

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

FACULTY OF ARTS



**THE EXPERIENCES OF TEENAGE BOYS ON BIOLOGICAL FATHER
ABSENTEEISM IN NGWELEZANE TOWNSHIP**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe, student number 201121010, hereby declare that the work contained in this Masters Dissertation is my own work, except where due acknowledgement is in the references. This dissertation has not been previously submitted to any university or institution of higher learning for any qualification or certificate.

Signed

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to Mrs Margaret Duduzile Thokozile Mbambo. She is the inspiration for my writing and my life. Because of her as a mother and a supporter, I was able to work long hours on my research and still keep the home fires burning. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being there for me.

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research was to explore and describe the experiences of teenage boys with father absenteeism in Ngwelezane Township. The research followed a qualitative research approach. Twenty participants were purposefully selected from two high schools in Ngwelezane. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and yielded results which showed that the teenage boys were facing various challenges.

The findings highlighted that some of the reasons for father absenteeism were due to death and living in different places from their fathers. Regarding the challenges, the study found that teenage boys were struggling economically in terms of paying school fees and stationery, uniform and transport fees, clothes, cosmetics and food. As a result, they had behavioural problems, academic difficulties and other emotional implications. Finally, it was found that teenage boys relied on the support of families, peers and the community as their coping mechanisms.

The increasing absence of father figures has brought attention to the consequences of this phenomenon. Based on the findings of this study and a review of existing literature, the researcher recommends that more social workers should be appointed in schools to identify and intervene where the phenomenon of teenage boys experiencing father absenteeism is identified. Teachers and parents need to be made aware of the effects of this phenomenon. Communities should also encourage men to act as role models in the lives of such teenage boys. In addition, therapy for fathers who have not had the education to fulfil their role as a father should be provided. Finally, there is a need for parenting skills and support programmes for single mothers to assist them in the managing of their teenage sons. Their sons also need training in relationship-building as they appear to lack the skills needed to build healthy relationships.

KEY WORDS: Biological father, teenage boys, absenteeism, experiences

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DNA – Deoxyribonucleic Acid

REC – Research Ethics Committee

LAAGBV – Lutheran Action Against Gender-Based Violence

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter entails the provision for the general overview of the study. The following vital components of the study are also taken into consideration, which are; the background of the study, the definition of the key concepts, the problem of the statement, the aims and the objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study and the intended contribution to the body of knowledge.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

A family is a fundamental and a basic unit in all societies. In a traditional African community, there are intergenerational and extended families made up of uncles, aunts, cousins living together in close proximity. Tradition, therefore informs such a conventional setup of the community to be responsible for the upbringing of the child that co-exists within a particular community more especially when the biological father is not present. However, due to urbanization and modernisation, there is a shift in belief, also, that children should be born and raised by their biological parents and both of them have duties which they are expected to fulfil (Richter, Chikovore & Makusha, 2010: 230).

Nevertheless, it has been found that the traditional family set-up no longer exists in communities as numerous families are now found to exist in the absence of one parent. About a third of pre-school children live in the same home with both of their parents (Richter et al., 2010: 231). This leaves two-thirds of the children in single-parent families.

The Department of Social Development (2011) argues that among the factors that have weakened family life is father absenteeism. Statistics South Africa (2011, as cited in Holborn & Eddy, 2013: 27) indicates that South Africa has the highest rate of father absenteeism in the nuclear family in the world. Relinquishing of family by the father takes such forms as working away from the nuclear family, alcoholism, divorce, separation and even death. Even though a vast amount of fathers support their children and remain in contact with them despite staying apart from their children,

previous studies have shown a link between father absenteeism and negative effects on children, particularly crime, truancy, poverty, drug dealing and drug abuse, poor academic performance, poor psychological and cognitive development and emotional instability (Allen & Daly, 2007; Richter et al., 2010: 232).

Gobbi (2013: n.p) showed that not only behaviour is affected in teenagers growing up without fathers, but the whole brain structure is transformed. These children show greater aggression, more antisocial behaviour and more abnormal social interactions than those brought up by both parents. They fail to make informed decisions and struggle in terms of problem-solving abilities.

Spencer (2013: 61) found that growing up without a father can permanently alter the brain and the children are more likely to grow up angry and ultimately turn to drugs. Spencer (2013: 70) argued that children need both parents for sustainable mental health development. This is because children who are growing up without fathers are at a far greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, suicide, poor educational performance, teenage pregnancy, cheap labour and criminality.

The researcher once had an opportunity to do practical work at a correctional centre and was placed in the juveniles' section. During the assessment of the juveniles, it was observed and identified that most of them came from absent-father households and most of them had never met their biological fathers. This common issue became a concern that needed to be explored. Therefore, the intention of this study was to explore experiences of teenage boys on biological-father absenteeism which might be influencing these teenage boys to resort to crime.

1.3 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section will provide the definition of the key concepts of the study. These concepts are defined below.

1.3.1 Experiences

According to Hornby (2010: 514), experiences are direct personal participation or observation, actual knowledge or contact. An experience can be a particular incident or feeling that a person has undergone. Experiences are the totality of characteristics, both past and present that make up the particular quality of a person or people.

According to Kernerman (2010: 1), experience relates to events that occur in someone's life in the course of time. It is knowledge or practical wisdom gained from what one has observed, encountered or undergone. For the purpose of this research, the term 'experiences' refers to the challenges encountered by teenage boys due to the absence of a father figure, particularly a biological father in their lives.

1.3.2 Biological Father

According to Collins English Dictionary (2017: 134), a biological father is a man whose semen fertilised the ovum from which the child was born. Biological father is defined by STANDS4 LLC (2017: n.p.) as the man from whom one inherits half of one's DNA and from whom men inherit the Y chromosome. In this research, a biological father is the male genetic contributor to the creation of the infant through sexual intercourse or sperm donation.

1.3.3 Father Absenteeism

According to the Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.), father absenteeism may be defined as the state where a father is either physically or emotionally absent to his children. Mancini (2010: 4) defines father absenteeism in the context of a family as a family which does not have a biological, adoptive or stepfather living with the children. This includes fathers who are divorced, separated, incarcerated, in the military, travel regularly for business and are absent in the home more than they are present. For the purpose of this research, the term father absenteeism refers to a state where biological fathers are emotionally, physically, spiritually and financially absent from their sons.

1.3.4 Teenage Boys

According to Dorn and Biro (2011: 180), teenage-hood is briefly defined as a transitional stage where one is developed physically and psychologically and this takes place during the period of puberty to legal adulthood. For the purposes of this research, this term teenage boy symbolises a male person who is between 13 and 19 years of age.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The major problem that prompted this research is the continued reporting from social workers in correctional facilities (e.g. Qalakabusha Correctional Facility, Empangeni)

that most juveniles who are incarcerated come from abusive and neglectful households. Also, it was reported that the teenagers who are living without biological fathers make up most of these juveniles. It has been noted that challenges faced by teenagers without fathers is a concern in KwaZulu-Natal as this has been highlighted by print media, radio and television. These teenagers are reported as facing more challenges compared to teenagers with fathers in their respective households. These challenges are mostly noticeable in the areas around the physical, cognitive, personality, social, and moral development. According to Elium and Elium (2004, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 26), fathers who spend most of their time away from home abandon the child rearing responsibilities to the mothers. This renders the father emotionally detached from the teenage boy. This also takes place when fathers are abusive, an alcoholic or just simply deserts the family. Statistically, the teenage boy is quite likely to follow in the footsteps of the absent father.

The researcher identified during practical work in the year 2015 at Qalakabusha Correctional Centre that the problem of the absent father is common to many of the teenage boys that are incarcerated. The researcher observed that their experiences or perceptions and behaviour towards the absence of their fathers were different. In areas where the other teenage boy might have performed poorly, the other boy might have turned into a drug addict. Therefore, the intention of this research was to discover these experiences of teenage boys who grow up in the absence of a biological father. It is, therefore, hoped that the recommendations that will be made out of the study would help teenage boys develop positive coping mechanisms and to bring back the purpose of life and sense of living in spite of all the life consequences they might be facing, and therefore reduce juvenile delinquency.

1.5. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to explore and describe the experiences of growing up in the absence of a biological father among teenage boys of Ngwelezane area.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To determine the reasons of father absenteeism in the lives of teenage boys in Ngwelezane area.

- To explore the economic consequences faced by teenage boys as a result of father absenteeism in Ngwelezane area.
- To determine the social consequences of father absenteeism among teenage boys of Ngwelezane area.
- To explore the coping mechanisms of teenage boys of Ngwelezane area without their biological fathers.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The principal question of the study was:

- What is it that these teenage boys of Ngwelezane experience when growing up without the biological father?

The following were the sub-questions which guided the study:

- What are the reasons for father absenteeism in the teenage boys' lives of Ngwelezane area?
- How are the teenage boys of Ngwelezane area socially affected with matters pertaining to the absence of the biological father in their lives
- What are the economic challenges associated with father absenteeism among teenage boys in Ngwelezane area?
- How do teenage boys of Ngwelezane area cope with having an absent father?

1.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the life experience of teenage boys who were living without their biological fathers. In our society, it has become the norm that many children are raised in single-parent households normally led by women. This is mainly caused by the high rate of teenage pregnancy which automatically means that the child will never get support from both parents, especially from the father. The researcher shall make it a point that the study and the findings thereof are made available to both the educators and the school social workers. The researcher shall do this with a sole aim of arming the aforementioned stakeholders to avail them with a more informed and insightful understanding of these boys who grow up without their biological fathers.

It is of the researcher's personal interest that these teenage boys are assisted in a manner that will render them full adults, and that they have transited through every developmental stage and are confident and competent enough to survive in this world.

This research will empower these young men in as far as curbing this social scourge of single-parenting so that they do not become absent fathers to their own children. It will also educate the respective community to fully understand the behaviour of these young men whenever they are confronted with challenges and not just to judge them but try as much as possible to understand the consequences of the absence of a father figure in their upbringing.

1.8 THESIS OUTLINE

Chapter 1: General overview of the study

This chapter offers an introduction of the study. It provides background information on the topic, the key concepts of the study, and a description of the problem statement. It includes the aim and objectives of the study and research questions. It also includes the significance of the study and the intended contribution to the body of knowledge.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review of this study involves the current information and other research that has been done on father absenteeism. It aimed at reviewing literature on the experiences of teenage boys who grow up without biological fathers. It also includes the theoretical framework of the study, the effects of father absenteeism on teenage boys, and the social impacts of an absent biological father on teenage boys.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter discusses how the study was conducted. The research approach, research design, population of the study and sampling strategy are discussed. Lastly, data collection methods, data analysis and ethical considerations are explained in detail.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data

This chapter presents the results obtained during the interviews with the participants concerning their experiences of biological father absenteeism. These findings are presented according to themes that emerged and discussed using literature and the selected theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter 5: Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

The final chapter provides the conclusions and recommendations which are based on the major findings of the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review provides the background of the study and the context of the research problem thereof. (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009: 80). The literature review makes an important contribution to the research. Ollhoff (2011, as cited in Terrell, 2016: 47) states that the review of literature is about what is already known of the research problem that which the researcher has identified and wants to investigate. The literature review has to do more with the study itself, the on-going-dialogue in the literature, filling the gaps that are there and extending prior studies. (Terrell, 2016: 47). This enables the researcher to gain access on how other scholars have investigated and found results on the research problem that the current study is about. This chapter reviews the literature on father absenteeism from both a global and local context. Specifically, literature on these experiences of the teenage boys with absent biological fathers; the effects of father absenteeism and coping mechanisms are reviewed. The theoretical framework that guides this study is also explained.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is guided by the ecological systems theory that was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, a developmental psychologist who is most known for his ecological systems theory of child development. According to Sincero (2012: 2), ecological systems theory attempts to explain what factors influence a person's behaviour and which ones have the most impact. The model is broken down into five systems: the microsystem, mesosystem, exo-system, macro-system, and chronosystem.

2.2.1 Microsystem

According to Sincero (2012: 2), the microsystem is considered the most intimate or most influential level and consists of the interactions between the person and their family or their close friends. These influences are bidirectional, meaning that both sides are influenced equally. For example, a child who is very calm and humble will most likely cause the parent to be calm and trusting of the child. On the other hand, if

the parent is very strict and harsh towards the child, the child may feel the need to rebel against the parent.

2.2.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem represents the connections between the microsystems. This means that there is more than one factor that influences a situation in one's life. For example, if a young student is doing poorly in school, it can be due to lack of parent involvement in their academics, or possible academic limitations. Another example of this would be if an employee was not doing well in the workplace, it could be linked back to a fight at home or the lack of communication with a spouse.

2.2.3 Exo-system

The next level in the theory is the exo-system. According to Sincero (2012: 2), "this system is made up of experiences or factors that do not necessarily contain the developing person but nevertheless have an impact in their life". These factors or experiences can be formal or informal organisations. Formal organisations may provide flexible work schedules or paid maternity or paternity leave, and these circumstances can positively influence the parent-child relationship. Informal organisations can consist of the parent's social networks, such as close friends or relatives that can offer advice or friendship in the child's life. These relationships can provide a sense of trust and source of love in the life of the child. This system can also be observed in a way that will affect the child's life negatively. For example, if the parents do not have close friends or a feeling of acceptance in the community, there is an increased risk of child abuse and conflict within the family.

2.2.4 Macro-system

The fourth level is the macro-system which is a much broader system that is made up of the cultural values, morals, customs, and resources in the community (Sincero, 2012: 2). An example of this would be if a child attends a private school that closely monitors the behaviour of the children and tries to instil moral values, children might experience a more enjoyable time during their school years.

2.2.5 Chronosystem

Bronfenbrenner (2001, as cited in Sincero, 2012: 2) defined the ever-changing nature of a person's environment to be the chronosystem. He noted that there were many factors that can influence or change the circumstances of one's life, which he called ecological transitions. Ecological transitions could be any event such as starting college, getting married, getting divorced, graduating high school or college, becoming a parent or retiring. All of these instances could be considered highlights in someone's life that can have a major impact in the routine or schedule one is familiar with.

Nicholas, Rautenbach and Maistry (2010: 90) explain that "an ecological perspective focuses on the interrelationship between interpersonal and wider environmental factors most likely to determine the degree of risk or resilience in the developing child and best fits contemporary theory on family functioning, including parenting". This is one of the crucial systems that include the spousal, family, extended family, social support, and wider cultural and socio-economic systems. Bowlby (1973, as cited in Nicholas et al., 2010: 90) describes how children build internal working models of their self-worth from experiences and perceptions of their parents' or caregiver's availability, ability and willingness to provide care, security and protection. In the ecological systems theory, behaviour principles underlying the model are identified, namely, exchange balance, inner consistency, and dialectical change. Nicholas et al. (2010: 90) further explain that ecological theory includes and adds dynamic and human dimensions to general and social system theories. It is concerned with people interacting in real life time and space within territorial habitats.

For the purpose of the study, an ecological system consists of teenage boys, their life situations, and the well-functioning or dysfunctional behaviour patterns that result from their interaction. The ecological systems theory was chosen as a theoretical framework as it is appropriate for the study. The ecological systems theory allows each individual to describe their lived experience from their own view and perspective.

According to Parsons (2017: 1), systems theory explains human behaviour as the intersection of the influences of multiple interrelated systems. Even for individual issues, families, organisations, societies, and other systems are inherently involved and must be considered when attempting to understanding and assist the individual. This systems theory is used to develop a holistic view of individuals within an

environment and is best applied to situations where several systems inseparably connect and influence one another. It can be employed in cases where contextual understandings of behaviour will lead to the most appropriate practice interventions. This systems theory also allows individuals to express their own feelings on how growing up in the absence of a biological father has influenced their behaviour and affected their teenage years. The following section explores the causes of father absenteeism on teenage boys.

2.3 CAUSES OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM

There are different reasons for father absenteeism. According to Ferrara (2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 18), some fathers voluntarily choose to not be part of the child's life and abandon the child. These causes have been categorised as follows:

2.3.1 Divorce and Single-parent Households

Holborn and Eddy (2013: 27) mention that father absence is often closely linked to the quality of the relationship between the parents (or former partners) especially after a divorce or a break-up. This study has found that conflict-ridden relationships, desire for vengeance after the collapse of a relationship, resentment and the lack of proper communication often result in fathers' restricted access to their children or complete exclusion. The rate of divorce in South Africa is relatively high and provides a clear indication of the extent and the seriousness of conflicts in marital relationships. For example, the total number of published divorces fluctuated between approximately 32 000 in 2004 and 31 000 in 2009 (Stats SA, 2009, cited in Holborn & Eddy, 2013: 27). Since these figures are only based on formal, legal marriages, they do not capture other forms of separation which occur in non-marital relationships.

The divorced father is one of the most common types of absent fathers. Research by the Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) argues that when visitation rights of fathers are discussed in a divorce situation, the conversation turns away from the rights of the child to a power struggle between the parents. Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) states that fatherhood should be viewed as the right of the child, and the father should accept the responsibility and see it as a pleasure. It is often conflict resulting from divorce that results in fathers being denied access to their children and the children experiencing the phenomenon of an absent father. In most

divorce situations, the mother gets custody of the children. Fathers fail to pay maintenance and may disappear altogether.

2.3.2 Occupational Demands

Ferrara (2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 19) postulates that some fathers are absent to their children because they have joined the military. Military fathers raise their families within long and dangerous deployments. Although modern technology allows for communication, they are often unable to have regular contact either with phone calls or via social media. Frequent moves take children away from familiar schools and friends. Some of these situations create barriers to involved fathering.

According to Holborn and Eddy (2013: 29), unemployment and poverty rates are very high in South Africa, and this has, in one way or another, contributed to the absence of these fathers in the lives of their teenage boys. It becomes clear that due to these socio-economic dilemmas, these fathers have no choice but to seek employment in neighbouring provinces or even foreign countries. This is simply because the unemployed father tends to feel emasculated and unable to fully assume the role of the father when he is unemployed.

2.3.3 The Cycle of Emotional Absence and Inadequate Role Models

This cycle of emotional absence and inadequate role modelling by fathers of these teenage boys is mainly caused by the false conception of fatherhood which emerges as fathers see themselves primarily as providers (Holborn & Eddy, 2013: 18). Though this term has a broader significance, by far the majority of fathers express this in terms of financial provision. The provider role refers to the fathers' obligation to provide for the children and/ or families with material goods and financial means. Masculinity and fatherhood are primarily understood as in terms of one's ability to provide for the family.

