



Mitigating the Effects of Father Imprisonment on the Family: A Study of Social Work Intervention Strategies in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in Eastern Cape

Akhona Tshaka¹, P.T. Tanga² and Akeem Adewale Oyelana³

^{1,2}*Department of Social Work and Social Development, University of Fort Hare,
Private Bag X1314, Alice 5700, Eastern Cape, South Africa*

³*Department of Public Administration, University of Fort Hare, Private Bag X1314,
Alice 5700, Eastern Cape, South Africa*

E-mail: ¹<201110882@ufh.ac.za>, ²<ptanga@ufh.ac.za>, ³<201100592@ufh.ac.za>

KEYWORDS Fatherless Families. Fatherless Children. Imprisonment. Interventions

ABSTRACT The South African population is highly populated by single mothered families. Fatherlessness has emerged as one of the greatest social problems, especially as children who grow up in families with absent-fathers suffer lasting damage. The aim of this study was to examine the effects of fathers' imprisonment on the functioning of the family and social work interventions to mitigate this effect. The study used a mixed method approach that involved the use of the quantitative and qualitative methodology. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires and face-to-face in-depth interviews. This study employed three sampling strategies namely: multi-stage sampling and purposive sampling as well as snowball sampling. The sample was made up of 65 members of families whose father is in prison or had been to prison and 15 social work officials. The findings revealed that father's imprisonment has a negative effect that causes dysfunctional families. The effect is due to the loss of a father figure and a provider of the family. Inequality and stigmatization among family members were also found to cause dysfunctional families after the father's imprisonment. The findings from social work officials revealed that social service interventions to alleviate the family dysfunctions. However, the services provided by social workers are limited, there is also a lack of awareness regarding social work interventions for families with fathers in prison. The study concluded that resources are limited to enhance the provision of adequate and better psychosocial support for affected families in order to alleviate the undesirable effect of father's imprisonment. Therefore, the study recommended that the social welfare system should be strengthened by embarking on enlightenment programmes that create awareness about family-based interventions for dysfunction families with fathers in prison.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa has one of the highest rates of absent fathers in the world. Only about a third of South African children live in the same home as their fathers (Ritcher et al. 2012). Fatherlessness has emerged as one of the greatest social problems, especially as children who grow up in families with absent-fathers suffer lasting damage. This sudden and involuntary separation from the family creates economic, psychological and interpersonal problems that are similar to those experienced by divorced families and families who have lost significant others because of death (Jeremy and Waul 2003). For the purpose of this study, the term father absence refers to fathers that do not live with their families and children, whom do not maintain communication and do not pay maintenance (Eddy et al. 2013). While this problem is often raised as one of the issues

of concern, little is known about the effects of father's absence due to imprisonment in the life of the family left behind. Research on this field has solely focused on the impact of father's incarceration on children. There are about 241 active correctional centres across South Africa. Eight are for women only, 13 are for youths, and 129 are for men only (Singh 2016). According to the Parliamentary Liaison Office (2014) on mother and babies in incarceration report, the prison population is 150 608, only 2 percent of them are women. South Africa has the biggest prison population in Africa and the ninth biggest in the world. About every month about 23 000 are released other 25 000 enter the correctional system (Parliamentary Liaison Office 2014).

In traditional African and other families, fathers constitute the authority figure and he shoulders the major responsibilities for members of his family (Lamb 2000). Importantly, men not only

contribute to women's well-being and happiness but in several studies, men have also been found to buffer children against neglectful or harsh parenting by a distant, demoralized or overburdened mother (Richter et al. 2012). According to a report by Currie and de Wall (2005) in South Africa a child's right to family and parental care is placed on parents and families. However, there is also a duty on the state to support the family as an institution. White Paper of Social Welfare (1997), states that stable, healthy families are the heart of strong societies. It is within the family environment that an individual's physical, emotional and psychological development occurs. It is from our family that we learn unconditional love, gain empathy, respect, and self-regulation. These qualities enable us to engage positively at school, at work, and in society. It further states its absence that profound damage on the individual often leading to a behaviour that is profoundly damaging to society. It is under these circumstances that this study sought to understand the voice from the family of the incarcerated father about the effects of his incarceration.

This paper was motivated by evidence based knowledge on the challenge of father absence in South Africa. Decades back many scholars, including Hairston (1991) demonstrated a need to develop a body of knowledge on imprisonment and family relationship. He came across knowledge gaps in other studies and saw a need for increased understanding of several key issues that need to be addressed by future researchers on the impact of father's imprisonment. Hairston (1991) stated that research on the nature, structure, and functions of prisoner's family and social networks outside prison is needed. It is known that there is little understanding of prisoner's family characteristics or relationships. He further said there is a lack of knowledge on how to do a prisoner's personal and family relationships develop and operate over the period of incarceration and post-incarceration (Hairston 1991). Surprisingly in South Africa, there is currently limited literature pertaining to the effects of absent fathers on the family due to imprisonment. Studies have focus on father absence as a challenge but few have focus on imprisonment as the reasons behind a problem of father absence.

Literature Review

Father Absence and Imprisonment in South Africa

One of the most negative issues of South Africa's imprisonment debates can be traced back to apartheid history on how Black family lives were ruined by separating fathers from families. Nelson engorged gender quality and recognized that it is the primary task of fathers to provide for their families, but women are becoming co-providers and bread winners in families because of father imprisonment (Shwalb et al. 2013). A recent report by Losel (2012:7) on risk and protective factors in the resettlement of imprisoned fathers with their families revealed that studies on the experiences of prisoners' families have only recently begun to accumulate. This was found to be due to challenges in identifying and accessing prisoners and their families for research, as well as social and cultural perceptions about what is acceptable and not to the public. Patrick (2006) argues that a better understanding of prisoner research processes may help to inform policies to protect and ensure the rights and well-being of prisoners' children and families. In his qualitative investigation in South Africa, he found that 42 percent of children lived only with their mothers compared to only one percent who lived with the fathers (Patrick 2006).

According to the report by the Department of Social Development (2016), the majority of single parent households in South Africa are headed by women. This has implications for families in terms of access to important socio-economic resources such as land, livestock, credit, education, health care, and extension services. It is stated that inequalities that have an impact on women in societies are found among female headed households where there are dependency and vulnerability combined with sexist societal attitudes that ensure that these households are poor (Ellis and Adams 2009). There is, however, limited research in South Africa in terms of the consequences of father imprisonment. Research in the United States indicates that excessively long imprisonment rates are the leading cause of family poverty, juvenile delinquency, poor academic performance, depression, and illness (Ballard 2015).

There is, however, no reason to suspect the figures would be any different in South Africa if research could be done and findings compared. Thus, this study is to bring research findings that show the consequences of father imprisonment on the family and professional mitigation to such consequences.

