts with them. They are able to give an outsider's perspective into the phenomenon.

##### 5.2.2 Objective 2: To gather information on the socio-economic status of the foster families

In the focus groups foster parents were able to further indicate their socio-economic statuses. Some revealed that they were the only adults in the household and had to ensure that all children in the home have been catered for. It came to light that most families were struggling to meet basic needs due to insufficient income. Gathering information on the socio-economic status of the foster families was crucial as it revealed how the grant would be utilised in the household.

##### 5.2.3 Objective 3: To establish the views of the foster parents about the importance of the foster care grant in the lives of foster children

The researcher found it important to know whether or not foster parents considered the FCG to be important in the lives of their foster children. Such information was essential to understand how the foster parents would then make use of the grant. The foster parents indicated that the grant was very important in the children's lives, hence they applied to receive it. They stated that some of their children would not have been enrolled into schools if it were not for this monthly income. One parent expressed gratitude that at least her grandchild will be formally educated unlike herself as there was no money for her schooling.

Foster parents view the grant as a way of assisting foster children in the poverty trap to get out. They found that one can use it in a manner that will one day prove to have been in the best interest of the child.

#### **5.2.4 Objective 4: To explore the views of foster children on how the grant benefits them.**

Foster children and foster parents are the two main participants in the study who experienced the studied phenomenon first hand. They are knowledgeable as it is them receiving the grant; they have an advantage of inside information. Due to this fact, exploring their views was held in high regard.

Firstly, they reported that the grant in fact benefits them. They stated that their foster parents utilise it in a manner that is useful to them. The children were happy to be receiving and saw its benefits in their individual lives. Some reported that it assists in buying them clothes, food and electricity in their homes. Others alluded to the fact that they can have the shoes they want, hairstyles, cell phones and the type of food that they want during lunch at school. Foster children stated that even though their schools have feeding schemes, the food provided is not always palatable to them, therefore they need lunch money to purchase what they want to eat.

Some foster children stated that they are happy that their foster parents put aside some money in savings. They reported that they see how it can benefit them in the future and they therefore, support this initiative. The older children further reported that their foster parents would have found it extremely difficult to raise them without the assistance of the state as they themselves do not have

income except for social grants. It seems that the right to social security is crucial in the lives of people in need of financial assistance from the state. A similar view has been expressed by Patel (2007:140) that “social security and especially social assistance has received widespread popular endorsement by the public in the 2004 campaign for the national general election”. People approve of the social grants and find them important in their lives.

#### **5.2.5 Objective 5: To explore the views of key informants on the expenditure of the FCG.**

The key informants also played an important role in the study as their views on how the FCG is spent were taken into consideration. Even though they are not in the homes of foster families, they have opinions on how it is being used. School teachers spend most of the day with foster children and are able to see their physical appearance and how their home circumstances may be affecting them.

The school teachers indicated that some foster parents seem to be utilising the grant in a manner that benefits the children concerned. They stated that they look good physically and are usually well groomed. When asked what they think the grant is used for, the teachers further indicated that they think the grant is used for school uniform, food and clothes. These teachers are also the ones who believed that foster parents consider the needs of children and not just use the grant in an unacceptable manner.

The other two teachers indicated that even though some needs of the children are met, foster parents still meet their personal needs with the grant, for instance, buying alcohol for themselves. They explained that they were referring to parents who do not seem to have any care for their foster children’s physical appearance and also by not being active parents in their children’s education. It was indicated that some children go to school hungry and or in dirty uniform, that is they even have the right school uniform. Also, that foster parents buy furniture for their homes and pay the monthly instalments with the grant.

### **5.2.6 Objective 6: To propose recommendations to policy makers and social service managers**

Foster parents agreed that their main recommendation is for the grant to be increased by a large margin. They stated that the annual increase is still insufficient for the children's upbringing. Even though they showed their appreciation of the financial assistance, they did not shy away from expressing this recommendation.

Further, they recommended that savings should still be encouraged by magistrates and social workers. They explained that it is not always easy to put away some of the money but that it is worthwhile in the long run.

Foster parents reported that the savings may also be utilised when the grant has lapsed and there are no pay outs. Even those who have not opened the savings accounts also advocated for this initiative. They simply pointed out the difficulty in doing so but could also realise the benefits.

The teachers and social auxiliary workers recommended that the grant be used for food and education of the foster children. Again, education proved to be regarded an important aspect of the children's lives. Also, it was recommended that savings accounts be opened for emergencies including offering relief during months where the grant may be suspended or lapsed.

