SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY WOMEN AND ITS EFFECTS ON FAMILY COHESION IN RURAL VILLAGES IN THE NKONKOBE MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE

By

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Prudence Muusha hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made with full references in the text and it has not previously been submitted to any university or institution of higher learning for any qualification or certificate.

Signed _____

Date   _____

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1. CHAPTER 1 : GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

There is a paucity of research in the area of women abusing substances and the effects thereof on family cohesion. Lameman (2008:83) has claimed that "women substance abuse is surrounded by secrecy owing to the societal position and history of women in South Africa and worldwide". Because women abuse substances in private it is reasonable to assume that there is little known on the effects of such abuse on especially the family and society at large. Mammam (2006:55) points out that "families continue to evolve like any other system as a way of adapting to the environment and responding to the changes around it". Families continue to survive because of the attractiveness the family has to its members. Studies on family cohesion such as by Grisham and Adele (2008) reflect some of the most important reflectors of family cohesion as respect, sharing values and beliefs, emotional support, trust, intimacy and the ability to confide in each other. The survival of the family therefore rests on cohesion. Since a family is a unit there are different roles played by each member and in rural settings where roles, status and perceptions in terms of gender are slow to change, the question was how substance abuse by a woman would possibly affect family cohesion. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2011 World Drug Report indicated that South Africa is a major African hub for certain drugs such as heroin and cannabis (marijuana), as well as a major producer of others, including methamphetamines. Large numbers of South African citizens also abuse drugs and alcohol, and the country has one of the world's highest alcohol consumption levels per drinker. Possibly the greatest negative effect of drug and alcohol

abuse is that it slows down or stops emotional and psychological development, preventing people from reaching their full potential, (UNODC, 2011). Added to this is the burden placed on society by health care and criminal justice costs related to substance abuse, as well as the costs associated with decreased productivity in the workplace, increased HIV transmission, domestic violence, injury and death (UNODC, 2011).

Women have also been under-represented in researches of substance abuse. According to Plant (2000:265) talks of and apprehension about women's drinking have frequently been characterized by "distortion, myth, prejudice and stereotyping". According to Al-Otaiba, Worden, McCrady and Epstein (2008) the reason for this misrepresentation of women's substance abuse can be found in the disproportion of female participants included in research. Despite the emphasis on the male experience of alcohol dependence, it has been suggested that the problems of females who are dependent on alcohol are gender specific (Lex, 1994; Wilke, 1994). Until relatively recently, several alcohol-related investigations, were based on men and excluded females (Plant, 2000). Earlier research included both men and women but frequently were unsuccessful in studying probable gender dissimilarities in alcohol use, alcohol-related behaviors and incidences (Gefou-Madianou, 1992). In this light, in addition to very little studies on women and substance abuse there are also issues about substance abuse that tend to be gender specific.

Social environments function equally as risk and protective factors for substance use, playing a significant part in the onset of abuse and continuation of substance dependence

as well as setbacks to general functioning and wellbeing. In the instance of rural areas and substance abuse, where the status of women and the role they play in the family is slow in changing, certain perceptions still exist which pose as risk factors for secretive substance use by women (Gefou-Madianou, 1992). Against this backdrop, this study investigated how substance abuse by women impacts on family cohesion particularly in rural areas where perceptions about the status and role of women are still slow in changing.

The study sought to look into the impact that substance abuse by women had on family cohesion. This introductory chapter will concentrate on the statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, literature review, theoretical framework, research design and methodology, ethical considerations and limitations to the study.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The study focuses on substance abuse by women mainly as this is an area that has not received adequate research. Substance abuse by women has cultural and moral implications to women hence it is done secretly. The above statement is substantiated by Rolfe, Orford, & Dalton, (2009) who say women's own accounts with substance use especially alcohol dependence have been less published compared to men. The limitation of such discourses also informs the paucity of resources or access to treatment for women with substance abuse problems (Rolfe et al., 2009). Over the years substance consumption in South Africa has been on the increase. Research has shown that there is

a strong link between drug and alcohol use and HIV transmission. Heavy consumption of alcohol and regular binge drinking by people on anti-retroviral treatment (ART) is linked to lower levels of treatment adherence and treatment efficacy (Rolfe et al., 2009). The negative impact of substance abuse is immense hence raising the question of how family cohesion is affected when substances are being abused by a woman, a figure that is affected by substance abuse genetically in different ways than her male counterpart, a figure that hides its substance abuse habits because of the society's morals and myths associated with substance abuse. It is from this light that the study sought to study substance abuse by women and its effects on family cohesion in the rural villages in the Nkonkobe municipality, in the Eastern Cape.

1.3 Research questions.

➢ What role do women play in promoting family cohesion?

➢ How is family cohesion affected by a woman abusing substances in the family?

➢ What are the circumstances under which family cohesion is affected when a woman abuses substances?

➢ What are the possible solutions to the problem of women abusing substances?

1.4 Purpose of the study

Substance abuse by women in rural areas is an area underserved when it comes to research therefore additional literature will emerge from the findings. The study's purpose was to look into the role played by women in the family hence highlighting the impact women have on the family. The purpose of the study was also to reveal the consequences

to family cohesion when a woman in the family is abusing substances. The study highlighted the pivotal roles played by certain family members enabling a better understanding of the composition of rural families and how they deal with substance abuse by women.

1.5 Objectives of the study

➢ To understand the role played by women in enhancing family cohesion

➢ To find out how family cohesion is affected by a woman abusing substances in the family

➢ To find out under what circumstances family cohesion is affected when a woman within the family abuses substances

➢ To find out what ideas people have on the problem of substance abuse among women and how it may be handled.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study can be very useful in analyzing the trends and dynamics in family relationships especially concerning the way the family functions as a whole. A study such as this one will help other studies reduce the risks and uncertainties as there will be prior studies that would have highlighted areas of concern. The research study may come up with a new angle or idea from which the issue of substance abuse by women in rural areas and the

impact on families may be viewed. [The research may be used to the existing literature on women substance abuse and the impact it has on the family] meaning of enclosed sentence unclear. The research may also provide information that can be used for longitudinal studies which systematically study ever changing institutions like the family, society and the environment.

1.7 Definition of concepts:

The researcher here is defining precisely what is intended by words and phrases which are crucial to the project. The terms key words and key phrases refer to concepts at the core of the study, concepts that are unambiguous so that concepts can be easily understood.

1.7.1 Substance abuse

In this study substance abuse will refer to the excessive use of substances, especially alcohol or a drug that tends to impair one's social functioning.

1.7.2 Women

In this study the term women will refer to women who are spouses or who are the head of the family.

1.7.3 Family

The definition of a family becomes more complex as the dynamics and the family composition changes with time. The term family in this study will refer to a group individuals related by blood, kinship or adoption, sharing responsibilities and specific status. These individuals will be living together cooperating economically and socially.

1.7.4 Cohesion

The operational meaning for cohesion in this study will imply the act or state of sticking, together, the functionality, the close union of the family unit. In search of cohesion in the family the study looked into aspects like respect, emotional bonds of the family members, pride in the family, values and beliefs, willingness to be together spending quality time as a family, duties and roles allocated to the members and how they feel as members of the family. This definition is based on the academic definition from Oxford Online Dictionary, (2011) which sums it up as "the integration of the behavior of different individuals as a result of social bonds attractions or other forces that hold the individuals together as a group or a team over a period of time".

1.7.5 Rural villages

In this study rural villages are areas or communities that are not urbanized, have low population density, far from cities, with little access to modern technology and under resourced.

1.8 Literature review

1.8.1 South Africa and substance abuse

In the South African black culture alcohol and marijuana consumption has been part of black culture and tradition for a long time, occasionally alcohol and marijuana used to mark celebrations and social gatherings in communities (Parry, 2000). Traditionally, drinking did not take place daily. Those who did drink, drank communally and not without a purpose. However, drinking was done in social gatherings and had a traditional role (Parry & Bennets, 1998). South Africa is now considered to be the world's highest rising alcohol fruit beverage market and in 1998 alcohol production had increased by 10% (Parry & Bennetts, 1998).

1.8.2 Women and substance abuse

Much of the knowledge of substance abuse has been gathered from studies conducted with a predominance of male participants (Wilsnack, 1991). Goodwin (1981) found that women are diagnosed as alcohol dependent at an older age; women dependent on alcohol are more likely to have a depressive illness preceding or coinciding with heavy drinking, and women are harder to treat and stay sober for briefer intervals compared to men. Wilsnack and Wilsnack (1997) discovered that women at high risk for substance abuse related problems and for continued abuse have some of the following traits; cohabitation with men when not married, part-time employment, frequent sexual dysfunction and living with others (usually male) who also abuse substances heavily.

1.8.3 Stigma associated with women abusing substances

Public discourses and policies with regards to pregnant women who are dependent on a drug are condemnatory, blaming, and unsympathetic. According to Maddux and Winstead (2005), society tolerates some behavior exhibited by intoxicated men but if women display the same behavior they are viewed as indecent. Blume (1990) asserts that women who are intoxicated are often prone to sexual promiscuity. Similarly, in a study on rape, respondents viewed women responsible for the rape if they were raped while intoxicated (Maddux et.al, 2005). A significant consequence of stigma related to substance use among women is denial of the problem by the person, the family and society (Van Olphen, Eliason, Freudenberg, & Barnes, 2009).

Limited research has been done into substance abuse by women. A report by the United Nations Development Program (1995) confirms that there is less documentation about women as drug users than about male users, and most studies do not focus on women drug users as a distinct group. This information, therefore, validates the need for this study. Pretorius and Naidoo (2009), in their report on women and substance abuse reported that substance abuse produces different physiological, psychological, and social problems in women than it does in men.

1.8.4 Theoretical framework

1.8.4.1 Family Systems Theory

The family systems theory suggests that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family, as the family is an emotional unit (Genopro, 2010). Families are systems of interconnected and interdependent individuals, none of whom can be understood in isolation from the system. According to the theory, a family is a system in which each member has a role to play and rules to respect. Members of the system are expected to respond to each other in a certain way according to their role, which is determined by relationship agreements. Within the boundaries of the system, patterns develop as certain family members' behavior is caused by and causes other family members' behaviors in predictable ways. Maintaining the same pattern of behaviors within a system may lead to balance in the family system, but also to dysfunction. The theory proposes that everyone in the family has a role to play and the roles have an impact on the whole. Since the family members have different roles to play according to his theory those different roles family members play will be looked at especially the role of women abusing substances. Each role in the family contributes cohesion to the whole and is important, meaning that any deviation from the set boundaries or malfunction in role performance may have dire consequences to the whole family.

1.8.4.2 Role theory

The role theory explains people's behavior in addressing how the social environment influences behavior by creating various roles to be filled. Roles therefore refer to ways in which people behave in relation to a socially defined position or set of expectations. The theory assumes the following propositions about social behavior: The division of labor in society takes the form of the interaction among heterogeneous specialized positions that we call roles Social roles include appropriate and permitted forms of behavior, guided by social norms, which are commonly known and hence determine expectations. Roles are occupied by individuals, who are called actors. When individuals approve of a social role, that is, they consider the role legitimate and constructive; they will incur costs to conform to role norms, and will also incur costs to punish those who violate role norms (Mead, 1934). Changed conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change. This may be applied in a family situation when a family member deviates from a role resulting in changes in relationships or the way the family relates to each other.

By addressing some of the structures provided by society, role theory also serves as a means of understanding the person in environment concept, by conceptualizing the way in which relationships may establish patterns of behavior and expectations (Parrish, 2010). The behaviors and expectations may contribute to an allocated status such as a wife, drug user, thief, or troublemaker. Different roles also carry with them different sanctions or level

of approval in different settings, for example drinking alcohol may be a rite of passage in some settings, but a stigma in others. Roles may be separated according to innate circumstances such as being female or through something that person has done for example being a mother. Role sets refer to clusters of roles that are interrelated such as being a mother, wife, cooking meals or managing the home. Role complementarity refers to the balance that occurs when role expectations and behavior form a congruent role with the surrounding environment and people. Role ambiguity occurs when there is uncertainty about what the role entails. If a role is incompatible with another then role conflict occurs. If the roles are incompatible then inter-role conflict can be found. Inter role conflict for example happens when a woman in the home who has the role of being a mother and a manager of the home partakes in another role or activity such as spending time at the sherbeen, as a result neglecting her role (Parrish, 2010). The other members in the family will expect to have the home well managed as per her role and when these expectations are not met inter role conflict occurs. All in all the role theory will explain how members in the family interact in a certain manner and why. It will also help in explaining the state of cohesion in the family as every member has a role to play and deviation or confirmation leads to a certain result.

The family systems theory will help highlight how cohesion in the family is like; it will explain why the family works together in the way they do. It will highlight the contributions each member of the family makes to the whole. In this study the family systems theory will be used to show the dynamics in the family, to explain the family situation. On the other

hand the role theory will be useful in explaining the role the woman plays in the family and how each role impacts on the family.

1.9 Research Design

The study was qualitative in nature. Durheim, (2004) says qualitative researchers are primarily interested in investigating how people experience the world in the way they do or how they make sense of it. Qualitative research is used to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviors, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. Since the study will focus on an area that is under researched, a qualitative research design was more appropriate as it helped explore the phenomenon of substance abuse by women and the effects it has on family cohesion.

1.9.1 Population

Population represents a group that one wishes to generalize the research to (Durheim, 2004). The population in this study were African families who reside in Ntselamazi, Gqumashe and Mavuso. The families had a history of women substance abuse or had woman/women in their family who abused substances. The population has been specifically targeted as the researcher has had previous experiences working with these communities in issues relating to substance abuse.

1.9.2 Sampling and sampling technique

Blanche and Durheim (2002:44) argue that the main concern of sampling is representativeness. The study used purposive sampling, which is defined as a form of sampling in which the selection of the sample is based on the judgment of the researcher as to which subjects best fit the criteria of the study (Durheim, 2004:45). The sampling method had been chosen as it best fits the kind of research that was being undertaken taking into account the fact that the area was under researched and that the research was exploratory in nature. The sample was made up of 45 families with women who have a history of substance abuse or are abusing substances in rural villages in the Nkonkobe municipality focusing on three villages namely Nselamazi, Gqumashe and Mavuso. These villages were identified by the local South African Police Services as areas that revealed the most problems regarding substance abuse.

1.9.3 Research instrument

The research instrument was unstructured in-depth interviews which were exploratory in nature. Unstructured interviews acquire preliminary data in an area in which little research has been done, in order to generate a hypothesis. As de Vos; Strydom, H.; Fouche, C.B. and Delport, C.S.L. (2005: 167) say that "unstructured interviews involve asking questions in an open and informal fashion without a previously established set categories or assumed answers to gain understanding about a phenomenon or variable of interest". Members of the family were interviewed together.