Effect of Father Absenteeism in the Family

According to Kimani and Kombo (2010), nuclear families in Africa are culturally viewed as comprising of a father, mother, and children. Fathers are assumed to be in charge of guidance, protection, and provision of material and welfare needs of the family. They are also seen as sources of inspiration. However, many families in Africa have absent fathers because of many reasons. Ogbuia (2008) states that children without fathers in African cultures are more likely to run away from home, live on the street or live with relatives.

Hairston and Addams (2001) argue that the loss of finances when a family has lost a father to prison is greatest for those families who try to maintain the convicted individual as a family member. The study by Denison et al. (2005) further revealed high levels of financial stress following the incarceration of a male family member. This financial impact was associated with higher levels of somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, symptoms of social dysfunction and severe depression. Griffin (1998) found that father absence not only hinders children's ability to make sound decisions; it also triggers negative reactions as opposed to positive ones. He says such conditions cause children to live their lives with fear and loss.

The family is usually the major source of basic necessities of life and health, love and tenderness, including adequate food, clean water a place and time for rest, thus a family is responsible for the care and upbringing of all its members (Kimani and Kombo 2010). Ogbuia (2008) furthermore illustrates the impact absent fathering at home; according to the author, it results in lots of emotional, psychological and physical deficiencies in children. The effect of father absence is the absence of male sex role models in single-parent families. In the absence of a male parental model, it is assumed that boys could not acquire strong masculine identities or sex roles and would

not have models or achievement with which to identify (Biller 1993). Large bodies of research pertaining to fatherhood reveal that compared to children raised in two-parent homes, children who grow up without their fathers have significantly worse outcomes, on average, on almost every measure of well-being (Horn 2002). Horn (2002) states that fathers make unique and irreplaceable contributions to the lives of their children; unique, according to him, means that they provide something different from mothers and are not just mommy substitutes. Irreplaceable means that when they are absent, the family suffers. Table 1 shows the percentage of children with absent living fathers by race in South Africa from 1996-2010. The researchers observed that the effect of father absenteeism in the family as reflected in Table 1 negatively affect the growth and development of children. In addition, it contributes to several immoralities in the society.

Coping Mechanisms in the Absence of the Father

A study in Ghana by Ofori-Dua et al. (2015) examined the coping mechanisms of the remaining spouses and children with social, psychological and financial problems resulting from incarceration and the social support systems existing for the benefit of families of the incarcerated. The study was done to examine the unintended consequences of imprisonment on 25 families of incarcerated men. The results of the study indicated that the incarceration of a family member has an impact on the families of the incarcerated. It was revealed that incarceration of family members led to social stigma of the spouses and children, reduction in family fortunes, emotional and psychological trauma, infidelity and family breakdown. Spouses and their children resorted to prayers from churches and pastors to cope with the situation, moving from their residences, relocating to cheaper and affordable accommodation and reducing their expenditure and luxury in order to survive, owing to unavailability of social support systems except temporary financial assistance from friends, close relatives and religious organizations (Ofori-Dua et al. 2015).

The study, therefore, made recommendations based on the results that stakeholders in the social service sector as well as the prison system

Table 1: Percentage of children with absent living fathers by race in South Africa from 1996-2010

<i>Race</i>	<i>Presence</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>
African	Deceased father	10.0	12.8	18.4	18.1
	Absent father	45.5	50.2	51.5	50.6
	Father present	44.5	50.2	51.5	31.3
Coloured	Deceased father	7.3	7.4	6.1	7.1
	Absent father	34.3	37.2	40.8	38.7
	Father present	58.4	55.4	53.1	54.2
Indian	Deceased father	4.8	5.0	2.4	3.6
	Absent father	16.6	8.4	12.2	13.4
	Father present	78.6	86.6	85.4	83.0
White	Deceased father	3.4	2.4	1.7	2.3
	Absent father	12.8	10.9	15.0	16.9
	Father present	83.8	86.7	83.3	80.0
Total	Absent Father	41.6	45.8	48.0	47.4
	Present Father	49.2	38.7	35.7	35.5

Source: Department of Social Development (2016:24)

should make professional counselling services available to families of the incarcerated to enhance their coping mechanisms. Economic problems are major challenges facing families of incarcerated persons. Prison authorities should enhance the ability of inmates to work while in prison so that they could remain economically active and remit their families at home (Ofori-Dua et al. 2015). According to Parke and Clarke-Stewart (2003), fathers' imprisonment leads to shifts in family structures and caregiver arrangements and responsibilities. It is revealed that a child's positive adjustment to the father's incarceration has been associated with the remaining caregiver's personal and familial coping resources, which include the degree of family cohesion before incarceration and their ties to support networks. The remaining caregiver's ability to cope with such changes and avoid depression has an indirect effect on the children. Lowenstein in 1984 identified successful coping strategies by the caregivers that included the development of independence and self-sufficiency, the ability to withstand psychological pressures, and the facility to maintain and develop new social relations. It is suggested that these characteristics have a greater impact on the family than the separation itself although other authors emphasise that it is difficult for families to develop such qualities alone (Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003).

Parke and Clarke-Stewart (2003) also revealed that recent reports by several authors outlined a need to develop health and support services to

assist the families of prisoners in their transition when their family member is incarcerated. They also reported that recent the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders conducted a study into the needs of families of prisoners. Their study advocated the need for interventions aimed at minimising the negative effects which impact on families, and the need to develop comprehensive services that are a range of community based support services that can respond to the complex and varied needs of children and families of prisoners (Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003). According to Losel (2012), research from several authors agrees that partners and children of prisoners may also experience secondary stigma and shame in relation to the imprisonment. Losing friends was a common outcome for family members of serious offenders. Stigma and bullying at school might also affect children of prisoners, both during and after the imprisonment. Most of the previous studies have addressed separately the experience of the imprisoned father or of the mother. Very few included the perspective of both partners in the relationship. Richards et al. (1994) carried out a longitudinal study that interviewed fathers and some of their children's caregivers during imprisonment and conducted follow-up interviews with the released prisoners only.

It is argued that feelings of shame and the experience of stigmatization are most evident when family members visit correctional institutions. Family members often report experiencing disrespect, hostility and humiliation upon visiting their

incarcerated family members. They are often made to wait for hours without any indication when, or even if, they will be allowed into the visiting centre. Upon entry, they are subject to extensive security clearance procedures, which can be especially traumatizing to young children (Losel 2012). Codd (2008) provides an example in which a young girl witnessed her doll's head being torn off by a corrections officer checking for contraband.