Moreover, the school teachers recommended that social workers should conduct regular home visits to foster families. That way, they would be able to find foster parents who use the grant for themselves and not the children's needs. The social workers would then be able to ensure that the best interests of the children are met by either advising accordingly or changing the foster parents. The teachers also believed that monitoring the use of the grant could be what is needed for children to be cared for financially.

## **5.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

The main findings are presented orderly as per the research questions:

It emerged from the research study that foster parents have a similar way of spending the FCG. The pattern that they follow usually covers the following aspects, basic needs which are food and shelter, clothes for foster children, school requirements, burial society and electricity. It seems that the expenditure

patterns of foster parents largely lean on the aspects that benefit foster children. On the one hand, these aspects were highlighted by both the foster parents and the foster children, thereby showing similarities in perspectives. On the other hand, some key informants were of the view that foster parents do not use the grant for the best interest of the foster children.

Most of the participants were not employed. They indicated that they largely rely on social grants to meet their basic needs. It appeared that the social security provided by the government really assists its citizens who are unable to support themselves as the Constitution states. The foster parents who are in employment are mostly employed as domestic workers.

There may be various reasons for wanting to legalise the placement of a child in one's care. In the case of the foster parents in this study the main aim of foster care was to receive the FCG. Foster parents indicated that they were unable to cope with the needs of the children in their care without any financial assistance from the state.

Some reported that if they were employed they would not have applied for a grant. They attributed their application to a lack of funds.

Those who were employed stated that the grant and their salaries were still not sufficient to cater for them.

The study revealed that the FCG is utilised for the basic needs of foster children. Not just needs, some parents did indicate that they also buy foster children what they want depending on the availability of funds and or the child's behaviour.

Foster parents also stated that sometimes they are forced to buy what the child wants as there would be pressure from the child, which would come from peers.

The clothing fashion of foster children seemed to also be how funds are spent as parents indicated that they also want their foster children to look like those who still have parents and sufficient income.

The research study revealed that foster parents spend the grant in a manner that they perceive to be best for their foster children. It did not appear as though they intend to misuse or abuse the grant. When asked how they spent it, it was revealed that it is for the best interest of the foster children. Their expenditure showed that their intention for applying for the grant was to care for the foster children and not necessarily for themselves or own children.

The research findings showed that foster parents would recommend an increase in the amount of grant per month. They stated that even though it comes as a relief on the financial burden that they carry, it is not sufficient to cater for all the needs and wants of foster children, especially the older ones.

The foster parents explained that the needs of older teenagers surpasses those of younger children, therefore the grant needs to be increased.

Besides the above, they were satisfied with the status quo including the requirements that they should meet when applying for the grant.

In addition, foster parents are satisfied with being advised to save some of the money that they receive for future tertiary expenses of foster children.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were recommendations that emerged from the findings of the study and they are presented as follows:

That an awareness campaign be conducted in Lethabong in order to clarify “foster care” to clients and other service providers. This would be to indicate to them that this form of placement is not only meant for orphans.

That the grant be increased to meet more of the foster children’s needs. It emerged that it is difficult to stretch the grant on a monthly basis in order to fully provide for foster children.

That social workers and magistrates should continue to advise foster parents to open savings accounts for their foster children. This way parents always keep in mind not to spend all the money at once without making provision for emergencies.

That social workers monitor how foster parents use the grant by doing regular home visits. Rendering thorough supervision services would assist to focus on the children's best interest.

### **5.5 MAIN CONCLUSION**

It appears that the CHWs understand "foster care" to be for orphans hence they relay the same information to the people caring for orphans. Another revelation that was brought about by the study was that foster parents did not have an intention to apply for legal placement but mainly for the grant.

It is critical that the best interests of foster children are taken into great consideration when spending the FCG. Foster parents acknowledge the state's assistance in raising children that they care for, who are not their biological children.

Furthermore, foster parents would find raising these children very difficult if there was no money to assist them. They indicated that it is a struggle to raise one's own children without being employed and also take care of the household; therefore it would also be a struggle with foster children.