McLanahan, Tach and Schneider (2013: 399) found strong evidence that father absence had a negative impact on children's social-emotional development, particularly by increasing specific behaviours, such as smoking and early child bearing during adolescence. Additionally, the Fragile Families Studies (Osborne & McLanahan, 2007: 1065) showed that children born to unmarried mothers were more likely to display aggressive behaviours compared to children born to married mothers. It is clear that the most emotionally resourceful and resilient boys are those whose

fathers are part of the emotional fabric of the family, whose fathers care for them and show it in comforting, consistent ways.

2.3.4 Incarceration

There is an increasing recognition that the high number of men or fathers being incarcerated also contributes to the number of children experiencing paternal absence as discussed by Ferrara (2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 19). Incarceration has a negative impact on teenage boys who then grow up without a father. There are many families that have been left in poverty because the father was sent to prison and is no longer able to provide for the family. An unintended consequence of the war on crime that exists in the South African context is that many fathers are imprisoned. According to Ferrara (2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 20), children of incarcerated fathers are more emotionally vulnerable and at a higher risk being involved in criminal activities.

Having discussed incarceration as one of the causes of father absenteeism among teenage boys, perhaps it is important to mention that the sentence could be so long that boys become adolescents without their fathers' presence. The possibility is that the boy especially in his teen years will experience emotional problems and, sooner or later, start to show behavioural symptoms that are unacceptable. The Minister of the Department of Correctional Services (2014: n.p.) reported that some children are never told that their father is or has been in jail and it is estimated that three-quarters of prison inmates in South Africa are fathers.

2.3.5 Illegal Immigration

It was reported by Irin News (2010: n.p.), that Mpembe, Gauteng's acting chief of police, stated that Gauteng was home to 3 000 000 illegal immigrants. It was suggested that illegal immigrants were responsible for a great number of crimes and the police had to spend their time looking for foreigners, arrest them and protect them with resources that were intended for South African citizens. Many of the illegal immigrants left their homes and families. Boys were being raised by their mothers in single-parent families, often having been abandoned by their fathers. Many men were incarcerated or deported due to legislation aimed at controlling the invasion of illegal immigrants. While this process is ongoing, many boys are experiencing the phenomenon of absent fathers (Ferrara, 2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 20).

2.3.6 Inability to Be a Primary Provider

Poverty, unemployment and lack of education may be the reason why many fathers avoid taking responsibility for their children because they are financially unable to do so. Holborn and Eddy (2013: 5) state that abandonment by fathers is often motivated by their inability to bear the burden of being primary providers. Failure becomes intolerable and they lack the capacity to generate enough income, are often uneducated and unskilled labourers. Many men die as parents and husbands by indulging in alcohol or drugs or becoming involved in violent crime.

2.3.7 Lack of Capacity to Provide

Holland (2008, as cited in Clark, 2013: 24) is of the opinion that we are an absent-father society because many men procreate but lack the capacity to nurture or provide for their children, having themselves grown up in absent-father families. Holborn and Eddy (2013: 8) postulate that fathers may be physically present but are emotionally absent. These fathers are not emotionally available to their children, nor are they involved with their children in any way. Barnes (2008, as cited in Clark, 2013: 24) also discusses the lack of competent nurturing fathers and refers specifically to South Africa as an absent-father nation, commenting on the cruel, self-perpetuating cycle of paternal absence. It is further discussed by Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) that many young fathers are intimidated by the idea of acting as reliable, present and mature fathers and try to avoid criticism from family members or peers about their parent skills.

2.3.8 Death

Death is one of the causes of father absenteeism. According Denis and Ntsimane (2006, as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 291), HIV and AIDS is one of the leading causes of death among a large section of population, particularly fathers. They found that, among children of families affected by HIV/AIDS in KwaZulu-Natal, two-thirds of children in this vulnerable group were being raised by single mothers and that these children seldom saw their fathers. When a father died, that is one of a suite of stressful events. The results for boys are very confusing. The death of the father causes images in the mind to appear, raising ideas of how the relationship should have developed.

Death closes the door on reconciliation. Words are left unsaid; feelings are left open and bare. Dreams for better relationships remain only that – a dream.

Sheppard and Sear (2012: 1) provide statistics on the effects of stressful early life experiences from the effect of father absence on the development of teenage boys. About 7.3% of boys lost their fathers before the age of seven; 2.5% between seven and 11; and a further 4.6% between 11 and 16. The age at which the child's natural father died makes a difference to the results. When a boy's natural father is absent, he becomes more likely to have a child by the age of 23.

2.4 EFFECTS OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEENAGERS

Nock and Einolf (2008: 1) revealed that children from absent father families are more likely to have children out of wedlock, are less likely to get married, and more likely to get divorced. They are also less likely to attend college and more likely to end up in jail. Other effects of father absenteeism on teenagers include juvenile delinquency, school violence, sexual assault, and drug and alcohol abuse (Bronte-Tinkew Moore, Capps & Zaff, 2006: 181). Bronte-Tinkew et al. (2006: 200) submit that men provide extensive amounts of care and resources to children and their absence can have a range of damaging effects on the psycho-social development of the child.

Teenage-hood is a crucial stage of life for any teenage boy. The researcher is of the opinion that it is during this stage that the boy will need his father's guidance more than at any other time. It is during this stage that the boy becomes uncontrollable and vulnerable to peer-pressure. The researcher is mindful that teenage-hood is the stage where teenage boys would do anything to prove their manhood. Chances are that they might become sexually active, or start taking drugs and alcohol and eventually fall into criminal activities. They tend to be more yielding to advice from unacceptable sources, particularly peers who are already involved in negative activities. The following are effects of biological father absenteeism among teenage boys:

2.4.1 Risk of Sexual Abuse

Research on effects of father absenteeism dates back to 1994 when Metzler, Noell, Biglan, Ary & Smolkowski (1994) did a study on teenage boys that involved more than seven hundred teenagers from single parented households, especially single mothers. Metzler et al. (1994: 19) found that these teenagers are at a greater risk of engaging

in early sexual activity, sexual abuse, and neglect when compared with families with two natural parents living in the same home.

Fathers have a direct impact on the wellbeing of their children. Teenage boys with involved, respectful fathers learn from their fathers how to respect women, how to treat them and are less likely to become involved in violent or unhealthy relationships (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006: 1). Furthermore, a study that involved 156 victims of child sexual abuse found that the majority of the children sexually abused come from disrupted or single-parent homes, especially those with single mothers (Gomes-Schwartz, Horowitz & Cardarelli, 2013: 1). Although step families make up only about 10% of all families, 27% of the abused children lived in a home with either a stepfather or the mother's boyfriend.

One could conclude that fathers play a major role in children's wellbeing. This means that teenage boys need their biological fathers to be present, especially during this crucial stage, in order to give the proper guidance so that they do not get involved in early sexual activities and unhealthy relationships. These kinds of issues need a man-to-man talk. Fathers are also needed for their children's protection. This decreases the risk of child sexual abuse.

Mendle, Harden, Turkheimer, Van Hulle, D'Onofrio, Brooks Gunn, Rodgers, Emery & Lahey (2009: 1463) furthered this investigation by exploring the possible paternal as well as purely biological influences that contribute to a speedy route to sexual initiation. In another study published by Jordahl and Lohman (2009: 1), in which 90 families were observed, greater exposure to father absence was linked to earlier sexual maturity. The factors related to sexual activity of adolescent boys, including age, race, and delinquency, found that a father's involvement was the only factor that decreased the chances of engaging in sexual activity and none of the other family processes was found to be statistically significant.

These studies show that a father's involvement is significant in any teenage boy's life. At this particular phase of life, fathers need to engage with and communicate more with their teenage boys which might have a more positive impact on their lives, in general, and they may become more careful and responsible.

Investigations have focused on non-traditional family structure, namely: married step-parents, cohabitating couples, and single parents, and its association with adolescents increased sexual activity (Brown, 2006: 447; Cavanagh, Crissey & Raley 2008: 698; Fomby & Cherlin, 2007: 181; Osborne & McLanahan, 2007: 1065). Specifically, Cavanagh et al. (2008: 698) found that adolescents residing in a step-parent family were more likely to be in a relationship than those in two-biological parent families. Additionally, those without a biological father who became romantically involved before they were fully mature experienced more conflict and instability within their relationships.

The researcher is of the view that, in the past, the rate of teenage sexual involvement and pregnancy was very low perhaps because people held their cultural norms in high regard. There were few instances where you would find a boy growing up to his teenage years without his biological father. Where this occurred, it was often the outcome of natural circumstances that were beyond human control such as death. Teenage boys growing up without their biological fathers have become the most damaging phenomenon of the modern age. It is also the driving force behind the most critical and continuing problems facing our society today. When teenage boys grow up in the absence of their biological fathers, the chances are high that they will become involved in sexual activities early in their teens. The researcher is of the opinion that this may lead these teenage boys to be irresponsible with regard to their own children. Many fathers have deserted their families because they do not have the supreme resource, namely, money, to take care of them and that has left many families in poverty.

2.4.2 Poverty

According to Mancini (2010: 14), 42% of children in 2002 lived only with their mother compared with only 1% who lived with the father. This could indicate that in single-parent households, it is fathers who are more commonly absent; where parents are not married, father support is weak and continues to decrease over time; children living only with their mothers experience poverty and difficult socio-economic circumstances. This means that the single parent is the sole provider for the home, and boys growing up in such families' experience higher incidences of poverty. It happens that single parent has to work long hours, and still the income may not be

enough to meet the needs of the family. As a result, single parents may not be in a position to make available the education and economic opportunities their sons need to get ahead.

Poverty rates among children increased by 5% from 1970 to 1996 due to the increase in single-mother families (Sawhill, 2006: 48). According to Nock and Einolf (2008: 40), “poverty is one of the negative impacts of growing up without a father because living with a single parent increases a child’s chances of living in poverty”. They further explained that below-average incomes of single-mother families is one of the factors that contributes to poverty. Popenoe (2009: 54) mentions that the economic loss is the most tangible and immediate consequence of absent fathers and that an increase in single-mother households constitutes a national emergency. In 2008, poverty rates for the United States were 13.2% for the whole population, 19% for children and 28.7% for single-mother families (Edin & Kissane, 2010: 460).

The United States Census Bureau (2011: n.p.) found that 12% of children in a conventional family were living in poverty, compared to 44% of children in families that were unconventional. The US Department of Health and Human Services (2012: n.p.) indicates that teenagers in single-mother families are four times more likely to suffer from poverty. This shows that biological fathers have a responsibility to provide for their children, including monetary support. This automatically reduces the risk of teenagers growing up in poverty.

Haywood (1995 as cited in Mancini, 2010: 13) states that “A principal reason for the increased number of children living at or below the poverty level, according to the recently released report ‘Kids Count’, is the rise in absentee fathers”. One indicator of poverty is that single-parent homes do not have as much access to resources. The U.S. Census Bureau (2002, as cited in Mancini, 2010: 14) states that “children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor”. It is obvious that families without a father lack a source of income. It is especially difficult for a single mother to provide financially for her children.

Having discussed all the above information, the researcher is therefore of the opinion that lack of money forces many fathers to turn against their own families. Not because they do not care anymore, but they become emotionally troubled, making it hard for them to think straight. When a man has no money, the people he loves the most or

those closest to him become his enemies. Today, fathers who lack money to provide for their families would often rather be not part of the child's personal development than inflict physical and emotional abuse on his family. This leaves the child to be raised by only his mother or by a stepfather whom most teenage boys hardly look up to or want to learn from.

In the modern era, however, money has become all-powerful in people's lives as it determines what they can do and what they can become. The researcher is mindful that many fathers chose to abandon their families, due to the lack of money and unemployment and most of those families suffer from poverty. Lack of money can also force a decent and dignified man to resort to substance abuse and criminal activity, leading to incarceration or being placed in a rehabilitation centre for some time which means his sons will have to grow up in his absence.

2.4.3. Substance Abuse

Holland (2008, as cited in Clark, 2013: 27) states that there is high rate of drug abuse among teenage boys with absent fathers. Kwant (2011, as cited in Clark, 2013: 27) states that teenage boys with absent fathers experience life-threatening difficulties with emotional, social, cognitive and moral issues. They experience a confidence crisis and may turn to drugs in order to fill the emptiness. Research by Spencer (2013: 61) shows that father absenteeism is the strongest factor in causing the sufferer to go through a lot of mental strain. Spencer (2013: 63) found that growing up without a father can permanently modify the brain: teenage boys with absent biological fathers tend to grow up with anger and ultimately turn to drugs.

In addition, the conclusions of Bronte-Tinkew et al. (2006: 200) also stress the consequences of uninvolved fathers. They found that youth were more at risk for substance use without an involved father. In fact, 75% of all adolescent patients in drug treatment centres came from absent father homes (Gottfried, 2007: 38).

Friedman, Ali & McMurphy (2009: 79) mention that it is a common belief that growing up without a biological father and in poverty that is related to father absenteeism, are the root causes of crime and drug trafficking, and possibly also of substance use. This popular belief or assumption is most often applied to adolescent boys in many different societies. The consequences of growing up without a biological father could have

devastating effects not only on the teenage boys but also on the community at large. Some boys could be so worried about their problem that they end up becoming wild and irrepressible. As a matter of fact, children need both parents for a sustainable mental health development. As a result, teenage boys with absent biological fathers are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, suicide, poor educational performance, cheap labour and criminality. Friedman et al (2009: 80) stress that father absenteeism also forces teenage boys to grow bitter and, in the end, they become aggressive to their peers and are at the greater chances of committing suicide.

2.4.4 Suicidal Tendencies

According to Hofferth (2006: 53), teenage boys living in single-parent households are more likely to commit suicide and suffer from psychological disorders, compared to teenage boys living in conventional families. Teenage boys who have no male role models are also statistically more likely to feel suicidal than those who have positive role models. Most teenage boys admitted to having felt suicidal at some point of their lives.

Teenage boys also experience other physical problems when living in absent-father homes. Single parents, particularly single mothers feel the pressure of raising their boys alone, and that may lead to stress and eventually violence and abuse from the mother. When these instances occur, many teenage boys commit suicide. This is due to the fact that teenage boys are not open to sharing their challenges and problems with others. Instead of asking for assistance, they are more likely to commit suicide.

The researcher points out that it is an African custom that a boy has to be nurtured by both his parents, especially his biological father, so that he would learn from him how to be a real man. This phenomenon is supported by the inherent belief that the boy has to fill his father's shoes and build him a home once his father dies. Every father, therefore, wants to play a part in the upbringing of his son, especially for this reason. In the present day, things have changed with many households in our societies being without biological fathers with the resultant negative effects among teenage boys.

2.4.5 Low Self-esteem

Growing up without a biological father can psychologically affect the teenage boy. These psychological effects of growing up without a father can lead to self-esteem issues. Gomes-Schwartz et al. (2013: 1) argue that teenage boys with absent fathers may blame themselves when the father is absent, and believe that there is something wrong with them. These teenage boys would then believe that they might not be deserving or lovable. They also develop a belief that the absent parent is bad and so, through genetics, they must also be as bad. A teenage boy of divorced parents or a single parent with sole custody grows up to have significantly lower self-esteem than children of parents who have joint custody or whose parents remain married (Gomes-Schwartz et al., 2013: 1). This is especially true with boys who learn to be men mostly through their interactions with fathers. Without these interactions, teenage boys can grow up to be unsure of how they should behave as husbands and fathers.

According to Kwant (2011 as cited in Clark, 2013: 14), fathers have an enormous influence effect on their children's self-esteem. Further to this, he postulates that when the father takes the spiritual lead in his family, 93% of the family members are likely to follow him. When a mother attempts to take this role, only 34% of the family members will follow her. This supports the notion that confirms the influence, authority and role that a father has over his family.

2.4.6 Negative Behaviour

Father presence is important, but father involvement is more important. Without parental approval, teenage boys suffer from emotional pain, which leads to attempts to prove themselves. These include struggles with other teenage boys, engaging in risky behaviours, and trying to scare the world into seeing them as men (Hartwell-Walker, 2015: 1). Moreover, teenage boys who grow up without fathers are reported to be more likely to be involved in criminal activity.

Barker and Ricardo (2005: 1) state that young men in some settings in sub-Saharan Africa participate in conflict and violence as a means to gain power and intentionally to find friendship, male role models, surrogate fathers and substitute families with their male peers. This could mean that boys with absent fathers in sub-Saharan Africa lack a sense of power and masculinity and search for it in conflict and violence.

The researcher indicates that people's background in some way determines the scope of people's future. A teenage boy who comes from a family where parents are often drunk is at a high risk of engaging in negative behaviours. A teenage boy who grows up in a dysfunctional family environment, where the mother is involved in drinking, drugs or prostitution and the biological father is absent, is at a greater risk of behaving inappropriately. This may be because a teenage boy has never experienced love and care from the parents, but has, instead, always experienced the hardships of life. The chances are that a teenage boy for whom abuse and neglect has always been the experience of his life will grow up to be a man without love and not caring for others. Often for far too long, these teenagers remain boys even in their adulthood. When they have their own families in the future, they may encounter difficulties in bonding with their own children.

2.4.7 Difficulties Bonding

A father holds great power in the lives of his children. According to Hartwell-Walker (2015: 1), teenage boys who grow up in the absence of fathers have more problems bonding with their own children. The absence of a father-to-son bond causes boys to be unable to develop that connection with their own children. Teenage boys who have absent fathers often become absent fathers themselves. They miss lessons of having healthy relationships with women and tend to have higher break-up and divorce rates than men who grow up with a father's guidance (Hartwell-Walker, 2015: 1). The lack of male role models has been discussed as a major reason for boys become irresponsible to their own.

Furthermore, Richter & Morrell (2012: 290) state that many men in South Africa rarely attend the birth of their children and often do not acknowledge their children as theirs. They say that South African fathers often fail to be involved in their children's lives. This leaves the child to be raised by his mother only or by a stepfather whom most teenage boys hardly look up to or want to learn from.