Social Work Intervention Strategies in Families with Absent Fathers

Eastin (2003) states that a father figure represents any male, but for the purposes of this study, a father figure represents a father in the family and does not include an uncle, grandfather, cousin or step-father. Considerable research has been done on the crisis of single parent homes and discussion that families suffer because one or both parents are frequently absent (Ogbuia 2008). According to the Department of Social Development, which is responsible for the welfare of the citizens in the country, a family is universally viewed as one of the essential sectors without which any society can function. It is the seat for the first integration of individuals into social life and the source of emotional, material and instrumental support for its members. In the family, each generation is replaced by the next, such that children are born, socialised and cared for until they attain independence. Stable and strong families are the heart of societies. It is also within a family environment that an individual's physical, emotional and psychological development occurs and individuals learn unconditional love, understand right and wrong, gain empathy, respect and self-regulation. Such qualities enable the individual to engage positively at school at work and in society as a whole. Therefore, the absence of a stable, nurturing family environment has a profoundly damaging impact on the behaviour of the individual and to the society as well (Department of Social Development 2012).

Van Breda (2001) state that research on mediating influence of social support for specific stressor events has emphasized the role of social support in mitigating against the effects of stressors, thereby contributing to a family's resilience. Research has also emphasized the importance of social support in promoting recovery from stress

or crisis experienced in the family as a result of life changes, thereby contributing to the family's adaptive power. According to Coyle (2006), social workers have long advocated the importance of interventions with families. Work with families that have experienced adverse events or risks and attempt to identify family processes that ameliorate those risks. The results of an explorative study on the nature of family resilience supported the resilience family model for Social Workers to intervene. In the results, the model describes the interaction of risks, protective factors and outcomes in at-risk families. Conceptualizing family functioning as a protective factor suggests a mechanism that leads to resilience, while family functioning as an outcome identifies resilience without describing how it occurred. A family resilience model also showed a promise for enriching social work education about families. It emphasised the interactions between risk, protection, and outcomes, expanding the traditional developmental family perspective (Coyle 2006).

South Africa promotes family Social Work intervention strategies through the implementation policies and services. First, the White Paper for Social Welfare was issued in 1997 for services of Social Workers. The Paper reaffirmed the country's commitment to securing basic welfare and human rights. Its focus is to facilitate the provision of appropriate developmental social welfare services to all South Africans, especially those who are vulnerable and in need. The services include those that are rehabilitative, preventative, developmental and protective on the family and its life cycle involving children, youth and the aged. It outlines strategies to promote family life, strengthens and guides developmental paradigms, implementation of pro-family policies and services in the country (White Paper for Social Welfare 1997). A study on the effects of incarceration and re-entry in the United States support the intervention services made to families because of father absence. It made a conclusion that an ability and motivation to keep trying under the most difficult circumstances that prisoners' families display is for the nation to promote sound reasons to promote and adopt policies which help families carry on with their family obligations and responsibilities. The authors argued that a social investment in a prisoner's family will require the adoption of more positive views of the prisoner's

family and family relationships, better understanding of family needs and societal responses and dedicated attention to changing the prevailing system responses (Hairston and Addams 2015).

Problem Statement

A study by Hairston (1991) found that investigation of any phenomenon which purports to prevent crime or reduce criminal recidivism is mandatory. The claim that prisoners' families, of which there are many, could be resources in enhancing public safety makes understanding of this phenomenon even more compelling. However, little scientific knowledge about prisoners and their families has been collected. The topic has not been popular with corrections researchers as they have generally failed to take into account the fact that prisoners' social networks extend beyond prison walls. Similarly, few family researchers and social services professionals have identified the area as a priority for knowledge building or service delivery. Consequently, it is no surprise to find that few studies have examined the effect of father imprisonment on the family. Therefore this study sought to contribute to a broader understanding of the perspectives of the effects of absent imprisoned fathers on families and their children in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in Eastern Cape.

Shwalb et al. (2013), state that one of the most shameful parts of South Africa's apartheid history is how black family life was ruined by separating fathers from families. Nelson Mandela engorged gender quality and recognized that it is the primary task of fathers to provide for their families but women are becoming co-providers and breadwinners in families because of a father's absence. There is also evidence from the reviewed literature that the absence of a father through imprisonment creates serious economic, emotional and interpersonal problems for families left behind. Such problems create excessive stress on families at the time when the incarcerated father and his family need each other's support which makes the family become the source of social service support because of the father's absence. A father's incarceration has a massive impact on the family, therefore this study examines the impact and the role of social work intervention strategies to mitigate this impact.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Domain

Participants and respondents in this study were drawn from Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in Eastern Cape, South Africa. Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality was established in 2000, towns or cities in the Municipality include Alice, Middle Drift, Fort Beaufort, Hogsback, and Seymour or Balfour. The towns are characterised by a huge number of women headed households with present but absent fathers. The municipality is rural. There are poor socio-economic conditions, a high unemployment rate and limited access to resources. The selected towns are populated by primary Xhosa speaking people.

Raymond Mhlaba Municipality is 140 km North West of East London on road 63 and is approximate 200km North East of Port Elizabeth. The municipality is the second largest local municipality covering 3725 km², and constituting 16 percent of the surface area of the Amathole District (Municipalities of South Africa 2012). There are 35 355 households in the municipality with an average size of 5-6 persons per household. Nearly half of the households (49.5%) are headed by females. In the municipality, there are 27,499 people that are economically active, employed and unemployed but looking for work and of these categories, 48.15 people are unemployed (Statistic South Africa 2011). The above characteristics noting 49.5 percent of households headed by women in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality reveal the need for this study to be embarked on.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to collect the data from the participants. These approaches were chosen for the study because it is viewed as more practical than using either qualitative or quantitative research approach in the sense that the researchers are free to use all the methods possible to address a research problem. Social work officials were purposively chosen from one (1) private and two (2) public social service offices in Alice, Middle Drift and Fort Beaufort. Five (5) social workers were selected from the offices, making a total number of 15 participants. Out of the 80 participants in the study, a sample of 50 respondents were selected and 50 questionnaires were administered to families using multistage sampling and snow-

ball sampling. Families making up a total of 15 were further selected for in-depth interviews using snowball sampling. The data were collected using both open-ended questions. Sensitive questions were avoided because it may be difficult for respondents to attempt and to avoid false information. Therefore, the questionnaire contained information like age, gender, as well as the educational status, which forms a part of the demographic information. The quantitative data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Biographic Characteristics of the Interviews Conducted with Family Members

Table 2 presents the biographic information collected from qualitative interviews with families, which covers gender, age, marital status, Municipal area, the highest level of education, number of family members in the household, household head in the absence of the father, type of housing, and a relationship of the household head with the imprisoned father.

Concerning the biographical characteristics of 15 family interviewees, findings reveal that females constituted the majority in the study as compared to males. Findings also reveal that the majority of the participants in the study were between the ages 41-55 and few were between the ages of 21-25. Many of them were single although a few others were married. The study was conducted in Raymond Mhlba Local Municipality, and data was collected from there major areas; the majority were from Alice, including Fort Beaufort and some were from Middle Drift. Findings regarding participants' levels of education show that many had a secondary level of education, some had a primarily level of study and a few studied up to the tertiary level.