1.9.4 Data analysis

In analyzing data the researcher was on the lookout for patterns in the data, recurrent behaviors, objects phrases or ideas. Once a pattern was identified it was interpreted in terms of the setting in which it occurred (Neuman 2006). During the course of analysis, the researcher implemented some steps in order to guide the process of interpreting the results. The first step was to go through all the interview material so as to refresh the memory hence gaining a sense of the whole. The next step was to highlight significant terms or themes for example lack of respect, shame, not caring and noting the key words down. The uncovered meanings on each interview question were grouped into themes and subthemes. The next step was to go over the interview material again this time reviewing the individual themes and checking for unrelated data which led to new themes or magnifications of themes. The next step was to use the themes to extract interpretations out of each theme. The final step was to review all the similarities and tensions across the themes. This final phase assisted in giving the researcher a basic structure which incorporated all the findings.

1.9.5 Ethical Considerations

1.9.5. a) Avoidance of harm to the participants

It is possible during a research to cause psychological or physical harm to the respondents. Babbie (2004) indicates that social research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study. This however was closely guarded against in this study by ensuring that the environment where the interviews took place in is safe and comfortable.

1.9.5. b) Anonymity and confidentiality

The respondents needed to be clearly notified of rights to privacy and thus offer their participation willingly. Singleton and Gapstur (1993) highlights that the right to privacy is the individual's right to decide when, where, to whom his attitudes, beliefs and behaviour will be revealed. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality the researcher used pseudonyms to protect the identity of the respondents. The respondents and researcher signed a confidentiality agreement in order to ensure confidentiality of information received.

1.9.5. c) Voluntary participation

Social research according to Babbie (2004) represents an intrusion into people's life, a major tenet of social research ethics is that participation must be voluntary. In this research, respondents were encouraged to participate out of free will. The respondents also signed a consent form to this effect ensuring that they exercise their right to free will. The respondents were also informed that even in the middle of the interviews if they feel uncomfortable they can stop the interview if they so wish.

1.10 Limitations

As de Vos et al (2005: 118), explains that "generally when identifying limitations the researcher must consider the validity and reliability of all data collection instruments, the

generalizability of the sample to the population from which it was drawn, access to data, ethical problems and the ability to control extraneous factors in the environment and in respondents". To ensure data collected was reliable and valid all the ethical principles mentioned had to be strictly adhered to. The possible limitation in conducting this research was that substance abuse among women is done secretively and there was a possibility of not getting the facts or getting incorrect data. To guard against this limitation the people were assured of confidentiality and anonymity with the handling of whatever information was gathered from them. Obtaining permission from the different households to conduct the interviews proved to be a challenging task as it was not always easy to gain access to people's homes and ask questions about sensitive issues like how substance abuse was affecting families. Working therefore with local institutions, already established within communities, helped in gaining access to the required families.

1.11 Chapter outline

1.11 a) Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to what the study is about, the rationale of the study and how the study is to be conducted. Key concepts to be used during the study are defined in this chapter.

1.11 b) Literature review

This is a critical summary and an assessment of the current state of knowledge in a particular field. The chapter includes the theoretical framework which includes the

family systems theory and the role theory. The chapter further elucidates on other studies and literature written which have relevance to this study

1.10   c) Methodology

This chapter provides more detail on each of the steps to be followed during the study. More detail is also provided on the theoretical framework to be applied during the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

1.10   d) Research findings

The chapter presents analyses and interprets what data was collected during the study.

1.10   e) Conclusion

The chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study following the analysis of gathered data. It highlights the limitations of the study. Finally it provides some recommendations on how identified issues may be handled.

1.12 Conclusion

The introductory chapter highlighted what this study focused on through explaining the statement of the problem, giving reasons as to why the study is necessary. Through

research questions, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, definition of concepts, a touch on some literature and theories, the preview and direction of the study was expressed. The research design outlined the method used in the study whereas the chapter outline outlined the arrangement of the chapters in the book as well as briefly stating what each chapter is about. In the following chapter, Chapter 2, the focus is on literature review, which gives a critical summary of current knowledge pertaining to this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the topic on substance abuse by women and its effects on family cohesion. Cano (2002) defines literature review as a critical summary and an assessment of the current state of knowledge in a particular field. The review of the literature leads logically to the research question.   This chapter discusses what past research has revealed on woman substance abuse and its impact on family cohesion in an attempt to justify the need for this study. The chapter also provides some information on the theoretical frameworks that have been used in previous studies. More detail is provided on the theoretical frameworks that are considered most relevant for this study. The closing paragraph highlights the perceived gaps in available knowledge on women and substance abuse in an attempt to justify the need for this study.

2.2 Women abusing substances and effects on family cohesion

This section discusses previous studies into women and substance abuse, and its impact on family cohesion. Few studies into this particular area could be found during the literature review. The researcher focused on substance abuse trends in mainly African settings. The focus was on what substances are used, how they are used and, most importantly, by whom.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, as quoted by Pretotius et.al (2009),

reported on the situation of women abusing substances. The report was based on a Rapid Assessment Study. 2831 substance abusers across nine urban centres were identified for detailed interviews during this study. 251 (8.9%) of the identified abusers were women. The study sought to examine substance abuse patterns in women, special characteristics of women substance abusers, and gender relevant issues in Mumbai, Delhi and Aizawl. The women selected for this study were mostly between thirty and forty years of age. Very few of the respondents had received technical or professional training and half of them were illiterate. A small percentage of the women were single in comparison to those who stayed with their families. The overall findings indicated that in Aizawl, where there were fewer incidences of women abusing substances, family cohesion was better than in Delhi and Mumbai. In Delhi and Mumbai domestic violence was often reported by non-drug abusing husbands of the women, sexual intimacy with their husbands was reported as poor, as was emotional closeness. Respondents from Aizawl and Delhi also reported taking casual sex work to support their drug habit. All these are factors brought by women substance abuse that seem to impact negatively on the family.

Mamman, Brieger, and Oshiname (2006) in their study reported that single, separated, or divorced women were more likely to abuse substances than married or widowed women. It is important here to note that these findings are in contrast with the previous report of a research in India which reflected that most of the women who abused substances stayed with their families; this means that not only single women abuse substances but also those who are married. This study also revealed that rural women do not only use substances

for recreation but for medicinal purposes also. The report explains that women found special uses of substances like in easing the pains of childbirth (Mammam et.al 2006). The report also highlights an important factor; that the likelihood of women neglecting their families when abusing substances is high. For instance, the respondents identified problems associated with substance abuse that they were confronted with like: accidents, fighting, illnesses, mental health problems, children learning to abuse substances, child neglect, rape, and tarnishing of one's image (Mammam et.al 2006).

Women who abuse substances are prone to physical, psychological and social problems amongst other issues. The Butler Centre For Research (2010) in its article on women and substance abuse found out that substance abuse produces different physiological, psychological, and social problems in women than it does in men. Physiologically, the article says, heavy drinking among women is associated with increased rates of breast cancer. Women are often more susceptible to substance abuse -related medical disorders than are men. For example, alcoholic women develop cirrhosis, cardiomyopathy, and brain impairment at the same rate, or sooner than, their male counterparts despite lower lifetime levels of substance abuse consumption.

All these physiological problems can be linked with the state of family cohesion in many ways. Deterioration in health of a woman, for instance, may mean there is no care giver left in the family, the end result being a neglected disorganized family. The psychological

effects could include conditions like depression and borderline personality disorders. Socially substance abuse's impact on women is reported as resulting in unsafe sexual behavior, breakdown in child care routines, and neglect of personal appearance. Shirah (2000: 15) points out that "the fact that nearly 70 percent of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome cases among women are drug related coupled with the rapid rise of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) among women makes it imperative that we address drug abuse problems in women". The findings can be imported to the research topic in that whatever affects a woman in the family situation, also impacts on the family and its cohesion.

The view that the abuse of substances by women results in the deterioration of their health is also supported in a report by Stevens and Wexler (1998) who have claimed that most of AIDS cases reported by women in rural Brazil are of married women who abuse substances together with their partners. Stevens et al (1998) have indicated that substance abuse is associated with higher rates of breast cancer and osteoporosis. Women abusing substances, they claim, are more prone to liver disease while menstrual disorders and impaired childbearing are also associated with substance abuse and drugs. Women who smoke go through menopause earlier. Stevens et al (1998) uncovered that while unplanned pregnancy is a consequence of addiction, it is also one of women's strongest motivators to quit.

Another very significant and relevant finding in the report by Stevens et al (1998) is that women are affected more negatively by abusing substances health wise than men. Substance use by pregnant women and mothers has received a great deal of attention, and there is a voluminous literature documenting the adverse effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs on the fetus. Alcohol use during pregnancy, particularly in combination with poor nutrition, poor general health, experience of trauma and mental health problems, and lack of prenatal care, has been found to have the most harmful effects. Maternal use of licit and illicit drugs can also result in problems that have short- or long-term consequences for those prenatally exposed. However, the study of the impact of these drug categories is hampered by methodological flaws that fail to take into account the use of more than one drug (Shirah 2000).

Westermeyer (2000) has pointed out in his study that women are less likely than men to be substance abusers. Westermeyer (2000:13) says "The onset of substance abuse tends to be later among women, yet women become addicted more quickly and have a more rapid course of substance abuse, a pattern referred to as telescoping." The rapid course of substance abuse among women is coupled with a more rapid development of medical problems, such as cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and liver diseases. This information is relevant in this study in that if women are abusing substances, the repercussions are far more devastating than in their male counterparts. This also reveals that women are less functional when they abuse substances than men. Westermeyer's findings also

emphasize that men are less affected by substance abuse suggesting that men are more able to perform their roles in the family when taking substances than women.

An article by the South African Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (2005) reports that a significant number of women are getting into treatment centers for addiction but still a great number shy away from the facilities they offer because of the stigma attached to being a substance addict. It also reports that because they do not get treatment problems associated with the addiction stay unaddressed hence the problem stays with the society and the family who have insufficient resources to deal with their conditions. South African Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (2005:16) explained that "lack of access to treatment by women because of stigma associated with substance abuse leaves families and societies scarred as their roles are neglected, leaving a huge gap"

Mwizenge (2001: 18) reporting on foster care and placement reported that a lot of children are being placed into foster care because more often than not the parents are heavily abusing substances and hence neglecting their families. Women in particular make the situation worse as their drinking leaves a huge hole which a husband is usually unable to fill; roles are neglected in the process. Mwizenge (2001: 18) explains that "in most cases it is either that both parents in the family abuse substances or it is the male partner abusing substances, often times when it is the male partner abusing substances a family can still remain intact but when both of them abuse substances the family almost always collapses".

A case study by the United Nations Development Program (1995) reveals that the introduction of women into substance abuse has had adverse effects on the family and society because traditionally the abuse of substances by men has always been tolerated and even encouraged whereas female substance abuse was shunned. Women because of addiction and substance abuse are neglecting more and more of their traditional roles hence the society suffers.

Loutif (1987) claims that the roles of women are like the spine of a human body without which it cannot stand erect. In her thesis on women substance abuse she explores the different issues that arise from women abusing substances. In terms of the effect on women's drinking on the family Loutif (1987) also claims that often times women try hard to hide their addiction to a substance and may carry on with their normal roles except in instances where women abuse substances to a great extent. According to the United Nations Development Program report (1995) urban women drink to socialize and wind down the week but they are capable of maintaining their jobs and their families. In the instances where women become abusers it is usually to highly addictive drugs like cocaine, they neglect their roles and duties in the family like any other drug user and hence prioritize the drug more than anything else. As a result there is an increasing number of child neglect, family problems, divorce associated with substance abuse now more than before.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks

Borgatti (1999) explains that a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, like a theory but not necessarily so well worked-out. A theoretical framework guides the research, determining what things you will measure, and what statistical relationships you will look for. The family Systems Theory was one of the most frequently used theories in the studies discussed in the literature review. This was also the theory chosen for this study. The Family Systems Theory claims that the family is understood best by conceptualizing it as a complex, dynamic, and changing collection of parts, subsystems and family members. The same theory was adopted for a study by Maring and Braun, (2005) in their study on Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use in Rural, Low-Income Families which used an Ecological and Family systems theory. This approach was developed by Bronfenbrenner in the late 1970s; the approach expresses that that a person develops within the context of his or her relationships (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Role theory is the second theory considered relevant for this study. More detail on the two preferred theories for purposes of this study is provided below.

2.3.1 The family systems theory

This theory emerged from General Systems Theory by scholars who found it had many applications to families and other social systems. Any system is defined as a bounded set of interrelated elements exhibiting coherent behavior as a trait (Constantine, 1986). Families are considered systems because they are made up of interrelated elements or objectives, they exhibit coherent behaviors, they have regular interactions, and they are

interdependent on one another (Morgaine, 2001). The family systems theory suggests that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family, as the family is an emotional unit, (Morgaine, 2001). Families are systems of interconnected and interdependent individuals, none of whom can be understood in isolation from the system. According to the theory, a family is a system in which each member has a role to play and rules to respect.

The components of the Family Systems Theory include the family systems which have interrelated elements and structure. The elements of a system are the members of the family for example a mother, a daughter, a son or an uncle. Each element has characteristics; there are relationships between the elements; the relationships function in an interdependent manner. In this sense the typical relationship in a family would be the different roles played by each figure for example the father being the bread winner and the mother managing the home and children, all necessary for the survival of the family system. All of these create a structure, or the sum total of the interrelationships among the elements, including membership in a system and the boundary between the system and its environment (Morgaine, 2001).

In a family set up there are interaction patterns, there are also predictable patterns of interaction that emerge in a family system. These repetitive cycles help maintain the family's equilibrium and provide clues to the elements about how they should function. Families have boundaries and can be viewed on a continuum from open to closed (Morgaine, 2001). Every system has ways of including and excluding elements so that the

line between those within the system and those outside of the system is clear to all. If a family is permeable and has vague boundaries it is considered open. Open boundary systems allow elements and situations outside the family to influence it. Maintaining the same pattern of behaviors within a system may lead to balance in the family system, but also to dysfunction. For example, if a wife abuses substances and cannot pull herself together, the husband may need to take up more responsibilities. The change in roles may maintain the stability in the relationship, but it may also push the family towards disequilibrium. This new equilibrium may lead to dysfunction as the husband may not be able to maintain this overachieving role over a long period of time. A closed boundary system isolates its members from the environment. No family system however, is ever completely closed or completely open (Morgaine, 2001).

Constantine (1986) explains that there is also what is called function by the Composition Law: the Whole is more than the Sum of Its Parts. Every family system, even though it is made up of individual elements, results in an organic whole. Overall family images and themes are reflected in this holistic quality. Unique behaviors may be ascribed to the entire system that does not appropriately describe individual elements. Families communicate through the use of messages and rules to shape members. Messages and rules are relationship agreements which prescribe and limit a family members' behavior over time, they are repetitive and redundant. They are rarely, if ever, explicit or written down. They give power; they induce guilt; they control or limit behaviors; and they perpetuate themselves and reproduce. Most messages and rules can be stated in one or a few words. In every family system there are subsystems. The relationships between these

people are known as subsystems, coalitions, or alliances. Each subsystem has its own rules, boundaries, and unique characteristics (Morgaine, 2010). Membership in subsystems can however change over time.