The researcher has observed that teenage boys who are born out of an abusive relationship usually have difficulties of bonding with their own children, or even with the mother of the child. They are often short-tempered and ready to leave the relationship. In fear of the law, the father would rather not be a part of the upbringing of his child. Such a father usually has little time for other people and, especially, of

worrying about their feelings. As a result, the father may decide to abandon the son he has brought into the world.

2.4.8 Emotional Distress

According to Doheny (2015: 1), emotional effects are also associated with boys coming from families with an absent father figure. Mothers head up a significant number of single-parent homes and in spite of their efforts to be present for their sons, boys might feel incomplete, alone and may lack a strong sense of identity. The need to belong might push them to join a group to get a sense of identity; and, in many cases, boys are more likely to be influenced to become involved in substance abuse, truancy and crime.

Teenage boys with absent fathers express extreme stress levels to daily challenges in life or dealing with the superiors (Doheny, 2015: 1). A single mother needs to be compassionate, patient, supportive and actively involved in seeking out activities and role models for her son to help him cope with the feelings of anger, alienation, vulnerability and confusion he might experience. Their relationships with their mothers help reduce stress levels as an adult, but the effect is less than that of a father. It is vital for a son to have a good relationship with his father because it teaches him a healthy way of solving problems, allowing him, as a man, to deal with everyday stress in more beneficial ways. Teenage boys who grow up without parental inspiration are more likely to experience sadness and worry (Gomes-Schwartz et al., 2013: 1).

2.4.9 Psychological Effects

Father presence in the family and involvement in their children's lives are factors associated with better psychological adjustment in adolescence. It has been investigated and argued that the absence of the biological father in a child's life may create a risk for psychological maladjustment (Videon, 2005: 55). The psychological effects of the teenage boys' childhood experiences can have a huge impact on what they become later in life. Growing up without a father could permanently modify the structure of the brain (Spencer, 2013: 63).

Many studies have shown that a range of negative behavioural, cognitive, psychological and mental health outcomes are associated with family breakdown. This includes the increased risk for psychopathology in early and mid-adolescence

(Storksen, Roysamb, Holmen & Tambs, 2006: 75). Although most research has not measured father absence per se, changes in family structure following marriage dissolution have been examined as risk factors for the development of psychopathology in adolescence (Cuffe, McKeown, Addy & Garrison, 2005: 121). Studies of fathers' role in child development suggest that, in two-parent households, fathers' involvement in child-rearing practices contributes to adolescents' psychological adjustment independently of levels of maternal involvement and various social and familial factors (Cookston, Braver, Griffin, De Luse & Mile, 2007: 123).

This discussion leads to the conclusion that sons of single parents are more likely to be disposed towards psychological disturbances. The children need to learn to cope, but the study shows that they are sometimes unable to cope because of situational stress and that they tend more towards depression, addiction, suicide and low self-esteem.

2.4.10. Delinquency and Violent Behaviours

In a study on mother-headed single-parent families, Sharma & Silbereisen (2007: 46) found that teenage boys living in single-parent family units present higher levels of delinquent behaviour in comparison with those living with their biological parents. Their findings suggest that any negative impact on young boys of not having a biological father in their daily lives is counteracted to some point by state support for single mothers, who are have no other means of support and have the responsibility of raising the child on their own.

According to Coley & Medeiros (2007: 132), low-income minority teenage boys' results showed that more frequent social encounters and communication with non-resident fathers decreased delinquency. Children raised in single-parent families and surrounded by other children of single-parent families at school are at a greater risk of delinquency. Teenage boys who grow up without married mothers and fathers are more than twice as likely as teenage boys from two-parent families to end up being incarcerated (Nock & Einolf, 2008, as cited in Dickerson, 2014: 39). Each year spent in the home without a father increases a boy's chances of being incarcerated by 5%. Boys raised by unmarried mothers are at greatest risk because they spend the most time at home without a father (Gottfried, 2007 as cited in Dickerson, 2014: 39), with

80% of rapists coming from absent father homes, and 85% of youth in prisons having grown up in absent-father households.

The chief predictor of crime in a neighbourhood in the United States is the percentage of homes without fathers. As many as 70% of adolescents charged with murder are from homes with absent fathers, and 70% of long-term prison inmates grew up in homes with absent fathers (Alabama Department of Human Resources, 2011). According to Masutha (2014), statistical reports show that South African prisons are at bursting point. Adult male inmates make up approximately two-thirds of the prisoners, pointing to the inevitability that many teenagers in the community are growing up without their biological fathers.

In terms of the law and the Constitution, children are given special rights that seek to protect them against any form of violence. A parent who gives beating to his child can now have legal action taken against him. If a teenage boy lays a charge against his father for assaulting him, the father will probably be jailed. At the end of the day, the teenage boy will be left to grow up in his father's absence. The court of law may also see fit to distance the child from his father by placing a protection order against him. In other words, the father would not be allowed by law to have a relationship with the child. This, of course, means the boy become an adolescent without his father. These teenage boys are more likely to be delinquents and be involved in violent behaviours because their fathers are no longer with them for the guidance they require.

2.5 SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEENAGE BOYS

In a patriarchal society such as South Africa, the absence of the male head of the family from the home removes the much-needed parental authority from the household. This places the mothers in an unpleasant position of having to play a double role, namely that of mother as well as the head of the family. O'Neill (2010: 1) postulates that many problems related to the absent father are a result of reduced parental attention and social resources. This means that a child living in a single-parent family will naturally receive less attention. This becomes even more difficult where there are teenage male members in the household because it is believed that they need the firm hand of a biological father.

According to Eddy, de Boor & Mphaka (2013: 30), single mothers are not as skilled at educating boys as they are in raising girls because they cannot teach boys how to become a man. Single mothers may also invest less time and emotion in their sons than in their daughters, causing the boys to misbehave and act out especially in school. Teenage boys, in such situations, can easily become involved in gangs because of their need for a male role model and a sense of identity. Eddy et al. (2013: 31) formulate the problem as an increase in absent fathers, which has a negative impact on boys in their functional and emotional environment. As a result, teenage boys grow up into manhood with an intolerant, aggressive and hate-filled attitude towards the world and the people living around him.

Teenage boys who live in father absent households and have no access to positive father figures often have lower academic results than those with actively involved men who are present at home or in the child's life. They are more likely to do poorly in school. According to Mitchell, Booth & King (2009: 650), there is general agreement among scholars that teenage boys with non-resident fathers tend to be having more behavioural problems and lower school achievement than children who live with both biological parents. Boys exhibit at-risk behaviours such as getting low grades, skipping school or dropping out, and they often refuse to attend college or make choices that could affect their access to greater economic opportunities in the future.

Raspberry (2005: 1) states that among African-American families in America, father absence is found to be the misery of the black community, affecting its children, particularly teenage boys, resulting in school failure, criminal behaviour, and economic suffering. He also observes that teenage boys with absent fathers end up becoming ineligible as husbands though they are no less likely to become fathers. Their male children, too, fall into the pattern that renders them ineligible as husbands. Boys in single-parent homes may suffer from social challenges because these homes lack the well-rounded development that complete families enjoy.

Teenage boys who grow up without fathers are greatly affected through manhood. They need fathers to socially construct them into becoming men in their own right. There are gender roles as determined by the respective society of who does what and how to behave (Lutheran Action against Gender-Based Violence (LAAGBV), 2015: 5). Without this influence in their lives, these boys are at high risk of growing into men

who have problems with matters pertaining to behaviour, emotional stability, and relationships with both significant others and their own children. These teenagers will also find it very difficult to make a transition from boyhood to manhood as the defining rules and/or lines are blurred (LAAGBV, 2015: 5).

Teenage boys with absent fathers are more likely to have a number of worse experiences, including their school achievement, their social and emotional development, their health and their success in the labour market (Sawhill, 2014: 1). Teenage boys with absent fathers easily commit crimes. Sawhill (2014: 1) further discusses that they are at greater risk of parental abuse and neglect especially from live-in boyfriends who are not their biological fathers and are more likely to become teen parents. As a result, these experiences affect them in their adulthood. Not all teenage boys raised in such households suffer these adverse outcomes; it is simply that the risks are greater for them.

There have been many instances where teenage boys grow up without their biological fathers, which have almost become the norm. However, it seems to have happened without any attempts at interventions by society to come up with ways to prevent it from happening because it clearly has adverse effects on the child. As a result, many teenage boys tend to lose their confidence by not believing in themselves. Others chose to engage in antisocial behaviour which can destroy their future.

It is then not good for a teenage boy to reach this stage in the absence of his biological father as it has devastating effects. It is heart-breaking especially for the child because the probability is that the boy had no part in driving his father away, not even in cases where the father is abusive owing to alcohol or drug abuse. In the African tradition, it is not appropriate for a teenage boy to mature without his biological father. Yet it happens, and the child is left to bear all the consequences that come with it. However, as much as there are negative impacts of biological father absenteeism on teenage boys, there are also positive impacts of having a present father on teenage boys. To better understand this, it is important to explore the impact of having a present father on teenage boys.

2.6. THE IMPACT OF HAVING A PRESENT FATHER ON TEENAGE BOYS

The involvement of a biological father is important and has a positive impact on his son. It happens that especially during pregnancy and early childhood when mothers focus more on their babies, fathers tend to feel their roles are belittled. However, the impact of fathers on their children, particularly teenagers, is weighty and immeasurable. It is postulated by Mancini (2010: 26) that a father's contribution to raising boys is unique and irreplaceable. A father's role is important in teaching boys how to feel and express emotions; and how to match inner feelings with outer behaviour. Marcus (2008, as cited in Mancini, 2010: 26) deems that a good father is a "good disciplinarian, he strongly disapproves of his children's misdeeds, using tough love to prove a point". He also emphasises that a good father should realise that mistakes are inevitable; "however, he makes it clear that repeated irresponsibility won't be tolerated". It is believed that a father's love will solidify his boy's self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. It is also believed that a healthy amount of a father's unconditional love and attention can prevent him from seeking it from other sources, for example, other men. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2012: n.p.) states that fathers who treat the mothers of their children with respect and deal with conflict within the relationship in an adult and appropriate manner are more likely to have boys who understand how they are to treat women and who are less likely to act in an aggressive fashion towards women.

2.6.1 Role Model

One of the most significant qualities of being a father, and certainly the most frequently cited is serving as a role model (Popenoe, 2009: 142). When teenage boys are asked who their heroes are, most boys who are fortunate enough to have a resident biological father would mention their fathers. It is vital for a father to be actively involved in his teen son's life because he serves as a role model by teaching his son how to approach life, treat women, establish a work ethic and make career choices (Sarkadi, 2008: 153). The teenage years are the most confusing years of development, and a teenage boy relies on his father to shape his identity. A teenage boy needs his father more during a period of overwhelming physical and emotional change experience with the onset of puberty because it shapes and helps a teenager to learn how to negotiate life

and assert his identity. It is never an easy role for a teenager to learn what he is made of, and the father to learn how to acknowledge the developing manhood of his son.

Research done by Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) indicates that fathers are seen as key people from whom children will learn their moral code. Further to this, they suggest that children need more than financial support from their father. Children want their fathers to play with them, talk with them and generally connect with them on an emotional level. Other ways in which a father could be involved in the lives of his children include treating his partner and his children with respect and never using violence.

Strength is an important and basic part which defines what men are made of as males. Missing a father figure as a teenage boy may sometimes cause difficulty as they learn how to utilise their strength in an appropriate manner. Sarkadi (2008: 153) notes that having a father in the home, whether or not he was actively engaged with the children, is somehow effective, simply because it results in less aggressive children, indicating a father can teach his son how to use his strength for the good of the family and society as a whole.

Bogels & Perotti (2011: 171) indicate that teenage boys look to their fathers for social clues and develop their social skills based on how their father networks with the world. The reason behind this may be because that in earlier times, fathers were absent in their home due to seeking employment to provide for the family while mothers have taken care of things at home. Therefore, a socially successful father will encourage a socially successful son.

The literature reviewed shows that a young boy learns from his father. In other words, the boy copies his father's behaviour. The only bad thing about this is that men are often fixed to a single behaviour. If a father is a positive man who is interesting to be around, he will always be like that. Similarly, if a father has a negative attitude that could be seen as harmful to teenage boys, he would nonetheless always wind up with that kind of behaviour. Boys copy whatever kind of behaviour that they learn from their biological fathers. This they do because they believe that a boy has to be exactly like his father. This confirms the saying 'like-father-like-son'.

2.6.2 Educational Advantages

According to McBride, Schoppe-Sullivan & Ho (2005: 215), when fathers are involved on a personal level with their child's education, the child's achievement increases. When fathers assume an active role in their children's education, there is a positive impact on student achievement. Saracho (2007: 403) has also provided evidence that fathers can help promote literacy skills in their children by reading books to them, engaging their children in discussions about books they read, and encouraging their children to read more books.

Children with involved, caring fathers have better educational outcomes. A study by Rosenberg and Wilcox (2006: 11) suggests that fathers who are involved, nurturing and playful with their boys have teenage boys who are more patient and can handle the stress and frustrations associated with schooling more readily than children with less involved fathers. The influence of a father's involvement on academic achievement extends into adolescence and young adulthood. Rosenberg & Wilcox (2006: 11) found that an active and nurturing style of fathering is associated with better verbal skills, intellectual functioning and academic achievement among adolescents. Time spent together means a father becomes more involved in a child's education, and, therefore, the student is more likely to get higher grades.

2.7 COPING MECHANISMS OF CHILDREN WHO GROW UP WITHOUT FATHERS

Teenage boys would be particularly vulnerable to the development of a poor self-concept if they have absent fathers or fathers who are present but do not give them affirming, positive feedback on themselves. The social development of children in teenage-hood will be looked at through the role of the family, the school and peers.

2.7.1 The Role of the Family

Elium & Elium (2004, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 30) state that during teenage-hood, children tend to spend more time away from their home and parents than before, but the family remains the child's main source of support and security. As a result of children's increased involvement outside of the home, parents are required to protect their children from potential harm in the community.

In a study conducted by Patrick (2006: 30), it was found that an important factor in the development of self-esteem is how the child is treated by adults and, in particular, the parents of the child. The findings of another study done by Louw (1998, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 30) showed that a factor that has a profound effect on a child's self-concept is that of a broken home where the mother is a single parent and the child is unsure of his relationship with the father.

In addition to this, the role of the parent includes moral, religious and cultural value training; the instilment of respect for authority; the teaching and modelling of how to handle interpersonal relationships; and the teaching of how to handle conflict situations (Patrick, 2006: 30). The family support is influential in the social development of children in the teenage phase. The researcher is of the opinion that the family is a boy's model of how to conduct oneself in social situations, but if the family is dysfunctional, this may hamper a boy's social integration.

2.7.2 The Role of the School

The role of the school during the boy's teenage-hood is very important as it is at this stage of development that children start to spend a significant amount of time in that environment. While the parents and the family remain very influential in the child's life, the child now has a whole new social arena to become familiar with and learn to function effectively in. In the early years of schooling, the child has the challenge of adapting to a new and unfamiliar environment, acquiring the basic scholastic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, becoming successful in task completion, building new relationships and developing new behaviour (Louw, 1998, as cited in Patrick 2006: 33). The mastering of these tasks is essential for a child to develop into a healthy, productive member of society. The teacher plays a vital role in this development. When children progress to high school, they have to learn an entirely new set of skills, mainly to do with becoming independent.

According to Elium & Elium (2004, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 33), the development of self-esteem at this developmental stage is focused on doing. It is described as a struggle between industry and inferiority, competence and incompetence, productivity and inadequacy. Boys at this stage need to feel that they are competent and have skills that allow them to contribute to their environment in a productive way. Where a boy lacks a father figure to give his approval and help him to feel successful, perhaps

this is an area where schools could fill the gap. However, schools can never replace the role of a father, but they could certainly contribute positively to the development of a boy's self-concept.

2.7.3 The Role of Peers

This section is important as teenage-hood is a phase in which children begin to shift their focus from their parents towards their peers. The peers may become a significant source of support for children who experience difficulties at home, particularly where there is an absence of a positive male role model. According to Louw (1998, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 34), children interact with other children for the sake of friendship, affection and fellowship. During teenage-hood, there is an increase in solidarity and cohesion in interaction. The peer group clearly becomes a very important agent in socialisation and fulfils the following functions: it provides love, affection and friendship; it provides the opportunity for trying out new behaviour; it facilitates the transfer of information and knowledge; it teaches a child to adhere to rules and regulations; it reinforces gender roles; it weakens the parent-child emotional bond; and it provides an environment for competing on equal footing.

Considering the importance of the role of peers in teenager's life, the researcher is of the opinion that peer relationships play a profoundly important role in the life of a boy with an absent father. The researcher is of the opinion that boys who do not receive love, affection and masculine role modelling from a father figure, may seek to satisfy these needs in their peer relationships. This could be positive and supportive for boys but could also have negative results, for instance when boys seek to satisfy their needs by involving themselves in gangs.

2.8 CONCLUSION

In the light of the literature reviewed, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of teenage boys growing up without their biological fathers has a major negative impact on this group. It is also the driving force behind the most critical and continuing problems facing our society today. The Minister of Correctional Services (2014: n.p.) states that it is also the cause of the increasing number of juvenile offenders who make up one-third of the population in South African prisons. Another conclusion is that it has become a norm that most children are raised in single-parented households which

are normally led by females. This is mainly caused by the high rate of teenage pregnancy where the mother may be left alone to raise the child because the boy refuses to take responsibility for it. The next chapter discusses the research methodology used in the process of conducting this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi (2013: 5) define research methodology as a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is carried out. Essentially, it is the procedure by which the researchers go about their work of describing, evaluating and predicting phenomenon. It aims to give the work plan of research. It provides training in choosing methods materials, scientific tools and techniques relevant for the solution of the problem. This chapter, therefore, outlines the research design, area of the study, population, sampling strategy, the data collection process, analysis of data and the ethical considerations that were used in the study.

3.2 AREA OF STUDY

This study was conducted in a township named Ngwelezane in Empangeni area. Ngwelezane is located on the West of Empangeni City in KwaZulu-Natal, under the uMhlathuze Municipality, and has a population of about a 100 000 people. It is made up of the following sections; Mshayazafe, Vezunyawo, White City, Imbali, Jabulani, B section, Umhlanga, Isigisi, Thinasobabili and Ungqolothi.