The biographical characteristics of the families section in the study also included the number of people residing in each household. Findings show that the majority of the participants had six members, others had five, and few had three in the household. During interview discussions, participants were asked about the head of the household while the father is imprisoned, and

Table 2: Biographic characteristics of the interviews conducted with family members

Participant's code	Age	Gender	Marital status	Municipality area	Level of educated	Number of family	Head in absence of the father	Type of housing	Relationship to the imprisoned father
FAM 1	36-40	F	Married	Middle drift	Secondary	3	Wife	Departmental house	Husband
FAM 2	41-55+	F	Married	Alice	Primary	3	Mother	Mud house	Son
FAM 3	36-40	F	Single	Alice	Secondary	3	Daughter	Mud house	Father
FAM 4	21-25	F	Single	Alice	Secondary	4	Mother	Mud house	Brother
FAM 5	41-55	F	Married	Alice	Secondary	6	Sister	Mud house	Brother
FAM 6	41-55	F	Single	Fort Beaufort	Primary	6	Wife	Mud house	Son-in-law
FAM 7	41-55	F	Married	Fort Beaufort	Primary	5	Wife	Deptental house	Son in law
FAM 8	41-36	F	Single	Middle drift	Tertiary	5	Cousin brother	Departmental house	Cousin brother
FAM 9	41-55	F	Married	Fort Beaufort	Secondary	4	Wife	Departmental house	Neighbour
FAM 10	21-25	M	Single	Middle drift	Secondary	5	Son	Mud house	Father
FAM 11	41-55	F	Single	Middle drift	Primary	6	Mother	Departmental house	Son
FAM 12	36-40	F	Married	Alice	Primary	6	Wife	Mud house	Husband
FAM 13	36-40	M	Married	Alice	Secondary	6	Son	Mud house	Father
FAM 14	41-55	F	Married	Alice	Secondary	4	Wife	Mud house	Niece
FAM 15	41-55+	F	Single	Alice	Secondary	6	Wife	Mud house	Son-in-law

the majority said it was the wife of the father in prison and mother, few others said it was the son, daughter, sister and cousin brother. Moreover, they were asked about the type of housing they occupied; many revealed that they live in emergency houses, and a few mentioned departmental houses. Finally, the demographic characteristics indicate the relationship of the participants with the imprisoned father; results show that the majority had a husband, father, son, and son-in-law in prison. Some mentioned the father in prison are a brother, niece, cousin brother and a neighbour.

Biographical Characteristics of Social Work Participants

Table 3 shows the biographic information of social workers which covers gender, age, marital status, the highest level of education, number of years of practical experience and area of specialization.

Regarding the biographic characteristics of the participants, five (5) social workers from private and ten (10) from the public sectors took part in the in-depth interviews. Concerning the gender of the participants, females were more than males in the study. Their ages ranged from 25 to 54; however, those with a dominating age were 40 years and older. The study results show that many of the participants included in the study were single while few were married. The educational level of participants showed that the majority of participants had a Bachelor's degree in social

work and few had Master's degrees. Findings in the study concerning the years of practice reveal that some participants have been in practice starting from two years up to ten years and above; however, social workers with four years in practice dominated. Results further show that social workers who took part in the study were from different areas of specialisation and the majority fell under generic social work practice. Some were from children and family welfare services, and the minority came from service managers and crime prevention and support.

Biographical Characteristics from Family Who Filled the Questionnaires

The biographic characteristic of respondents who filled the questionnaire was sought from 50 families. The characteristics are made up of gender, age, marital status, the major area of the municipality, education qualification, household size, household head, type of housing, the relationship between the imprisoned father and the respondent. Females constituted the majority (94%) of the respondents while males made up only six percent of the respondents. Regarding racial distribution, 88 percent of the respondents in the study were blacks and only 12 percent were coloured.

Age of Respondent

The finding indicates that 52 percent of the respondents which formed the largest compo-

Table 3: Biographical characteristics of the interviews conducted with social workers

<i>Participant's code</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age group</i>	<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Level of education</i>	<i>Years of practice</i>	<i>Specialization</i>
SWK1	M	54	Married	BSW	5 years	Generic social work
SWK2	M	25	Single	MSW	5 years	Generic social work
SWK3	M	35	Married	MSW	9 years	Service manager
SWK4	F	29	Single	BSW	4 years	Generic social work
SWK5	F	47	Single	BSW	8 years	Children and families
SWK6	F	41	Single	BSW	+10 years	Children and families
SWK7	F	42	Single	BSW	6 years	Generic social work
SWK8	M	36	Married	BSW	4 years	Generic social work
SWK9	F	39	Married	BSW	+10 years	Generic social work
SWK10	F	34	Single	BSW	4 years	Generic social work
SWK11	F	40	Married	BSW	4 years	Child and family welfare
SWK12	M	40	Married	BSW	2 years	Child and family welfare
SWK13	F	39	Single	BSW	6 years	Child and family welfare
SWK14	F	42	Married	BSW	9 years	Service manager
SWK15	F	47	Single	BSW	7 years	Child and family welfare

ment of the household heads of the study were between the ages of 56-70, 22 percent were between the ages of 41-55 years, 14 percent were between the ages of 36-40 years, eight percent were between ages of 26-35 years and four percent constitutes the least number of heads of household while the father is imprisoned were between ages of 21-25 years.

Marital Status of Respondents

It is clear from the findings of the study that 50 percent of the respondents were married. However, the 50 constituted traditional marriage and marriage in the court of law followed by 44 percent of single respondents and six percent (6%) of respondent’s cohabitation.

Major Areas of the Municipality

The finding shows that respondents were selected from three major areas of Raymond Mhlaba’s local Municipality, 42 percent of the respondents came from Alice; 34 percent from Fort Beaufort and 24 percent were from the Middle drift area.

Educational Qualification of Respondents

The finding reveals that the majority of 48 percent of respondents had completed secondary education, followed by 28 percent of respondents who completed primary school; 16 percent did not complete primary school. Lastly, the least number of respondents with eight percent (8%) had completed tertiary education. Socio-demographic characteristics were sought by social workers. The purposes of the interviews were to solicit information on how the incarceration had affected families and available social work interventions to mitigate the effect. Fifteen (15) social workers from private and public sectors took part in the in-depth interviews. Concerning genders of the participants, females were more than males in the study. Their ages ranged from 25 to 54, however, those with a dominating age were 40 years and above. While others were married some were single. Concerning the level of education, the majority had a bachelor’s degree while some had a master’s degree. With regards to their level of practice, the majority have been in to practice

for four years, and some were between two years up to ten. Social workers who participated in the study were from different areas of specialization with the majority from generic social work, child and family welfare. Few were from offender care, criminal justice, adult diversion programs, crime prevention, and support. The minority were service managers.