The theory will be of relevance to the study as it offers the basis on which the family functions. Like any other systems change is inevitable and certain changes in roles may tip the balance of the family system. The theory proposes that everyone in the family has a role to play and the roles have an impact on the whole. Since the family members have different roles to play according to this theory those different roles family members play will be looked at especially the role of women abusing substances. Each role in the family contributes something to the whole and is important, meaning that any deviation from the set boundaries or malfunction in role performance may have dire consequences to the whole family. Thus looking at the role women play and finding out if abuse of substances has any impact on the role they play within the whole family system, it will be apparent if there is a connection between women substance abuse and family relationships.

2.3.2 Role Theory

The Role Theory is also known as the Sociological Theory. The Role Theory suggests that human behaviour is guided by expectations held both by the individual and by other people (Mead, 1934). The expectations correspond to different roles individuals execute in their daily lives, such as being a mother, father, or friend. For instance, most people hold

pre-conceived notions of the role expectations of a child in the African setting, which might include being obedient to the rules of the home, playing house, respecting adults or helping at home with chores. These role expectations would not be expected of a father for instance. The Role Theory hence explains people's behaviour in addressing how the social environment influences behaviour by creating various roles to be filled. Roles therefore refer to ways in which people behave in relation to a socially defined position or set of expectations. The theory assumes the following propositions about social behaviour: The division of labour in society takes the form of the interaction among heterogeneous specialized positions that we call roles. Individuals generally have and manage many roles. Roles consist of a set of rules or norms that function as plans or blueprints to guide behaviour. Roles specify what goals should be pursued, what tasks must be accomplished, and what performances are required in a given scenario or situation. Role Theory holds that a substantial proportion of observable, day-to-day social behaviour is simply persons carrying out their roles, much as actors carry out their roles on the stage or ballplayers theirs on the field. Role Theory is predictive. It implies that if we have information about the role expectations for a specified position, a significant portion of the behaviour of the persons occupying that position can be predicted. Social roles include appropriate and permitted forms of behaviour, guided by social norms, which are commonly known and hence determine expectations. Roles are occupied by individuals, who are called actors. When individuals approve of a social role they will incur costs to conform to role norms, and will also incur costs to punish those who violate role norms (Mead, 1934). Changed conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change. This may be applied in a

family situation when a family member deviates from a role resulting in changes in relationships or the way the family relates to each other.

By addressing some of the structures provided by society, Role Theory also serves as a means of understanding the person in environment concept, by conceptualizing the way in which relationships may establish patterns of behaviour and expectations (Parrish, 2010). The behaviours and expectations may contribute to an allocated status such as a wife, drug user, thief, or troublemaker. Different roles also carry with them different sanctions or level of approval in different settings. For example drinking alcohol maybe a rite of passage in some settings, but a stigma in others. Roles maybe ascribed according to innate circumstances such as being female or through something that person has done for example being a mother. Role sets refer to clusters of roles that are interrelated such as being a mother, wife, cooking meals or managing the home. Role complimentary refers to the balance that occurs when roles expectations and behaviour from a congruent role with the surrounding environment and people. Role ambiguity occurs when there is uncertainty about what the role entails. If a role is incompatible with another then role conflict occurs if the roles are incompatible then inter role conflict can be found. Inter role conflict for example happens for example when a woman in the home who has the role of being a mother and a manager of the home partakes in another role or activity such as spending time at the shebeen, as a result neglecting her roles (Parrish, 2010). The other members in the family will expect to have the home well managed as per her role and when these expectations are not met inter role conflict occurs. All in all the Role Theory will explain

how members in the family interact in a certain manner and why. It will also help in explaining the state of cohesion in the family as every member has a role to play and deviation or confirmation leads to a certain result.

The Family Systems Theory will help highlight how cohesion in the family is like, it will explain why the family works together in the way they do. It will highlight the contributions each member of the family makes to the whole. In this study the Family Systems Theory will be used to show the dynamics in the family, to explain the family situation. On the other hand the role theory will be useful in explaining the role the woman plays in the family and how each role impacts on the family. In this sense the role theory will explain how if a woman abuses substances her role is affected at the same time the Family Systems Theory will elaborate on how the family situation is what it is as a result of different contributions being made by all the family members.

2.4 CONCLUSION.

The researcher noticed some gaps in the body of knowledge especially gender related. Limited research has been done into substance abuse by women. The United Nations Development Program report (1995) confirms that there is less documentation about women as drug users than about male users, and most studies do not focus on women drug users as a distinct group. This information, therefore, validates the need for this

study. The article by Gran Angular (1998), further suggests that it is vital to focus on the relationship that exists between the sexes, rather than looking at women and men separately when focusing on substance abuse problems.

In the chapter that follows the research tools and methods will be explored in detail. The chapter will highlight how the study was conducted, research design and methodology research process, geographical area and sample chosen, data collection methods, data analysis, challenges and limitations of the study, ethical considerations and value of the study.

3. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research process that was employed in carrying out the research. The chapter is inclusive of the research design and methodology, research process, geographical area and sample chosen, data collection methods, data analysis, challenges and limitations of the study, ethical considerations and value of the study. Bailey (1987) believes that each research is unique depending on a number of variables, for example the time, place and approach of the particular research but all research projects must have a clearly stated research problem or goal.

The study focused on substance abuse by women and its effects on family cohesion in rural villages around Nkonkobe Municipality, Eastern Cape. The objectives of the study were to find out what views exist on the importance of women in maintaining family cohesion and to find out what effects substance abuse by women has on family cohesion

3.2 Research design and methodology

The study was investigative, qualitative and exploratory in nature. According to Singleton et. al (1988) an exploratory study is conducted when there is no or very little information about a particular subject. The researcher in this study had very little information on the effects of substance abuse by women and how family cohesion is affected as a result. As

expressed in chapter two this was a relatively under researched area hence more explorative research was paramount.

The study explored in a qualitative manner the effects of substance abuse by women on family cohesion in rural villages in the Nkonkobe municipality. This study answered questions like, what roles do women play in promoting family cohesion and how are these roles affected when women abuse substances? Since the study was exploratory and qualitative in nature; the choice of an exploratory design was motivated by the need to gain insight and understanding of experiences of families who had women who abuse substances. The qualitative nature of the study allowed the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of family dynamics when women abuse substances in the family.

3.3 Research process

The research was conducted in selected rural villages in the Nkonkobe municipality namely Ntselamanzi, Gqumashe and Mavuso. The reason for choosing this area was because it was a typical rural African village and the researcher has had a lot of experience dealing with family issues in this municipality. Through exposure the researcher had witnessed large numbers of cases of substance abuse by women in these areas. Having worked in some of the areas before the researcher was not a stranger to the communities hence consent to participation was not difficult to obtain.

3.4 Population

A population represents a group that one wishes to generalize the research to (Durheim, 2004). The population in this study were African families who reside in Ntselamazi, Gqumashe and Mavuso. The families had a history of women substance abuse or had a woman in their family who abuses substances. A number of 15 families will be chosen from each village hence a total of 45 families will be studied.

3.5 Research sample and sampling method

According to De Vos (1986) a sampling method is employed by a researcher who instead of studying the whole population collects information from a group identified and chosen from the population of choice. The researcher employed non probability sampling which is purposive. Non probability was appropriate and suitable as the main objective was to become more informed about the effects of substance abuse by women on family cohesion in rural villages surrounding the Nkonkobe Municipality. Bailey (1987) expresses that non probability sampling has different types of methods and in this study the researcher used purposive sampling. The study used purposive sampling as it is defined as a form of sampling in which the selection of the sample is based on the judgment of the researcher as to which subjects best fit the criteria of the study (Bailey, 1987). The sampling method had been chosen as it best fits the kind of research being undertaken taking into account the fact that the area was under researched and that the research was exploratory in nature. De Vos (1986) also defines a purposive sample as a form of non-

probability sampling where cases are judged as typical of some category of cases of interest to the researcher. In purposive sampling, the sample is used with a purpose in mind as there are specific predefined groups the study seeks to target. Bless et al (1995) refer to purposive sampling as judgmental sampling where units of study are judged to be typical of the population under investigation. As this will be a study of limited scope purposive study will fit the aim of the study very well as the study was exploring how family cohesion was affected when a woman abuses substances. De Vos (1986) claims that although purposive sampling does not ensure representativeness, such a method of selection can provide useful information.

3.6 Data collection methods

Once the researcher completed the research design the next step was data collection. The nature of data collection also highly depended on the nature of the study or research design. Since the study is exploratory and qualitative in nature the data in this study was collected using semi structured interviews which were administered by the researcher. The researcher decided to use this method of data collection because semi-structured interviewing, according to Bailey, (1987) is best used when you will not get more than one chance to interview someone and when you may be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data. The semi-structured interview guide provided comparable qualitative data. Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researchers to

develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions.

The inclusion of open-ended questions also provided the opportunity for identifying new ways of seeing and understanding the topic at hand. Semi-structured interviews were convenient as the questions could be prepared ahead of time thus allowing the interviewer to be prepared and to appear competent during the interview. Semi-structured interviews also allowed informants the freedom to express their views in their own terms.

Flick (2006:155) explains that "through the semi structured interviews, a complex stock of knowledge relating to the topic including assumptions that are explicit and immediate can be expressed spontaneously in answering a question". One of the features of a semi structured interview is that it is flexible (Haralambos & Holborn 1995). The flexibility of the interviews allows the researcher to extract simple factual information, to ask people about their attitudes, their past, present of future behavior and the emotions that cannot be directly observed.

3.7 Data analysis.

In analyzing data the researcher was on the lookout for patterns in the data, recurrent behaviors, objects phases or ideas. Once a pattern was identified it was interpreted in terms of the setting within which it occurred (Neuman 2006). The data was analyzed according to themes, similarities and differences using a method of qualitative data analysis called thematic analysis. "The process of thematic analysis includes that of transcribing verbal data. Through transcribing data the researcher is able to familiarize themselves with the data which contributes towards the facilitation of the close reading and interpretive skills needed for analyzing the data" (Braun and Clarke 2006:88).

The themes and patterns were guided by the elements of cohesion as mentioned in chapter one which focus on aspects like respect, emotional bonds of the family members, pride in the family, values and beliefs, willingness to be together spending quality time as a family, duties and roles allocated to the members and how they felt as members of the family. Thematic analysis focused on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behavior. As the research study continued all the elements of cohesion were looked at and compared with the information being provided by the respondents which enabled the researcher to find out how cohesion in the family is affected by women who abuse substances in the family.

The first step was to collect the data using audiotapes which were collected to study the interview schedule themes (Spradley, 1979). From the transcribed conversations, patterns of experiences were listed; this came from direct quotes or paraphrasing common ideas. An ideal example would be a family being interviewed to get a better understanding of their experience with women who abuse substances in the family. The entire interview will be transcribed. The first pattern of experience listed, will be the process a family's experience with a woman abusing substances, and the different views from the various family members. The second pattern of experience listed will be the attitude that each family member had toward the process

The next step in analyzing thematically was to identify all data that related to the already classified patterns. To continue the above example, the identified patterns are then expounded on. All of the talk that fits under the specific pattern were identified and placed with the corresponding pattern. For example, each family member somehow named their attitude while they were speaking. The father may have stated that he is anti-substance use, the son may say that he is protective, and the mother may state that she feels guilty about her drinking habits, (Aronson, 1992).

The next step in analyzing the data thematically was to combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes. Themes are defined as "units derived from patterns such as conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings

and proverbs" (Taylor and Bogdan, 1989: 131). Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985: 60). Themes that emerge from the informants' stories were pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience. The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985: 60). Constas (1992: 258) reiterates this point and states that the "interpretative approach should be considered as a distinct point of origination".

When gathering sub-themes to obtain a comprehensive view of the information, it became easy to see a pattern emerging. When patterns emerged the researcher obtained feedback from the informants about them. This was done as the interview was taking place, by asking the informants to give feedback from the transcribed conversations. In the former, the interviewer used the informants' feedback to establish the next questions in the interview. In the latter, the interviewer transcribes the interview or the session, and asked the informants to provide feedback that is then incorporated in the theme analysis.

The next step was to build a valid argument for choosing the themes. This was done by reading the related literature. By referring back to the literature, the interviewer gained information that allowed him or herself to make inferences from the interview or therapy session. Once the themes were collected and the literature had been studied, the

researcher was ready to formulate theme statements to develop a story line. When the literature was interwoven with the findings, the story that the interviewer constructed was one that stands with merit. A developed story line helped the reader to comprehend the process, understanding, and motivation of the interviewer.

3.8 Challenges and limitations

As De Vos (2005: 118), explains "generally when identifying limitations the researcher must consider the validity and reliability of all data collection instruments, the generalizability of the sample to the population from which it was drawn, access to data, ethical problems and the ability to control extraneous factors in the environment and in respondents". The possible limitation in conducting this research lay in that substance abuse among women is done secretively and there was a possibility of not getting the facts. To guard against this limitation the respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity with the handling of whatever information will be gathered from them. Obtaining permission from the different households to conduct the interviews proved to be a challenging task as it is was not always easy to gain access to people's homes and ask questions about sensitive issues like how substance abuse was affecting families. Working therefore with local structures, already established within communities, helped in gaining access to the required families.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Singleton et al (1988:444) believes that just as much as practical considerations are important for implementing an ideal research design, ethical considerations are also important. There are three areas of ethical consideration according to Singleton et al (1998) namely, ethics of data collection and analysis, ethics of responsibility and society and ethics of treatment of participants. Ethics of data collection occur when the researcher omits negative findings and falsify or change data Singleton et al (1988). The study was conducted honestly and the findings reported as they are, without omitting relevant data.

In relation to the ethics of treatment of participants, Singleton et al (1988:445) identified four problems, "potential harm, lack of informed consent, deception, invasion of privacy". Gomm (2008) also gives examples of harm that could befall subjects in conducting a study such as, physical harm where for instance a research which involves political activism, psychological harm in studies where subjects are vulnerable and the research close emotional charged relationships between researcher and subjects or privacy and confidentiality in which sense the subjects right to privacy is an important right. The participants in the study were expected to open up about sensitive family matters which could be humiliating and embarrassing hence debriefing was necessary.

With informed consent the participants were not forced to participate in this study. The researcher explained to the participants that their participation was voluntary. Social research according to Babbie (2004) represents an intrusion onto people's life, a major tenet of social research ethics is that participation must be voluntary. In this research, respondents were encouraged to participate out of free will, the respondents also signed a consent form to this effect ensuring that they exercises their right to free will. The respondents were also informed that even in the middle of the interviews if they feel uncomfortable they can stop the interview if they so wish hence exercising their right to voluntary participation.