Frith (2011: n.p.) established the population statistics that was obtained from the Census 2011 community profile databases and geographical areas. The Ngwelezane Township covers area of about 6 km² with the population of about 18 000 (3105 per km²) and households amounting to 5 500 (928 per km²). The general information on population's gender, racial composition and first language preferences of the Ngwelezane Township is presented in percentages in the table below:

Table: 3.1: Demographic characteristics of people staying in Ngwelezane area

GENDER	
Female	52.95%
Male	47.05%
RACIAL COMPOSITION	
Black African	99.21%
Other	0.23%
Coloured	0.19%
White	0.18%
Indian or Asian	0.18%
FIRST LANGUAGE	
IsiZulu	93.28%
English	2.75%
IsiNdebele	1.23%
Other	0.56%
Sign Language	0.54%
Setswana	0.40%
Sepedi	0.37%
Afrikaans	0.30%
IsiXhosa	0.23%
SiSwati	0.14%
Sesotho	0.08%
Xitsonga	0.08%
Tshivenda	0.03%

When the researcher was doing her fourth-year practical, it was observed that most juveniles who were incarcerated at Qalakabusha, Empangeni and Mthunzini correctional centres were from Ngwelezane area. During the individual assessments, it was then identified that the majority of these teenage boys were coming from holds. Therefore, this become a concern that needed a study, hence the focus of the study on Ngwelezane area.

Data on types of families and their influence on children's lives in Ngwelezane community are not available. Conclusions are often based on Child Welfare caseload statistics and generalisations in the media on the impact of the HIV/AIDS disease, increasing divorce rates and rising unemployment.

The caseload at Child Welfare Ngwelezane includes abandoned children, orphaned children, children in alternative care, the products of domestic violence and marital and pre-/post- divorce counselling. Social workers in practice have noted an increase in the number of orphaned, abandoned and neglected children who enter the welfare system and who require alternative care placements (Gordhan, 2007: 1). From research such as that of Madhavan, Townsend & Garey (2008: 1443), it can be assumed that the HIV/AIDS pandemic might be contributing to the increasing number of children who are required to be placed in alternative care. In addition, the researcher observed an increase in the number of teenage pregnancy.

The uThungulu Mayor spoke out about teenage pregnancy at the District Youth Council that sat in 2015. She expressed her displeasure at the increase of the pregnancy rates among young women in the district, particularly in Ngwelezane area. She said that the youth of 1976 should be turning in their graves, as this was not what they struggled for. The youth of 1976 were more focused on their future and the future of South Africa they wanted, and, clearly, this business of young women getting pregnant from the age of 18 years and below was painting a negative picture of the future of this country. Teenage pregnancy was impacting the lives of many people but also said something about their morals.

Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod & Letsoalo (2009: 9) mentioned that childbearing among teenagers remains a common social and public health concern worldwide, affecting nearly every society. Teenage fertility establishes the pace and level of fertility over a woman's entire reproductive life span. This has an impact not only on women's health but on the socio-economic status and general wellbeing of the population. Despite public health literature and family planning services treating HIV and pregnancy as distinct, they share many common antecedents, chief among which is unprotected sex. What is more, there is evidence that pregnancy and lactation increase the susceptibility to HIV infection through immunological changes induced during pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy has grown in significance as a social construct and

come to represent one of several indicators of burgeoning adolescent delinquency, sexual permissiveness and moral decay.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

This research used a qualitative research approach. A qualitative approach to gathering information focuses on describing a phenomenon in a deep, comprehensive manner. The appropriateness of this research design is emphasised by its ability to explain, to understand, and to assign meaning to experiences from the perspective of those who are directly involved (Creswell, 2014: 232). This is generally done in interviews, open-ended questions, or focus groups. In most cases, a small number of participants participate in this type of research, because to carry out such a research endeavour requires many resources and much time. Interviews can differ from being highly structured and guided by open-ended questions, or be less structured and take the form of a conversational interview.

Creswell (2007: 37) states: “Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. It typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment and focusing on their meanings and interpretations. The emphasis is on the quality and depth of information.

Biklen and Casella (2007: 13) say that the purpose of the qualitative dissertation is to pose an open-ended question and investigate the experiences and perspectives of the participants. Using open-ended questions and interviews allows researchers and practitioners to understand how individuals are doing, what their experiences are, and recognise important experiences and outcomes of interest that might not surface when surveyed with pre-determined questions. Although qualitative research can be thought of as unreliable, when pooled across a number of participants it provides a conceptual understanding and evidence that certain phenomena are occurring with particular groups or individuals (Ahrens, DuBois, Garrison, Spencer, Richardson & Lozano, 2011: 1012).

Creswell (2007: 40) emphasises that “we conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimise the

power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study". In order to gain a better understanding of people's behaviour and perceptions of a phenomenon, the researcher looked at the participants' events in a more holistic way that attempts to locate individual actions in their cultural contexts. This was important in this study as the participants' activities were investigated in terms of meanings – why teenage boys say this, do this or act in this or that way – and were interpreted by linking them to other participants' events to enable greater understanding (Creswell, 2007: 40).

A qualitative approach was used in this study in order to collect rich descriptive data from the participants with the intention of developing an understanding of what was being observed. The focus was on how individuals' participants view and understand the world and construct meaning out of their experiences of growing up with absent fathers. The participants were required to answer questions, specifically about the phenomenon. This was done intentionally to understand the participants' own viewpoints and to provide an interpretive understanding of human experience (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011: 310).

3.4 TYPE OF RESEARCH

This research was exploratory research because the research was conducted for a problem that had not previously been studied. It intended to establish priorities, develop operational definitions and improve the final research design (Babbie, 2007: 87). Exploratory research helps determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects. This type of research aims to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to acquire new insight into it in order to formulate a more precise problem or to develop exploratory studies. For the purpose of the study, exploratory research sought to find out how teenage boys perceived father absenteeism, what meanings they gave to their actions, and what issues concerned them. The goal was to investigate a social phenomenon without any specific expectations of the results. It helped the researcher to have a better understanding of the problem.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research used a phenomenological design because it aims to clarify how the life world of subjects is developed and experienced (De Vos et al., 2011: 316). Life world

refers to a person's understanding of everyday life and social action. According to Giorgi (2009, as cited in Creswell, 2014: 42), a phenomenological study attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation or phenomenon. Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. Phenomenology aims to understand the phenomenon under study on the researcher's own terms and therefore to deliver a report of human experience as it is experienced by the subjects allowing the essence to be revealed (De Vos et al., 2011: 316). A phenomenological research design was used to explore and describe the experiences of teenage boys growing up with an absent father. Creswell (2007: 57) explains that the type of problem best suited for phenomenology is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon.

In general, phenomenological research is well suited for studying affective, emotional, and often intense human experiences (Merriam, 2009: 26). The most common means of data collection in a phenomenological study is through in-depth interviews to gather the participants' detailed descriptions of their experience, participants' written or oral self-reports, or even their visual expressions. The researcher relied on interviews to understand the perspectives and experiences of the participants. Information from the interviews allowed the researcher to describe and interpret the common experiences of the participants. Interviews were based upon broad, open-ended questions.

3.6 RESEARCH METHODS

In this section, the researcher provides a detailed explanation on the study population and sampling method that was utilised in the study. In addition, the data collection and data analysis methods for the study are also discussed.

3.6.1 Population of the Study

De Vos et al. (2011: 223) view population as a term that sets boundaries on the study. It refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. A population is the totality of persons, events, organisation units, case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned (De Vos et al., 2011). It should include geographical area (country, region and town) as well as the age group and gender. This research's population involved teenage boys with absent fathers

from the age of 13 to 19 years who lived in Ngwelezane Township, eMpangeni Region KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

3.6.2 Sample and Sampling Strategy

According to De Vos et al. (2011: 223), sampling means taking a certain percentage of units of a population as representative or symbol of that total population. A sample consists of the cases which are units or elements that will be examined and are selected from a defined research population (Boeije, 2010: 35). In terms of participants, the researcher selected 20 participants for interviewing which only included the teenage boys. The participants were selected from two local high schools namely, Thanduyise high school and Khombindlela high school because there are many teenage boys from absent-father households in these schools. The researcher was assisted by the social workers from each school in terms of identifying the participants. The researcher interviewed 10 boys per school with the total number of participants being 20.

The participants were chosen through the use of non-probability, purposive sampling which is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind (Maree & Pietersen, 2016: 198). The cases are specifically selected because they can teach us a lot about the issues that are of importance to the research (Boeije, 2010: 35). It was suitable for this specific study because the target population was teenage boys who grew up in the absence of their biological fathers. Sampling decisions are therefore made for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest source of information to answer the research questions (Nieuwenhuis, 2016, as cited in Maree, 2016: 85).

3.6.3 Data Collection

In this research, data were collected through interviews, specifically the semi-structured one-on-one interviewing method (Creswell, 2014: 240). A semi-structured interview schedule was used as the data collection instrument. This type of interview was used in order to gain a detailed picture of a participant's experiences of growing up without a biological father. There was also the possibility of following up particularly interesting avenues of thought that emerged in the interview, and the participants were able to give a fuller picture (De Vos et al., 2011:351).

During the interview process, teenage boys were called from their classrooms one by one and were asked if they would like to participate in the study. Their parents and guardians were also called by the school principals for a meeting at school to explain what was about to happen and asked for the permission to interview the boys.

An observation tool was also used as part of data collection. Observation is defined as systematic and deliberate study of events through the eye of the researcher at the time they occur (Creswell, 2014: 242). Observation is a methodological way of recognising and noting, a fact, or occurrence, involving some sort of measurement. Understanding the culture of the people and the engaging with them are essential for good observation.

Each interview was recorded using a recording instrument in order to collect the correct interview data. This is the most efficient way to collect data and is also less distracting than taking notes (Creswell, 2014: 244). This practice also ensured that the details of the interview were preserved for analysis (Merriam, 2009: 29). This allowed the researcher to pay more attention on how the interview was proceeding (De Vos et al., 2011: 359). Field notes were also included simply because it was vital to make full and accurate notes of what was going on in the interview. These notes helped the researcher to remember and explore the process of the interview.

Discussions were held with the participants, prior to the beginning of the interview, explaining the reason for the study and that their participation was voluntary. They were advised of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and that all information provided would be confidential. A time and place was arranged and the participants were informed that the interviews would be done during the school day. The participants were asked for permission to record the interviews and to sign the voluntary consent form informing them of their right to terminate their participation whenever they felt the need. The parents/or guardians of the participants were also required to give written consent for the participants to participate in the research.

The actual interviews with the participants began after introductory comments and the creation of a non-threatening environment. The purpose of the research was again explained to the participants. The interviews were conducted in the school social worker's office in both schools, on school days. One interview session was allocated per participant. Interviews were planned for a period of one to three weeks. Each

interview session was set to take one hour, due to time constraints such as school schedules and work schedules.

As walls were broken down and the element of trust was established, the interviews became more meaningful and intimate. Participants were willing to share their lived experiences of going through teenage stage without their biological fathers present at home. While the open-ended questions were answered, the researcher had to listen for implicit and explicit meanings in the answers and explanations that were given. In certain instances, where insufficient detail was given, the researcher probed for further information. Certain assumptions and associations needed to be clarified as to understand the explanations and meanings from the participants' frame of reference.

3.6.4 Data Analysis

Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006: 322) highlight that data analysis means repeatedly going over the data and breaking it down only to build it up again in a different way (elaborating and interpreting). According to Creswell (2014: 245), data analysis is a process of focusing on the constant comparison of the data leading to coding and then categorising of data and simultaneous conceptualising and assessing the similarities and differences in social interaction in search of a core idea that could explain variability in interactions. Data analysis was conducted by means of management of data, reading and memo writing, description, classification and interpretation of data, and representation and visualisation of data (De Vos et al., 2011: 403). According to De Vos et al. (2011: 403), data analysis is also the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. This involves the volume of raw information, sifting significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal.

The researcher used thematic analysis as a system for recognising, examining and reporting arrangements within data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It organises and describes the data set in rich detail (De Vos et al., 2011: 404). Following is the process of qualitative data analysis as per Creswell's (2009) analytic spiral:

Step 1: Planning for recording of data

The researcher planned for the recording of data in a systematic manner that was appropriate to the setting and participants, and facilitated analysis before data collection started (De Vos et al., 2011: 404). The researcher demonstrated an awareness that techniques for recording observations, interactions and interviews did not intrude excessively on the ongoing flow of daily events. Taking notes was also considered. Plans to use the recording instruments were outlined in the research proposal, stating that the researcher would use data recording strategies that fit the setting and the participant's sensitivities. They were only used with participants' consent.

Step 2: Data collection and preliminary analyses: the twofold approach

De Vos et al. (2011: 405) state that data analysis in a qualitative inquiry requires a twofold approach. The first aspect involves data analysis at the research site during data collection. The second aspect involves data analysis away from the site, following a period of data collection. Data analysis regularly requires revisions in data collection procedures and strategies. These revisions yield new data that are then subjected to new analysis. The result of this process is the effective collection of rich data that provide the basis for shared constructions of reality. Creswell (2014: 137) states that data collection and analysis typically go hand in hand in order to build a clear interpretation of the data. The researcher is guided by initial concepts and developing understandings, but shifts or modifies them as she collects and analyses the data. On occasion, gaps or ambiguities found during analysis demand further data collection so, where possible, interviewees may be re-contacted to clarify or deepen responses, or new observations may be made to enrich descriptions.

According to Creswell (2009: 183), this process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data.

For the purposes of this study, analysis of the data began during the collection of the data. Given the emerging design of qualitative research, simultaneously collecting and

analysing data helped identify possible questions for future interviews and helped recognise emerging themes to be explored further in the proceeding interviews.

Step 3: Managing (organising) data

At an early stage in the analysis process, researchers organise their data into file folders, index cards or computer files (De Vos et al., 2011: 408). Creswell (2014: 247) states that this involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up field notes, cataloguing all of the visual material and sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information. Besides organising files, researchers convert their files to appropriate text units for analysis either by hand or by computer. In this study, all the collected data were organised in a highly manner in order to keep a clear mind and not to be overwhelmed by the total amount data. The data were managed by capturing voice recorded files of each of the sessions that the participants attended. The data were then organised and filed on the researchers' computer. This organising method was done according the folders and files in order to gather together materials dealing with the same batch of data. Each participant had a separate file and all data collected on the participant was stored in their respective files. The researcher then took into consideration the gathered data and selected what was relevant to the study. The selected data were then categorised according to different responses given by participants to research questions that were presented to them during the interview. The data were then arranged in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Step 4: Reading and writing memos

This involves reading the transcripts numerous times in order to get a sense of the interview as a whole before breaking it into parts (Creswell, 2014: 247). This forces the researcher to become familiar with the data in intimate ways. During the reading process, the researcher can list on note cards the data available, perform the minor editing necessary to make field notes retrievable, and generally clean up what seems overwhelming and unmanageable. Reading and memo writing was then done as the researcher thoroughly read the data gathered to get a holistic picture of the database. The researcher made memos in short phrases and lifted the ideas and key concepts from the data in order to categorise the data into workable themes. This process helped the researcher to identify and edit data which were unorganised.

Step 5: Generating categories and coding the data

De Vos et al. (2011: 410) states that the process of category generation involves noting regularities in the setting or people chosen for study. As categories of meaning emerge, the researcher searches for those that have internal convergence and external divergence. In this case, the researcher does not search for the exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories of the statistician, but instead identifies the salient, grounded categories of meaning held by participants in the setting. Coding entailed reading carefully through the transcribed data (Creswell, 2014: 247) line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytic units. This meant marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or identifying unique names. The meaningful data were labelled to signify a particular theme. This coding process enabled the researcher to quickly retrieve and collect together all the text and other data that was associated with a thematic idea. Themes and sub-themes were examined together and were analysed by comparing different cases. Each file was coded to organise the data into sections depending on the type of data gathered.

Step 6: Testing emergent understandings and searching for alternative

According to Creswell (2014: 248), the researcher begins the process of evaluating the acceptability of his developing understandings and exploring them through the data. Part of this phase is evaluating the data for their usefulness and significance. As the researcher discovers categories and patterns in the data, he should engage in critically challenging the very patterns that seem so apparent. The researcher must search for, identify and describe them, and then validate why the explanation offered is the most reasonable of all. Through this process, the researcher gradually built up ideas about how the categories or patterns within them related to each other. Once the researcher formed explanations about the categories and patterns, reasonable alternative explanations were considered.

Step 7: Data Interpretation and developing typologies

Once the data were categorised and classified, the researcher interpreted the data by describing what was found in order to make sense of the data (De Vos et al., 2011: 416). This was the final part of putting together the researcher's interpretation in a written form of the studied phenomenon. Briefly, this was a good opportunity to reflect

on the researcher's role in collecting the data and creating the interpretation. Terre Blanche et al. (2006: 326) state that a way of checking the interpretation is to discuss it with people who know a lot about the topic, as well as those who do not, but who are able to consider it from a new point of view. The researcher was able to discuss the interpretation with the social worker in the Department of Education.

Step 8: Presenting the data

In this final phase, the researcher presents the data, a packaging of what was found in the text form. Creswell (2009: 189) states that the most popular approach is to use a narrative report to convey the findings of the analysis. This might be a discussion that mentions a timetable of events and the detailed discussion of several themes. Once the themes and sub-themes that were meaningful to the study were decided on, a colour scheme to identify them was selected. The transcriptions were analysed and the data colour-coded. The data were analysed word for word and sentence by sentence and finally one paragraph at a time to gain a complete understanding of what had been said.

3.7 DATA QUALITY

Trustworthiness of a research study is important to evaluating its worth so the researcher focused on trustworthiness as a way of evaluating the worth of this study. Lincoln & Guba (1999, as cited in De Vos et al., 2011:419) assert that the trustworthiness of qualitative research can be addressed by four specific strategies, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

3.7.1 Credibility

In order to ensure credibility, the focus of the process was on the continued engagement and observation. Both the researcher and the school social worker had sustained engagement with the participants and their mothers and /or guardians. The researcher was familiar with the different cultures of the participants. De Vos et al. (2011: 419) mentioned that this is the alternative to internal validity used in quantitative research in which the goal is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject has been accurately identified and described. Sufficient time was spent with each participant during the interview. The researcher had a solid understanding of the culture and way of life of the participants. The

implication of this was that the researcher had to guard against misrepresentations and be cautious about predicting the findings of the study.