Effect of Father’s Imprisonment on the Family

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the effect of father’s imprisonment on the family. Regarding the effects of the father’s absence on the family, Table 4 shows that that 58 percent of the respondents indicated financial constraints on the family, 10 percent were social and behavioural problems from children. Twenty percent of the respondents revealed loss of a spouse, husband and father figure. Ten percent mentioned that crimes committed by the father caused inequality among family members, followed by the least number of two percent were affected by social stigma in the community and other issues/concerns. From the qualitative results, one of the social workers had this to say *“Families with fathers imprison have entered our offices many times to plea for financial assistance. Most of the time it’s whereby the mother also passed on and children are under the care of extended family members. The social worker is to assess the background of the family in order to intervene, and then interact with other stakeholders at facility prison where the father is incarcerated.”*

From the majority of respondents, findings show that children display behavioural problems during the father’s imprisonment.

Table 4: Effects of father imprisonment on the family

<i>Effects of a father’s absence on the family</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Financial constraint	29	58
Social and behavioural problems of children	5	10
Loss of a spouse, husband, child care, and parenting	10	20
Inequality	5	10
Social stigma and other problems	1	2
Total	50	100

The respondents were therefore asked to describe the behaviours. Table 5 illustrates that 68 percent of the respondent's views of the different forms of negative behaviours manifested by children within the household. Only 10 percent of the respondents made it known that the children had abused certain substances. This was followed by eight percent (8%) who said children were staying out late. Furthermore, the table shows that six percent were involved in all the anti-behaviours. Four percent of the children committed theft crimes, followed by the least number made up of two percent who quit school and do not follow house rules.

Table 5: Behavioural problems displayed by children

Type of behavioural problems displayed by children	Frequency	Percentage
Substance use	5	10
Stealing	2	4
Staying out late	4	8
Quit school	1	2
Do not obey house rules	1	2
All of the above	3	6
Others	33	66
Total	50	100

Qualitative results also revealed that the father's absence led to the loss of child care and changes in the role of the remaining spouse. Families further argued that the longer the sentence the more the family is separated. Social work professional on the other had also revealed that one of the toughest cases for offenders and their families is to intervene when the father is being released from prison, a 55-year-old female had to say "I consulted social service because ever since my son in law went to prison, my daughter has been abusing alcohol. She is misusing the child support grant money with other men. She has neglected the children. I am the process of getting custody for the children; they lived an unfair condition for their upbringing."

Coping Strategies Adopted in the Absence of the Father Due to Incarceration

In the study, one of the objectives was to identify family coping strategies adopted in the

absence of the father due to incarceration. The coping strategies identified were household financial support from the government, family supports and other coping mechanisms adopted by the family in the father's absence as reflected in Table 6. However, before proceeding to the coping strategies, respondents were asked whether the father in prison was providing towards the family. The majority of the respondents (86%) indicated that the father was the provider in the family. Only 14 percent indicated that the father was not the provider of the family.

According to Table 6, the majority of the households (58%) received financial benefits from the government as a source of income. Twenty-four percent of the respondents had others sources of financial support including their own businesses, selling products. Twelve percent of the household heads were employed part time, followed by six percent of household heads who were employed fulltime.

Table 6: Household financial support

Household financial support	Frequency	Percentage
Head of the household is employed part-time	6	12
Head of the household is employed a full time	3	6
The family receives financial benefits from the government	29	58
Other sources of financial support	12	24
Total	50	100

In terms of household support, respondents were further asked to describe family support in the household. Table 7 illustrates the responses of the respondents. It is shown that 68 percent of

Table 7: Extended family support

Source of extended family support	Frequency	Percentage
Parents	34	68
Relatives	6	12
Older children	1	2
In-laws	1	2
Religious and spiritual activities	2	4
Others	6	12
Total	50	100

family support came from parents; followed by 12 percent from relatives and others, 12 percent from the in-laws. Finally, a small number made up of two percent came from church members.

Table 7: Extended family support

<i>Source of extended family support</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Parents	34	68
Relatives	6	12
Older children	1	2
In-laws	1	2
Religious and spiritual activities	2	4
Others	6	12
Total	50	100

Other Coping Mechanisms Adopted by the Family

Since the objective was to identify family coping strategies in adapting to absent of fatherhood due to incarceration. The finding shows that 60 percent of the respondents had other forms of coping strategies, followed by 26 percent of those who consulted social work officials for psychosocial services. Finally, 14 percent were involved in the use of substances as a coping mechanism. One of the social work participants mentioned that, *“Families with fathers in prison have economic needs that are not met. When they come to our offices they report that ever since the father was in prison they depended on their parents financially and they are struggling to continue providing.”*

Family’s Experience about the Fathers’ Absenteeism

Qualitative results further reveal that the absence of the father led to the family’s experience of different reactions and emotions as they experience a very difficult situation. While others were provided assistance and searching for help, others resorted to substance use. They mentioned that they thought substance use will just be a destruction of the matter, but it was a continuous everyday behaviour that led to abuse. One of the 35-year-old participants said, *“I used substances after my father was incarcerated and my mother died I cannot really specifically say I do so to*

make the problem disappeared. All I know that I started then I and never stopped.”

Social Work Intervention Strategies in Mitigating the Impact of a Father’s Absence on the Family

For the purposes of the study, one of the objectives was to examine the social work intervention strategies in mitigating the effects of a father’s absence on the family. Respondents were therefore asked if they have received psychosocial support from social workers and the significance of the role of social work interventions. The finding shows that 44 percent of respondents received food parcels from social workers followed by 18 percent of those who said there were referred to other stakeholders, and social grant relief. Twelve percent indicated other mechanisms of mitigating the effect of absence father on the family while eight percent maintained that they received social grants from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) through the department of social development.

Qualitative results through interviews with families and social workers revealed that the majority of the participants, through interacting with government stakeholders such as social workers in private and public sectors, were entitled to an assessment, counselling, family conferencing, links, and referrals, including offender re-integration forms of psychosocial support interventions. However, there were those family interviewees who revealed that they were not entitled to these forms of services because of a lack of knowledge and awareness. Findings further reveal that services were received by families consulted by the social work officials through interacting with stakeholders with regards to interventions provided to offenders in prison.