The objective of the study was explained to the participants in order to allow them to make an informed decision about participation in the study. Written consent was given to the participant or legal guardian, since the study involved minors. Since the study was conducted in a family household setup parental consent was sought.

The researcher in this study tried not to mislead the participants about the purpose and the aim of the study. Before the interviews were undertaken the full purpose of the study was explained to the participants and that the study was part of a requirement for a Masters degree in Social Work. The participants were informed of the rationale of conducting the study and the way in which the results will be published.

All the participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in order to protect their identities when publishing the results. Pseudonyms were used in place of real names of the respondents. Considering the sensitive nature of the study which involved the family having to talk about how substance abuse by a woman in the family affects cohesion, the probing was conducted with care, sensitivity and consideration.

3.10 Significance of the study

The family is the nucleus of society, and when it weakens or crumbles the stability of the entire community is adversely affected (Family and Marriage Association South Africa, 2010). This study can be very useful in analyzing the trends and dynamics in family relationships especially concerning the way the family functions as a whole. Since this study focuses on the women element of the family this study will highlight their contribution as members of a family. Furthermore organizations and government especially the department of social development may benefit from such a study before investing in issues relating to family cohesion and the dynamics involved hence they can always reduce the risks and uncertainties as there will be prior studies that would have highlighted areas of concern. The research study can also give food for thought to the new researchers, in that it may come up with a new angle or idea from which the issue of substance abuse by women in rural areas and the impact on families may be viewed from. The research will add to the existing literature on women substance abuse and the impact it has on the family. The research will also provide information that can

be used for longitudinal studies which systematically study ever changing institutions like the family, society and the environment

3.11 Conclusion

In a nutshell the research design and methodology is an important aspect in conducting the research which lays the foundation for which the next steps will follow. Being able to know ones sample, method of data collection and data analysis and all the minute details before conducting the actual study proves to be pivotal as it is preparation which enables the researcher to know and prepare for what the study throws at him. In the next chapter, Chapter 4, the researcher focuses on research findings through presenting, analyzing and interpreting data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents, analyzes, and discusses the information that was collected in the study. In doing so the aim is to gain an understanding and explore the issue of substance abuse by women and the impact it has on family cohesion. The major themes that have emerged from the semi-structured interviews with the respondents will be presented. The themes and patterns will be guided by the elements of cohesion as mentioned in chapter three which focus on aspects like common motives and goals, an accepted division of labor , that is roles, established status relationships, accepted norms and values with reference to matters relevant to the group and development of accepted sanctions (Sherif and Sherif; 2002). The themes will also be guided by the theoretical models chosen for this study. The theoretical models will serve as a backdrop for which assumptions and conclusions will be drawn upon.

4.2 Presentation of interview information.

 Information is presented according to the way it was initially presented on the interview schedule. The presentation begins with a description followed by the analysis of the respondent's personal details to determine the commonalities and differences among identified substance abusing women.

4.2.1 Personal details of families interviewed

4.2.1 a) Age

Table 1
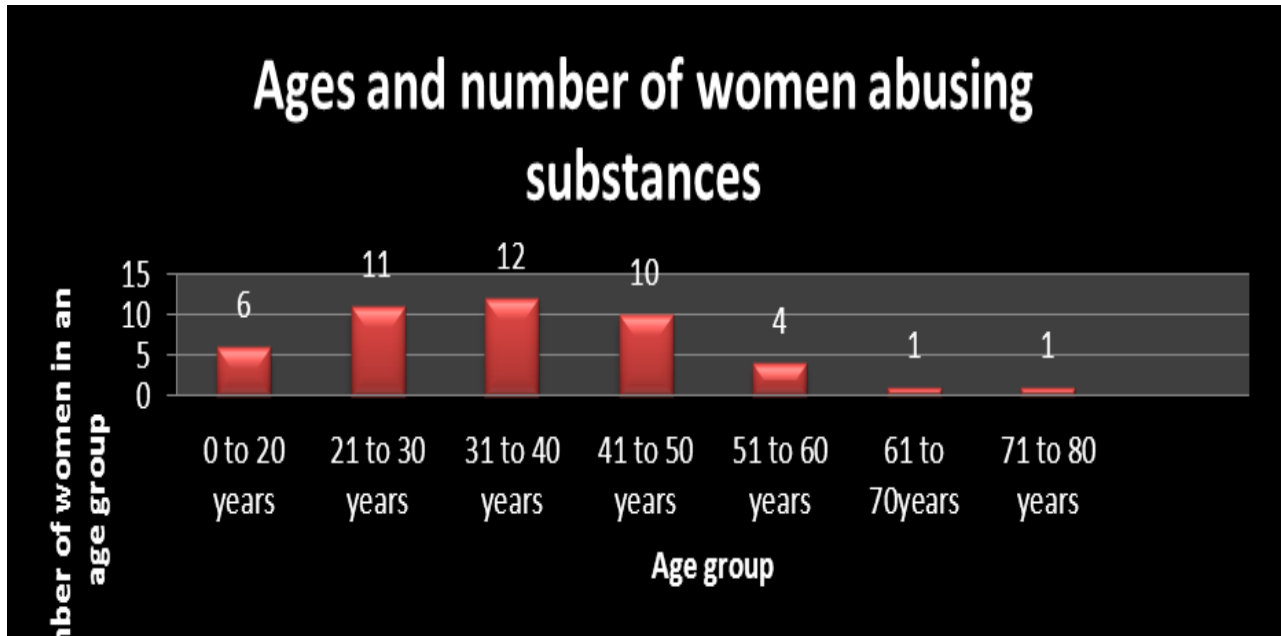
The ages of the women abusing substances varied as some were as old as seventy two years old and some as young as seventeen. However many women who abused substances in this study were middle aged ranging from the age of twenty six to forty five years old. The common traits among these substance abusing women was that they were the adults from 21 years to 40 years old and most of them were mothers.

4.2.1 b) Marital status

Table 2

	0 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	51 to 60 years	61 to 70years	71 to 80 years	
married	1	4	5	6	2	0	0	
not married	5	7	6	3	1	0	0	
widowed	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	
separated	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	
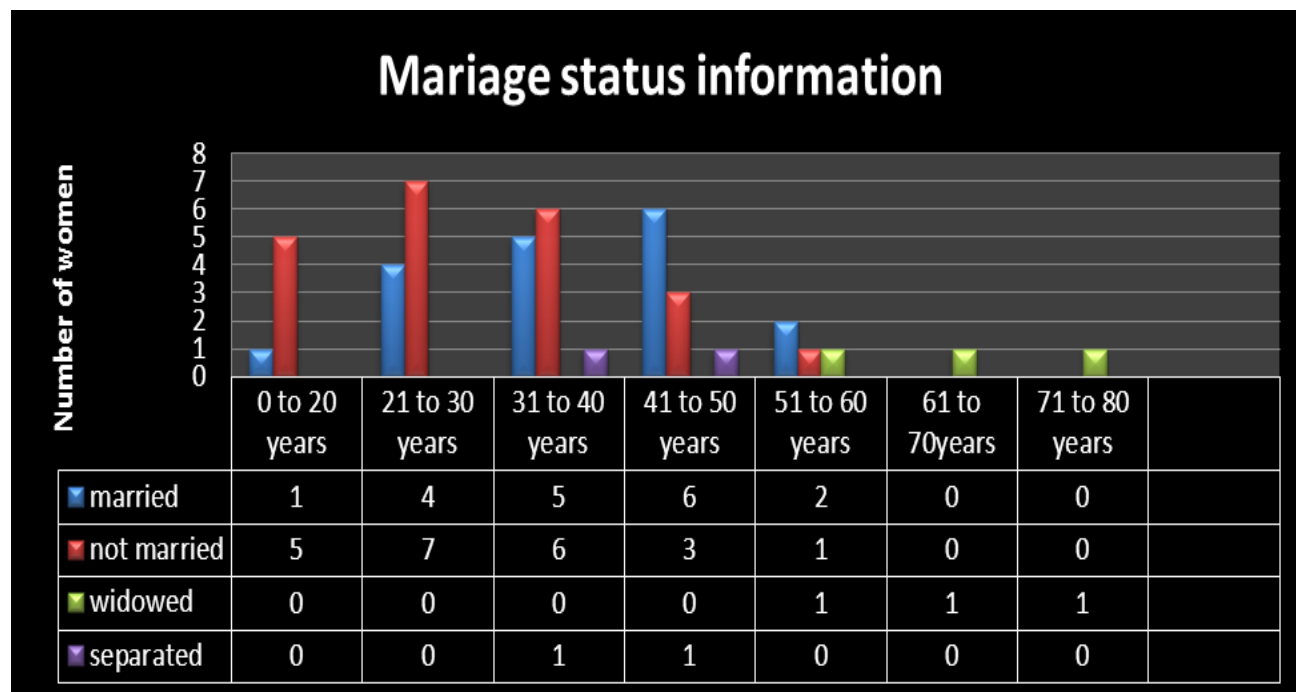
The data collected on the marriage status reflected that twenty two women were single. This information agrees with information in the literature review by Mamman et al (2006) who in their study presented that single, separated, or divorced women were more likely to abuse substances than married or widowed women. Eighteen of the substances abusing women were married or staying with the father of their children. Three women reflected they were widowed and two were in separation with their husbands.

4.2.1 c) Status of substance abusing women within the family

Table 3

	0 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	51 to 60 years	61 to 70 years	71+ years	
mother	3	5	6	6	0	1	1	
mother and care givers	0	1	4	4	4	0	0	
dependents	3	5	2	0	0	0	0	
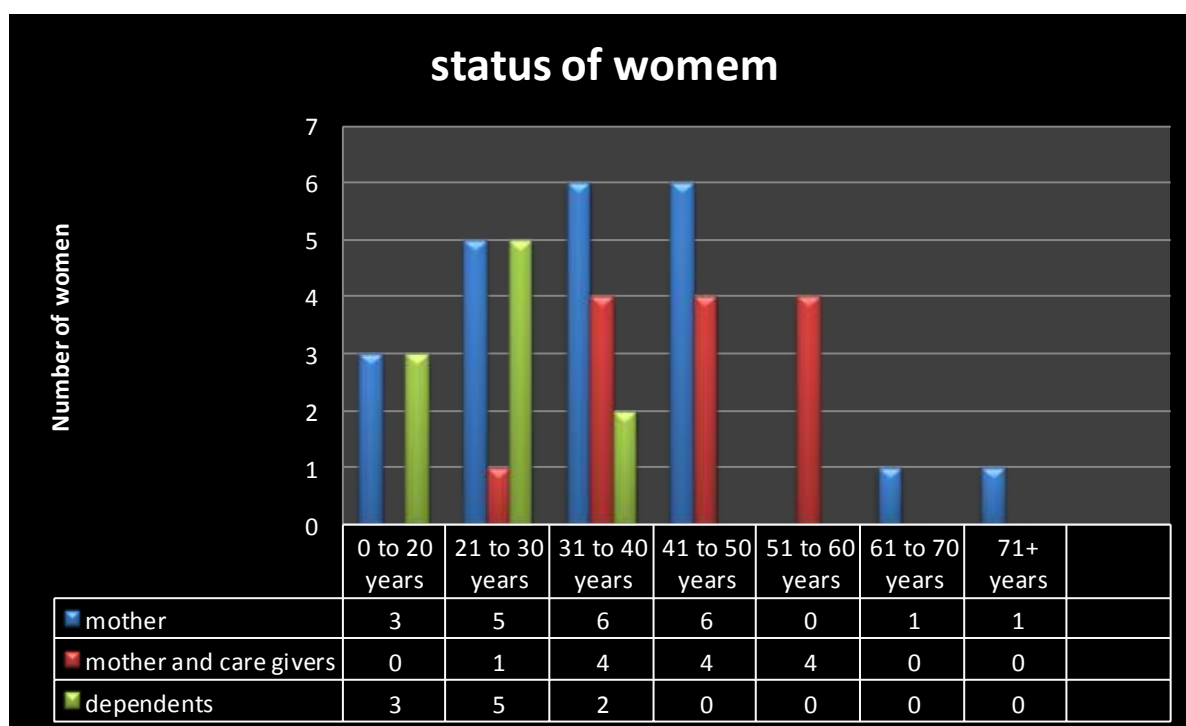
Twenty one substance abusing women in the study were mothers, while twelve were care givers or guardians to the children and eleven were dependents in the family with no children, occupying the role of nieces, cousins or daughters. Most of the women were mothers as reflected by the numbers, having the important role of nurturing and caring for children.

4.2.4 d) Level of education

Table 4

Level of education of the substance abusing women

	Primary School	High School	Maric +	
Number of women	25	17	3	
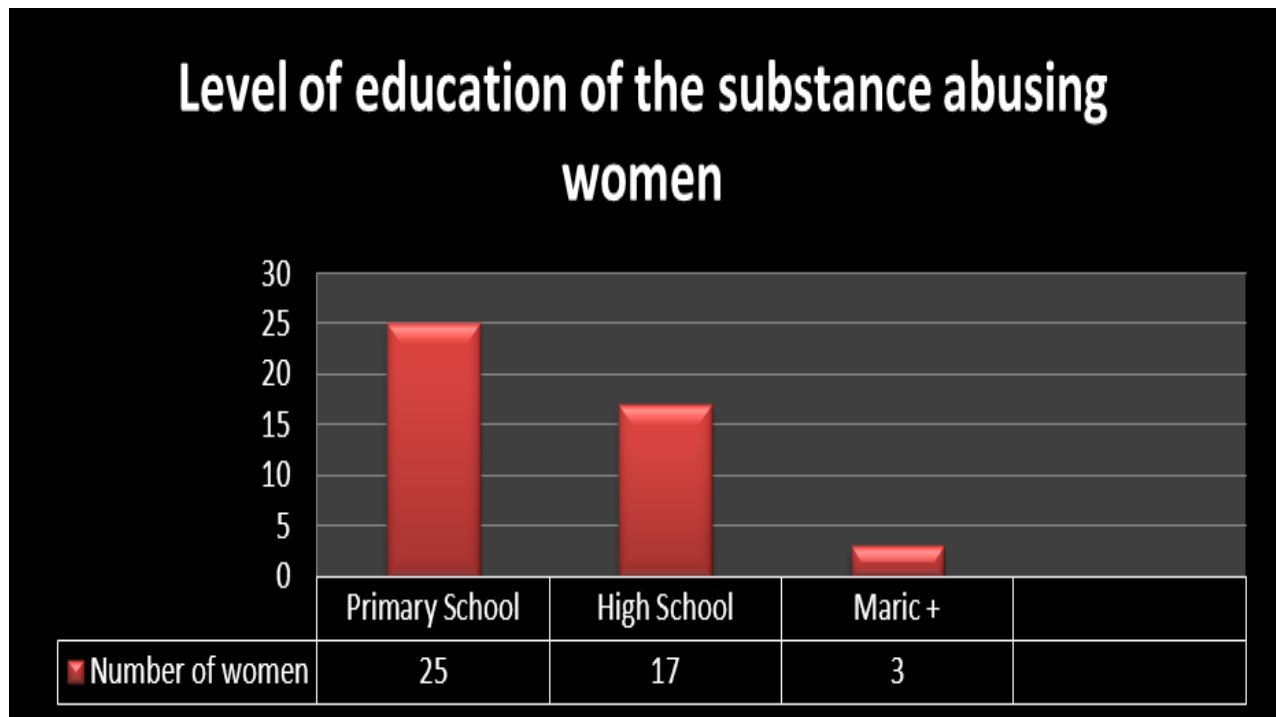
Twenty five of the women had gone up to the primary school level, seventeen had gone to high school, and three reflected they matriculated. Most of the women interviewed h had basic primary education which could not qualify them into gainful employment.