To further enhance credibility, the participants were selected by the school social worker to ensure that the researcher was not directly involved with the participants in any way. The aspect of confidentiality and privacy was explained to the participants to create a safe atmosphere where they would feel free to express their thoughts and feelings.

3.7.2 Transferability

Lincoln & Guba (1999, cited in De Vos et al., 2011: 420) propose transferability as the alternative to external validity or generalisability, in which the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings in another context rests more with the investigator who would make the transfer than with the original investigator.

Transferability in this study was addressed by purposeful selection of the participants who were able to genuinely relate to the issue at hand, namely, participants with absent fathers, who were able to provide rich descriptions of their experience. According to Terrell (2016: 174), this is done by providing a thick description of the researcher's results. This demonstrates the extent to which the results of the study can be transferable to other participants or situations. The researcher provided solid and accurate descriptions of the participants' experiences of growing up with an absent father so that transferable judgements could be made to enable others to apply the research to their work. The aim of the study was to provide as solid as possible a description of the experience of the participants with absent fathers based on the interviews and observations.

3.7.3 Dependability

Credibility refers to the consistency and the replicability of the results (Terrell, 2016: 175). The researcher asks whether the research process is logical, well documented and audited (De Vos et al., 2011: 420). This enables future researchers to repeat the process. This also makes it possible to assess how the depth of the research. This would entail describing the design and implementation in detail, describing exactly how the data were gathered and then evaluating the process (Terrell, 2016: 175).

3.7.4 Conformability

As discussed by Terrell (2016: 175), to achieve conformability, the researcher discusses how he or she ensured his or her neutrality in the study. This poses difficulties in quantitative and qualitative research as the interference of the researcher's biases is unavoidable. Caution needs to be exercised by the researcher, that it is the experiences and ideas of the participants that are used and not those of the researcher.

Caution was exercised by the researcher in the form of bracketing as well as member checks. Bracketing, as described by De Vos et al. (2011: 421), means laying aside all perceptions from the external frame of reference, and focusing on the participants' frame of reference.

3.8 PILOT STUDY

Barker (2003, as cited in De Vos et al., 2011: 237) states that pilot study is the procedure for testing and validating an instrument by administering it to a small group of participants from the intended test population. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006, as cited in De Vos et al., 2011: 237) define a pilot study as a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate. A pilot study can be viewed as the dress rehearsal for the main investigation. A pilot study was conducted by interviewing two boys who had absent fathers in order to gain a deeper understanding of how best the research should be approached and to ensure the trustworthiness of the data gathered. During the interviews, the researcher made use of an interview schedule, recording instrument and took extensive, detailed notes of what was observed. This was done to test the measuring instrument. Lastly, the researcher conducted an evaluation of the pilot study in order to determine the weak and strong points of the investigation and to see where amendments could be or should be made (Strydom, 2011 in De Vos, 2011). Observations were made that indicated that the interview schedule was appropriately constructed and there was a need for research into the area of how boys experience the absence of their fathers.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, all ethical and safety issues were observed and followed. The Unizulu research ethical guide was followed to ensure that ethical policy and procedures were correctly applied. The National Research Act of 1974 ensures the protection of individuals invited to participate in research studies. The law does not allow research to place individuals in physical danger, nor does it permit inquiry, without advised consent of the participants involved, into personal matters considered sensitive in nature. The intent of the law was to protect individuals against physical, mental, or emotional harm.

3.9.1 Avoidance of Harm

De Vos et al. (2011: 115) state that the researcher has an ethical obligation to protect participants within all possible reasonable limits from any form of physical discomfort that may emerge from research project. Participants should be thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation. Such information offers the participants the opportunity to withdraw from the investigation if they so wish. Babbie (2007: 522) stresses that negative behaviour of the past might be recalled during the investigation which could be the beginning of renewed personal harassment or embarrassment or even endanger their home life, relationships, jobs situation. Therefore, the researcher must look for the underlying dangers and guard against them. The researcher took the responsibility to consider whether any type of harm could occur in this specific study and she ensured that mechanisms were instituted to remove any type of harm. Harm can be both physical and /or psychological and therefore can be in the form of stress, pain, anxiety, diminishing self-esteem or an invasion of privacy.

The interview did trigger some emotions from the participants but researcher had prepared the participants by informing them of such circumstances and emphasised the fact that, should they feel uncomfortable, they had the right to withdraw. When such emotions were triggered, the researcher's assistant who is a trained counsellor took over to calm of the nerves of the participants. After the interviews, there was a debriefing session with each participant where the researcher ensured that the participants were stable again.

3.9.2 Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Babbie (2007, as cited in De Vos et al., 2011: 117) mentions that nobody should ever be forced into participating in a research project because participation must always be voluntary. Participants must be legally and psychologically competent to give consent, and they must be aware that they would be at liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any time. Permission to conduct this study was requested from all relevant authorities in agreement with research ethical policy. The research plans were reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) at the University of Zululand. According to Creswell (2009: 89), REC involves regulations that provide protection against human rights violations. REC requires assessing the potential for risk, such as physical, psychological, social, economic or legal harm. Special needs of vulnerable populations, such as minors (under the age of 19) were considered. The permission from the mothers or guardians was also required. Since in this research, teenage boys were the participants, consent was required in writing from their mothers and/or guardians. Respondents were informed of what was expected from them and participation was voluntary. It was ensured that the participants were clearly informed on the aims, objectives and consequences of the study as well as the possible effects and benefits of the research. The researcher also respected the freedom of potential participants to decide for themselves.

3.9.3 Confidentiality and Privacy

De Vos et al. (2011: 119) view confidentiality as the agreements between persons that limit others' access to private information. Every individual has a right to privacy and has the right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitude, beliefs and behaviour will be shared. A researcher cannot decide on behalf of other persons on those delicate issues. All aims, instruments and methodology were discussed with the prospective subject and the research workers prior to the investigation. De Vos et al. (2011: 119) argue that privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner. The researcher is responsible to maintain confidentiality that goes beyond ordinary loyalty. Confidentiality and the interests of respondents were protected at all times. Confidentiality and privacy was guaranteed from the beginning

of the study until it was completed. Pseudonyms were used instead of the real names of the participants.

3.9.4 Actions and Competence of the Researcher

De Vos et al. (2011: 123) mention that researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. Any lack of knowledge in the area under research must be clearly stated. Inexperienced researchers should work under qualified supervision which has to be reviewed by an ethics committee. Careful choice of method for data collection, to ensure validity and reliability, are two main requirements that must be met in all kinds of research. The choice depends on the object of the study. When human beings are involved, all the ethical issues, discussed above, must be taken into account. The researcher was competent to do the research because she did a module on research and had a research supervisor to guide her.

3.9.5 Publication of Findings

De Vos et al. (2011: 126) mention that the findings of the research must be introduced to the reading public in written form. This means that researchers should compile a report as accurately and objectively as possible. The report should be as clear as possible and contains all the necessary information for readers in order to understand what is written. The researcher should, therefore, ensure at all times that the investigation proceeds correctly and that no one is deceived by the findings. The information must be formulated and conveyed clearly and unmistakably to avoid or minimise misappropriation by subjects, the general public and even colleagues. Committing plagiarism is serious ethical misconduct and should be avoided at all costs. The researcher should also mention clearly the shortcomings and errors of the investigation in the report. Subjects should be informed about the findings in an objective manner, without offering too many details or impairing the principle of confidentiality. The researcher will present the results of the study at a local academic conference and publish articles from the main study.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the research methodology and highlighted the nature of qualitative research used in the study. This chapter involved how the study was carried

out and how data were gathered, interpreted and reported. The following chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study based on the interviews with the participants.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study according to the four themes that emerged. These themes include reasons for father absenteeism; economic and social consequences; and coping mechanisms of teenage boys. Direct quotations from the interviews with the participants have been used, and the results have been linked to relevant literature. The results were also interpreted in light of the theoretical framework provided in chapter two namely, the ecological systems theory. Nevertheless, this chapter starts by presenting the profile descriptions of participants.

4.2 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The researcher interviewed a total number of twenty participants. This section focuses on the biographical information of the participants in terms of age, sex, race and their academic qualifications. This information is illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Biographical information of participants

Number	NAME (Pseudonyms)	AGE	SEX	RACE	GRADE
1.	G.S.	15 years	Male	Black	08
2.	N.L.	16 years	Male	Black	08
3.	M.O.	15 years	Male	Black	09
4.	N.N.	13 years	Male	Black	08
5.	K.A.	14 years	Male	Black	08
6.	N.K.	14 years	Male	Black	08
7.	M.M.	17 years	Male	Black	11
8.	X.N.	19 years	Male	Black	12
9.	S.N.	19 years	Male	Black	12
10.	X.L.	17 years	Male	Black	11
11.	M.N.	18 years	Male	Black	12
12.	N.B.	18 years	Male	Black	12
13.	M.Z.	17 years	Male	Black	12

14.	S.V.	13 years	Male	Black	08
15.	L.N.	15 years	Male	Black	08
16.	S.A.	13 years	Male	Black	08
17.	S.K.	14 years	Male	Black	08
18.	S.N	13 years	Male	Black	08
19.	S.B	15 years	Male	Black	08
20.	D.M.	16 years	Male	Black	11

As indicated in the Table 4.1, a large number of participants were between the ages of 13 to 15. This shows that they were still in the early stage of adolescence and are still transitioning and adjusting into teenage hood. According to the school social worker, teenage boys were experiencing more hardships during these ages. The minimum number of interviewed participants was from the age of 16 to 19.

Furthermore, all twenty interviewed participants were males, as the study focused particularly on teenage boys. These participants were all black South Africans. This is due to the fact that Ngwelezane Township consists of mainly black people.

Among the interviewed participants, 11 were doing Grade 8. According to the school social worker's report, more boys from this grade were experiencing more difficulties than those in higher grades. One boy was in Grade 9 and three were in Grade 11. Five out of 20 participants were in Grade 12. The school social worker also indicated that teenage boys from Grade 12 who were from single-parent households due to absent father figures were more likely to be engaging in drug and substance abuse.

4.3. AN OVERVIEW OF THE THEMES AND SUB-THEMES OF THE STUDY

The analysis of the results led to various themes and sub-themes which emerged. Table 4.2 below shows these themes and sub-themes which emerged. A discussion of the themes is presented thereafter.

Table 4.2: Themes and sub-themes

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1 Reasons of father absenteeism among teenage boys.	Death Non-residential
Theme 2 Economic consequences of father absenteeism among teenage boys.	Inadequate financial support
Theme 3 Social consequences of father absenteeism	Emotional implications Behavioural problems Academic difficulties
Theme 4 Coping mechanisms of teenage boys with absent fathers	Family support Peers and community support

4.4 THEME 1: REASONS OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM AMONG TEENAGE BOYS

During the interviews with the participants, the researcher found that the reasons of father absenteeism among teenage boys were due to death and non-residential situations. According to studies of Posel & Devey (2006 as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 17, & Richter et al., 2010: 360), migrant labour and the resulting fluidity of family life, delayed marriage due to lobola requirements, gender-based violence and a growing autonomy among South African women are contributors to fathers' absence from households. However, Morrell & Jewkes (2011: 17) confirm that some teenage boys are from father absence households because their own fathers had died, left or never been present as it was found on this particular study.

4.4.1 Death

The participants were asked about the reasons of having absent biological fathers in their lives. The researcher found that eighteen out of twenty participants had biological fathers who were absent due to death. Out of those eighteen participants, six reported that they had not seen their fathers because they had passed on before they were born.

Participant L.N. highlighted that:

"I do not know my biological father. My mother told me that he passed on while she was still pregnant with me. I have asked my mother to at least show me his photo, but she refused without explaining to me. She just keeps on promising to show me the photo, but she has not".

Participant K.A. was quoted saying:

"I was told by my aunt that my father was deceased before my birthday. My aunt also told me that my father shot himself using my grandfather's gun. I have no idea how he looked like and what kind of person he was".

Nine participants reported that they knew their biological fathers and they had played a role in their lives before passing away.

Participant N.N. indicated that:

"I know my biological father as I was staying with him before he was deceased in 2003. Most of the time, I feel bad of not having him around anymore because I believe that things would have been better at home if he was still alive".

Participant M.O. was cited saying:

"My biological father was deceased in February 2012. He was originally from Phongola and worked for an insurance company in Durban. Life was good back then as I used to visit him on weekends. My father was married to another mother but was very supportive and responsible towards me".

Three interviewed participants claimed that they only heard about their biological fathers but had no relationship with them at all.

Participant M.N. specified that:

"I heard that before my father was deceased, and was working in the taxi industry. I honestly do not know him, and I also heard that he has fourteen other children from different mothers. I do not care and feel nothing about my father due to the fact that we had no relationship. To me, he never existed".

Jones (2004 as cited in Dickerson, 2014: 14) identified that the death of a father can be the single greatest loss a person can experience. Nock & Einolf (2008, as cited in Dickerson, 2014: 14) stated that death is another factor that has also contributed to father absence. Despite its infrequency, death contributes to father absenteeism. In 1960, more than 20% of female-headed households were due to death; however, in 2008 only 3.6% of female-headed households were due to the death of the father (Nock & Einolf, 2008, as cited in Dickerson, 2014: 14). Based on the literature reviewed, it is evident that father absence is an existing problem in the world as a whole.

Sunderland & Armstrong (2005: 22) state that surviving the actual death of a parent may be easier than trying to cope with the torture of the parent who walked out one day and never came back. This child may be overwhelmed with a terrible hurt of that parent enjoying life without them or with someone else's children. Sunderland and Armstrong (2005: 22) believe that the finality of death helps people to grieve and start life again in separation, the wish to connect or reattach can be encouraged again and acted upon many times before there is resolution. The research findings proved that teenage boys have managed to cope with the fact that their fathers are absent because of death, though it has been hard for others.

There is a huge importance of fathers in the healthy development of children, particularly teenage boys. This is regarding the fact that the fathers' roles are provider, protector, and educator. The researcher is of the opinion that the increasing number of teenage boys who are living without biological fathers is linked with negative and non-beneficial outcomes. The death of a biological father lowers the teenage boys' social and emotional wellbeing. The following section will then, focus on the non-residential condition as the reason of father absenteeism among teenage boys.

4.4.2 Non-resident fathers

According to the remaining two out of 20 participants mentioned that the reason they had absent fathers in their lives was because they lived in different places that were too far from each other. Research done by Posel & Devey (2006, as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 17) estimated that 55% of rural Black African children (age 15 years and younger) in 2002 did not live with their fathers. In 2005, 51% of the 23 000 resident children with living biological parents (non-orphans) lived in a household where their

biological father was not considered to be a member (Hill, Hosegood & Newell, 2008: 65). Of the 49% of children whose fathers was considered to be a member of the household, 44% of these children were not co-resident with their fathers because the father was living primarily somewhere else, meaning he was a non-resident household member. Participant G.S. said that:

“I know my father although there is no communication between us. He works for Engen garage somewhere in Johannesburg. The fact of knowing that my father is out there but not supporting me in any way as he should, makes me feel very angry, especially at him. My mother is currently the only one who supports me in my required needs. This makes me feel bad because I can see that my mother is struggling a lot”.

Participant D. M. indicated that:

“I do not want to talk about my father because I do not know his whereabouts. I heard that he works in a taxi industry and had lots of other children. I tried to ask my mother about my father, but she also refused to talk about him. Not knowing my father makes me not care and do not get hurt because I do not even know how he looks like. I basically get all the support from my mother”.

The participants mentioned that one of the reasons to be living in the holds is due to the fact that their fathers are forced to go and work far from their homes. This might be because there is a scarcity of jobs in their area. This causes fathers to lose communication with their families and most importantly, teenage boys. This study confirms what Patrick (2006: 38) found that the current prospects for job opportunities in this country are generally poor. This is pushing people to seek employment beyond the borders of South Africa. It is often the husband and fathers that are making this move. This could also contribute towards the absence of fathers. This does not necessarily mean that the father chooses to be emotionally unavailable to his son, but the reality of being so far removed from him reduces the father's opportunities to interact with his son in the manner of a present father.

With respect to benefits for themselves, men who assume fatherhood have less likelihood of engaging in high risk behaviour and are more likely to retain steady

employment (Magruder, 2010: 62). Interviews with men, including men who are separated from their children, suggest that men highly value their status as fathers; they express deep affection for their children and often endure extreme hardship in work and through separation from their families in order to be able to provide financial support for their children (Rabe, 2007: 161). Similarly, shame and alienation is experienced by some men who cannot secure employment and are unable to support their families (Ramphela & Richter, 2006, and Wilson, 2006 as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 17). A study conducted by the Child Protection Services as cited in US Department of health and human services (2012: n.p) supports the findings that the father is significant to the child, whether the father is actively involved in the child's life or not. The non-residential father has an important impact on the dynamics of the family. Regarding the findings, many fathers are expected to be the providers, and the issue of unemployment, therefore, forces them to separate from their children in order to look for better opportunities.

According to Ferrara (2009, as cited in Clark, 2013: 18), a 'dead-beat dad' is described as a parent who has chosen to not support their children financially. This father voluntarily chooses to not be part of the child's life, whether it is physically, emotionally or financially. According to Dobson (2002: 69), at around the age of 10 to 13, boys go through a critical time of disconnecting and differentiating themselves from their mothers and developing a need for the attention and involvement of their fathers. Dobson (2002: 69) emphasises that if fathers are absent, inaccessible, distant or abusive at this time, boys have a hard time understanding what it is to be male. He further states that boys living in female-headed homes are left to develop their masculine identity out of thin air. A present father would, therefore, be characterised by one who shows physical love and affection towards a boy through rough and tumble play, hugs and positive, uplifting, encouraging and affirming words. In addition to this, he would be a good role model for masculinity, assertive and secure in his manhood, and will affirm his son's masculinity. Dobson's (2002) findings confirmed that as the boy enters the teenage stage; seek more of their father's attention in order to fully develop their manhood. It was confirmed also in the findings of the study that these boys feel sad, lonely and angry when their fathers are not around. They think that their fathers do not love them or care for them. They pointed out that they are missing out

a lot in terms of development as male because they have no one to look up to as they are growing up.