Assessment

Concerning assessment, it emerged from the majority of participants during the interviews that one of the services provided by social workers was to assess the family coping circumstances while the father is in prison. The majority of the participants who were fortunate to receive the services indicated that the importance of support for families of father imprisonments cannot be over-

emphasised for families. One of the participants said:

Even though the process takes time to be completed, I would definitely agree that if it was not for social workers, I would still be worried about my grandchildren's unhealthy living conditions with their mother. (FAM15)

The view was also echoed by another participant who said the following:

There is a program called non-custodial imprisonment whereby as social workers, we assess if the father was the provider of the family and whether or not he committed a less serious crime. Because of the family background, the father is allowed to serve the sentence outside prison, but for serious offences, we find measures in order to assist the family members left behind. (SWK4)

Family and Individual Counselling

From the majority of the findings concerning counselling services for families, most felt that this is what they all deserve after the emotional state they went through. Participants who were not entitled to such services felt the need for counselling services provided by social workers. One of the participants expressed herself as follows:

I believe that counselling is what I needed after my father's incarceration. Social work consultations assisted my life for the better. (FAM10)

One of the participants who was not entitled to social services said:

My family needs counselling at this present moment because the father in prison is a family member, and the victim is also a family member. We love both of these people and cannot do anything on our own. We are experiencing what we call a family breakdown. (FAM11)

One of the social worker's interviewee also revealed that:

Counselling is one of our support programs for families of imprisoned fathers through incarcerated offenders. As we deal with offenders, we implement a holistic approach and a systems approach; we recognise the dysfunction of a missing family member who is used to be there. (SWK6)

Family Conferencing

According to the findings, participants who were interviewed revealed great concerns for a

family breakdown among families of imprisoned fathers. Findings revealed that an overwhelming majority of cases dealt with regarded to family breakdown after father imprisonment. Participants who did not have access to such services remarked on how attention is needed among their own families with regards to social services. One of them remarked below:

We are no longer interacting with our extended family members ever since my father's imprisonment. (FAM3)

Also concerning family conferencing, one social worker mentioned that:

Our programs are family strengthening programs. We have provided family conferencing for many families impacted by fathers' imprisonment to strengthen the family left behind. We ensured that these families find strength behind their situation in order to carry on with life as fully functioning families. (SWK11).

Stakeholders' Interaction

The study findings also show the services provided by stakeholders interacting. However, participants revealed dissatisfaction with regards to these services, saying that there is more that is needed to be done with regards to the accessibility of services to participants of imprisoned fathers. Concerning the interaction of stakeholders, some of the social workers had this to say:

As social workers working at the Department of Social Development, we also interact with other social workers working in prison with regards to the permanent placement of children of a father that went to prison and the mother who passed away. (SWK7)

Since we provide a holistic approach when working with families, we also take into consideration the need to involve other stakeholders for support concerning a presentable problem. However, we are still concerned about the lack of resources provided by the government in order for all people to have access to services. (SWK2)

The South African government must develop policies to assist families of imprisoned fathers. Furthermore, the capacity of social workers to work even closer to the rural area must be improved. There is still more to be done for dysfunctional families. (SWK3)

Links and Referrals

Among participants who were interviewed, findings indicate that the majority were happy and satisfied with the services they have received from social workers with regards to links and referrals. Findings further show links and referrals were for families to receive financial benefits from the government because of their economic financial circumstances due to the father’s incarceration. One of the family participants said:

My children were not receiving the child support grant because their father was working for the government, but I have been told that he will no longer receive the money, and I was referred by social workers to apply for a child support grant. (FAM1)

Some of the interviewed social workers had this to say:

The majority of cases reported to our offices are concerning financial assistance; we, therefore, link and refer clients to other offices. In most cases, we have provided families with foster care, child support grant, and other emergency social grants. (SWK12)

We refer most of the cases of families with imprisoned fathers to other social service practitioners such as psychologists and social security offices for more assistance. However, it depends on the client’s presenting problem. (SWK13)

Offender Re-integration

Concerning social work interventions, the majority of the results from the interviewed participants show that offender re-integration was the main intervention that assisted the majority of families affected by father imprisonment. Participants who were fortunate to have access to social services believed in their minds that this was the only measure taken by social work officials providing services for families with fathers in prison.

I have heard that some of the families have been visited by social workers in their houses after the father’s imprisonment. I am also still waiting up until today. I also know that they have been to my husband’s victim’s house but not my house. (FAM12)

A concerned participant mentioned that:
In South Africa, it’s mostly the Department of Correctional Services that deals with families of imprisoned fathers after the sentencing of the offence. I would recommend that the government should not only focus on this process. The court should also consider the circumstance of all the families left behind to be provided social service without even the need to consult the offender first. (SWK5)

Based on the knowledge of families of imprisoned fathers have on social work services, respondents were then asked to measure if the role of social work services eased the impact of father imprisonment. The results are shown in Table 8. It is revealed that 64 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, followed by 24 percent agreed, 10 percent disagree and, finally, two percent were not sure about services provided by social workers.

Table 8: The extent of the role of social work interventions in easing the impact of father absent

Family members	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	32	64
Agree	12	24
Disagree	5	10
Others	1	2
Total	50	100

DISCUSSION

The findings of this paper are corroborated by the study of Hairston (2015) who stated that a prisoner’s family relationship and social networks outside prison are emerging as a major correction and social service issue. More so there is a little knowledge or understanding of prisoner’s family characteristics or relationship and there is a need for the development of policy and programs towards family ties during parent imprisonment.

This is also upheld by recent results by McGillivray (2016: 3) review paper on the progress towards increasing awareness and support of Prisoners’ Families found that prison populations have drastically increased in many countries over recent years, and as a consequence, so too the number of families and children affected by imprisonment. Families often suffer multiple hardships as a result of a family member being sent to prison. In addition to the direct fragmentary im-

pact of imprisonment, there are numerous other dire implications for families where one of their members is sent to prison, including emotional problems; financial hardship; housing issues; harm to children; loneliness; social stigma; and practical difficulties of separation (McGillivray 2016). Losel (2012: 7), on risk and protective factors in the resettlement of imprisoned father with their family revealed that studies on the experiences of prisoners' families have only recently begun to accumulate. This was found to be due to challenges in identifying and accessing prisoners and their families for research, as well as social and cultural perceptions about what is acceptable and not to the public. Thus the study concluded that a stronger focus on prisoners and their families is important for several reasons. The conclusion was made on bases that, parental imprisonment may disrupt existing marital and family relationships and have negative outcomes for children (Mills and Codd 2008; Savolainen 2009). The findings in this study are also supported by a study done by (Ofori-Dua et al. 2015) who found that prison population has increased rapidly in the last three decades' with ten people worldwide incarcerated. This extraordinary increase in the number of individuals incarcerated has caused tremendous implications for the state and national governments dealing with global decline and range of economic, social and political challenges. He further speculates that with these challenges globally human beings do not live isolation. They live in an array of interdependent relationships and networking. Thus, incarceration affects the individual's concerned, their families and other close associates who are seen as passive victims (Ofori-Dua et al. 2015).