4.2.4 e) Employment status

Table 5

Employement status of substance abusing women

	0 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	51 to 60 years	61 to 70years	71 to 80 years
unemployed	3	3	5	6	4	1	1
self employed/ part time	3	7	5	4	0	0	0
permanantly employed	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
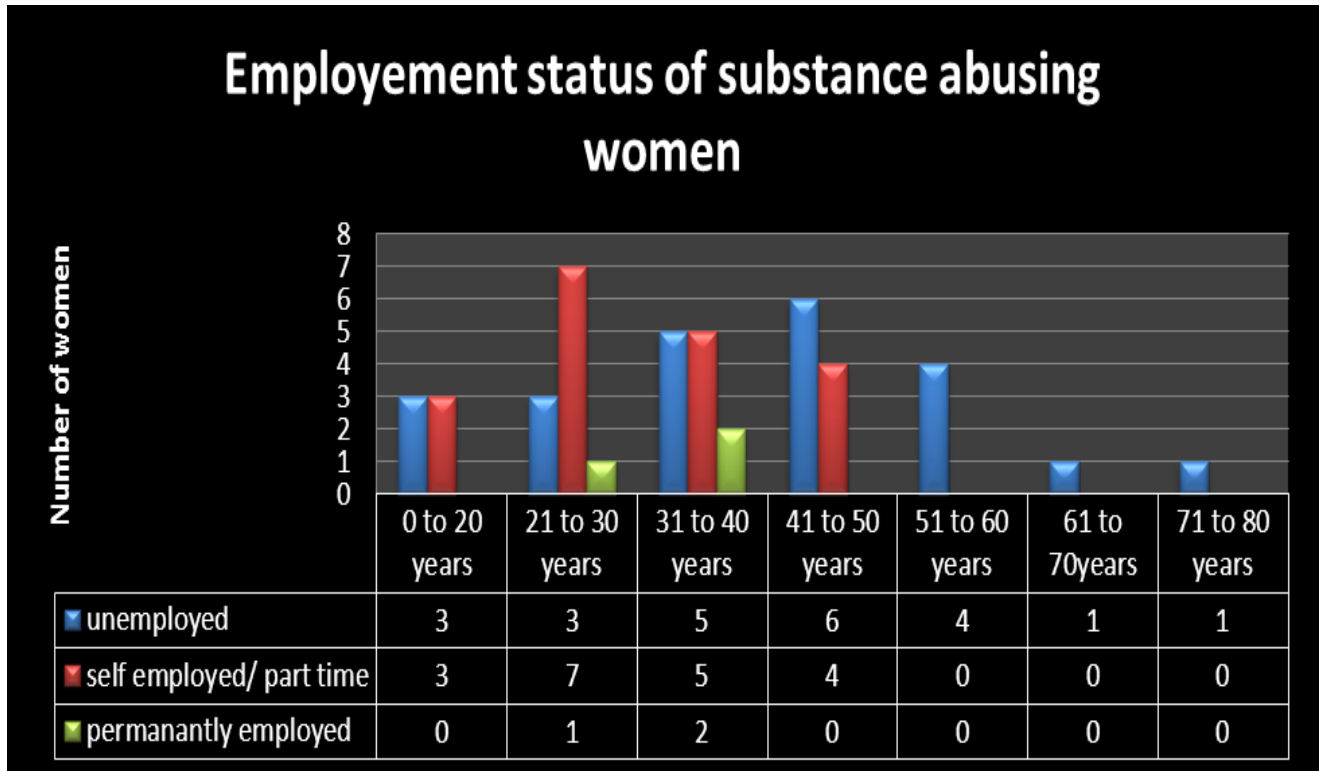
Nineteen of the women claimed that they had temporary jobs or were self-employed doing odd jobs here and there, twenty three women were unemployed and three were permanently employed. This is an indication of an unstable financial security in the lives of the substance abusing women.

4.2.2 Analysis of personal details

The age range of the women interviewed reflected adults as the average age of the women interviewed was twenty eight. This age range of adult women reflect an age range of women that should physically, economically and emotionally be capable of ensuring that the needs of the families are met as they are at their prime. Marchetti (2002: 3) supports the above in her report by stating that "in terms of light manual work, performance does not change much in the age 20 and 60, although wisdom tends to increase and physical abilities increasing with age". The information on personal details reflects that the substance abusing women had low levels of education. Most of the women only received primary education. The women were mostly unemployed or had temporary unsatisfactory jobs. Most of the women were single occupying the status of a mother and a smaller number were guardians or care givers to the children in the family. All these commonalities lumped up and analyzed together give a typical profile of a substance abusing woman. Mamman (2006) in their study claimed that single, separated, or divorced women were more likely to abuse substances than married or widowed women. The marital status of substance abusing women is important as it affirms that single mothers or women were more likely to abuse substances than those married. This fulfills the notion that women who abuse substances are mostly single or divorced.

Establishing the age of substance abusing women was essential so as to highlight level of maturity, responsibility and accountability. Adults in general are capable of maintaining their roles, being productive, responsible and accountable. In this case most of the women are expected to be mature and assume their expected roles in society without difficulty. It

was important to establish if the women who abused substances were employed so as to establish the extent of poverty and if there was a relation between substance abuse and lack of employment. Peltzer and Seoka (2004) in their study established that substance abuse was influenced by the variation in geographical prevalence and was highly correlated with seven indicators of background deprivation levels in each area: unemployment rate, council tenancies, overcrowding, larger families, unskilled employment, single parent families and lack of access to a car. Most of the families interviewed had a few members working or employed. The most common source of economic generation was through piece jobs. The lack of employment among family members and the women concerned reflect lack of education hence most of the respondents resorted to odd jobs. Streissguth (1997) [established in his findings that drug-using women are more likely to be single, unemployed, separated, or divorced; have less than a high school education; use alcohol and tobacco in addition to illicit drugs; and have fewer sources of social support. It is therefore reasonable to imply that the fact there was a low employment rate, contributed to substance abuse among the women.

4.3 Elements of family cohesion

In search of elements of family cohesion the researcher asked the respondents questions that elicited how as a family they shared affection, support, economic support, helpfulness and caring among the family members. The aim was to find out what the families identified or believed to show cohesion in the family and how the woman played the role of ensuring cohesion in the family. Cohesion has been defined by Sherif and Sherif (2002) as shared

affection, accepted norms and values with reference to matters relevant to the group and development of accepted sanctions, an accepted division of labor that is roles, and common motives and goals.

4.3.1 Shared affection

Families expressed how cohesion in the family was reflected by the emotional family bonds and the physical affection they gave to each other. This was expressed in how much the family members had pride in each other, missed each other when they were not together, how as a family they sacrificed to be with each other, or went an extra mile to make each other happy.

One respondent expressed the above point by stating that:

> I miss my mother when I am away. The stories I tell other people about her make me see how special we are as a family. I often tell my colleagues at work that when I am home my mother washes my clothes and cook's for me, as though I am still a child. My favorite thing that she still does to this day is making sure when any of us has a cold, she rubs vapor rub on our backs. That makes my colleagues envy me and I in turn feel so proud to have a mother like mine.

One child also expressed that:

> I like to talk about my family to my friends, especially my brother. He is very close to me, we share everything and he always looks out for me. I am not afraid when he is around because he is my brother and is there for me.

According to the families the emotional closeness and warmth they gave each other reflected love and understanding. It was the root that made all cooperation and upholding of family values possible.

One man expressed the position of a woman as a giver of emotional strength and closeness through an African expression, he said:

> *There is a saying in the African tradition that says a child can play with her mother's breasts but never with her father's manhood (respondent chuckles). This just goes to show the closeness children can have with their mothers, but with their fathers it is a different story.*

This emotional closeness was fostered by the mother as indicated by the response above. Children are comforted by the presence of their mothers or of women in general. Very few men in the African culture, especially in the rural areas, have the skills to soothe a child or provide that sense of security with a child. Women give a sense of calm and security to the home like no one else can (Sweetman, 1996). A mother is the first physical contact and bond a child has, as it enters this world. These physical bonds is further strengthened by breast feeding and other acts of care and love as a mother shares this with her newly born (Sweetman, 1996: 53). As the mother bathes, sings, plays and kisses the baby, all this is visible to other family members and they in turn emulate the same behavior towards

the child. Growing up a child will therefore be physically and emotionally affectionate, an element introduced to him at birth by his mother.

One woman respondent expressed the role played by woman in ensuring the physical and emotional element in the family by stating that:

> *I think children grow well when showed that they are loved, they see the small acts of kindness and love such as kisses and hugs. Even as adults we need the physical and emotional closeness. As a mother I can teach that to my children and give them love. I bring that love and closeness within my family, it begins with me as my child feeds from my breast until he is grown. I don't think fathers have and can show such a deeper physical and emotional connection like us mothers do.*

Another respondent, an elderly woman stated that:

> *Children automatically learn especially when they are young to be close to their mother. As my children grew up, for a long time they always followed me around and I nurtured them. I was tender with them, emotionally responsive to their needs than their father. I think that is how children learn and know it is to their mother they can run to in case of trouble or to help them wipe their tears, they always feel safer with me.*

As a mother or care giver the woman is the primary source of care, with the responsibility of ensuring emotional and physical well-being of her family. Being a care giver or a mother comes with responsibilities such as cooking, ensuring good health among family members and overall conditions of all the family members.

Being a mother according to one respondent meant that:

> *In this home I have the responsibility to provide love to my children, I am the one who can mediate in sibling quarrels and small matters in the home and provide counseling to my young growing girls. I am able to calm my husband down when he is angry, I know how to approach him. Those are the things as a woman I do that I feel contributes in keeping this family together.*

From the above information, women play a pivotal role in the raising of children and extending their nurturing ways through showing affection to their children and to the rest of the family. This is a natural role that can be played most perfectly by a woman. Parrish (2010) explains the role theory as addressing some of the structures provided by society, he further purports that the role theory also serves as a means of understanding the person in environment concept, by conceptualizing the way in which relationships may establish patterns of behaviour and expectations. The role played by women is a role that occurs naturally to her; hence it makes sense that she can have such an influential impact on cohesion in the family.

4.3.2 Norms and values

In a patriarchal setting like the one of the respondents, the responsibility of ensuring open communication lines and respect would be expected to essentially begin with the mother as her reverence of her husband served as an example to children and other family members.

A forty six year old man with the status of a father in the family explained that:

> *When a woman shows respect to her husband, it is simpler for children and the community to follow suit, respect starts with the woman, because if as a woman you have no respect for me as the father and head of the home, then we will have problems. A woman should know her place and so should the children, but only if the mother serves as a good example. I don't see how sleeping around with other men or the way she talks to me when under the influence is serving a good example. There is no way anybody else will respect me….*

In this sense the woman showed other family members the importance of respect and manners in which a husband should be approached, in a way maintaining the element of status quo. Some of the families reflected that respect and communication showed cohesion.

A twenty year old mother of three expressed that:

> *Cohesion is working together, in this family we do work together. My children help me with washing the dishes, cleaning around the home and me taking care of my children. This is mainly achieved by a woman as men rarely concern themselves with raising children. Ensuring that my children are well fed, warm and comfortable is a woman's core business in the home, it goes without saying. Despite everything the children know that I love them and I take time to show them that.*

Being able to communicate also showed an individual knows his status and position in the family and that family members know proper channels to follow when there are issues to be handled.

Religion dominates the life of the Africans and therefore plays an important part in determining the status and roles of African women in the society. Religion and cultural practices as established hence dominate the lives of Africans and therefore plays an important part in determining the status and roles of African women in the society (The Pew Summary 2009). According to this study the aspect and responsibility lied with adults in the family but some specified women as the leaders in ensuring especially children practice faith. From the responses of the interviewees women were however more vocal about their role in instilling values of religion in the family.

A thirty three year old man explained that,

> *In this home my wife goes to church with the children, I usually go too but not all the time. Faith is for all of us but I just expect my wife to lead in these things, When it is time to go to church she ensures we are all ready to go to church, I do encourage the children to attend church but she is more active, the way it should be.*

Religion also becomes an important element of cohesion in families and the society (The Pew Summary 2009). Teaching the children values and issues of faith is one of the duties that come with being a mother according to the respondents.

A sixty two year old elderly woman expressed the same sentiments by revealing that:

> *In this family faith in God is the only unifying factor, for without him I would have disowned my own daughter, as her behavior goes against the family's faith, but we continue to pray and wish her recovery and that she overcomes. We are able to*

respect each other and cooperate in different activities because we have the same faith. I encourage faith and every member to have a relationship with God, which is how I feel as a woman I am helping this family stay together through fearing the Lord.

In a patriarchal setting like the one of the respondents, the responsibility of ensuring open communication lines and respect would be expected to culturally begin with the woman and children as their reverence of fathers or husbands serve as an example to other children and family members (Siqwana-Ndulo 1998). A mother is often blamed for any mistake on the child's part.

A thirty three year old man explained that,

Naturally the mother of the children takes care of every little detail of the child's needs. I could be there just to help if I want to but it is not my responsibility. If I come home from work and the child has not been fed or washed I look to the mother to give clarity. It is not to me to worry about these things but when they are not done I know who to ask questions.

A woman is therefore responsible for the training of the children in the home to become useful to the family and the nation in the future. She is expected to inculcate in the children the virtues of obedience, tolerance, love, kindness, discipline, responsibilities, and honesty.

4.3.3 Division of labor

Research has shown that women do a larger proportion of child care and routine indoor house work tasks than men, regardless of their marital status (Baxter 2001). The study's main focus lies significantly on the contribution women make in enhancing family cohesion and in trying to make an assessment of the impact of her substance abuse towards family cohesion. Having roles and different status ensured that the family worked as a system, complementing the weakness of others.