Patrick (2006: 46) supports the above-mentioned findings by viewing his opinion that these findings would be valuable in view of the growing trend in South African society for men to leave their homes and country for long periods of time to seek employment abroad, as employment opportunities in this country become depressing. The separation of children from their fathers as a result of problems relating to the industrialisation of South Africa, enforced under the Apartheid rule, is supported by research done by the Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.). The gap that was created between men and their families was, and is, difficult to close. It is further discussed by the Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) that many young fathers do not take responsibility for parenting an unplanned child and leave the task of parenting to the mother. Many young fathers are intimidated by the idea of acting as reliable, present and mature fathers and try to avoid criticism from family members or peers about their parenting skills. The results of the Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) study are in line with the study findings that the fathers are absent because they moved to other places in search for employment. This results in separation of children from their fathers.

It was acknowledged by Biddulph (2003 as cited in Patrick, 2006: 66), fathering in the 20th century did not have a good track record. He describes what the researcher understands as emotionally absent fathering, as being the model that today's generation of fathers has to draw from. This is a model of fathers who fulfilled their role by working and not playing, cuddling, teaching or talking to their children. Many were violent, scary, drank too much or were traumatised by war and difficult to get close to. Many abandoned their families and never returned. When men today are faced with the task of fathering, they go with what they know best. For most men, the model of fathering that they had was largely insufficient, and so the cycle of emotionally absent fathering is spread.

Having discussed all the above findings, perhaps it is important to mention the ecological systems theory which consists of people, their life situations, and the well-functioning or dysfunctional behaviour patterns that result from their interaction. This system theory also allows teenage boys to express their own feelings on how growing

up in the absence of a biological father has influences their behaviour and affected their teenage years. This particular section underlines the mesosystem model which basically means that there is more than one factor that influences a situation in a teenage boy's life. In this case teenage boys viewed that are experiencing sadness, anger and confusion due to the lack of father involvement and communication in their lives. The above findings show the fact that female-headed households are regularly worse off in resource terms than male headed households. Mothers in these households are much more likely to invest in children's wellbeing. Some fathers neglect their obligation financially to support their children. Teenage boys also face economic consequences when there is no present father figure in their lives. The following section will touch more on economic consequences.

4.5 THEME 2: ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM AMONG TEENAGE BOYS

This section presents the results from participants about the theme on the economic challenges they faced due to father absenteeism. The sub-theme of inadequate financial support emerged.

Out of 20 participants, 13 mentioned that they were struggling in terms of financial support. This is due to the fact that their biological fathers are no more. They only received financial support from their other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters. According to the participants, they mentioned that the financial support they received from their relatives was not enough and were therefore faced with difficulties such as school fees and stationery; food, cosmetics and clothes. They mostly went to school without having breakfast. These teenage boys also mentioned that they walked long distances from home to school because they did not have money to pay for their transport fees. This led them to be late for school and they ended up being punished at school. Six participants mentioned that they received financial support from their mothers, whereas one participant was reluctant to answer this question during the interview.

Participant M.M. specified that:

"It is only me and my older sister at home. My mother is also deceased. I once had a stepfather, but he is also deceased. I receive financial support

from my grandmother who does not stay with us. My grandmother sometimes does not send us the money, and therefore my sister takes care of me. The school principal has told me not to pay the school fees because she knows my situation. I struggle to get things I need such as clothes, toiletries and school uniform. Most of the time I must wait very long in order to get what I need”.

Participant S.N. indicated that:

“I was staying with my father before he passed away in four years back. Life was good and we were very close. After his death, my stepmother sent me at my uncles’ place, and that is where things started to be tough. There is a lack of financial support. My uncle only works piece jobs and had to take care for me. Things are not well, but life has to go on”.

Participant M.Z. was quoted saying:

“I do not stay with my father because we do not get along and, as a result, he decided not to financially support my needs. I stay at my friend’s place that also does not have parents. I get financial help from my sisters and brothers. It takes time for me to get help from them because I always have to remind and beg them. They are far away from where I stay and that makes it more difficult for me”.

Participant S.A. highlighted that:

“My father passed away in 2008 due to the car accident. My mother is now my only support system. She does not have a permanent job. She is struggling because there are four of us that need to be taken care of. To be honest, things are hard at home, but my mother is trying her best”.

The findings on inadequate financial support are echoed by O’Neill (2010: 15) who postulates that many problems related to the absent father are a result of reduced parental attention and social resources. A child living in a lone-parent family will naturally receive less attention, but it is the difference in the type of attention that is important. A father’s influence may be long or short-term in that his financial contribution may provide food, clothing, shelter and study fees. A study done by

Mkhize (2006, as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 11) shows that the biological father plays a critical role in the lives of the children; such as providing financial support, dependability and presence and/or emotional support.

Households headed by men tend to be financially better off than female-headed families (Desmond & Desmond, 2006, as cited in Richter & Morrell, 2012: 2). In addition to money, men usually have access to other community resources which may not be available to women, including loans, mutual support and influence. To illustrate this, Townsend (2002: 270) concluded from a study in Botswana that “Children are not necessarily disadvantaged by the absence of their father, but they are disadvantaged when they belong to a household without access to the social position, labour and financial support that is provided by men”. Townsend (2002: 270) added that children experiencing the absent-father phenomenon are reported to be very poor. The researcher is, therefore, of the opinion that if the father is present in his child’s life and financially supports them, it might reduce the chances of these teenage boys involving themselves in criminal activities as a way of survival.

When looking at these findings, it is clear that the lack of financial assistance may affect the lives of teenage boys. It was also mentioned during the interviews with the teenage boys that they have been facing financial problems since their fathers’ passing. When single mothers are raising the boys alone, they are likely to face many struggles including financial issues. In many parts of the world, a father who acknowledges and supports his children confers social value on them, enabling children to become members of a wider circle of family and kin. According to Dubowitz, Black, Kerr, Starr & Harrington (2004: 57), men also provide a household with protection which includes shielding women and children from potential exploitation and abuse by other men. Father absenteeism among teenage boys also causes social consequences which are discussed in the next section.

4.6 THEME 3: SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF FATHER ABSENTEEISM AMONG TEENAGE BOYS

The teenage boys in the study were given the opportunity to express their feelings around their relationships with their fathers. This section provides the findings on the effects of father absenteeism on teenage boys’ social lives. In a study done by Swartz & Bhana (2009: 1) on the experiences of a group of teenage boys with absent fathers

in Cape Town and Durban, it was found that these young boys face multiple social challenges because fathers are not involved in their lives which is confirmed by the current study. The sub-themes that emerged in this study include emotional implications; behavioural problems and academic difficulties.

4.6.1 Emotional Implications

This section presents the findings on how the teenage boys in the study with absent fathers were emotionally affected by the absence of their fathers. The gathered data in this study relied on the boys' ability to express their emotions as accurately as possible. Three participants stated that not having a present father in their lives made them feel angry. This was because that they believed that their fathers should be there for support and guidance. Eleven said that they were hurting, feeling lonely and missed their fathers so much.

Participant S.K. said that:

"I missed my dad so much and sometimes I feel like crying because of the pain I am feeling. At times, I feel like I am lost and empty. To me, having no father is unbearable".

Participant L.N. stated that:

"It has always been hard for me; my father was never there for me. I will be a responsible father to my own kids because I know how hard it is growing up without a father".

Participant S.V. was quoted saying:

"I feel sad of not having my father around. Although I was too young when he passed away and I do not remember much about him but I missed him. This is because my mother told me that he was a good man".

Five participants showed that they did not care about having absent fathers. This was because they barely knew each other and, therefore, there was never a healthy relationship between them.

Participant M.N. said that:

“I do not feel anything for my father. He was always absent in my life. I do not wish to be like my father because he was not responsible and have lots of children (14) from different mothers”.

Participant X.L. highlighted that:

“I do not know my dad, haven’t heard from him, my mother is also deceased. I therefore have no feelings about his absence. I have a stepfather who treats me like his own son and now my focus is on having a better future”.

One participant did not want to comment about his feelings of not having a present father figure.

The findings of a study done by Elium & Elium (2004 as cited in Patrick, 2006: 27) showed that it is around the age of 9 or 13 that a boy starts to make a transition from his mother to his father. The boy continues to need, but no longer identifies with, his mother and craves attention from his father. Fathers are vital for the development of a strong, positive self-concept as they serve as positive role models and must encourage and praise their sons in their successes. In this context, fathers are expected to have a much more effective and engaged relationship with children, going far beyond provision and discipline. The findings showed that teenage boys without a present father figure have an unfilled gap in their emotions and are not happy about the situation. The boys pointed out that they wish to live normal lives like any other children who have both their parents.

Research done by Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) indicates that fathers are seen as key people from whom a child will learn their moral code. Further to this, Sonke Gender Justice Network (2012: n.p.) suggests that children need more than financial support from their father. Children want their father to play with them, talk with them and generally connect with them on an emotional level. Other ways in which a father could be involved in the lives of his children include treating his partner and his children with respect and never using violence. This acknowledges the type of fathering relationship with the child, the importance of father involvement, the support and personal qualities (personality, beliefs and cultural background). The study confirms that teenage boys need their fathers’ involvement for their emotional

wellbeing. Teenage boys mentioned different emotions, such as anger, loneliness, sadness, and hurt. Some boys could not hold back their emotions but cried during the interviews when they were asked about their absent fathers.

In addition to this, Berk (2000 as cited in Patrick, 2006: 36) states that children's strategies for emotional self-regulation increase in variety, become more internal, and can be adjusted to the needs of a specific situation. The researcher notes that, although the above points are the developmental norm for teenage boys, boys would need to be exposed to an environment and relationships such as those with a father, in which emotional experiences could be expressed, in order to fully develop their emotional intelligence. An absence of this environment and relationship would, in the researcher's opinion, put boys at a disadvantage. Teenage boys with absent fathers also seem to have more difficulties with behavioural problems.

4.6.2 Behavioural Problems

When participants were asked about the negative social experiences due to not having a father around them, ten out of twenty participants that were interviewed showed that they were encountering behavioural problems. They mentioned that they were involved in drugs and substance abuse. This is because these participants were in their late teens and were now facing more bad influence even outside school. Those are people who are involved in criminal activities and substance abuse. However, the other 10 participants highlighted that they were trying all they could to distance themselves from negative behaviours although they showed signs of being aggressive, avoidant and less social towards their peers.

Participant X.N. noted that:

"Losing my father at an early age made me engaged into wrong doings. I guess I had too much freedom; I spent most of my time outdoors with the group of friends. We would get bored and ending up influencing each other on experiencing new things such smoking and drinking alcohol. It became a habit and I would come home angry, shouting at my siblings and demanding things like food and money".

Participant S.N. said that:

"I started abusing drugs four years back after my dad's passing. The treatment I got from my stepmother made me missed my father so much; as a result, I turned to drugs. I could not handle the pain of living miserable life. My future was vanishing in front of me. I also turned to crime by stealing people's belongings and sell them in order to cater for my personal needs. My wrong doings led me to the rehabilitation centre where I spent a year".

Participant D.M. stated that:

"I do not have friends at school and I do not want to talk to anyone. I always fight or argue with people around me. Nothing makes me happy in this world and, in fact, I do not see the reason to live because nothing makes sense to me. Even at home, I do not get along with my mother".

The findings showed that teenage boys from absent fathers are more likely to involve themselves in criminal behaviours and, as a result, spend most of their time outdoors with gangsters and substance abusers. The findings also showed that these teenage boys blame the absence of a father in their lives. Perhaps it is important to mention that fathers play a vital role in the boy's lives. Boys need the father's teachings because this helps them in many ways in terms of development and changing for the better.

Biddulph (2003, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 40) points out that a father offers a unique and irreplaceable contribution to parenting. He explains the role of the father as being important in the areas of teaching attitudes; teaching children to feel and give expression to their feelings, to match their inner sensations with their outer behaviour; teaching boys to "rough and tumble," with the specific intention of training boys to be able to have fun, get noisy and angry, but also to know how to handle their testosterone and know when to stop. Essentially, this is the training of self-control. Biddulph (2003, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 40) discusses that a father teaches boys to respect women; to affirm a boy and give him the confidence to know that he has what it takes to be a man.

When looking at the findings of the study, it is clear that if the father spends much time away from home, leaves child-rearing to the mother, is emotionally detached, abusive, an alcoholic or deserts his family, his son is quite likely to follow in his footsteps.

Statistics confirm the findings of the study that children are living in absent-father households are significantly more delinquent than those living in both parent families. According to Eium & Eium (2004, cited in Patrick, 2006: 26) a father's absence or presence has a powerful effect on his son. Regardless of the father's level of involvement, his son will observe him and assimilate his every movement in a process of learning what it means to be a man.

The researcher found that aggression and impulse control were problems with all the boys who were part of the study. This finding appears to be consistent with the available literature. According to Patrick (2006: 27), father absence is linked to some of our most serious social issues such as juvenile delinquency which currently has the fastest growing crime rate. Mullan, Cavanagh & Elder (2000) endorse this in asserting that father absence contributes to the higher levels of delinquency characterising adolescents in single-mother families, and that parental gender in single-parent families is associated with delinquency. The findings of this study demonstrate that it is the absence of a parent in general or the absence of a father in particular that tends to contribute to higher levels of delinquency among adolescents in single-parent families' relative to adolescents in two-parent families.

More research consistently reveals that children from broken homes are more delinquent than those from intact families. Mackey and Mackey (2003: 63, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 28) state that children who have difficulty in regulating their emotions are more disposed to aggressive behaviour, and that this is even more applicable to children who experience their emotions intensely. Studies have indicated that the phenomenon of an absent father increases the likelihood of a boy becoming violent. Kwant (2011, as cited in Clark, 2013: 25) postulates that boys with absent fathers experience a sense of lack of power and masculinity and, as a result, compensate for this in conflict and violence. O'Neill (2010: 25) discusses that these adolescents are more likely to have socialising problems and display antisocial behaviour, showing aggression to adults and other children as well as being destructive of belongings. They are unhappy and struggle with poor self-esteem. These supporting studies demonstrate that, in many cases, teenage boys in father-absent families are likely to commit serious antisocial behaviours and violent offences.

According to Holland (200, as cited in Clark, 2013: 27), research has shown that the rate of drug abuse – a common feature among perpetrators of violence – is higher in adolescents with absent fathers. This is supported by Kwant (2011, as cited in Clark, 2013: 27) who argues that the rate of drug abuse is much higher in adolescents with absent fathers. He refers to research that states that boys with absent fathers experience extreme difficulty with emotional, social, cognitive and moral issues. They experience a confidence crisis and often turn to drugs to fill the vacuum. In summary, this study determines that parental absence, particularly father absence, is positively related to adolescent delinquency among teenage boys.

With all the foundation of background information and findings mentioned above, it is clear that this section is part of the exo-system level in the ecological systems theory. This system is made up of experiences or factors that have an impact in the lives of the teenage boys. In most cases, it showed that father absenteeism affected the child's lives negatively. For example, it was mentioned that, since the fathers were not known or present in their families or communities at large, there had been an increased risk of child abuse and conflict within the families. Teenage boys also tend to be involved in criminal behaviours and substance abuse. The researcher is mindful of the fact that this may prove that teenage boys with absent fathers have problems with friendships; many develop a swaggering, intimidating persona in an attempt to disguise their underlying fears, anxiety and unhappiness. When looking at the above-mentioned findings, it is clear that these teenage boys shared the following characteristics: inappropriate levels of aggression, either verbal or physical; and underdeveloped ability in emotional expression and self-regulation. Also, the study showed that boys with absent fathers have more trouble academically.

4.6.3 Academic Difficulties

Fifteen participants out of 20 indicated that they were repeating their grades. These participants claimed that they were having difficulties in life and they did not get enough time to do their school work. They mentioned that they were failing to concentrate during classes and experienced abuse from their families, failed to communicate with other children or to make friends. Five out of 15 participants highlighted that they were from abusive households and were not given time to do their homework. However, the other five said that were doing well with regards to their academics.

Participant S.B. was quoted saying that:

“My aunt is very abusive. She always beats me up for no reason. She pours a glass of ice water over my face every morning in order to wake me up. When doing my homework, she shouts at me telling to go and wash the dishes and clean the house. I honestly cannot concentrate at school because my mind is always thinking about why aunt is doing this to me. I just sit there in class and pretend to be listening. As a result, I am repeating the same grade for the third time now. I am always angry and fighting with other kids”.

Participant M.Z. indicated that:

“Some kids are treating me bad because I do not have a father. I have even withdrawn in many school activities like debating and sport. I now do not associate with others during break time, I now prefer being alone. I am not happy because I am now struggling with my school work. I am repeating the same grade for the second time now and I don't see what the future holds for me”.

Participant N.L. stated that:

“My father passed away in 2015. At first it was hard because I had just known him. Although it was not easy at the beginning but I have finally come to a point of accepting that he is no more. I still have unanswered questions but life has to go on. I am now not dwelling in the past but focusing in the future. I try not to let this distract me in my school work”.

The findings of the study support an earlier study done by Vitz (1999, as cited in Clark, 2013: 22) who suggested that academic problems, teens who became class troublemakers and school dropouts were consequences of the absenteeism of a biological father, even for children living with stepfathers. Boys experiencing fatherly absence are more likely to play truant and leave school with no qualifications, suggests O'Neill (2010: 13). Further to this they are more likely to score poorly on reading, mathematics and thinking skills tests as well as experience problems with teachers. The researcher found that some teenage boys who reported to perform poorly in school can be due to the lack of father involvement in their academics.