This study was guided by the resilience theory. The resilience theory is a strength-based theory in social work which is used as an effective method for social work practice in risk populations, in particular, through the identification of risk and protective factors (Powell 2014). The theory places emphasis on the individual and his or her response to the environment, whether successful or unsuccessful, being greatly influenced by a host of risk and protective factors (Powell 2014). This theory is based on the definition of resilience, which means the capacity to adapt and rebound from crisis and adversity (Walsh 1996). In relation to this study, findings show that the

majority of families and children, because of father absence due to imprisonment, face immense challenges and social problems that require developmental, preventative and restorative social work interventions in order to be fully functioning resilient individuals. This means that families of imprisoned fathers are going through adversities and seek services to meet their needs as at-risk populations. According to van Breda (2018: 4), Resilience theory consists of three connected components, which are adversity, outcome and mediating factors. He best describes resilience as a process and an outcome (van Breda 2018). In the light of both quantitative and qualitative findings, the father's absence has created negative changes among the family and the father. It was found that spouses and partners had difficulty in maintaining relationships with the fathers in prison.

This study found family coping strategies adopted in the absent of the father due to incarceration. The findings revealed that some of the families resorted to informal support from parents to cope with the father's absence. The evidence provided by this study confirms what other researchers have found such as a study by Moos and Billings (1982) who found that during difficult times or times of transitions, individuals rely on a variety of coping mechanisms and support systems to deal with increased pressure and anxiety from looking within one's spirituality to turning outward to family, friends, or support groups such as one's church. Although the White Paper provides the policy framework for welfare in South Africa to incorporate a developmental focus, the implementation of this is found to be a huge challenge given the agenda for the new democracy (Lombard 2007). Both qualitative and quantitative findings identified father imprisonment as a social problem and as a challenge in the lives of many people in South Africa. The developmental social work service intended to prevent problems by empowering the social functioning of beneficiaries through empowering programmes.

Recent studies on resilience bring an emerging understanding of the relationship between the individual's interaction with the social and psychological ecologies that make resilience more likely. The likelihood that the interactions will promote well-being under adversity depends on the meaningfulness of these opportunities and the qualities of resources provided (Unger 2012). The

findings from the study show that social workers are currently playing and could still play an active role in improving the resilience of the families of imprisoned fathers. However, the study revealed that there is more that is needed to be done on this issue. It is said that intervention and its intensity, more than the individual's trait motivations, accounts for variation in the outcome of adversity. It is said that intervention interacts with risk factors at present to produce a change in most risk populations (Unger 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study identified and analysed the effect of father's imprisonment on the family and social work interventions to mitigate the effect in South Africa. The study, therefore, concludes that information regarding this phenomenon is out there but still minimal especially in rural areas. Also, it revealed that many people have been exposed to the negative effect of father's absence because of imprisonment and they have resorted to social work services, however only a few were well informed about the availability of interventions to mitigate the severity of father absence. Therefore, it can be concluded that people in South Africa need knowledge, awareness, and resources with regards to the effect of father absence and social service interventions. Furthermore, there is more work that needs to be done on this topic. Even though this study was not able to generalise the entire South African families of imprisoned fathers, Women and children of imprisoned fathers are one of the vulnerably and marginalise population and they need social work service. Policy makers should consider the needs of families of imprisoned fathers so that they can be strengthened and resilient individuals. Social workers need to be equipped with more resources, including training to practice the developmental approach to social welfare. There is also a need for more focused attention on specific programmes to strengthen vulnerable families. If service providers are to provide the most appropriate and effective treatment methods the focus of services providers in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality must be a developmental approach to social welfare principles.

Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy

The study findings on this area call for further development in social work practice on families of imprisoned fathers. The study also recommends policy makers to consider the needs of families affected by fathers' imprisonment to enable social workers to practice the developmental approaches on social welfare. On the basis of the findings and conclusion of the study, implications on social work practice and policy are discussed below.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Social work professionals are attempting to alleviate incarceration's effect on families. The interventions by social workers provided appear to have positive effects on families. However, service providers face the challenge of identifying this population because of a lack of resources. This makes an indication of a strong need for evidenced-based interventions employed by social workers, and the social work practice area on this phenomenon calls for further development. Researchers have determined the impact on the family, and according to findings, this study shows a need for the establishment of more treatment models being analogous to professionals diversifying interventions for dysfunctional families. The focus mainly on the current interventions provided is on generalist approaches whereby service providers have identified interventions that address unique issues; more focused attention on specific programmes is needed. If service providers are to provide the most appropriate and effective treatment methods, the focus of the services provided must be on the developmental approach to social welfare principles.

The Implication of the Findings to Social Work Policy

As social reformers, social workers are committed to working with the marginalised and the poor. They confront the root cause of the problem, modify societal structures and engage in advocating policy and legislative changes that will improve environmental conditions and cre-

ate opportunities. Social welfare in South Africa is committed to delivering services towards developmental approaches. It strives to achieve this social goal by collaborating with individuals, organisations in civil society and private organisations. Accordingly, this study recommends that policy makers should consider disadvantaged families of imprisoned fathers and investigate the role played by social work interventions to mitigate the adversity in South Africa. They should also enable other social service stakeholders to participants and offer assistance towards the alleviation of the dysfunction.

There should be further investigations by the policy makers on the role played by the government in providing resources towards social work services provided for dysfunctional families with imprisoned fathers. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) recognises the right of the child to family care or parental care or to appropriate parental care when removed from the family. Accordingly, it has been found that children from families of imprisoned fathers suffer long lasting damage and sometimes lose both parents due to their father's imprisonment. Social work policies should recognise and support the right to care and parenting of children of imprisoned fathers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Base on the result of the findings of this paper below are the recommendations that will help families with negative impact because of fathers in prison.

- ♦ Serious social service legislative laws and programs based on mitigation of the impact of father absence in South Africa should be established.
- ♦ Social workers, police and the criminal justice system of South Africa should work together in order to provide more sufficient services to better the lives of the imprisoned father's families left behind.
- ♦ More awareness campaigns in rural areas by social services professionals are needed so as educate people about the availability of social services to mitigate the impact of father's imprisonment.
- ♦ The government should take into consideration the matter of lack of resources to pro-

vide social services for dysfunctional troubled families and children.

- ♦ South Africa has good instruments (White Paper for Social Welfare 1997; White Paper on the Family 2013 amongst others), but implementation is rudimentary.
- ♦ Most social workers offer residual services rather than implementing the developmental social welfare approach because of a lack of capacity and skills/knowledge.
- ♦ Despite the adversities, families are still coping (resilience).
- ♦ There is a compelling need for implementing policies that will enable dysfunctional families with fathers to imprison to access adequate psychosocial support services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appreciation goes to the National Institute for Humanities and Social Science Bricks mobility grant and GMRDC, University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus who funded this paper.