One respondent echoed the same sentiments by revealing that:

> *This is a female headed home. I am the grandmother; there is an aunt, my brother's wife, who is a mother to her children. The children in this house have a status as well as there are brothers and sisters. Being a brother comes with certain responsibilities as well as being an aunt. Everyone has a responsibility and expectations. As mothers we help them understand their roles and teach them how to love, be kind and to treat each other as family should, with love.*

A thirty eight year old woman also reflected that:

> *I am a mother, I have responsibilities and I have to set a good example to my family. To ensure cohesion I would have to take my role seriously, take my children to school, cook for them and nurse them when they are sick. My children on turn will have to respect and acknowledge my authority as their mother. I know my responsibilities as a mother and it is knowing those responsibilities that make us work together in unison, I cannot see anyone who can do what I am supposed to do as a result my family cannot do without me.*

Being a woman in the family effectively playing her part in the well-being of the family ensured cohesion. The response from the above respondent suggests that inability to partake in one's role would result in role confusion and possible malfunctioning of the family system.A woman's role in the family in terms of division of labour is traditionally the management of the home. The respondents revealed that division of labour encouraged cohesion.

One woman conveyed that:

> *When the day starts, the home is busy as everyone gets ready to go to school and my uncle gets ready to go to work. However I am soon left alone to clean the home make their beds and make them lunch when they come back from school. We do help each other with chores, but that responsibility lies mainly with me the woman in the home.*

In as much as everyone's role was important, so was that of the woman which the focus was. According to the families interviewed having roles and different statuses ensured that the family worked as a system, complementing the weakness of others. Being a woman, therefore, in the family who is effectively playing her part, ensures cohesion.

4.3.4 Common motives

Having common motives has been identified as a part of the definition of family cohesion. According to most of the families protecting the family name and image seemed very

important. It was essential that as a family they upheld the family name, being able to do this ensured they worked in harmony and they understood each other.

One male respondent said that:

A factor that ensures family stays as a unit in my opinion is having a respectable family name. This is the name that our fathers and forefathers have worked so hard to establish, and we are a well-known family. We are known for good things, for example my mother was a good traditional healer. She was trusted by many and because of this good name; favor has come to this family. It is therefore a cohesive factor that we keep our family name this way. This is the responsibility of every family member and it begins with everyone knowing their place.

Common motives included believing and wanting the same things, be it economically or socially. If the family worked hard to ensure that everyone was educated, well fed and warm, to them cohesion had been achieved.

One woman expressed cohesion in the family as:

As parents we are supposed to lead by example, especially as a mother as one is always in the eyes of the children being constantly observed and imitated by them. Though the name of the family cannot be upheld by one family member, every member has a role to play in ensuring that the family name is clean and blameless. The same image can be undone by one deed by a family member, but it is important that the parents are consistent especially the mother in ensuring that children observe behavior worthy of imitating. Our children need to embrace the same values as us the parents and I have a central role as their mother to ensure that.

Men by the nature of their culturally ascribed roles spend less time in the home; they can mostly just provide money and resources to keep the home running (Mwizenge 2001). This implies that the responsibility of making sure children attend school daily, feeding the family and keeping everyone in the home warm is for the large part done by women.

4.3.5 Family structure or marital stability

The availability of structure in the family to others families was a source of cohesion. If a home had a father and mother and other extended family members, this ensured cohesion.

One respondent concurs by stating that:

A home that has a mother and a father is not the same with one where one of them is missing. My sister raised her children by herself but she failed to execute the firm control over her children. She did a wonderful job at raising her children but it could have been better if there was a father figure around.

One woman conveyed that:

> *It was much easier to discipline my son when his father was still with us. After his father passed away he became difficult to discipline, I had always been soft with him and his father was the disciplinarian. I failed to adjust properly and I still find it hard for him to listen to me.*

The respondents pointed out that the lack of father figures in the family left skewed responsibility with the woman which probably also cultivated parenting and substance abuse problems. The male children according to the respondents were the most difficult to deal with without the presence of their fathers. The families also highlighted how it was difficult to economically contribute to the needs of the children, having to compete with men to secure jobs. Having a secure traditional family structure ensured that the family worked together better.

A middle aged woman respondent also expressed that:

> In this home we understand each other because as a family we are complete. I play my role as a wife and mother whereas my husband takes his role. We help each other to economically provide for the family even though my husband leads in that area. The fact that we are complete as a family and that we have division of labor amongst us ensures that we work together in peace therefore ensuring cohesion. Sometimes when the children do not listen to me, am positive they will listen to their father, if they do not we sit together as husband and wife to try and figure out how we can solve the problem.

As reflected in the findings the woman contributes significantly to cohesion in the family mostly in child rearing. The fact that most families in the study were without fathers proves the point.

Another respondent also expressed the above points by stating that:

There was a time during apartheid when most fathers were never there in the home; it was their mother who ensured that the children had a sense of security and warmth. Our women multi tasked playing the role of the father and their role as mothers. Women still to this day provide a strong sense of security and nurturance. Even today custody of a child is given to the mother as first option. The absence of a mother in the home leaves a huge gap, which a man can never adequately fill, yet women can fill the gap left by fathers with ease.

So as the only adult in the home, the woman is able to multi task and coupled with her nurturing instinct she becomes the most instrumental force in the home responsible for building nations. A woman therefore is recognized as the backbone of the family because of the important roles she plays in the home. Having explored how a woman influences cohesion the next section will focus on how a woman's substance abuse affect family cohesion exploring the circumstances under which this happens.

4.4 Impact of substance abuse by women on family cohesion

After having uncovered what many families defined as family cohesion the researcher sought to find out the impact of woman substance abuse on family cohesion. Under this theme, divorce and separation, neglect of children, role strain/ neglect, moral disintegration, health and foetal alcohol syndrome were uncovered as subthemes.

4.4.1 Divorce and separation

The researcher found out through the interviews marriages were indeed affected by substance abusing women. When the women interviewed were under the influence they tended to exacerbate the arguments and fights. Eventually as the history of substance abuse and violence progressed, divorce and separation resulted.

One respondent explained that:

> *Our father left our mother as he could not stand her drinking. They were always arguing and fighting every time she drank as a result our father decided to find another wife. This did not go well with our mother who made things worse by deteriorating into using all sorts of drugs trying to block the pain of losing our father. She has not been the same since, she cares only about getting high, which is taking its toll on us her children as we are out of our depth dealing with matters arising, we have no father or mother. What makes things worse is that she does not want to seek help; she refuses to try and work with us to heal the family.*

The above case like many others of this nature reflected the story of a majority of women who were single mothers. Few of the women who were involved in some union of some kind with the father of their children ended up separated and in divorce as they could no longer bear living together as a result of alcohol use. In couples that were in separation or divorced, there was lack of structure which has been identified as an essential element in family cohesion.

One respondent said that:

> *It is just harder surviving as a single parent if you once had someone. I find it hard to cope on my own and I am overwhelmed by financial problems as well as my children's emotional needs. I just feel so overwhelmed I want to run away from it all.*

Unfortunately it is drinking that helps. When I drink my problems stay out of my mind even if it is just for a while.

Women play a role in structure by helping in instilling values and keeping the family running on a day to day basis. Perrino et al, 2000 as quoted by Makomane (2012) explains the above point by saying that to execute this role women and other adult family members generally exert considerable influence as teachers and role models for children through skill building, limit setting or discipline, and as models of healthy and competent behavior. Lack of structure hence leads to problems in family functioning.

In response to the above one respondent said:

My sister's son was caught stealing at a neighbor's house and the community beat him up. He said he wanted to steal money to buy lunch at school. This is not the first time he has been caught; he has developed the habit over a time. I feel he is a good child but lacks his mother's guidance. His mother does not watch him and give him proper care and she drinks a lot.

Furthermore as a wife or spouse, the marriage, which is essential for cohesion as it provides structure, is adversely affected by substance abuse.

One woman described that:

I find it hard to discipline my children; my husband would help with that. If I was not so stressed I would try. I should have worked harder to stop using drugs, but it is difficult as I am addicted, I know it has cost me a lot but I cannot do it alone. I should have kept my family together and I am failing because I do not have the time and have robbed my children of a chance to grow up with their father.

One of the most important aspects of any marriage or spousal relationship is closeness or intimacy. The close emotional and physical connection that two people have reinforces the importance of the relationship and the love, care and compassion that is shared, it also reinforces cohesion when parents have synergy caused by their mutual understanding. Children imitate the model behavior and in turn act in the same loving ways towards each other. Substance abuse destroys this essential part of a marriage easily as a partner chooses drugs or alcohol over spending time with a spouse, especially if the woman too exacerbates the situation putting fuel onto the fire.

A woman expressed this point by elaborating that:

> *The intimacy that is shared by husband and wife is like a fire at the hearth in the middle of the room warming the rest of the family. When I and my husband work together our love rubs on to the children and they learn to be kind towards one another. This is not only because of me as a woman but our combined effort me and my husband bring to make our home warm, the opposite is happening in this home and I cannot be bothered to try anymore alone so, I leave everything as is and do what I want (abusing substances).*

Another respondent expressed that:

> *My relationship with my husband should be the foundation for our children as they learn from us, especially me the mother as I am the center of their lives and they see the world through my eyes. My children seeing me acting in a loving manner and showing respect to my husband gives them a sense of security and warmth that is necessary for then to develop as emotionally nourished human beings capable of loving other people and showing respect to their family.*

Not having this foundation may lead to many personal problems including resentment, sexual dysfunction and lack of trust, trust being an element of cohesion. This reflects that

when a woman is abusing substances she contributes to lack of cohesion through fights, instead of being the calming factor which is expected of her.

One woman described her failed marriage saying that:

We used to be so close my husband and I, we never used to fight. Something changed though as the years went by, we drifted apart, he never used to treat me like a woman or look at me the way he used to. He was an alcoholic and failed to realize this fact. I felt neglected and unworthy as a result in his absence I would drink and smoke. I felt I was nothing without him but still could not bear being around him. Soon we were fighting over anything and everything, money was never enough, we could not stand each other hence we divorced. I have since stopped drinking but it's the drinking that took away my marriage, we could have worked through our problems. I do not know how to be strong for my children; I break down and cry in front of them. I am busy nursing my own wounds half of the time, they are a reminder of their father, and it hurts.

Hurt, pain and anger are emotional responses that spouses feel when they are let down by the other partner not meeting their side of the obligations of marriage. When people in the home are not emotionally secure, it becomes hard for them to have the same goal.

4.4.2 Neglect of children

Emotional security is an element of cohesion which is built by a woman especially in children and is obviously destroyed by abusing substances. Often times as the respondents revealed mothers who abused substances neglected their mothering roles. Children were neglected and as a result some of them experienced abuse. The profound revelation in what the respondents revealed is that, as mentioned in the literature review, women as a result of abusing substances tend to neglect their roles, especially nurturing their children.

To explain this point, a respondent explained that:

> *There is no one in this family to cook, clean and help the children with their homework when they come back from school. The mother of the children is very irresponsible; she leaves the children alone and exposes them to criminals and rape. Because of her absence of drinking sprees, her youngest daughter was a victim of rape. She has emotionally neglected her children and her children will never be the same again.*

Another respondent expressed that:

> *I miss the mother my mother used to be, she is so deep in alcohol and she does not care about us her children anymore. I hurt when I see other children with lunch made by their mothers. Its small things but hurts to know she does not concern herself with the motherly things anymore. She is always angry and abusive. My sister now takes care of us, but my sister can never replace the mother my mother used to be.*

As discussed earlier women are the center of socialization for growing children, they show love through hugs and kisses to their children, an element which is essential to cohesion and which cannot be achieved if the woman is preoccupied with abusing substances. As a result of the divorce and violence, emotionally the woman fails to cope and finds comfort in substance abuse everything else dimming in comparison, including the important contribution she makes in enhancing cohesion when she is there for her children and running the household as should be.

A respondent who was a child expressed that:

If my mother loved me she would show it, like other mothers. She has never been there for me to wash for me and to be there emotionally. She has no time for me, she only cares about the men who give her drugs, the same men she exposes me to and I don't want them. I am told at school about drugs and I can see from her how they are destroying our home, especially our bond as mother and daughter. I also hate that she never keeps her promise to do something for me.

The biology of addiction and substance abuse has purported that women biologically suffer the onset of substance abuse illness compared to their male counterparts. Medical conditions and even death result as a result of addiction and substance abuse leaving orphaned children in an unstable, shacky family environment.

To this one respondent highlighted so well by stating that:

As a family we experience trauma and pain from our grandmother's actions, words, and attitudes. Because of this trauma we experience, we grow up changed, different from other children, missing important parts of necessary parenting that prepare us for adulthood, missing parts of our childhood because we are forced into unnatural roles within the family. For me, it has led me to attempt to flee the pain of the violence in the family by substance use as well. There is no love and everybody minds their own business. I smoke a lot of dagga so that I remain calm otherwise I would not be able to cope with the things my grandmother does.

Children were neglected as a result of abuse of substances by women. This was because of effects substances have physically and psychologically on the brain of its user. In the literature review, it was revealed that under the behavior of substance users is exaggerated and mainly that their main preoccupation is on how to get the next fix. This takes away focus from societal responsibilities that are expected of them.

Another respondent simply said:

The behavior exhibited by my mother embarrasses me and I am ashamed to have a mother like her. I am teased at school hence I often do bunk school which affects my grades. I wish she did not have to put me through all this.

Most of the women in this study were mothers, being a mother or caregiver who abuses substances affected the family emotionally and physically. The family was affected emotionally in the sense that substance abuse takes away the emotional availability of the mother's nurturing ways and is replaced by an uncaring human being whose main focus is on sustaining her substance abusing habit. Again physically the family members especially children and the elderly who need care are as a result neglected. For instance the hugs and kisses a mother gives to her children when they do well or when they go to sleep, or the cleaning of the house and preparation of meals goes missing when there is preoccupation with substance abuse, hence affecting cohesion.

4.4.3 Role strain/ neglect

Relationships and marriages often engross a fundamental level of responsibility for one another and for other aspects of each other's lives. This responsibility could include earning money for the family, paying bills, maintaining a house, seeing children to school or cooking dinner. When a person fails to meet their share of responsibilities, resentment can easily build up and lead to relationship problems.

A respondent expressed this point by elaborating that:

In this home no one has a job, our grandmother gets the old age grant, that is the money that is supposed to sustain us but however my mother steals it to support her substance abusing habit. It is stressful as we do not have much and now we have to hide it from her, yet she should be doing the budget and shopping. My grandmother is too old to do shopping and have no choice but to ask her to do the shopping which often she does not do and claims the money got lost.

Another respondent expressed that:

I am looking after my mother who has a drinking problem. Instead of her looking after me her child I am doing that. I fear that because of her habit one day she will be abused or murdered in the taverns. My heart is sore because I feel she has robbed me of a chance to play or to be worry free. I constantly worry if she is safe. It is worse now because my older sister is turning out to be like her, following her footsteps, its only me who seems to see that all this is not good for the family. Our mother has never been there for us.

Drugs and alcohol often impact on person's perception, memory and ability to perform simple acts. Changes may occur in a person's concept of personal responsibility when they begin using drugs and alcohol. They may also bring drug-addict behavior into the family home which can upset the delicate balance of a marriage or family.

The family systems theory and role theory purported in some instances that some of the family members will become overburdened with the responsibility of taking care of children, being emotionally supportive and taking unnatural roles resulting in role strain.

This was put into light by one elderly woman who said:

> *The eldest child who is only seventeen has now assumed the role of her mother, as the mother fails to ensure everyone is well fed and the home is looking clean. As her aunt, I now mother my entire sister's children; I try my best as I have my own children to mother as well. This is all because the mother of the children fails to fulfill her role and we are now forced to fill that role whether we like it or not.*

Cohesion as defined by the respondents earlier is impacted negatively as the mother is absent to play her role and other family members are forced to take atypical roles. As a result children who are at the height of enjoying a certain developmental stage are robbed of that opportunity to become mothers, a role they may not fully perform well.

In most of the families the woman was the breadwinner and had the responsibility to ensure that the welfare of all the members is sufficiently catered for. In most cases the most vulnerable members were children. According to the families interviewed cohesion represented positive supportive interaction among family members who can economically support each other.

One respondent expressed that:

> *The benefits of belonging to a family are working together especially economically. We are disadvantaged as women; it is hard for us to get employment. Not having a man who is employed in this home is a major blow to us.*

Women in sub-Saharan Africa however have high unemployment rate, they are under-represented among the working poor as they find is more difficult to secure formal employment than men, owing to their short or no work experience, limited professional

networks and lack of education. In consequence, even if they find work, the jobs "tend to be characterized by low wages, poor working conditions and few opportunities for skills development" (UNDP, 2012:19)

A thirty eight year old woman reflected this as:

> *I am a mother, I am self-employed, I only have a grade 7 and it is hard to provide for my family. As a woman some jobs are not open to us, especially those that required physical hard labor.*

The family as a result, suffered as there was no food in the home, adequate clothing, there was a general neglect of responsibility from the woman as her main aim was to sustain her substance abuse habit. In a situation where the substance abuser is a bread winner, the family might have to find other financial resources with which to buy necessities like food or pay bills, since abusers will often use that money to get drugs. Being able to economically work together has been said to enhance cohesion by the respondents, reflecting that lack of the ability to economically work together, definitely weakened the family system and negatively affected cohesion.

This was outlined by a respondent who expressed that:

> *It is hard to work together as a family as everyone minds their own business. My brothers actually take my mother's habit as an excuse for them to misbehave and be involved in all sorts of truancy. My mother does not work but the little she makes from her odd jobs, she abuses, leaving us with nothing. She has become a burden instead of making our lives easier as a mother should, because we have to find help in treatment centers so that she may stop abusing substances.*

There can also be financial strain caused by medical bills for multiple rehabilitation treatments, bail for court appearances, and emergency services related to drug overdoses. Given that use of alcohol or drugs can impair the parts of the brain responsible for rational thought (Cavanaugh, 2010), it is reasonable therefore to assume that financial needs of the family are put aside in favor of financing the habit of substance use. This inevitably affects the well-being of children, school performance, esteem, health and cohesion. As a result of the resources of the family instead of working towards strengthening the family system and benefiting it, most of its economic gains are abused by one family member hence creating tension and needs are not met.

A family member and a student expressed that:

> *I don't have time to do my homework as I have to take care of my sister's children after school. My sister lives a nomadic lifestyle because of the drugs and has left the responsibility to our mother and me. My mother takes care of the children in the morning while I am at school and later she goes to work and I have to babysit. She should be here to see her children grow but she does not care.*

Part of cohesion in the family as mentioned earlier is the ability for members to take care of each other and contribute economically and emotionally towards the needs of the family. In this study, this responsibility best fit the woman. The women could however, not take such a responsibility as most were preoccupied with how to get their next fix.

4.4.4 Moral disintegration

Women in the home are also responsible to some extent for teaching the children what is right and what is wrong. It is within the family environment that an individual's physical, emotional and psychological development occurs.

A respondent revealed that:

> *The way I see it, the family teaches children as they grow up how to be part of the larger society. In the family children learn right and wrong, manners and how to behave in a way that is appropriate in society.*

It is from the family that we learn unconditional love, we understand right from wrong, and we gain empathy, respect and self-regulation. These qualities enable us to engage positively at school, at work and in society in general (Centre for Social Justice, 2010:6). The woman as explained before is the first point, primary source of socialization and without her being present effectively watching over the development of her family results in a family that is not cohesive. As a result of not having had a woman to tell the difference between right and wrong to the family especially children, the children grow up without boundaries. This affects respect, communication and the value system in the home which are essential for keeping cohesion in the family.

A respondent clearly explained the situation in this way:

> *The mother of these children hardly has time to teach her children right and wrong; they are up and down the streets and have no one to counsel them. The children really need their mother to cook for them, keep them warm and be there for them as they grow up. This is not happening because the mother is on drugs and she is not there for her children. Her children are also adopting her behavior as they imitate her behavior and it is easy to see that the children will go nowhere in life.*

Not only does the absence of the woman in the home rob children of their mother, a woman who is supposed to be a role model for them, her substance abusing habit also means that children see her behavior as the model behavior and begin to imitate it. Cohesion is affected in the family especially when there is no mother to teach right and wrong, meaning everybody does what they want and nobody listens to anyone. The woman, in a way, breeds a generation of substance abusing children who are disrespecting, have no values and lead chaotic lives, because children learn through imitation and the mother or care giver is their first source of imitation.

The status of being a mother involves assisting and being at the forefront in inculcating in children the virtues of obedience, tolerance, love, kindness, discipline, responsibilities, and honesty. International multidisciplinary research evidence, for example, indicates that children growing up in low-income families and households where parenting practices and behavior are created as a result substance use and material hardship generally experience social and health conditions that place them at risk of later academic, employment and behavioral problems (Shanks &Danzinger, 2005).

Not partaking in religion or tradition by parents or elders does not only affect them but their children as well. This was highlighted by a young man who emotionally opened his heart expressing that:

> *I have not gone home to the mountains because my mother has not found time and the money to. I am 21 years old and still a boy. Because of the way my mother treats me, that is why I have turned to Dagga for solitude. No one can believe am still a boy, and it is because of her putting boyfriends and alcohol first*

In the Xhosa culture, among men, the most important part in their life is when they are recognized to have become a man. This is something that is organized and celebrated by the whole family. On the other hand not having gone through the ritual demeans and castrates one's manhood, (SiqwanaNdulo1998). The effects of not having conformed to cultural practices have already been established by the young man, who is embarrassed of what he is and seeks comfort in substances.

Again because of the patriarchal nature of the community where the interview was being conducted, the primary role of ensuring the proper socialization of the child was left to the woman, making sure that children are exposed to the proper value systems and tradition. In African society, children are believed to imitate the mother more than any other person around them. A mother is often blamed for any mistake on the child's part (Siqwana-Ndulo 1998). This further illustrates the paramount and influential position women are expected to have over the household and raising of children. The importance of their contribution

and their pivotal role is thus illuminated. After having discussed the effects of substance abuse on the user and situations it then goes without saying that a child cannot be raised well by a substance abusing mother

4.4.5 Economic Support

As a result of transformations such as, among others, domestic violence perpetuated by substance abuse, female-headed households have become a discernible pattern on the African social landscape, with recent figure showing that these type of households account for more than 20 percent of all households in many countries of the region (Mokomane, 2012). This pattern has implications the social and economic empowerment of individuals in these households given that female-headed households have been shown to be generally disadvantaged in terms of access to important socio-economic resources such as land, livestock, credit, education, health care and extension services (Connell, 2003).

One male also respondent echoed that:

> *Through helping each other and economic support, we are able as a family to stay strong. I am the only one gainfully employed in this house and my mother at times helps by hawking selling sweets and vegetables. That is how I am able to raise my children. My wife however does not contribute anything as she is irresponsible with money, which she would rather drink.*

Although Africa has, over the last decade, experienced rapid economic growth and declines in the poverty rate and the absolute number of poor people poverty continues to

deter families in the continent from playing their various roles, and hence makes it difficult

for individuals to realize full social and economic empowerment. In essence, just less than

half (47.5 percent) of people in sub-Saharan Africa were living on less than US$1.25 per

day in 2008, a decline from 52.3 percent and 56.5 percent reported in 2005 and 1990

respectively (UNDP, 2012).There can also be financial strain caused by medical bills for

multiple rehabilitation treatments, bail for court appearances, and emergency services

related to drug overdoses. Given that use of alcohol or drugs can impair the parts of the

brain responsible for rational thought (Cavanaugh, 2010), it is reasonable therefore to

assume that financial needs of the family are put aside in favor of financing the habit of

substance use. This inevitably affects the well-being of children, school performance,

esteem, health and cohesion. As a result of the resources of the family instead of working

towards strengthening the family system and benefiting it, most of its economic gains are

abused by one family member hence creating tension and needs are not met.

A family member and a student expressed that:

> *I don't have time to do my homework as I have to take care of my sister's children*
> *after school. My sister lives a nomadic lifestyle because of the drugs and has left*
> *the responsibility to our mother and me. My mother takes care of the children in*
> *the morning while I am at school and later she goes to work and I have to babysit.*
> *She should be here to see her children grow but she does not care.*

According to UNDP (2012), A disproportionate burden of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa

is borne by women as they typically assume more household responsibilities, spend a

larger portion of their time on unpaid care work than men, and form a greater proportion

of discouraged work seekers. This situation is further exacerbated by the inadequate provision of childcare facilities, causing the amount of time women spend on wage work to be reduced, and their vulnerability to poverty to increase.

This was outlined by a respondent who expressed that:

> *It is hard to work together as a family as everyone minds their own business. My brothers actually take my mother's habit as an excuse for them to misbehave and be involved in all sorts of truancy. My mother does not work but the little she makes from her odd jobs, she abuses, leaving us with nothing. She has become a burden instead of making our lives easier as a mother should, because we have to find help in treatment centers so that she may stop abusing substances.*

In most of the families the woman was the breadwinner and had the responsibility to ensure that the welfare of all the members is sufficiently catered for. In most cases the most vulnerable members were children.

4.4.6 Health and foetal alcohol syndrome

Being a mother who abuses substances also affects the development of an unborn child, who is vulnerable, unable in any way to avoid the impact and at the mercy of its mother's habit. Some of the respondents reflected on how as a result of too much alcohol consumption some of the family members were born with fetal alcohol syndrome (F.A.S). F.A.S seriously impairs a child's lifetime ability to function mentally, physically and socially and to achieve his/her full potential.

As one respondent, a mother to three children, put it this way:

> *My first child has learning difficulty as well as behavioral problems, I was not aware that it was because of my drinking as there was little information about the condition, it was only after my second pregnancy that I was informed about the dangers of drinking alcohol while pregnant, how it causes permanent brain damage to an unborn child even though it was too late to reverse the damage. The children are very difficult to control and I blame myself, if I had not been drinking things would have been different. It is so expensive to get them medication and into schools that cater for their special needs.*

The ability of a mother to be understanding and seek some form of treatment early in the development of the child helps in the healthy development of the child. As a result not understanding the condition and the mother's continued abuse especially of alcohol, strain develops which cascades further abuse, misunderstandings hence lack of cohesion in the family.

A married woman expressed the chaos in her family caused by F.A.S by saying that:

> *As much as we have always fought as husband and wife, things worsened after the birth of our son. He did not grow to be like other children, he needed too much medical attention and he was later diagnosed with F.A.S. This worsened our fights as he never approved of my drinking in the first place. I did not know about F.A.S then but now my child may never be like normal children and my husband is already entertaining other women. Our fights never end as the child is a reminder of a stubborn woman I am who never listened to her husband.*

The role theory proposes that changed conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change (Mead, 1934). The family systems theory also suggests that a family is a system in which each member has a role to play and rules to respect. Members of the system are expected to respond to each other in a certain way according to their role, which is determined by relationship agreements. Within the boundaries of the system, patterns develop as certain family members' behavior is caused by and causes other family members' behaviors in predictable ways. Maintaining the same pattern of behaviors within a system may lead to balance in the family system, but also to dysfunction. The study has been guided by these two models that helped in explaining how the family works as a system, and the importance and understanding of each part playing its role.

4.5 Possible solutions

In this case most of the interviewees felt that it was because of poverty and lack of money that made them resort to substance abuse. One man expressed that:

> *If only the government could give us more money for child support, or grants we would be able to cope. Right now it is hard to cope and face reality of the circumstances we live in on a sober mind. Understandably substance abuse removes one temporarily from the pain and for those few hours one can experience bliss of another kind. It is different with rich people who do not have to face bleak circumstances as us, they are happy already and so they do not need to alter their state of mind to experience happiness like we do. We need financial support since obviously the government cannot give us jobs, so yes we need money.*

Another respondent looked at the possible solution from another angle:

Its lack of shame, taking cultures that don't belong to us. We are losing our moral values because we are taking cultures that are foreign to us and making them ours. It is a matter of going back to our roots from the point things started to go wrong and adopting those old values. We never used to have social grants long back; we would work hard for everything with our hands. We can still do it.

In a nutshell the respondents felt that there is more the government can do to relieve them from poverty through financial assistance. Most of the respondents were jobless, unskilled and lack of resources to enable self-employment made the situation worse. As a result one is looking at idle people, who are hungry, have nothing to occupy them and who find solace in abusing substances as a way of running away from it all. Some of the respondents echoed the same sentiments as the woman who felt it was because of loss of moral values and pride in the culture that has always sustained families for decades and adopting other cultures that do not crystallize with the African family system.

Another respondent highlighted the need for increased awareness of the dangers of substance abuse in the communities:

The police needs to take a strict and firm stance with substance abusing women. It is wrong for a woman to kill the future of an unborn child because she has been drinking too much. We need awareness of such things in our communities. It is a sad and grim reality that needs to be tackled. Women are running loose in taverns and children are left vulnerable to rape because there is no one looking after them.

As reflected in the literature reviewed in this study, South Africa especially the Western Cape has one of the highest rates of F.A.S. Reflectively this makes it a problem that needs gender specific targeting in order to unravel the solution. Women hence need to be educated of the dangers and firm measures be put in place to ensure that an unborn child has a fair chance of leading a normal life.

4.6 Conclusion

All in all the respondents managed to elaborate the different facets that affect the families as a result of substance abuse by woman in the family. Highlighted was how roles in the family change as children and other family members take the role of the woman who is abusing substances. Health issues surrounding women abusing substances, how marriage suffers, domestic violence and child neglect were some of the issues raised by the respondents. The responses reflected that substance abuse negatively alters marital and family functioning. Therefore substance abuse by women and family functioning are strongly and reciprocally linked. Substance abuse thus increases family problems, as family problems increase, substance abuse also increases. In the following chapter, the researcher concludes the study. Limitations and recommendations are also suggested.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by drawing conclusions on substance abuse by women and the effects it has on family cohesion in rural villages in the Nkonkobe municipality in the Eastern Cape. The chapter will further review the work done as a whole and highlight the limitations and recommendations. In reviewing the work done emphasis will be on identifying points of comparison and contrast in the various texts that have been examined in this study, and to show that, in the process of conducting the study, a more precise, critical understanding of the topic was displayed. The chapter will also re-visit the objectives of the study so as to determine the findings of the study in relation to the objectives of the study.

5.2 Summary of findings

 The first objective of the study was to understand the role played by women in enhancing family cohesion. Under this objective the study uncovered what the respondents' expectation was of women. The study revealed that women in rural villages in the Eastern Cape still occupied a submissive role to men in their communities. African tradition and culture influenced the expectations of what the role of the woman should be in the family and her contribution in keeping the family together. The family systems theory suggests how every member's role contributes to the whole system. The role of the woman in this

case functions in an interdependent manner with the rest of the family. The most prominent contribution that surfaced was that of child rearing and managing the home. This is not surprising taking into consideration the traditional and rural setting in which the study was conducted. The study was conducted in rural villages where patriarchy still dominates and strong traditional and cultural African values are still held.

 The study further revealed that, women were said to contribute significantly to shared affection. Shared affection was a natural by-product of being by nature a nurturer which came easily to women and was easily extended to other family members. Norms and values were indicated as contributions made by women owing to the position of influence the mother has one child due to the fact that they are always supposed to be in her sight. A woman has been said to be responsible for training children, teaching them morals and instilling values. Instilling norms and values is however not exclusively done by women, but women do contribute significantly according to the interviewees' responses. Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) has indicated that a child in the African families is not raised by one person alone but by a community, in fact usually the whole extended family has the responsibility of raising a child. It is therefore important that the researcher highlights that it is not by the strength of the mother alone that a child is raised but her contribution adds breadth and depth to a child's development.

Through division of labour the influence of a woman in enhancing family cohesion was indicated in the study. Regardless of the setting, which means that, anywhere in the world a woman has more responsibility in issues of the home and child rearing (Bexter 2001). So as it turned out in this study, this was the case. In terms of the division of labour the duties of home management lay heavily with women. Another contributing factor is the African culture which demands that a woman pays attention to issues in the home (Mwizenge, 2001). Most articulated in this was the woman's ability to clean, cook and cater for the needs of the children. No other member of the family was indicated as best suitable for this role other than the woman. Having common interests has also been included in the definition of cohesion as a cohesive factor. The study also identified common interests as a subtheme under the elements of family cohesion as identified by the respondents. Though this attribute was not uniquely attributed to the woman, this was also where her contribution was credited by the respondents. Finally marital stability was indicated as a factor that encouraged family unity as it provided balance and structure in the family. This was also not an attribute solely contributed by the woman but by both man and woman with equal depth. The availability and presence of the woman in the home even without the father was indicated as a better option in the study.

The study also had an objective to find out how family cohesion is affected when a woman abuses substances in the family. The second objective inevitably is linked to the first objective and the response was virtually the opposite. Nevertheless, the study has revealed that substance abuse by women greatly leads to separation or divorce, fights and

arguments and domestic violence. This is exacerbated by the nature of the problem which is substance induced. Statistically most domestic violence cases are committed by a spouse or partners under the influence of substances (UNDP 1995). The impact that substance abuse has on the marital union hence undeniably negatively affects cohesion in the home.

Neglect, especially of the children, has been indicated through the study as a side effect of women abusing substance in the family. Many cases of child neglect today are a result of neglect which is connected to substance abuse (Streissguth, 1997). The study has revealed the neglect of duties and emotional unavailability by a woman abusing substances, the emotional availability that has been established as critical for the development of a child in this study. As a result of children learning through imitation especially of its closest members, women have been said to pass the substance abusing behaviour to their children. Through imitating the behaviour of an adult, the family structure and cohesiveness is negatively impacted upon, significantly. This results in moral disintegration. Substance abuse also negatively impacts on the health of its users and particularly so in women because of their genetic makeup. Substance abuse goes a step further in women to also affect the health of the unborn child, a factor that has been significantly raised in this study

The other objective which was addressed in this study was to find out the kind of ideas the respondents had on how the problem of substance abuse among women could be handled. The respondents raised concern over government's role in raising awareness, deepening and entrenching of ourselves more in our cultural values and stricter policing by the South African Police Service.

The application of theory assisted in understanding the theoretical assumption in the study. A family is a system and could be best understood using the role theory which has enabled the researcher to understand and illuminate why as a woman her role and contribution in family is significant in cohesion. Roles have been defined as ways in which people behave in relation to a socially defined position or set of expectations (Parrish 2010). In this case the role of the woman was indicated and an understanding of her position in the family system established through the identification of elements of family cohesion, a woman's contribution to cohesion was projected.

The role theory assumes that the division of labour in society takes the form of the interaction among heterogeneous specialized positions that we call roles, these social roles include appropriate and permitted forms of behaviour, guided by social norms, which are commonly known and hence determine expectations. In this study, the role under scrutiny was that of the woman, and it was revealed that she is most importantly a mother and a caregiver. The expectations of mothers and women in this study have been

revealed as child rearing, home management, economic contribution, instilling norms and values and shared affection. The changes in the family cohesiveness as a result of women using substances was explained in the role theory, as the role theory says that changed conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change(Mead, 1934).

In understanding the family as a system, each element contributes something to the whole. Families are systems of interconnected and interdependent individuals, none of whom can be understood in isolation from the system (Genopro 2010). It has been established in this study that cohesion is not a factor uniquely secured by the woman alone. There were instances in the study where marital union was a factor in unifying the family. Marital union was the responsibility of both husband and wife. In other instances, as said in literature, a child is not raised by a mother alone but by his extended family and by the rest of the community. According to the family systems theory, a family is a system in which each member has a role to play and rules to respect. Each role in the family has characteristics; there are relationships between the elements; the relationships function in an interdependent manner. The family systems theory allowed the researcher to look at the bigger picture the family as a whole whereas the role theory zoomed in to look at what each role entailed and what it contributed to the whole.

5.3 Comparison and contradictions of findings with Literature

Siqwana-Ndulo (1998: 262) explains that "in an African society generally, and among the Xhosa in particular, "family" refers to a much wider circle of people. Present-day African marriages do not necessarily involve a plurality of wives but the fundamental principles of family life have not been lost altogether". In this study during the interviews it was apparent that this definition still applied, as families interviewed included aunts, uncles and nieces living together in the same household.

The study has concurred with some of the studies about women and substance abuse, especially with statistics confirming that alcohol and dagga are the most abused substances in rural villages and that poverty and substance abuse have a relationship. Poverty was more pronounced in the households as the findings reflect that there was a high rate of unemployment, Peltzer and Sekoa (2004) also affirm that use of drugs such as dagga/Mandrax and solvents (e.g. glue) are more common among persons from less advantaged communities. Alcohol and dagga were the most abused substances in this study. There was a lot of reflection from the respondents about how a woman loses respect when she abuses substances; this perhaps explains why often-times women do it in secret, even though it was not reflected in this study.

The marital status of most of the women interviewed who abused substances was single, particularly single mothers, Mamman, Brieger, and Oshiname (2006) in their study

presented that single, separated, or divorced women were more likely to abuse substances than married or widowed women. Most of these women were as a result in violent relationships that ended up in separation or some, because of their habit of abusing substances, were involved in risky sexual encounters with men hence bearing children without fathers. This concurs with literature as some of the studies revealed that women who usually abuse substances are single. In this study the women explained how it was hard for them to leave their habit as they were unemployed and to run away from the stress of life they had to abuse substances.

As a result of substance abuse many women were involved in risky sexual behaviours, as expressed by one respondent that:

> …*we have a problem especially with my eldest daughter who is not even available today for this meeting because she was drinking with another woman's husband she is now staying with.*

Such behaviours were a source of strain to the family as this behaviour brought shame to the family. The risky sexual behaviours also resulted in single motherhood and put women at risk of infection of diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

"In South Africa, roles played and contributions made by black women, in particular, include supporting households, raising children, caring for sick and disabled family members, caring for persons infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS, engaging in livelihoods to augment household income, and participating in activities of community

organizations and in political processes", (Ferreira 2006:5). Women have been described as nurturers, the managers of the home, and hence when under the influence of substances this role is jeopardized. This has been voiced more often among the respondents as they emphasised how the role the woman should play was being sabotaged by the abuse of substances. The respondents voiced mainly the issue of child care, how as a result there was role strain, how other members of the family like children had to take up the unnatural role of being the mother and looking after the siblings. In this study as a result of the substance abuse women in a way changed their roles with their children in some situations as the children had to look out for their mother, the mother in this case became almost like a child as she had to be looked after and looked as in some cases when women go missing.

Literature has revealed how women are affected more physically by substance abuse than their male counterparts, how they easy get addicted to the substances than men. Because of women's genetic makeup women are more prone to diseases and addiction. This has also been revealed in this study as some people expressed how ill and fragile women were compared to men. One respondent as a result also expressed how after finding out about the effects decided his partner should stop drinking though to no avail.

The issue of Foetal alcohol syndrome affects the child and the family as a whole. Many of the women interviewed abused alcohol more than any other drug; this had a bearing on

their children as many were born with Foetal alcohol syndrome. The findings reflected that women who abused alcohol gave birth to children mentally incapable of facing the normal academic challenges at school. These children also displayed major behavioural problems and were said to be hyper active. As a result the family was faced with a permanent challenge of finding means of coping with a child with mental disability as a result of the mother's substance abuse. The problem of having challenging children no added to the strain in relationships in the households.

Peltzer et.al (2004:12) revealed that "substance abuse in the form of alcohol, dagga, crack and mandrax are frequently used by sex workers". Contrary to some findings in literature as much as some of the women in the study who were interviewed abused substances, there was no reflection that they were sex workers, most of these women were single mothers who were only involved in risky sexual behaviours but not necessarily selling their bodies for money.

5.4 Conclusions

The study aimed at finding out substance abuse by women and its effects on family cohesion in rural villages surrounding the Nkonkobe Municipality in the Eastern Cape. The findings from the 45 families interviewed reflected that indeed family cohesion was adversely affected when especially a woman abused substances. The different roles the woman plays in a family set up were explored, their situation in terms of employment and

marital status also looked into. This gave the researcher a broad view of the issues that impact the family and the contributing factors to substance abuse by women. In exploring the role women play and how women react under the influence of substances an undeniable connection was made and the effect on the family was immense. Women tended to neglect their traditional roles; they were more affected physically as their biological set up made it easy for them to get addicted easily. Of the worst effects substance abuse by women had on the family was how the future of the unborn child was affected. Children who are born with foetal alcohol syndrome have little hope of ever leading a normal life as their lives are permanently scarred from birth, no amount of rehabilitation could remove the permanent damage caused by foetal alcohol syndrome. To make matter worse many of the women are ignorant of this information hence the cycle is likely to continue for a long time.

5.5. Limitations

As de Vos et al (2005: 118), explains that "generally when identifying limitations the researcher must consider the validity and reliability of all data collection instruments, the generalizability of the sample to the population from which it was drawn, access to data, ethical problems and the ability to control extraneous factors in the environment and in respondents". To ensure data collected was reliable and valid all the ethical principles mentioned were strictly adhered to. The possible limitation in conducting this research was that substance abuse among women is done secretively and there is a possibility the researcher did not get all the information regarding this issue. To guard against this

limitation the respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity with the handling of whatever information will be gathered from them. Obtaining permission from the different households to conduct the interviews was a challenging task as it is not always easy to gain access to people's homes and ask questions about sensitive issues like how substance abuse is affecting families. Working therefore with local institutions, already established within communities like the South African Police Services and the Department of Social Development helped in making this possible as they already had contacts and communities they worked with regarding related matters. Furthermore these stake holders had the trust of community members hence as a result the researcher was welcomed as a colleague.

5.6 Recommendations

- ➢ There is definitely a need to increase awareness among pregnant mother of the dangers of foetal alcohol syndrome by the Health Departments.

- ➢ The government needs to implement policies or a law that criminalises the abuse of substances by women when pregnant or the creation of boot camps for women who continue abusing substances despite being fully aware of the damage it causes to the unborn child.

- ➢ Structures and resources to be put in place by government or social development that encourage women to take pride in their role of being nurturers in the family

hence ensuring that families can survive and the nation can be raised by nurturing and loving care givers.

➢ Organisations that deal with family problems to reach out to these marginalised communities as they are often left out to cater for themselves with no expertise or means to achieve this.

➢ The local South African Police Service to continue and expand its awareness programs of substance abuse to all rural communities as they are making impact within these communities.

➢ There is need for a combined effort from the families, government, nongovernmental organisations and various stake holders concerned with the well-being of families to put an effort to conscietize and rehabilitate failing families, maintaining and encouraging existing family values that promote family values.

5.7 Suggestions for further studies

➢ A lot more studies of this nature to be undertaken that focus on women and substance abuse and the effects on family cohesion as literature has reflected that very few studies have been done in this area.

➢ Focus on other areas that may affect family cohesion like violence and substance abuse by other family members.

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APPENDIX 1:

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FORM

The confidentiality Agreement is entered into by and between University of Fort Hare

Masters Student, Prudence Muusha, with interviewees for the purpose of preventing the

unauthorized disclosure of Confidential Information.

Kindly be informed that the interview will be conducted with confidentiality, anonymity and

your right as a respondent to exercise your voluntary participation, will be ensured. Each

party has signed this Agreement.

_____ (Signature)

Date: _____

_____ (Signature)

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2:

CONSENT FORM

I hereby confirm that:

- I have understood the information provided on the study.

- I am aware that a tape recorder will be used to capture data during this study.

- I understand that participation in this study is voluntary.

- I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

- I understand that no payment will be received for participating in this study.

- I have a right to access the study results if I so wish.

I hereby confirm that I fully understand the conditions of this study and what my rights and responsibilities as a participant are.

I am therefore willing to participate in this study.

Signature: ....

Date: ....

APPENDIX 3:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

Kindly be informed that the interview will be conducted with confidentiality, anonymity and your right as a respondent to exercise your voluntary participation, will be ensured.

This schedule is designed to look into the issue of Substance abuse by women and its effects on family cohesion in rural villages around Nkonkobe Municipality, Eastern Cape. This interview Schedule comprises of two sections, section A for demographic particulars, B Interview schedule questions.

A) DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

A1) Age of substance abusing women

A2) Marital status

Single	Divorced	Widowed	Married

A3) Status of substance abusing women within the family

Mother	Guardian/ caregiver	Dependent of the family e.g. daughter

A 4) Level of education

None	Primary	High School	Matric	Tertiary

A5) Employment status

Permanently employed	Temporarily employed	Unemployed

B) INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

B1. What role do women play in promoting family cohesion?

B2. How is family cohesion affected by a woman abusing substances in the family?

B3. What are the circumstances under which family cohesion is affected when a woman abuses substances?

B4. What are the possible solutions to the problem of women abusing substances?

B5. Any other information you might want to add?

Thank you.