O'Neill (2010: 13) discussed that a father's involvement includes providing a model of education, skills and work ethic as well as the co-parenting relationship providing a model of how adults working together, communicate, negotiate and compromise, and present a united authority. This shows that both mothers and fathers contribute to the development of the child uniquely and independently of each other. The father's contribution in areas of emotional intelligence, self-esteem, competence and confidence are not easily duplicated by the mother. When the father is absent in children's life, children have more trouble at school, scoring poorly on tests, do not develop critical thinking skills and are less likely to attain academic and professional qualifications in adulthood. From the literature referred to above, it is clear that fathers play a vital role in the cognitive, physical, and social, personality and moral development of their sons. Consequently, boys with absent fathers are at a distinct disadvantage.

Having discussed all these findings, perhaps it is important to mention that children need both parents and parents need the support of social institutions in regard to being there for their children. This is due to the fact that these teenage boys consistently report feeling abandoned when their fathers are not involved in their lives, struggle with their emotions and manifest behaviour problems. The researcher, therefore, believes that a father provides guidance in the development and education of his children and makes important contributions to the development of the child's individual identity. The contribution of a father in the life of a child becomes more important as the child gets older and is preparing for an independent life and career. Father involvement has a positive impact on quantitative and verbal skills, problem-solving skills and higher academic achievement. Such findings suggest that when fathers engage with their children in many different ways, this leads to better outcomes for their children.

The research findings are consistent with literature that when teenage boys do not have a father figure, many things can go wrong in their lives, one of them being school disturbances. Every child deserves a good education. It has been shown that having an absent father may lead to the child to face challenges at school. This may ruin the child's future and it is even worse when a teenage boy is left with abusive family members. The following section looks at the coping mechanisms of teenage boys with absent fathers.

4.7 THEME 4: COPING MECHANISMS OF TEENAGE BOYS

The researcher identified that the interviewed participants used various coping strategies for their own survival due to father absenteeism in their lives. According to Nicholas, Rautenbach & Maistry (2010: 90), an ecological systems theory is one of the crucial systems that include the spousal, family, extended family, social support and wider cultural systems. They describe how children build internal working models of their self-worth from experiences of their parents' availability, ability and willingness to provide care, security and protection. The sub-themes which emerged as coping strategies include support from the family, the community and peers. These strategies are discussed below.

4.7.1 Family Support

Seven participants indicated that mothers played a huge role in every kind of support. Eight participants said that they received support from their aunts and uncles; three reported getting support from the grandparents; two got the support from their brothers and sisters. The researcher identified that seven participants were dependent on their mothers because they came from single-mother households. It was also identified that 18 of the participants were living without their biological fathers due to death. Participants mentioned that they moved to live with their relatives simply because they had no one else to look after them.

Participant G.S. highlighted that:

"I get all the support from my mother, she buys me clothes, toiletries and pays for my school fees. She also plays a huge role in guiding me".

Participant N.K enlightened that:

"My mother is financially struggling but she is trying her best in supporting me. She calms me down whenever I do not feel good. She talks to me about life and offer the guidance I need".

Participant X.L said that:

“All of my family members are very supportive to me. I also have a stepfather who treats me as his own son. They always tell me to focus on building my future”.

Participant M.N. stated that:

“I have my uncle as my support system. He pays for my needs and we communicate well but he is not open as my father was. I am experiencing hardships in life and struggling to cope”.

These findings support findings of the study conducted by Richter and Morrell (2012: 13) who pointed that, for some other children, maternal uncles and grandfathers, as well as older brothers, assume the role of social fathers, supporting their mothers, providing for children’s livelihood and education, and giving them fatherly love and guidance. Morrell & Jewkes (2011: 1) also showed that mothers in female-headed households are much more likely to invest in children’s wellbeing, including health and education. Mothers, grandparents and siblings had been socialised to understand men’s roles in an alternative sense or chosen to take on the role of being a father, looking after children. The above literature supports the findings of the study because participants stated that aunts, uncles, grandparents and their siblings were supporting them.

Elium & Elium (2004, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 29) point out that as a result of children’s increased involvement outside of the home; parents are required to protect their children from potential harm in the community. Using data that is consistent with the research findings from the South African General Household Survey (Stats SA, 2010: 1), it was found that 31% of children aged 0-9 years did not reside with either of their biological parents while 19% of children not residing with either of their parents were double orphans. It was also found that many children moved between households and often lived separately from their parents. Nationally, only one-third of children lived with both their biological parents, while 40% lived with their biological mother but not their father and 3% of children lived with their biological father but not their mother. According to Hall & Wright (2010: 45), the statistics are similar at national and provincial levels. Even though a large proportion of children are not living with one of their parents, one of their biological parents is often alive. The findings showed that even though teenage boys did not have their biological fathers in their lives, the family

members were trying their best to provide the required support. One of the emotional difficulties that were particularly noticeable to the researcher was that the verbal expressions of the boys often were different from their nonverbal responses.

Having discussed all the above opinions and views, it is therefore important to mention that raising a teenage boy, especially as a single mother is not easy. It is then clear that teenage boys need the full family support in order for them to have a bright and stable future. This is said because almost all of the participants raised the point of facing difficulties because they did not have their biological fathers in their lives. These participants even doubted that they would have a bright future due to their circumstances of living in holds. According to the findings, the researcher believes it is important to acknowledge the wonderful task the families of these teenage boys are doing in their lives in terms of support and care. As well as receiving support from their families, it was found that they also received support from their peers and the community.

4.7.2 Peer and Community Support

All 20 participants mentioned that they got fair support from the community as a whole. Community members understood their situations of living in absent-father households and they treated them like any other children. It was noted that 13 participants received emotional support from their peers. They did not encounter any form of discrimination due to biological father absenteeism.

Participant N.B. stated that:

“Although I do not get along with my mother, my friends play a huge role in supporting me. The support is fair, understandable and treats me with respect. We always share comforting words and guiding each other. They have become my family”.

Participant M.M. said that:

“My class teacher has become my support system. She always brings lunch for me and my little sister because we do not get breakfast at home. She is very open to us and asked us to tell her if we need anything. She provides us with any possible support she could offer”.

However, seven participants said that they had chosen to distance themselves from friends because some of them were treating them badly due because they are living with absent biological fathers. These teenage boys said that they had turned to their school teachers and community members for support and care they needed. The microsystem within the ecological system is considered the most intimate or most influential level and consists of the interactions between the person and their family or their close friends. If the parent is very strict and harsh towards the child, the child may feel the need to rebel against the parent. As such one participant, S.B. was quoted saying:

"I am always angry and sad because of the treatment I get from home since my father passed. At school, I do not have friends and I do not want them because are making fun of me and I end up fighting with them. My aunt who is financially supporting me does not treat me as she should be; she hates me for no reason".

Participant M.Z. mentioned that:

"I always spend most of my time at the neighbours with my friends. Most of us do not have parents, so we understand each other. We avoid talking about our parents and we treat each other very well".

Lack of self-control is described by Elium & Elium (2004, as cited in Patrick, 2006: 33) as a struggle between self-sufficiency and dependency, competence and incompetence, productivity and shortfall. Boys, at this stage, need to feel that they are competent and have skills that allow them to contribute to their environment in a productive way. According to Kwant (2011, as cited in Clark, 2013: 26), boys with absent fathers demonstrate a lack of self-control as well as failure to complete development stages such as education, due to weak family structures. He considered that these boys easily get caught up in cycles of delinquency and join gangs where they quickly become hardened criminals as they may be required to kill as an entry fee to the gang. Where a boy lacks a father figure to give his approval and help a boy to feel successful, perhaps this is the area where peers and community could fill the gap. The researcher believes that peers and community could never replace the role of a father, but they could certainly contribute positively to the development of a boy's self-concept. This is evident in the research findings because those teenage boys

mentioned that they received a fair amount of support and friendship from peers and community members. They also said that they respected each other; provided love and care; and treated them like any other children.

This section is important as teenage-hood is a phase in which children begin to shift their focus from their parents towards their peers and community at large. The peers may become a significant source of support for children who experience difficulties at home, particularly where there is an absence of a positive male role model. Considering the importance of the role of peers and community in teenage phase, the researcher is of the opinion that peer relationships play a very important role in the life of a boy with an absent father. The researcher argues that boys who do not receive love, affection and masculine role modelling from a father figure, may seek to satisfy these needs in their peer relationships. This could be positive and supportive for boys but could also have negative results, for instance when boys seek to satisfy their needs by involving themselves in gangs.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Children growing up with absent fathers encounter many different experiences and these affect their lives and possibly their adulthood. In sum, the evidence suggests that father absence may be harmful, not necessarily because a gender-role model is absent but because many paternal economic, social and emotional roles are missing or inappropriately filled in these families. It is suggested by Holland (2008, as cited in Clark, 2013: 13) that, as a coping mechanism, notorious characters like Saddam Hussein and Robert Mugabe, in childhood, detached themselves from their own feelings as a shield against the pain of their experience of having an absent father. The following chapter includes a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study, reviews the findings, draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The absence of a father at home has an impact on teenage boys. Twenty participants were selected for interview purposes in order to collect data and the research followed a qualitative approach. Among the needs that the participants in this study expected from a father included being there for support, offering guidance and advice, providing discipline and motivation, and sharing father-son experiences. When these needs were not fulfilled, it affected participants emotionally and some experienced financial deprivation. Some participants experienced anger and loneliness because their fathers were absent and not around to help meet needs.

Previous studies have highlighted the damage to teenage-hood development. Much research has been on the effects of an absent father on a boy, but the intention of this study was to explore the experiences of teenage boys growing up in the absence of a father. The researcher found in existing literature that father absence is an emotionally-charged subject in the debate concerning its influence on the social, economic and emotional effect on teenage boys. The phenomenon of the absent father is still on the increase in some cultures and has a ripple-effect on the socio-economic climate of the country. Parents and other practitioners as teachers and counsellors are faced with complex issues when dealing with teenage boys experiencing the phenomenon of living with an absent father. The researcher found that the experience of absent fathers has the potential to destroy lives of teenage boys. Therefore, the importance of a father in the life of his son should not be underestimated.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study interviewed 20 participants from two high schools in Ngwelezane Township who were teenage boys aged 13 to 19. These participants were all black South Africans because Ngwelezane Township consists of mainly black people.

The findings are summarised with respect to the four objectives which were formulated to guide the study concerning the experiences of growing up in the absence of a biological father among teenage boys of Ngwelezane area.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To determine the reasons for father absenteeism in the teenage boys lives in Ngwelezane area.
- To explore the economic consequences associated with father absenteeism in Ngwelezane area.
- To determine the social consequences of father absenteeism on teenage boys of Ngwelezane area.
- To explore the coping mechanisms of teenage boys of Ngwelezane area without their biological fathers.

5.3.1 Objective 1: To determine the reasons of father absenteeism in the teenage boys lives in Ngwelezane area

The results of the study determined the reasons of father absenteeism in the lives of teenage boys. The research findings showed that 18 of the 20 participants had biological fathers who were absent due to death, while the other two participants mentioned that the reason for the absenteeism of their biological fathers in their lives was that they lived in different places which made it hard for them to be together.

5.3.2 Objective 2: To explore the economic consequences associated with father absenteeism in Ngwelezane area

It was found during the interviews that 13 teenage boys were economically struggling. The teenage boys were struggling in terms of paying school fees and stationery, uniforms, transport fees, clothes, cosmetics and food. This was because their biological fathers were not around in order to provide for them. The boys mentioned that they received financial support from their relatives such as grandparents, aunts,

uncles, brothers and sisters. They considered that the financial support was not enough and were therefore suffering. The other six participants mentioned that they received the financial support only from their mothers. These participants said that their single mothers were having challenges in terms of supporting them, but were trying the best they could since no one else was helping. One participant was, however, reluctant to answer this question.

5.3.3 Objective 3: To determine the social consequences of father absenteeism on teenage boys of Ngwelezane area

The researcher was able to gather information regarding the teenage boys' emotional expressions. Two participants stated that not having a present father in their lives made them feel angry. These boys mentioned that it was hard for them to know that their fathers were out there playing a father role to other children and not to them. Twelve said that they were hurting, feeling lonely and missed their fathers so much. The participants viewed that the emotions were because they believed that things would have been better if the fathers were actively engaged in their lives. Six participants indicated that they did not care about having absent fathers in their lives. This was because they never saw their biological fathers who had never played a role in their lives.

When participants were asked about the negative social experiences due to not having a father around them, 10 of them showed that they were encountering hardships in terms of behaviour. They were involved in drugs and substance abuse and criminal activities. Other participants said that they were repeating their school grades and were finding it hard to concentrate in school. These participants claimed that they were being abused in their current homes and as a result they did not get enough time to do their school work.

5.3.4 Objective 4: To explore the coping mechanisms of teenage boys of Ngwelezane area without their biological fathers

The teenage boys mentioned that they got every possible support from their family members, especially their mothers. It was identified that the support and advice they received from their family members helped them to cope with having absent fathers. It was found that teenage boys also received support from peers and community

members. During the interviews with participants, they mentioned that community members understood the teenage boys' situations and they treated them like any other children. It was noted that 13 participants received emotional support from their peers. The boys, therefore, did not encounter any form of discrimination due to biological father absenteeism among them. According to these teenage boys, the support they received from their families, community members and peers acted as a coping mechanism.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The researcher identified several problem areas. Having carefully described the data that were gathered from the participants, the researcher draws conclusions according to the themes of the study. Based on the literature reviewed and the empirical findings of the study, it can be concluded that the experiences of teenage boys who are living in the absence of the biological fathers are as follows:

5.4.1 Reasons for Father Absenteeism among Teenage Boys

The researcher found that death and fathers not living with the children were the main reasons for father absenteeism among all the teenage boys that participated in the study. Father absenteeism is caused fathers migrating to urban areas in search of work as rural areas are not developed to employ people. It is also concluded that some father absenteeism is caused by death due to HIV and AIDS.

5.4.2 Economic Consequences of Father Absenteeism among Teenage Boys

It was found in the study that teenage boys who are from absent-father households suffer from inadequate financial support. It is then concluded that teenage boys who are from homes with absent fathers have economic challenges. It is also concluded that financial constraints are a consequence of father absenteeism because the financial burden rests on the mothers only.

5.4.3 Social Consequences of Father Absenteeism among teenage boys.

The study found that loneliness was experienced by the participants whose fathers were totally absent from their lives. In order for these teenage boys to overcome this feeling, they resorted to different negative behaviours and had academic difficulties and difficulty making friends. The participants identified other emotions such as

helplessness as well as demotivation and not caring anymore. It was also observed that there are uncertain feelings towards the father: hardened emotions; anger and aggression; a feeling of powerlessness; limited capacity for the verbal expression of their emotions; lack of self-confidence and insecurity; low self-esteem and an improperly formed identity. There is a longing for a father to be part of their lives.

5.4.4 Coping Mechanisms of Teenage Boys with absent fathers

The researcher found that teenage boys relied on families, peers and community support as coping mechanisms. A good choice of friends had helped to guide the boys away from trouble and encourage them to make better choices. The single mothers of these teenage boys have obviously played an important role in the lives of their children. It was observed that teenage boys from the absent-father households are facing difficulties such as low self-esteem, low self-confidence, insecurity and the desire for approval. It is, therefore, important for teenage boys with absent fathers to be close to their families, peers and community members in order to develop positive self-esteem and confidence through support and approval.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings show there are many challenges that teenage boys face in their development when they grow up without a male role model. The following recommendations could be implemented by strategic role players to prevent these teenage boys from being affected by the challenges they face on a daily basis in growing up without a father figure.

More social workers are needed in schools to identify and intervene where this phenomenon of teenage boys experiencing father absenteeism is identified. Teachers and parents need to be made aware of the effects of this phenomenon. This includes more awareness campaigns and the provision of services and resources as required. This could help them identify problems earlier, or even prevent such problems from occurring. Teenage boys need role models who can encourage them and boost their confidence. In the absence of strong male role models, mentoring training could be provided by male educators and other male volunteers. Communities should also encourage males to act as role models in the lives of such teenage boys.

The researcher also recommends therapy for fathers who have not had the education to fulfil their role as a father. Initiatives to encourage older men, such as grandfathers or uncles could be arranged to support boys in the absence of fathers in order to fill the gap left. Finally, the teenage boys' relationships with their mothers require attention. There is a need for parenting skills and support programmes for single mothers to assist them in the managing the needs of their teenage sons. Their sons also need training in relationship-building as they appear to lack the skills needed to build healthy relationships.

It is also recommended that educating children, parents, families and community about the effects and consequences of the phenomenon might be one way of addressing it and providing a better future for all. The creation of awareness and educational programmes will allow for and empower teenage boys to successfully boost their wellbeing and confidence.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited in the racial and age aspect, as only black, teenage boys participated in the study. It seems that the impact of growing up with an absent father and the effect it has on teenage boys warrants further investigation on boys of other ages and race groups. The study was also limited in terms of gender, since only male children participated in the study. It is believed that the impact of growing up without a father figure has effect on girls (daughters) as well.

The research was conducted with 20 teenage boys from the same community and with similar social backgrounds and influences. Though qualitative research is about understanding, and not generalising, the findings cannot be generalised beyond this community. Lastly the study was limited in terms of area where it was conducted, as it only focused in Ngwelezane area.

5.7. IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

While interventions that bring the father and the child together in a supportive environment are imperative, it was also found that it is important to target interaction between the parents of a child. An evaluation study conducted by Rienks, Wardsworth, Markman, Finhorn & Etter (2011: 191) suggested educational workshops with both parents to teach them skills and principles involved in building relationships where

participants learn communication, coping, problem-solving, and parenting skills rooted in research on how parents communicate and handle conflict to help teenage boys. These educational workshops would create safer, more stable father-son relationships and better environments for their children, including coping with economic deprivation. Father-child activity programmes are also important because they are aimed at promoting fathers' involvement in their children's lives. In addition, the research found that participants would appreciate peer-group support programmes and parenting skills programmes.

5.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The researcher suggests that the aspects of race, age, gender and geographical area should be further considered for future studies. This is because father absenteeism has various impacts and effects in peoples' lives. Father absenteeism is a growing factor and a major concern in the country. It is therefore suggested that it should be looked at from every possible angle. This might help to develop, empower and improve the lives of many people and particularly children.

The study focused only on the teenage boys' experiences. Further research is needed on single-parent households and how mothers compensate for the absence of fathers in the lives of their sons. Research could be undertaken to find out how boys deal with discipline in female-headed households. The scope of this study did not allow going into detail about how the school context contributes to the situation of these adolescent boys. There is need for a more comprehensive research study in which these issues can be addressed.