REFERENCES

- Ballard C 2015. Opinion Crime and Punishment Don't Add Up. From <<http://za.effectivevmeasure.net/em/>> (Retrieved on 12 November 2019).
- Billier H 1993. *Fathers and Families: Paternal Factors in Child Development*. Westport: Auburn House.
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 2013. Juta's Pocket Statutes (Eds.).12th Edition. South Africa: Juta Law.
- Coyle JP 2006. *An Exploratory Study of the Nature of Family Resilience*. United States of America: Ohio State University College of Social Work.
- Currie I, De Wall J 2005. *The Bill of Rights Handbook*. 5th Edition. Claremont: Juta and Company.
- Denison S, Denise F, Stewart A 2005. Understanding the Experiences and Needs of Family of Prisoners. *Final Report to the Department of Communities*. Griffith: Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Griffith University.
- Department of Social Development 2016. Integrated Service Delivery Model. From <www.socdev.gov.za/> (Retrieved on 11 November 2019).
- Eastin JF 2003. *Impact of Absent Father Figures on Male Subjects and the Correlation to Juvenile Delinquency: Findings and Implications*. PhD Dissertation, Unpublished. United States: The University of North Texas.
- Eddy MM, Thomson-de Boor H, Mphaka K 2013. So we are ATM fathers': A study of absent fathers in Johannesburg. Johannesburg, South Africa: Centre for

- Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg.
- Ellis C, Adams W 2009. Families, Households and Children. From <www.dsd.gov.za.> (Retrieved on 10 November 2019).
- Griffin D 1998. Fatherless Women. From <http://findarticles.com> (Retrieved on 10 November 2019).
- Hairston CF 1991. Family ties during imprisonment: Important to whom and for what? *Journal Sociology and Social Welfare*, 87-104.
- Hairston CF, Addams J 2001. *Prisoners and Families Parenting Issues During Incarceration*. Washington D.C: U.S Department of Health and Human Services.
- Hairston FC, Addams J 2015. *Prisoners, and Families: Parenting Issues during Incarceration*. PhD Dissertation, Unpublished. Illinois: University of Illinois.
- Horn WF 2002. *Father Facts*. Washington. DC: National Fatherhood Initiative.
- Jeremy T, Waul M 2003. *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Re-entry on Children, Families, and Communities*. Washington: The Urban Institute Press.
- Kimani E, Kombo K 2010. Challenge facing nuclear families with absent fathers in Gatundu North District, Central Kenya. *The African Symposium: An Online Journal of the Africa Educational Research Network*, 10: 11-22.
- Lamb M 2000. The history of research on father involvement: An overview. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29: 23-42.
- Lombard A 2007. The impact of social welfare polices on social development in South Africa: An NGO perspective. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 43(4): 295-316.
- Losel F 2012. *Risk and Protective Factors in the Resettlement of Imprisoned Fathers with Their Families*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lowenstein A 1984. Coping with stress: The case of prisoners' wives. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 46: 699-708.
- McGillivray C 2016. Rendering Them Visible: A Review of Progress towards Increasing Awareness and Support of Prisoners' Families. From <https://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/content/uploads/2017/12/Rendering-Them-Visible-FINAL.pdf> (Retrieved on 15 July 2019).
- Mills A, Codd H 2008. Prisoners' families and offender management: Mobilizing social capital. *Probation Journal*, 55: 9-24.
- Moos RH, Billings AG 1982. Conceptualizing and measuring coping resources and processes. In: L Goldberg, S Breznitz (Eds.): *A Hand Book of Tress: Theoretical and Clinical Aspects*. New York: Free Press, pp. 212-230.
- Municipalities of South Africa 2012. Nkonkobe Local Municipality: Overview. From <https://municipalities.co.za/overview/1009/nkonkobe-local-municipality> (Retrieved on 28 September 2016).
- Ofori-Dua K, Akuoko K, de Paul Kanwetuu V 2015. Unanticipated consequences of imprisonment on families of prison inmates of Kumasi Central Prison of Ghana. *International Journal of Social Science Studies*, 3(3): 185-196.
- Ogboia C 2008. Absent Fathers: It's Impact on the Family. From <http://www.onlinenigeria.com/articles/> (Retrieved on 10 November 2019).
- Parke RD, Clarke-Stewart KA 2003. The effects of parental incarceration on children: Perspectives, promises, and policies. In: J Travis, M Waul (Eds.): *Prisoners Once Removed*. Washington DC: The Urban Institute Press, pp. 189-232.
- Parliamentary Liaison Office 2014. Prison and Family: Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference. From <http://www.cplo.org.za/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/07/BP-386-Prison-and-the-Family-July-2015.pdf> (Retrieved on 12 November 2019).
- Patrick LC 2006. *Boys' Experiences of an Absent Father: Gestalt Therapeutic Association*. MA Thesis, Unpublished. Pretoria. University of South Africa
- Powell HD 2014. On Resilience Theory: A Statement Based Method of Social Work Practice. From <https://www.westeastinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Hughlett-O.pdf> (Retrieved on 11 November 2019).
- Republic of South Africa- *White Paper for Social Welfare* 1997. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Ritcher L, Desmond C, Hosegood C, Madhavan S, Makwane M, Makusha T, Morrell R, Swartz S 2012. Fathers and the Other Men in the Lives of Children and Families. *A Paper Presented at the Strategies to Overcome Poverty and Inequality Conference* held at the University of Cape Town, 3-7 September 2012.
- Savolainen J 2009. Work, family and criminal desistance: Adult social bonds in a Nordic welfare state. *British Journal of Criminology*, 49: 285-304.
- Shwalb DW, Shwalb BJ, Lamb ME (Eds.) 2013. *Fathers in Cultural Context*. USA: Routledge.
- Singh V 2016. A Review of Legislation Pertaining to Children With Particular Emphasis on Programmes Offered to Children Awaiting Trial at Secure Centres in South Africa. From <www.Scielo.org.za> (Retrieved on 10 November 2019).
- Statistic South Africa 2011. The South African Statistics 2011. From <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publicatio/SAStatistics/SASStatistics2011.pdf.> (Retrieved on 10 November 2019).
- Unger M 2012. *The Social Ecology of Resilience: A Handbook of Theory and Practice*. New York: Springer Science Business Media.
- van Breda AD 2001. *Resilience Theory: A Literature Review with Special Chapters on the Deployment of Resilience in the Military*. South Africa: South African Military Health Service, Military Psychological Institute, Social Work Research and Development.
- van Breda AD 2018. A critical review of resilience theory and its relevance for social work. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 54(1): 1-18.
- Walsh F 1996. The concept of family resilience: Crisis and challenge. *A Family Process*, 35: 261-281.

Paper received for publication in October, 2019
Paper accepted for publication in November, 2019