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## Appendix A

### MAP OF THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

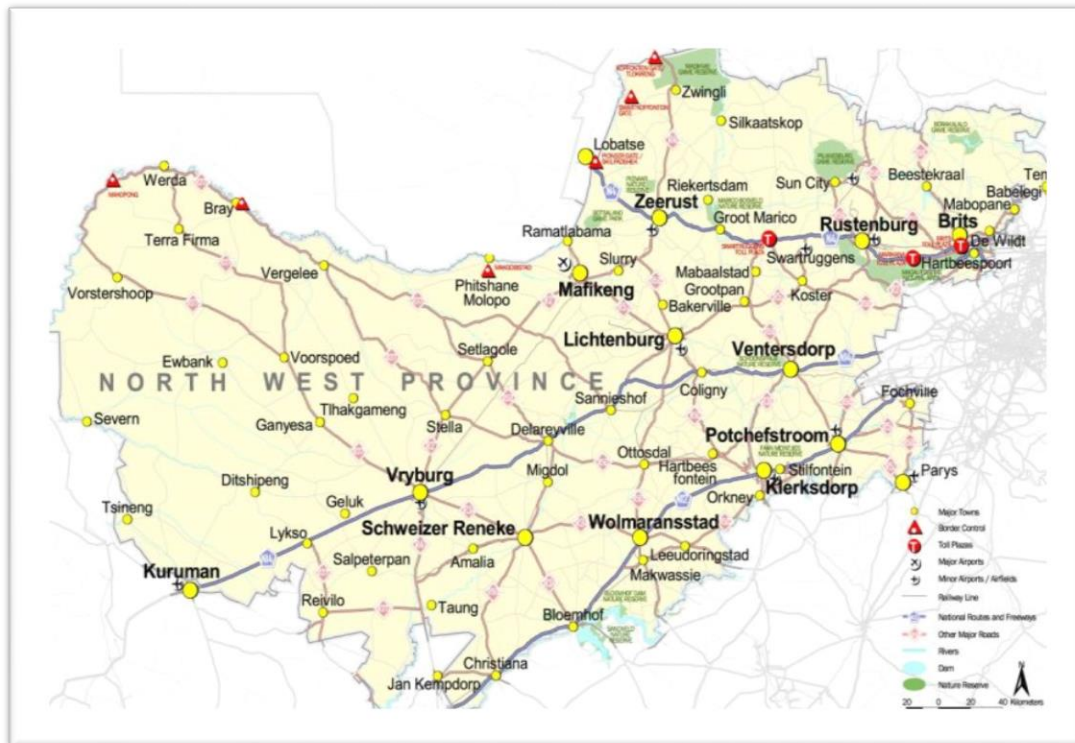


Figure 1

Lethabong is situated between Rustenburg and Beestekraal on the above map.

## APPENDIX B

### SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF FOSTER PARENTS IN LETHABONG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE (Perspective of foster parents)

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender

|   |   |
|---|---|
| M | F |
|---|---|

2. Age (Tick the appropriate box)

|             |             |             |                 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 19-29 years | 30-39 years | 40-49 years | 50 years& older |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|

3. Race

|       |          |       |       |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| Black | Coloured | White | Other |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|

4. Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ethnic group \_\_\_\_\_

6. Preferred language

|         |          |       |      |       |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|
| English | Setswana | Xhosa | Zulu | Other |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|

7. Marital status

|        |            |         |          |         |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|
| Single | Cohabiting | Married | Divorced | Widowed |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|

**SECTION B: DURATION OF RECEIVING THE FCG**

8. How long have you been receiving the FCG? \_\_\_\_\_

9. For how many children are you receiving the FCG? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C: INVESTIGATING KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION RELATED TO THE FCG**

10. Have you heard about the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended? \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Have you heard about the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you know that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides social security to its citizens? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION D: USES OF THE FCG**

13. What do you usually buy with the FCG? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you know that it is meant for the foster child? \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you consider the needs of your foster child when spending the grant?  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. The FCG is meant to buy what the foster child wants? 

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
|------|-------|

17. The needs of other family members may be met using the FCG? 

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

**SECTION E: EXPLORING THE NEEDS OF FOSTER CHILDREN THROUGH THE EYES OF FOSTER PARENTS**

18. What do you think your foster child needs mostly? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. Do you use the grant for that/those need mainly? 

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

**SECTION F: ESTABLISHING VIEWS OF FOSTER PARENTS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FCG IN THE LIVES OF FOSTER CHILDREN?**

20. Do you think that the foster care grant is important in the lives of foster children?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

21. Elaborate on your answer on 20 above \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. Do you use the grant in a manner that supports your answer on 20 above?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

23. Are you employed? \_\_\_\_\_

24. Why did you apply for foster care? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION G: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FOSTER PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES**

25. What recommendations do you have on how the FCG should be used?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU**

## ANNEXURE C

### SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF FOSTER PARENTS IN LETHABONG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE (Perspective of key informants)

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender

|   |   |
|---|---|
| M | F |
|---|---|

2. Age (Tick the appropriate box)

|             |             |             |                 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 19-29 years | 30-39 years | 40-49 years | 50 years& older |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|

3. Race

|       |          |       |       |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| Black | Coloured | White | Other |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|

4. Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ethnic group \_\_\_\_\_

6. Preferred language \_\_\_\_\_

|         |          |       |      |       |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|
| English | Setswana | Xhosa | Zulu | Other |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|

7. Marital status

|        |            |         |          |         |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|
| Single | Cohabiting | Married | Divorced | Widowed |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|

**SECTION B: DURATION OF RECEIVING THE FCG**

8. Have you heard about the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you heard about the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you know that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides social security to its citizens? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C: USES OF THE FCG**

11. What do you think foster parents usually buy with the FCG? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you know that it is meant for the foster child? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you think that foster parents consider the needs of foster child when spending the grant? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Elaborate on your answer on 13 above \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION D: EXPLORING THE NEEDS OF FOSTER CHILDREN THROUGH THE EYES OF KEY INFORMANTS**

15. What do you think foster children need mostly? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. Do you see the grant being used for that/ those need(s) mainly?

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| No | Yes |
|----|-----|

**SECTION E: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM KEY INFORMANTS' PERSPECTIVES**

17. What recommendations do you have on how the FCG should be used?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU**

## APPENDIX D

### SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF FOSTER PARENTS IN LETHABONG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE (Perspective of foster children)

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender (Tick the appropriate box)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| M | F |
|---|---|

2. Age (Tick the appropriate box)

|             |             |                |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 14-16 years | 17-18 years | Above 18 years |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|

3. Race

|       |          |       |       |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| Black | Coloured | White | Other |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|

4. Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ethnic group \_\_\_\_\_

6. Preferred language

|         |          |       |      |       |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|
| English | Setswana | Xhosa | Zulu | Other |
|---------|----------|-------|------|-------|

7. Marital status

|        |            |         |          |         |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|
| Single | Cohabiting | Married | Divorced | Widowed |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|---------|

**SECTION G: EXPLORING THE VIEWS OF FOSTER CHILDREN ON HOW THE GRANT BENEFITS THEM?**

8. Who decides how to use the grant between you and your foster parent?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Does the grant benefit you? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Elaborate on your answer above \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. How do you think the grant should be used? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Are you happy to be receiving the FCG? \_\_\_\_\_

13. The grant is meant to be used in a manner that best benefits you?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

**THANK YOU**

## **APPENDIX E**

**Title of research project: Expenditure patterns of kin foster parents in Lethabong Township, North West province**

The study has been described to me in a language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and this will not negatively affect me in any way. I agree not to disclose any information that was discussed during the study.

**Participant's name:**

**Participant's signature:**

**Date:**

## **APPENDIX F**

**Title of research project: Expenditure patterns of kin foster parents in Lethabong Township, North West province.**

The study has been described to me and my foster child in a language that we understand and I freely and voluntarily agree that my foster child may participate. Our questions about the study have been answered. We understand that our identities will not be disclosed and that we may withdraw from the study at any time and this will not negatively affect us in any way. We agree not to disclose any information that was discussed during the study.

**Participant's name:**

**Parent's signature:**

**Date:**

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Setlhogo sa patlisiso: Ditsela tsa tirisomadi tsa batlhokomedi ba losika mo motseseteropong wa Lethabong, porofense ya Bokone Bophirima**

Ke tthaloseditswe patlisiso e ka puo e ke e tthaloganyang mme ke dumelana ka tokologo le ka boithaopo go tsaya-karolo. Dipotso tsa me ka ga patlisiso di arabilwe. Ke tthaloganya gore boitshupo ba me ga bo kitla bo senolwa le gore ke ka nna ka ikgogela morago mo patlisisong ka nako nngwe le nngwe mme se ga se kitla se nkama ka bosula bope. Ke dumelana gore ga ke kitla ke sutlhisa tshedimosetso epe e e builweng mo tsamaong ya patlisiso.

**Leina la motsaya-karolo:**

**Tshaeno ya motsaya-karolo:**

**Letlha:**

## **APPENDIX H**

### **Setlhogo sa patlisiso: Ditsela tsa tirisomadi tsa batlhokomedi ba losika mo motseseteropong wa Lethabong, porofense ya Bokone Bophirima**

Nna le ngwana yo ke mo tlhokomelang re tlhaloseditswe patlisiso e ka puo e re e tlhaloganyang mme ke dumelana ka tokologo le ka boithaopo gore ngwana yo ke mo tlhokomelang a ka nna a tsaya-karolo. Dipotso tsa rona ka ga patlisiso di arabilwe. Re tlhaloganya gore boitshupo ba rona ga bo kitla bo senolwa le gore re ka nna ra ikgogela morago mo patlisisong ka nako nngwe le nngwe mme se ga se kitla se re ama ka bosula bope. Re dumelana gore ga re kitla re sutlhisa tshedimosetso epe e e builweng mo tsamaong ya patlisiso.

**Leina la motsaya-karolo:**

**Tshaeno ya motsadi:**

**Letlha:**

# APPENDIX I



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X8001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900  
Faks: (018) 299-4910  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

### Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee

Tel +27 18 299 4849  
Email [Ethics@nwu.ac.za](mailto: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.

|   |   |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|--------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--|--|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|------|--|--------|--|--|--|
| <b>Project title:</b> Expenditure patterns of kin foster parents in Lethabong township, North West Province: A case study of twenty families. |   |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Project Leader:</b>  | Dr BPM Setlaltoa  |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Student:</b>   | OA Mafatshe   |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Ethics number:</b>   | <table border="1"><tr><td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Institution</td><td colspan="6">Project Number</td><td colspan="2">Year</td><td colspan="4">Status</td></tr></table><br><small>Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small> | N | W              | U | - | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6    | 6 | -      | 1 | 5 | - | A | 9 | Institution |  |  | Project Number |  |  |  |  |  | Year |  | Status |  |  |  |
| N   | W   | U | -              | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 6 | -    | 1 | 5      | - | A | 9 |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| Institution   |   |   | Project Number |   |   |   |   |   | Year |   | Status |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Approval date:</b>   | 2015-07-07  |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Expiry date:</b>   | 2020-07-06  |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |
| <b>Category:</b>  | <b>N/A</b>  |   |                |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |        |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |                |  |  |  |  |  |      |  |        |  |  |  |

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-IRERC. Would there be deviation 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**  
Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis  
DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=NWU, ou=Vaal Triangle Campus, email=Linda.duplessis@nwu.ac.za, c=ZA  
Date: 2015.07.29 14:47:22 +0200

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



social development

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Department:  
Social Development  
North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Private Bag X 6  
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## **CORPORATE SERVICES**

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Enq: Dr. Motshedi, 079 511 3282

**TO : Ms. OLEBOGENG MAFATSHE**  
**SOCIAL WORKER- DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY (MAFIKENG CAMPUS)**

**: DR. BMP. SETLALENTOA**  
**SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY (MAFIKENG CAMPUS)**

**FROM : DR. M. MOTSHEDI**  
**MANAGER: RESEARCH UNIT**

**DATE : 16 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**SUBJECT : PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

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**Dear Sir/Madam**

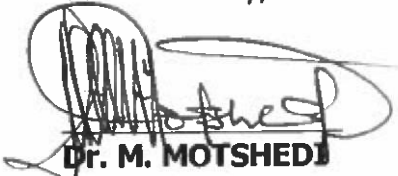
Your letter dated 04 August 2015, requesting permission to conduct research bears reference. The Department acknowledge receipt of the letter and the Acting Head of Department granted permission for you to undertake a research study in the Department. The title of the research study registered as " the expenditure patterns of foster parents in Lethabong".

In the light of the above the research candidate is vehemently urged to consider all ethical considerations during the course of this research projects. Failure to comply with this

requirement may lead to this permission being withdrawn or suspended. You are also requested to submit to the Department a research proposal to this effect prior commencing with the study.

Upon completion of the research study a copy of the research report should also be submitted to the Department to consider imperative findings for planning and policy development, decision making and the improvement of programmes or interventions.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. M. MOTSHEDI**

16/09/2015  
**DATE**

**MANAGER: SUB: DIRECTORATE RESEARCH**

Mir I Mogorosi to act'oc



North West University Mafikeng Campus

University Drive

04/08/2015

Ms. M. Mothobi

Acting Head of Department

North West Department of Social Development

Provident House

Mafikeng



**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR AREA OF OPERATION**

Dear Ms. Mothobi

My name is Olebogeng Mafatshe and I am registered for Masters in Social Work at the North West University (NWU), Mafikeng Campus. The title of my research study is "the expenditure patterns of foster parents in Lethabong" and my supervisor is Dr. M. Setlalloa.

The reason for writing to you is to request permission to conduct this study. This involves access to the foster care files of clients in Lethabong, Rustenburg to identify the possible participants that I can interview. The following documents are attached:

- A copy of my proposal
- Approval Letter to conduct the study
- Ethics Approval Certificate from the University

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Social Development with a bound copy of the research report. In case you require any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact me on 073 764 8567/082 521 6345, TladiO@nwpg.gov.za, olebogengladi@yahoo.com or Dr. Setlalloa on (018) 389 2505, Marilyn.Setlalloa@nwu.ac.za.

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



O. Mafatshe (Ms.)