It was not within the scope of this research to study the family unit, specifically the role of male siblings. Further research could be conducted on the role that older brothers play in the lives of their teenage brothers.

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ANNEXURE 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

An Interview Guide for Teenage Boys Who Grow Up without the Guidance of a Biological Father

Ministerial

Introduction

My name is Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe, currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Social Work with the University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa Campus. I am currently doing a study on *The Life Consequences of Biological Father Absenteeism among Teenage Boys in Ngwelezane Township*. The aim of the study is to investigate on the life consequences and the effects thereof teenage boys of Ngwelezane area who grow up in the absence of a biological father. My intention is to engage relevant societies/communities with matters pertaining to teenage behaviour with reference to their early childhood development. The study intends to have 25 participants and these participants shall be teenage boys, aged between 13 and 19.

The information that you are going to share with me will only be used for academic purposes and it will remain confidential. As participants, you will participate on a free will basis, and you are welcome to withdraw from participating should you become uncomfortable. With regards to your age, the permission will be required from your parents or guardians and they will sign a consent form, granting me to do an interview with you. Your positive responses and participation with regards to this particular study will be highly appreciated.

SECTION A: Biographical Data

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. How many are you at home?
4. Do you have any siblings? If yes, were you all fathered by the same father?

5. Do you go to school? If yes, what grade are you doing/ If no, what grade did you do?

SECTION B: Reasons for Father Absenteeism

1. Do you know who your father is and his whereabouts?

If yes explain further

If no explain further

SECTION C: Social Consequences

1. How do you feel when seeing other children with fathers?

2. Do other children/ community members treat you badly because you do not have a biological father around?

3. Explain any other negative social experiences that you have of not having a father around?

4. Growing up without your biological father, do you see yourself growing up just like any other child?

5. When growing up, do you see yourself as a responsible father to your own children?

6. Do you have anyone who acts as a father figure to you?

SECTION D: Economic Consequences

1. Are there any economic challenges that you face because your father is not around? Explain further

2. Do you have any support from your immediate family? (Financial)

SECTION E: Coping Mechanisms

1. Do you think that growing up without your father contributes toward your problems or it has affected your life?

If yes explain, if no explain

2. How do you cope with growing up without a biological father present in your life?

ANNEXURE 2: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Project Title: **The Life Consequences of Biological Father Absenteeism Among Teenage Boys in Ngwelezane Township**

(**Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe**) from the **Department of Social Work; University of Zululand** has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project, and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The purpose of the research project is to investigate the life consequences and effects thereof teenage boys who grow up in the absence of their biological fathers. To further engage the respective communities with matters pertaining to teenage behaviour with regards to their early childhood development.
2. The University of Zululand has given ethical clearance to this research project and I have seen/may request to see the clearance certificate.
3. By participating in this research project, I will be contributing towards societal behavioural change and providing information that will offer new information and/ or improve the present information with regards to positive coping mechanism and bringing back the purpose of life to young men who grew or are growing up without their biological fathers.
4. I will participate in the project by providing appropriate answers to a set of systematically structured questions.
5. My participation is entirely voluntary and should I at any stage wish to withdraw from participating further, I may do so without any negative consequences
6. I will not be compensated for participating in the research, but my out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed. The researcher will provide snacks during the sessions.
7. There may be risks associated with my participation in the project. I am aware that:

- a) The following risks are with my participation: The participant may feel a little uncomfortable when reminded of the fact that he is without a father and therefore is facing difficulties.
 - b) The following steps have been taken to prevent the risks: As a social worker, I have prepared the teenagers by providing them information about the project and the consequences thereof participating. I have made it clear to them that should they feel uncomfortable, they must inform me and we shall stop.
 - c) There is a 50% chance of the risk materialising.
8. The researcher intends publishing the research results in the form of a Thesis. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and that my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conduct of the research.
 9. I will not receive feedback/will receive feedback in the form of a formal letter from the researcher regarding the results obtained during the study.
 10. Any further questions that I might have concerning the research or my participation will be answered by Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe 0825430261/0823633045.
 11. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.
 12. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record.

I.....have read the above information / confirm that the above informed has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

.....
Participant's signature **Date**

IFOMU YOKUZIBOPHEZELA

(kobambe iqhaza)

Isihloko socwaningo: **The Life Consequences of Biological Father Absenteeism Among Teenage Boys in Ngwelezane Township**

(Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe) ovela ku Mnyango wezenhlalakahle, iNyuvesi yakwaZulu ibe nesicelo semvume yokuzibandakanya kulolucwaningo olulotshiwe ngenhla.

Imvelaphi kanye nenhloso yalolucwaningo, nalolu lwazi nophawu lokwamukela ukuzibophezela ngichazeliwe ngalo ngolimi lwami engilizwayo.

Ngियाqonda ukuthi:

1. Inhloso yalolucwaningo ukuthola ngesimo sempilo nemiphumela yabafanyana abakhula ngaphandle kwesandla sobaba ababazalayo. Ukumbandakanya umphakathi mayelana nokuziphatha kwabafanyana.
2. Inyuvesi yakwaZulu inikeze ngemvume kubenzi balolu cwaningo ukuba benze loluhlelo futhi ngiyibonile leyomvume/ngingacela ukubona isitifiketi semvume.
3. Ngokubamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo ngizonikezela iqhaza ngokupha umphakathi ulwazi olusha okuzoshintsha ukuziphatha kwawo. Ukuthuthukisa abafanyana ngolwazi lokuba bakwazi ukubhekana nezimo abahlangabezana nazo ezibangwa ukukhula ngaphandle kobaba empilweni yabo ukuze bezokwazi ukubhekana nempilo.
4. ngizobamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo ngokunikezela ngezimpendulo ezifanele.
5. ekuzibandakanyeni kwami angizukubheka nzuzo futhi akukho lapho engizotholakala ngihoxa ocwaningweni, umakwenzeka ngeke kube nemiphumela emibi ocwaningweni.
6. mina angizikunxephezela ngokuzibandakanya kwami kulolucwaningo, kodwa izindleko eziphume kwelami iphakethe zizokhokhelwa.
7. kuzoba nezimo ezibucayi ekuzibandakanyeni kwami kulolucwaningo, ngियाqonda ukuthi:
 - a) lobu bungozi obulandelayo kuxhumene nokuzibandakanya kwami: obambe iqhaza kungenzeka avukwe umunyu nokungakhululeki uma bekhunjuzwa ngeqiniso lokukhula ngaphandle kababa okuyimbangela yobunzima abahlangabezana nabo.

b) lezi zitebhu ezilandelayo zithathwe ukuzivikela ubungozi: abafanyana bazokwaziswa yonke imininingwane yocwaningo kanye nemiphumela yokubamba iqhaza. Obamba iqhaza ukhululekile ukuthi uma engakhululekile ngocwaningo asho ukuze kungaqhutshekwa.

c) angu 50% amathuba okuvela kobungozi.

8. umphequluli uzoshicilela imiphumela yalolucwaningo ngohlelo loku

9. Nokho, ubhalomfihlo, nofihlo-gama lwemininingwane izobe igciniwe nokuthi igama lami nobutho kwami angeke kubonakaliswe kunoma yimuphi umuntu obengeyona inhlango yocwaningo.

10. angeke ngiyamukele imiphumela/ngizoyamukela imiphumela engaloluhlelo ngencwadi emayelana nemiphumela etholakale ngesikhathi sesifundo.

11. eminye imibuzo ephathelene nalolucwaningo noma mayelana nokuzibandakanya kwami ingaphendulwa ngu Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe 0825430261/ 0823633045.

12. ngokusayina lamafomu angiqubuli ubuthi noma amalungele kwezomthetho

13. ikhophi enolwazi oluphelele nophawu lokwamukela ukuzibophezela kwami ngizonikezwa, bese okungungqo kuyasayinwa.

Mina ngilufundile lokhu okubhalwe ngenhla/ngiyavuma ukuthi ngiyakuqonda okuqukethwe nokubhaliwe. Ngiyibuzile yonke imibuzo engifuna ukuyibuza, futhi yaphendulwa ngendlela engenelisayo. Ngiyayoqonda kahle ukuba kulundelekile ini kimi kulolucwaningo.

Angiphoqwanga nakancane ukubamba iqhaza kulolicwaningo.

.....

Isishicilelo kobambe iqhaza

.....

usuku

PARENT AND GUARDIAN'S INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION

INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION

(Parent or Guardian)

Project Title: **The Life Consequences of Biological Father Absenteeism Among Teenage Boys in Ngwelezane Township**

Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe from the **Department of Social Work; University of Zululand** has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The purpose of the research project is to investigate the life consequences and effects thereof teenage boys who grow up in the absence of their biological fathers. To further engage the respective communities with matters pertaining to teenage behaviour with regards to their early childhood development.
2. The University of Zululand has given ethical clearance to this research project and I have seen/may request to see the clearance certificate.
3. By participating in this research project my child will be contributing towards societal behavioural change and providing information that will offer new information and/ or improve the present information with regards to positive coping mechanism and bringing back the purpose of life to young men who grew or are growing up without their biological fathers.
4. My child/ward will participate in the project by providing appropriate answers to a set of systematically structured questions.
5. My child's participation is entirely voluntary and if my child/ward is older than seven (7) years, s/he must also agree to participate.
6. Should I or my child/ward at any stage wish to withdraw my child/ward from further participating, we may do so without any negative consequences.

7. My child/ward may be asked to withdraw from the research before it has finished if the researcher or any other appropriate person feels it is in my child's/ward's best interests, or if my child/ward does not follow instructions.
8. Neither my child/ward nor I will be compensated for participating in the research, but my out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed. The researcher will provide refreshments during the sessions.
9. There may be risks associated with my child's participation in the project. I am aware that:
 - a) The following risks are associated with participation: The participant may feel a little uncomfortable when reminded of the fact that he is without a father and therefore is facing difficulties.
 - b) The following steps have been taken to prevent the risks: As a social worker, I have prepared the teenagers by providing them information about the project and the consequences thereof participating. I have made it clear to them that should they feel uncomfortable, they must inform me and we shall stop.
 - c) There is a 50% chance of the risk materialising.
10. The researcher intends publishing the research results in the form of a Thesis. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and that my child's name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conduct of the research.
11. I will not receive feedback/will receive feedback in the form of a formal letter from the researcher regarding the results obtained during the study.
12. Any further questions that I might have concerning the research or my child's participation will be answered by Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe 0825430261/0823633045.
13. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.
14. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record.

I.....have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of my child during the research.

I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree that my child participates in the above-mentioned project.

.....

.....

Guardian's/ Parent signature

Date

IFOMU YOKUZIBOPHEZELA

(uMzali wobambe iqhaza)

Isihloko socwaningo: **The Life Consequences of Biological Father Absenteeism Among Teenage Boys in Ngwelezane Township**

Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe ovela ku Mnyango wezenhlalakahle, iNyuvesi yakwaZulu ibe nesicelo semvume yokuzibandakanya komntwana wakho kulolucwaningo olulotshiwe ngenhla.

Imvelaphi kanye nenhloso yalolucwaningo, nalolu lwazi nophawu lokwamukela ukuzibophezela ngichazeliwe ngalo ngolimi lwami engilizwayo.

Ngiyaqonda ukuthi:

1. Inhloso yalolucwaningo ukuthola ngesimo sempilo nemiphumela yabafanyana abakhula ngaphandle kwesandla sobaba ababazalayo. Ukumbandakanya umphakathi mayelana nokuziphatha kwabafanyana.
2. Inyuvesi yakwaZulu inikeze imvume kubenzi balolu cwaningo ukuba benze loluhlelo futhi ngiyibonile leyomvume/ngingacela ukubona isitifiketi semvume. Ngokuvumela umntwana wami ukubamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo kuzonikezela iqhaza ngokupha umphakathi ulwazi olusha okuzoshintsha ukuziphatha kwawo. Ukuthuthukisa abafanyana ngolwazi lokuba bakwazi ukubhekana nezimo abahlangabezana nazo ezibangwa ukukhula ngaphandle kobaba empilweni yabo ukuze bezokwazi ukubhekana nempilo. Ukubamba iqhaza komntwana wami kulolucwaningo ngokunikezela ngezimpendulo ezifanele.
3. Ekuzibandakanyeni komntwana wami angizukubheka nzuzo futhi uma umntwana wami engaphezu kweminyaka eyisikhombisa, angazivumela ngokwakhe ukuba yingxenye yocwaningo.
4. Uma mina Kanye nomntwana wami sifisa ukuhoxa ocwaningweni, singenxa njalo futhi ngeke kube nemiphumela emibi ocwaningweni.
5. Umntwana wami angacelwa ukuba ahoxe ocwaningweni ngaphambi kokuba luphele uma umcwaningi noma omunye oqondene nocwaningo ezwa ukuthi kufanele, okanye umntwana engalandeli ngedlela imithetho.

6. Mina noma umntwana wami asizukunxephezela ngokuzibandakanya komntwana wami kulolucwaningo, kodwa izindleko eziphume kwelami iphakethe zizokhokhelwa.
7. Kuzoba nezimo ezibucayi ekuzibandakanyeni komntwana wami kulolucwaningo, ngiyaqonda ukuthi:
 - a. Lobu bungozi obulandelayo kuxhumene nokuzibandakanya komntwana wami obambe iqhaza okungenzeka avukwe umunyu nokungakhululeki uma ekhunjuzwa ngeqiniso lokukhula ngaphandle kababa okuyimbangela yobunzima abahlangabezana nabo.
 - b. Lezi zitebhu ezilandelayo zithathwe ukuzivikela ubungozi:

Abafanyana bazokwaziswa yonke imininingwane yocwaningo kanye nemiphumela yokubamba iqhaza. (ii) Obamba iqhaza ukhululekile ukuthi uma engakhululekile ngocwaningo asho ukuze kungaqhutshekwa. Angamashumi ayisihlanu amaphesenti (50%) amathuba okuvela kwalobubungozi.
8. Umcwaningii uzoshicilela imiphumela yalolucwaningo ebhukwini lokugcina imiphumela yocwaningo.
9. Nokho, ubhalomfihlo, nofihlo-gama lwemininingwane izobe igciniwe nokuthi igama lomntanami nobutho bakhe angeke kubonakaliswe kunoma yimuphi umuntu obengeyona inhlangotho yocwaningo.
10. Angeke ngiyamukele imiphumela/ngizoyamukela imiphumela engaloluhlelo ngenchwadi emayelana nemiphumela etholakale ngesikhathi sesifundo.
11. Eminye imibuzo ephathelene nalolucwaningo noma mayelana nokuzibandakanya komntanami ingaphendulwa ngu Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe 0825430261/ 0823633045.
12. Ngokusayina lelifomu angiqubuli ubuthi noma amalungele kwezomthetho
13. Ikhophi enolwazi oluphelele nophawu lokwamukela ukuzibophezela kwami ngizonikezwa, bese okungungqo kuyasayinwa.

Mina ngikufundile lokhu okubhalwe ngenhla/ngiyavuma ukuthi ngiyakuqonda okuqukethwe nokubhaliwe. Ngiyibuzile yonke imibuzo engifuna ukuyibuza, futhi yaphendulwa ngendlela engenelisayo. Ngiyayoqonda kahle ukuba kulundelekile ini kimi kulolucwaningo. Angiphoqwanga nakancane ukubamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo

Isishicilelo kumzali wengane ebambe iqhaza

usuku

ANNEXURE 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-030)



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
Tel: 035 902 6887
Fax: 035 902 6222
Email: MangeleS@unizulu.ac.za

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2017/360				
Project Title	The life consequences if biological father absenteeism among teenage boys in Ngwelezane Township				
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	N Hadebe				
Supervisor and Co- supervisor	Dr P Gutura				
Department	Social Work				
Faculty	Arts				
Type of Risk	Medium – Data collection from people				
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year		Master's	x	Doctoral
					Departmental

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project. The Researcher may therefore commence with data collection as from the date of this Certificate, using the certificate number indicated above.

Special conditions:

- (1) This certificate is valid for 2 years from the date of issue.
- (2) Principal researcher must provide an annual report to the UZREC in the prescribed format [due date-30 April 2018]
- (3) Principal researcher must submit a report at the end of project in respect of ethical compliance.
- (4) The UZREC must be informed immediately of any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the meeting.

The UZREC wishes the researcher well in conducting research.


Professor Gideon De Wet
Chairperson: University Research Ethics Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research & Innovation
15 May 2017

<p>CHAIRPERSON UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (UZREC) REG NO: UZREC 171110-30</p> <p>15-05-2017</p> <p>RESEARCH & INNOVATION OFFICE</p>
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ANNEXURE 4: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1041

Ref.:2/4/8/1155

Mrs NY Hadebe
PO Box 10297
Empangeni
3880

Dear Mrs Hadebe

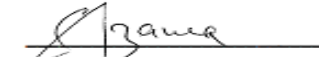
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DōE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"THE LIFE CONSEQUENCES OF BIOLOGICAL FATHER ABSENTEEISM AMONG TEENAGE BOYS IN NGWELEZANE TOWNSHIP"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 31 January 2017 to 07 June 2019.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9 137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Thanduyise High School

Khombindlela High School


Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 06 February 2017

...Championing Quality Education - Creating and Securing a Brighter Future

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 - Pietermaritzburg - 3200 - Republic of South Africa
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COUNCILLOR S G MKHIZE

D136, CIVIC CENTRE, RICHARDS BAY
CELL: 083 726 7533
TEL: 035 907 5027 FAX: 086 539 5410
e-mail: mkhizesg@umhlathuze.gov.za

26 January 2017

Dear Sir,

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Clr S G Mkhize, Deputy Mayor of the City of uMhlathuze, hereby grant permission to Ms Nondumiso Yolande Hadebe, Zululand University student number 201121010, to conduct research in terms of her Master Degree in Social Work on the topic of: *The life consequences of biological father absenteeism amongst teenage boy in Ngwelezane Township, Empangeni.*

Therefore any assistance you may grant her would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

CLR S G MKHIZE
DEPUTY MAYOR : CITY OF UMHLATHUZE



ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST BE ADDRESSED TO THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER