088556

182968925F

RGN·HSRC

SENTRUM VIR BIBLIOTEEK- EN INLIGTINGSDIENSTE

CENTRE FOR LIBRARY AND IMFORMATION SERVICES

VERVALDATUM/DATE DUE

1997 -07- 21

1997 -12- 09

1997 -12- 09

1929933866

001.3072068 HSRC ASS 17

287862

287859

Report ASS/BBS-17

THE SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND SOCIAL NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS OF A GROUP OF LOW-INCOME SINGLE MOTHERS IDENTIFIED AS USERS AND NON-USERS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Rumilla V. Naran

Co-operative Programme: Affordable Social Security

Subprogramme: Affordable Social Provision

Pretoria
Human Sciences Research Council
1991

The Co-operative Research Programme: Affordable Social Security is managed within the Group: Social Dynamics, of the Human Sciences Research Council. The research is being undertaken by means of several subprogrammes of which Affordable Social Provision is one.

The main emphasis in the overarching programme as well as in the subprogrammes is on aspects of affordability, responsibility and accountability in the field of social security and the provision of social services.

The consultation and administrative infrastructural assistance obtained from the Centre for Social and Development Studies (CSDS), University of Natal, is hereby acknowledged. Neither the CSDS nor the HSRC (particularly the committee for the Subprogramme: Affordable Social Provision) necessarily agrees with the views expressed and the conclusions reached in the publication.

Committee members
Dr Ritha Ramphal (Chairperson), Mrs Celia Dawson, Prof. E.A.K. Hugo, Miss Sheilagh Hurford, Mrs Elizabeth Sithole, Dr Ina Snyman (Co-ordinator), Dr H.G. Strijdom, Prof. M.A. van Zyl

Specialist consultants
Dr D.B.T. Hackland, Dr J. Op't Hof, Dr Milla McLachlan

Programme secretary
Mrs M. Doorewaard

RGN BIBLIOTEEK
1991 9. 19.
HSRC LIBRARY
STANDKODE 001.3072068 HSRC ASS 17
AANWINSNOMMER 088556

ISBN 0-7969-1011-1

© Human Sciences Research Council, 1991

Printed and distributed by the HSRC Publishers
134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria
(Private Bag X41, Pretoria, 0001)

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	EKSERP/ABSTRACT	vi
1.	**INTRODUCTION**	1
2.	**PURPOSE, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**	4
2.1	Purpose of the study	4
2.2	Rationale for the study	4
2.3	Significance of the study	6
3.	**STUDY DESIGN, INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLING**	7
3.1	Survey instruments	7
3.1.1	Questionnaire One	7
3.1.2	Questionnaire Two	7
3.2	Definition of terms	8
3.2.1	Single mother	8
3.2.2	User (of professional services)	9
3.2.3	Non-user (of professional services)	9
3.3	Sample	9
3.3.1	Study area	9
3.3.2	Study population	9
3.3.3	Sampling procedure	9
4.	**THEORETICAL OVERVIEW**	10
4.1	Theoretical perspectives	11
4.2	Definition/description of relevant variables	12
4.2.1	Network size	12
4.2.2	Network density	12
4.2.3	Multiplexity	13
4.2.4	Social networks and social support	14
4.2.4.1	Sources of social support	15
4.2.4.1.1	Support from kin	15
4.2.4.1.2	Support from friends	15
4.2.4.1.3	Support from neighbours	16
5.	**FINDINGS**	17
5.1	Cross-tabulation analyses	17
5.2	Product-moment correlation	23
5.3	Principal component analysis	24
6.	**DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**	26
6.1	Importance of relatives	26
6.2	Sources of support	28
6.3	Other	28
6.4	Discussion of principal component analysis	28

CONTENTS (continued)

		PAGE
7.	**IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES**	30
7.1	Network assessment at intake level	30
7.2	Assessment of support requirements	31
7.3	Social support intervention	31
7.4	Creating a new support network	31
7.5	Training helping agents	32
7.6	Training clients to influence their social networks	32
7.7	Increasing individual, family and community resources	33
REFERENCES		35
APPENDIX A	**Sample Selection Guide**	42
APPENDIX B	**Personal Social Resource Questionnaire**	44
	The Network Map	46

LIST OF TABLES

1	HELP WITH HOUSING	17
2	HELP WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS	18
3	HELP IN AN EMERGENCY	19
4	ADVICE	19
5	TALK ABOUT WORK	20
6	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	20
7	HELP WITH CONCERNS RELATED TO CHILDREN	21
8	CORRELATION MATRIX OF NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS AND SERVICE UTILIZATION	23
9	RESULTS FROM A PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS	25

EKSERP

Hierdie navorsing handel oor 50 lae-inkomste enkelmoeders van wie die helfte as verbruikers en die ander helfte as nie-verbruikers van formele, professionele maatskaplike dienste geïdentifiseer is.

Die doel van die studie was om die 50 persone se persoonlike besonderhede, maatskaplike steunstelsels en netwerkkenmerke te beskryf; die maatskaplike steunstelsels van gebruikers met dié van nie-gebruikers te vergelyk; die netwerkkenmerke te identifiseer wat met hulpsoek-gedrag verband hou; dan assesseringriglyne vir die evaluering van steunstelsels en netwerke te ontwikkel, en ingrypingstrategieë vir enkelmoeders aan die hand te doen.

Familie, veral gesinslede, was die vernaamste bron van ondersteuning vir die gebruikers sowel as die nie-gebruikers van dienste, maar die twee groepe het verskil ten opsigte van die *tipes* steun wat ontvang is. Daarbenewens, terwyl gebruikers meer van *formele* dienste gebruik gemaak het, het hulle minder van *informele* dienste gebruik gemaak.

Strategieë vir netwerkingryping wat aan die hand gedoen word vir enkelmoeders met tekortkominge in hulle steunstelsels, is: skep 'n nuwe steunstelsel, lei persone in die bestaande netwerk op om meer ondersteunend op te tree, of verstewig die bestaande steunstelsel.

Dikwels funksioneer steunstelsels egter swak of glad nie omdat die *gemeenskapsbronne* waaruit, of met behulp waarvan, hulle opgebou moet word, ontoereikend is of glad nie bestaan nie. Maatskaplike werkers, onder andere, behoort dus meer betrokke te raak by gemeenskapsontwikkeling en -organisasie, asook by maatskaplike en politieke aksie, ten einde sodanige gemeenskapsbronne te skep, vermeerder of verbeter.

ABSTRACT

This research deals with 50 low-income single mothers of whom half were identified as users and the other half as non-users of formal, professional social services. The objectives of the study were to describe their personal details, social support systems and network characteristics; compare the social support systems of the users with those of the non-users; identify the network characteristics associated with help-seeking behaviour, and develop a social support and social network assessment guide as well as strategies of intervention for single mothers.

Relatives, mostly family, were found to be an important source of support for the users as well as the non-users of services, but the two groups differed with regard to the *types* of support received. Furthermore, while users made greater use of *formal* support services, they tapped fewer *informal* sources.

The network intervention strategies suggested for single mothers with deficiencies in their support systems, are: to create a new support system, train the people in the existing network to become more supportive, or strengthen an existing support system.

However the support systems often do not function well, or not at all, because the *community resources* from which, or with the aid of which, they should arise are inadequate or non-existent. Social workers should therefore *inter alia* become more involved in community development and organization in order to establish, increase or improve such resources.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study examines the personal characteristics, social support systems and network characteristics of 50 low-income single mothers identified as users and non-users of formal professional social services. This information is seen as necessary to the planning and provision of social services for single mothers.

Single mothers may choose to cope with the single-parent role by using their personal resources, the resources available in their informal network, mutual aid self-help groups; community self-help efforts or professional services. The majority maintain their own mental health with little assistance from mental health professionals. Gottlieb (1976) states that most people avoid psychopathology in their own lives, intentionally or unwittingly, by tapping naturally occurring helping networks or by turning to the informal, aprofessional support of self-help groups and community care-givers, thus providing themselves with "lay treatment". A number of studies have demonstrated that people in need of help typically do not seek aid from formal organizations, but turn to relatives, friends, and various others in their network (Koos 1946; Eddy, Papp & Glad 1970).

Professionals are consulted only at the end of a multistage process when people in need find themselves or their problem referred to a professional when the informal helpers do not succeed (Collins & Pancoast 1976). Usually the person in need seeks or is referred to the professional by the informal network, because of the severity of the problem, and/or the lack of adequate personal and social network resources.

In American black communities there are strong kin and non-kin support networks and community self-help efforts (McAdoo 1978; McAdoo 1980; Stack 1974). These sources of support exist and have been strengthened in the black community for the following reasons: the belief that private and governmental programmes are not sensitive to the unique pressures faced by black people (Martin & Martin 1985); the view that non-black social workers perceived blacks in a stereotypic manner; the belief that blacks were given services that were inferior to those in other communities; and the perception that changing social policies shifted support and emphasis and therefore were undependable.

In an ethnographic study of 30 black families in the American Midwest and South, Martin and Martin (1978) found that although black families are characterized by

extensive extended family networks, the social support exchange system was not as effective as suggested by previous investigations based on small non-randomly selected families (Stack 1974). Martin and Martin (1978) cite economic deprivation, the impersonality of urban life, the preference for nuclear family structures and the difficulty of maintaining strong kinship ties in urban areas, as reasons for the less than optimal effectiveness of informal exchanges and support. In a study of low-income black families Ball (1983) suggests that these families realize the limits on the help that their friends and relatives can give them, but are reassured that they are there in times of a real crisis.

In their analysis of the national data on a probability sample of blacks, Taylor, Jackson and Quick (1982), found that contrary to the **need hypothesis** (discussed below), respondents with less income and less education reported receiving support less often than respondents with higher income and higher education. Antonucci (1985) suggests that the need hypothesis works only within limits; that is, if one is needy for too long, problems arise within the support system.

Mutran and Skinner (1981) found no ethnic and racial differences in social support once demographic controls were introduced. They suggest that the high proportions of negative life events experienced by disadvantaged ethnic groups may account for stronger family and non-kin network support. They argue that blacks receive more help from their families because they are in greater need than whites. In a review of the literature on social support and social networks, Antonucci (1985) concludes that there seem to be ethnic and racial differences in social support, but the nature of these differences is influenced by both demographic and structural factors.

In South Africa the traditional African and Indian families are extended family systems. Tshabalala (1986) states that the traditional African family is an extended family network with a built-in mutual aid system for the welfare of its members and the maintenance of the family as a whole. The traditional Indian family is a joint economic unit held together through religious beliefs and the moral ties of kinship (Jithoo 1975). The strengths and structure of the traditional black social systems have been used by the South African Government to justify insufficient state resources being made available for social welfare programmes in the black community.

The provision of welfare services in South Africa is based on race[1]. Qualification for a social maintenance allowance is based on a means test which is considerably

more generous for whites than for Indians, coloureds and Africans. Jinabhai (1986:10) refers to the fact that in the Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa (1974) the South African Government held the view that:

> "Among the Black nations ... the traditional social and family structures are such that a considerable amount of what is usually regarded as public welfare assistance and poor relief in Western societies is carried out on a customary basis by relatives and associates. For this reason, *inter alia*, it has been found necessary and advisable to differentiate between these groups and others as regards the nature and scope of assistance provided."

However, although acknowledging the extended family structure of traditional communities in the allocation of state resources for social welfare programmes, housing developments by the state provide homes for nuclear families. Housing for nuclear type families, government legislation, forced removals, westernization, urbanization, impoverishment, deteriorating social conditions and family conflicts have resulted in many changes in the traditional extended family systems in South Africa (Jithoo 1975; Simkins 1986; Tshabalala 1986). Given these influences, many different family forms are to be found in South Africa today, such as single-parent families, extended family systems that have maintained traditional structures and nuclear families (Burman & Fuchs 1986; Jithoo 1975; Simkins 1986; Tshabalala 1986). Also on the increase are homeless individuals and families, squatter families, displaced families and families living in overcrowded living conditions (Letlaka-Rennert 1990; Magwaza 1989; Sunday Star 1990; Sunday Tribune 1990).

Changes are also to be found in social networks. Social networks have changed to include not only family members and kinship ties but also friends, co-workers, neighbours, and ties with members from social, religious, political and professional organizations. As more and more families are experiencing the crippling effects of poverty, political violence and disintegration and in the absence of an adequate state welfare programme, they become desperate in their attempts to seek support from their informal networks. However the members of informal networks are themselves faced with the same conditions of poverty and unemployment. Many are able to share their common experiences, and to offer empathy, emotional support and accommodation but very little material help. The number of people in need of formal services, given the breakdown in personal, family and community resources, is increasing and will continue to increase unless efforts are made to address and increase individual, family and community resources.

Social network analysis offers a number of possibilities in addressing the problems associated with social service delivery in South Africa, as discussed above. It allows for an assessment of not only the individual presenting the problem, but also of the family, the network of informal ties, the community and religious and political organizations. In times of increasing need and demand for formal services, network analysis and social support intervention offer exciting possibilities for examining and strengthening the existing sources of support.

2. PURPOSE, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study of the personal characteristics, support systems and network characteristics associated with the utilization/non-utilization of formal professional services among low-income single mothers was conducted between March and November 1990.

2.1 Purpose of the study

(a) To describe and examine the personal details, the support systems and network characteristics of single mothers.

(b) To compare the social support systems of single mothers who utilize professional services with those who do not.

(c) To identify the personal and network characteristics associated with the utilization of formal professional social services among single mothers.

(d) To develop a social support and social network assessment guide; as well as intervention strategies to be used with single mothers.

2.2 Rationale for the study

Single motherhood is fast becoming a major issue because of the increase in the number of single mothers, the number of children being raised in single-parent households, the rising number of single mothers and their children receiving social and mental-health services and the cost of providing services for single-mother families.

The increase in divorce rates in South Africa is evident from figures released by the Central Statistical Service (1984; 1989) according to which the specific divorce rates in 1989 were 15,8 (5,6 in 1984) per 1 000 white married couples, 11,3 (8,6 in 1984) per 1 000 coloured married couples, and 7,1 (4,8 in 1984) per 1 000 Indian married couples. Although these figures indicate that Indians had the lowest

rates of divorce, there has been a steady increase since 1980 when a figure of 3,4 per 1 000 Indian married couples was recorded (Central Statistical Service 1989).

The following figures indicate the number of children affected by divorce in South Africa according to the Central Statistical Service. In 1989 22 545 white children were affected by divorce (compared with 22 253 in 1988). The coloured children affected by divorce numbered 7 827 in 1989 (compared with 8 298 in 1988). The number of Indian children affected by divorce increased from 1 973 in 1988 to 2 077 in 1989 (Central Statistical Service 1988; 1989).

The extent of illegitimacy and its increase in South Africa are given by the Central Statistical Service (1986). The figures are calculated by the difference in the number of births and the number of fathers whose details are recorded in the official records. The figures indicate a rising incidence of illegitimacy in the three surveyed population groups, i.e. whites, coloureds and Indians. The percentage of illegitimate births for whites was 5,4 in 1983 and it rose to 7,1 in 1986. The percentage of illegitimate births for coloureds was 50,5 in 1983 rising to 55,0 in 1986. The percentage of illegitimate births for Indians was 16,2 in 1983, and 16,7 in 1986. The total percentage of illegitimate births for all three surveyed population groups rose from 27,3 in 1983 to 30,6 in 1986.

Various American surveys (Ladbrook 1976; Pearlin & Johnson 1977; Bloom, White & Asher 1979; Berman & Turk 1981) show that single mothers reported substantially higher rates of anxiety and depression than married women and men; and facility utilization statistics show that mother-only families consumed a disproportionate share of community mental-health services (Ladbrook 1976; Pearlin & Johnson 1977; Bloom, White & Asher 1979; Berman & Turk 1981). Children of divorced parents are significantly over-represented in child psychiatric populations (e.g. Kalter & Rembar 1981). A large national survey in the United States revealed that over twice as many children of divorced parents had seen a mental health professional compared to children from intact families (Zill 1983).

A South African study by Snyman (1987) on maintenance payments indicates that the major costs and financing arose from maintenance default among the divorced. Major costs included the administrative expenditure of government departments with regard to personnel, transport, the documentation of complaints, finding defaulting spouses, processing and administrating maintenance allowances and the costs of the maintenance allowances themselves. Snyman (1987) also discusses

the time, transport and emotional cost to the single parent in seeking and collecting the maintenance payments from former spouses. Other costs with regard to maintenance are also discussed, such as the cost to the South African Police of tracing spouses in hiding, of serving the summonses, of making arrests and the administrative costs of such action.

The application of social support theory and social network analysis to the problem of single parents is appropriate because single parenthood - either arising from death, divorce or unwed motherhood - entails or threatens the loss of significant social ties or calls for a reorientation or rearrangement of the social environment. The loss of or changes in social networks call for social intervention rather than only a person-centred approach.

Social relationships and social support are traditional themes in social work theory and practice. Although social network ideas are still new to social work, Mitchell and Trickett (1980) suggest that they can be translated into guidelines for designing and implementing interventions. Since social network theory focuses on social relationships, as does social work, the theory is very useful for social work. Enhancing the goodness-of-fit between individuals and their personal networks, as well as providing professional support, are the routine goals of social work practice. Ell (1984) suggests that research findings can be applied in conducting needs assessments and identifying the individuals experiencing the disruption of social ties or those with few ties, such as the recently widowed or divorced woman or the single working mother. Identifying the circumstances associated with low levels of satisfaction can target those individuals in greatest need of intervention.

2.3 Significance of the study

The single-parent family, with its implied disruption and discontinuity, is the root of many of the problems facing social service professionals. The best, the most effective and relevant methods of intervention need to be planned and delivered to meet the specific needs of single-parent families.

Information on the existing support arrangements, the social support needs of single mothers and the possible gaps in the network is crucial to professionals in planning the social intervention strategies directed at single mothers. The existing social support systems can be mobilized or strengthened to complement or substitute for formal services. Strengthening the informal support systems by

using social support interventions has several implications for reducing the considerable need for professional services and also offers the clients several advantages. Gottlieb (1988) points out the following advantages of using a social network intervention by targeting the informal support systems of clients. Social network interventions increase the cost-effectiveness of social services, make social services more accessible and valid for the unserved and under-served populations; increase self-help among clients and empower clients to take control of their own lives. Social support interventions also have significant implications for practitioners in moving beyond the individualistic modes of intervention as well as drawing significant ties into treatment, to reinforce the impact of professional treatment.

3. STUDY DESIGN, INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLING

A cross-sectional survey research design using two different questionnaires and a network map were used to collect personal, network and service utilization data.

3.1 Survey instruments

3.1.1 Questionnaire One

A *Sample Selection Guide* (Appendix A) was used to collect information on the descriptive personal characteristics of single mothers - their age, education, marital status, income and their utilization/non-utilization of professional services for themselves or their children. Information on custody arrangements and the number and ages of children were also obtained with this questionnaire.

3.1.2 Questionnaire Two

A semistructured questionnaire *Personal Social Resource Questionnaire* (Appendix B) was developed by the investigator to obtain further personal details as well as network and social support information. The *Personal Social Resource Questionnaire* is based on a technique developed by McCallister and Fischer (1978). The questions were specifically designed to gather information on the types of support relevant to single mothers. Attached to the *Personal Social Resource Questionnaire* is *The Network Map* which is based on Attneave's Family Network Map (1977). This was adapted to obtain information on network stability and changes, and on the multiplexity of roles.

McCallister and Fischer's (1978) technique of examining support systems and network characteristics is based on the many ways in which networks are defined.

The criteria for defining membership vary in terms of:

(1) whether all members are listed;

(2) whether members with a certain level of contact with the focal person are listed;

(3) whether those individuals whom the focal person considers significant are listed; and

(4) whether a certain level of contact occurs.

McCallister and Fischer (1978) developed a technique whereby each respondent's "core" network - the part that is felt most influences attitudes, behaviour, and well-being - is tapped. This approach defines the core network as the set of people who are most likely to be the sources of a variety of rewarding interactions with the respondent, such as discussing a personal problem, lending money, or socializing. The method is based on exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley 1959) and implies that people who are sources of rewarding interactions will be important in shaping attitudes and behaviour. A master list of names was drawn up, based on a set of name-eliciting questions (e.g. "With whom do you engage in social activities?"), and the respondent was then asked to add the names of any people who were important but whose names did not appear in response to the name-eliciting questions. The respondent was asked if each of the network members was a friend, a relative, or some other role relationship.

McCallister and Fischer (1978) tested the reliability and validity of these questions during extensive pretesting with 80 respondents. These researchers compared the initial answers that people gave with their elaborations after further probing. Questions about the likely sources of rewarding exchanges elicited more complete and consistent answers than did questions about roles or feelings - the reason being that questions about exchanges ask people to either describe or imagine a concrete situation rather than to associate names with vague labels. The pretesting of the questionnaire also indicated that the respondents had more consistent interpretations of the kinds of behaviour described in questions about exchange than they did of terms such as "best friend", "co-worker" or "feel close".

3.2 Definition of terms

The following definitions of terms were used in this study.

3.2.1 Single mother

A woman who has one or more children living with her and who is either divorced, widowed, separated, or is an unmarried mother. Mothers who were remarried,

living with a person (as man and wife), or living away from their children were not included in the study.

3.2.2 User (of professional services)

A single mother is regarded as a user of professional social services (excluding assistance from medical and related medical services) if:

(i) she has received/is receiving professional counselling since becoming a single mother;

(ii) she belongs to an informal support group initiated by a professional; and

(iii) her child has received/is receiving professional counselling.

3.2.3 Non-user (of professional services)

A single mother is defined as a non-user of professional services if neither the mother nor the child(ren) has had professional counselling, and if she belongs to a group not initiated by a professional.

3.3 Sample

3.3.1 Study area

The subjects for this study were recruited from the population of single mothers in Phoenix, Durban. Phoenix is a low-cost residential area, developed by the state, for low-income Indian families. It is divided into ten areas. One area, Sunford, was randomly selected as the study area.

3.3.2 Study population

The number of single mothers in Phoenix (and in Sunford) is an unknown parameter. Since the study was directed at both a community and a clinical population, the sample was drawn through the four primary schools in the study area.

3.3.3 Sampling procedure

Permission to obtain the names and addresses of primary school children from single-mother families was sought from the Department of Education and Culture, House of Delegates. The principals of the four primary schools were visited to explain the study and to request the names and addresses of children from single-mother families.

The names and addresses of 402 children were made available. The lists were examined and the names of siblings (42) were eliminated. The remaining 360

families were visited with the aim of completing a brief sample selection questionnaire. Of the 360 single families visited, a further 20 single mothers were not selected for the following reasons:

(i) they were remarried (N = 8);

(ii) they had left their children in the care of relatives while they worked and lived away from home in Johannesburg, Pinetown and other places where employment was available and the salaries were higher than in and around Phoenix (N = 3);

(iii) they had been evicted from their homes or had moved for other reasons (N = 5); and

(iv) they were unavailable during home visits for the sample selection interviews (N = 4).

During the sample selection interviews the mothers were informed of the purpose, objectives and procedures of the study. Permission to be interviewed at a later date was obtained during the visit. Arrangements were made to interview the mothers in their homes should they be selected to participate in the study.

Using the information gained from the brief sample selection interviews, a purposive sample of 50 single-mother families was finally selected from the list of 340 names. The criteria for selection were:

(i) whether or not they were users or non-users of professional services;

(ii) at least one child under ten years was living with the mother;

(iii) the mother had not remarried;

(iv) the mother lived in Sunford, Phoenix; and

(v) she had been a single mother for at least six months.

A sample of users (N = 25) and non-users (N = 25) was selected according to the age and education of the single mothers, as well as the number and ages of the children.

4. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

This section gives an overview of the current literature on single mothers, social support and social networks. The theoretical overview provides an understanding of the problem and the theory and links the two. A definition and/or description of the relevant social network variables are also presented.

4.1 Theoretical perspectives

A review of the literature indicates that single motherhood is fast becoming a major issue because of the increase in the number of single mothers, the number of children being raised in single-parent households, and the rising number of single mothers receiving social and mental-health services. The three main areas of difficulty for single mothers are interrelated and revolve around parenting and child care responsibilities, financial difficulties and social relationships. The way that women respond to their problems and the extent to which their lives are affected by these problems depend on a number of personal and social factors.

Social network theory is applied to the problem of single mothers because the literature on social networks provides a well-defined set of concepts with which to order both the structural and interactional patterns of the single mother's social world. Furthermore, researchers have linked network phenomena to mental and physical health; and single parenting is a stressful life event, linked to various physical and mental health problems.

Ladner (1971) was the first to link the importance of informal networks to the lives of single parents. Since Ladner (1971) many more studies on informal networks and single-parent families have been conducted (Wilcox 1981; Daniels-Mohring & Berger 1984; Leslie & Grady 1985).

Wilcox (1981) utilized retrospective data to examine network changes and adjustment in a sample of 50 divorced women. Twenty-five women who reported themselves as being successfully adjusted were compared to 25 who reported an unsuccessful adjustment to divorce. Wilcox reported that women with less change or disruption in their networks following divorce were better adjusted than those who had experienced a great deal of turnover in their social networks.

Daniels-Mohring and Berger (1984) investigated the impact of informal support systems on the well-being of low-income single parents. A non-random sample of 63 female subjects from a clinical population was interviewed. Correlations and stepwise multiple regressions were run between measures of support and measures of well-being. Various types or sources of support were found to have differing impacts on well-being.

Leslie and Grady (1985) examined the network characteristics associated with the provision of support in a sample of 38 divorced mothers chosen at random from

RAAD VIR GEESTESWETENSKAPLIKE NAVORSING
HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

088556

court records. The authors investigated the change in the networks of these women at two different time periods: immediately after the divorce, and a year later. The results indicated that in the year following divorce, social networks became more homogeneous and allowed greater support as they became denser and more kin-filled.

Although these studies were based on small non-representative samples, they provide key ideas, concepts, and relationships. More specifically they have helped to identify the following salient characteristics of social networks as they relate to the problems of single mothers: First, the study by Wilcox (1981) indicates that an inadequate social network, or changes in the social network, constitutes one of the major problems for divorced women. Second, Leslie and Grady (1985) found that low-income single mothers often increase contact with, seek help from, and receive support from their family of origin. Daniels-Mohring and Berger (1984) report that the presence of an informal support system increases single parents' well-being; however, the structure, type, and change of social networks are differentially related to single parents' feelings of well-being.

4.2 Definition/description of relevant variables

The social network variables tested in the empirical study are defined and/or described as follows:

4.2.1 Network size

The basic structural criterion of a person's network is its size. Size does not necessarily indicate support, emotional depth, or other qualities of relations. The size of a person's network is the starting point and is used to calculate other properties, such as density.

The size of a network depends on how the network is defined. The size of the network of people whose names one knows would probably be larger than the size of the network of people with whom one interacts daily. Most researchers define a network as including people who are significant in the respondent's life and with whom the respondent interacts regularly (McCallister & Fischer 1978).

4.2.2 Network density

The degree to which the members of a person's network are in touch with each other, independently of the focal person, is an important index for understanding networks. This index is called the density of a network - that is, "the extent to which links which could possibly exist among persons do in fact exist" (Mitchell 1969:18).

Bott (1957:59) was the first to explicitly use the concept of network density. She distinguishes between "tightly-knitted" and "loosely-knitted" networks and uses the degree of "knittedness" of a couple's network to explain the degree to which the couple's conjugal roles are separate. This measure was soon formalized and generalized by Barnes (1969) and Mitchell (1969), who adopted a graph-theoretic perspective. From this perspective, the "knittedness" (Mitchell 1969:17) of a network was replaced by the concept of the density of a graph - that is, the ratio of the number of links in a graph to the maximum number of possible links.

Density is measured by comparing the number of actual relationships among a set of people to the number of possible relationships. We can, for example, ask individual people to name those who are especially important to them, have the individual represent these people as dots, and then indicate whether these people have contact with each other (independently of the individual) by connecting these dots by a line.

The formula for computing network density is:

$$\frac{X}{N(N-1)/2} \cdot \frac{100}{1}$$

X = the number of independent connections actually made.
N = the number of individuals in the network, excluding the respondent.

4.2.3 Multiplexity

Boissevain (1974:30) defines multiplexity as follows: "A social relation that is based on a single role relation, is described as uniplex or single-stranded, while a relation that covers many roles is termed multiplex or many-stranded." Mitchell (1969:22) defined multiplexity as related to the content as follows: "Network links which contain only one focus of interaction, are called 'uniplex' or, more simply, 'single-stranded' relationships. Those which contain more than one content are called 'multiplex'."

Multiplexity may refer to the number of different role relations, such as kin, neighbour or co-worker, that any two people have with each other. For example, the link between two people who work together and belong to the same club has a multiplexity of two (Fischer *et al.* 1977).

A number of studies document the ways in which informal networks differ structurally. As shown by Litwak and Szelenyi (1969), for example, friends or peer

groups serve best in helping individuals to handle major transitions in their lifestyles, whereas kinship networks, characterized by permanency of membership, provide a more long-term commitment. In contrast, neighbours are called upon most often for aid in emergency, on-the-spot situations. However, although it is true that informal support groups are structurally different, seem to be effective in performing specific, unique tasks, and are generally non-substitutable, there is also evidence of an overlap between them. Research suggests that people make distinctions among kin in terms of shared intimacy, and that some kin are selected and identified as friends. There are often cases of long-lived friendships in which the friends actually think of one another as being like relatives, not just friends. There are frequent incidents of kin residing in the neighbourhood and actually functioning as neighbours. Such findings suggest that kin and friendship ties are structurally similar and, in consequence, to some degree interchangeable (Litwak & Szelenyi 1969).

Multiplexity has been used in studies by Tolsdorf (1976), and Kapferer (1969). Tolsdorf studied the coping process of hospitalized psychiatric patients and medical patients. He considered the strength of ties between the patients and their network members. One variable that he assessed was the number of "content areas" encompassed by each relationship out of a possibility of ten. He found that the medical patients had a higher proportion of multiplex ties in their networks, whereas schizophrenics had a higher proportion of uniplex ties. The analysis by Kapferer (1969), and the secondary analysis by Doreian (1981), of the conflict of mine workers in Zambia were based on the concepts of connectivity and multiplex relationships. Their analyses contain the following arguments: (1) in a conflict in a small social network, multiplex relations are more important than uniplex relations; (2) people are mobilized primarily in accordance with multiplex relations; and (3) those individuals better connected by multiplex relations will have greater success in mobilizing support (Doreian 1981:108).

4.2.4 Social networks and social support

"Social networks can be conceived of as vehicles through which social support is distributed or exchanged" (Antonucci 1985:96). Cobb (1976:300-301) specifies three kinds of social support, all of which focus on the interpersonal aspects of a person's life: (a) emotional support, leading them to believe they are cared for and appreciated; (b) esteem support, leading them to believe they are valued; and (c) network support, providing a network of mutual obligations through which they obtain problem-solving information, material assistance and a sense of belonging.

4.2.4.1 **Sources of social support.** Within sources of social support, a division is possible between kin, comprising blood and marital ties, and non-kin - comprising friends, neighbours, co-workers and acquaintances (see 4.2.3 Multiplexity).

4.2.4.1.1 *Support from kin.* Kin support appears positively related to a successful divorce adjustment. Kin often prove helpful to the divorced person by making their homes available, offering services such as child care, providing companionship and lending money (Weiss 1975). However the research findings suggest that the potential advantages of support and interaction offered by kin may be moderated by a variety of familial sanctions such as criticism and disapproval (Goode 1956; Wilcox 1981). Goode (1956) found that adjustment was enhanced most when kin were indifferent to the divorce, offering neither approval nor disapproval.

The study by Wilcox (1981) offers an explanation why social contact with kin, after the divorce, is negatively related to successful divorce adjustment. Wilcox's evidence suggests that it may be women in less dense, less kin-filled networks who show the best adjustment following divorce. Though the availability of a tightly knit, supportive group of family members may initially sound like the most desirable situation for a recently divorced woman, it is a diverse, loosely knit network with a wider range of alternatives and information that best helps a woman to restructure her life.

4.2.4.1.2 *Support from friends.* Friends are generally similar to one another in characteristics such as age, life status, sex and socio-economic status. Because of these similarities, friends share a repertoire of common experiences and often live through similar role changes. Such bonds make friends valuable aids in the learning of new roles and the relinquishment of old ones.

Spanier and Casto (1979) interviewed 50 divorced persons and found that the lack of support from friends made adjustment more difficult. When the respondents were able to find new friends quickly, or when they had developed an individual network of friends before the divorce, separation was easier. Daniels-Mohring and Berger (1984) found that the changes in the social networks of individuals before and after divorce tended to decrease the quality of the person's adjustment to this life crisis.

Support by both friends and relatives contributes uniquely to the reduction of problems in the lives of single parents. Friends seem to tend to assist single parents with certain problems, whereas relatives help with others. This suggests that single parents who can rely on both sources of support may be the least problem-ridden.

Support from friends appears to have the greatest impact on reducing loneliness. This, along with the finding that support by relatives is not related to loneliness, generally supports findings of Spanier and Hanson (1981). These researchers found that relatives were not always emotionally supportive, even when they provided other types of services. Similar results have also been reported in research on the morale of the elderly, which has been found to be related to interactions with friends but not to contact with the adult children of the elderly (Larson 1978). Possibly friends provide an opportunity for freer and more open conversations about many matters that people feel less comfortable about discussing with relatives. These findings also correspond with the conclusions drawn by Fischer and Phillips (1979) that isolation from kin and non-kin has different consequences.

4.2.4.1.3 *Support from neighbours.* Neighbourhood ties resemble friendship in many respects, but require residential proximity and are more likely than either kin or friendship ties to be characterized by short-term commitment. Neighbours may be friends, but this is not necessarily true of all neighbours. More typically, neighbours develop friendly relations more characteristic of acquaintanceships, in which congeniality and helpfulness are expected behaviours that are mutually beneficial to all involved (Litwak & Szelenyi 1969).

Neighbourhood ties may also play a role in the support systems of single parents. Brandwein (1977) found that divorced women, who were isolated in their homes, even in fairly affluent circumstances did not seem to do as well as those who could draw on neighbourly support.

The forms of helping that are appropriate to being requested of and received from neighbours, generally have more defined limits than those of family and friends (Litwak 1978). Neighbours seem best prepared to provide assistance of a non-technical sort that requires fast or

immediate action or entails close proximity. Thus, neighbours are both available and present to assist in emergencies, to keep an eye on the house, or to check in during an illness with an ease and facility typically not possible for kin and friends residing outside the immediate neighbourhood.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Cross-tabulation analyses

The data in Table 1 are abstracted from the *Sample Selection Guide* (Appendix A). The data in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are abstracted from the *Personal Social Resource Questionnaire* (Appendix B). The data are used to determine the similarities and differences in the number of users and non-users who seek help from specific network ties to meet specific needs.

The cross-tabulation procedure in SPSS was used to obtain the numbers and percentages of users and non-users. The dash indicates no response.

The cross-tabulation in Table 1 lists the number and percentage of single mothers who:

(1) maintained independent households;
(2) depended on their social networks for help with housing; and
(3) identified network ties which provided help with housing.

Cross-tabulation shows that 28 % of the users compared to 60 % of the non-users maintained independent households. Sixty-four per cent of the users compared to 40 % of the non-users lived with relatives.

TABLE 1: HELP WITH HOUSING

Source of help	User		Non-user	
	N	%	N	%
Own home (no help)	7	28	15	60
Relative	16	64	10	40
Friend	2	8	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Eight per cent of the users lived with friends while none of the non-users did so. Neither users nor non-users utilized other network ties to obtain help with housing.

The findings show that a comparatively larger percentage of users lived with relatives. A very small number of users lived with friends. Of all the available network ties, relatives essentially provided help with housing.

The cross-tabulation in Table 2 identifies the network ties from whom single mothers reported seeking help regarding their personal problems. The numbers and percentages of users and non-users who sought help from a specific source are provided.

TABLE 2: HELP WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Source of help	User	Non-user
1. Relative	23 (92 %)	22 (88 %)
2. Co-worker	14 (56 %)	6 (24 %)
3. Neighbour	10 (40 %)	18 (72 %)
4. Friend	5 (20 %)	17 (68 %)
5. Community resources	-	1 (4 %)
6. Employer	-	-
7. Doctor	-	6 (24 %)
8. Social worker	11 (44 %)	-
9. Other	13 (52 %)	3 (12 %)

Ninety-two per cent of the users and 88 % of the non-users sought help from relatives in dealing with their personal problems. Fifty-six per cent of the users compared with 24 % of the non-users sought help with personal problems from co-workers. Forty per cent of the users compared with 72 % of the non-users turned to neighbours for help with personal problems. Twenty per cent of the users compared with 68 % of the non-users turned to friends for help with personal problems. Community resources/helpers (4 %) and the local medical doctor (24 %) were two additional sources used by non-users to deal with personal problems. Eleven per cent of the users reported receiving help with their personal problems from social workers. Fifty-two per cent of the users compared with 12 % of the non-users sought help from others in dealing with their personal problems.

The cross-tabulation analysis in Table 3 determines the similarities and differences in the ways that the users and the non-users sought help in an emergency and identifies the network ties associated with such help.

TABLE 3: HELP IN AN EMERGENCY

Source of help	User	Non-user
1. Relative	24 (96 %)	22 (88 %)
2. Co-worker	7 (28 %)	7 (28 %)
3. Neighbour	11 (44 %)	21 (84 %)
4. Friend	7 (28 %)	19 (76 %)
5. Community resources	1 (4 %)	1 (4 %)
6. Employer	-	-
7. Doctor	-	-
8. Social worker	-	-
9. Other	2 (8 %)	-

Ninety-six per cent of the users compared with 88 % of the non-users sought help from relatives in an emergency. Forty-four per cent of the users compared with 84 % of the non-users sought help from neighbours in an emergency. Seeking help from friends in an emergency was reported by 28 % of the users and 76 % of the non-users. There were no differences in the use of co-workers (28 %) and community resources/helpers (4 %) in an emergency among the users and the non-users. A small number of users (8 %) sought help from others in an emergency.

The cross-tabulation in Table 4 identifies the key network ties from whom single mothers reported seeking advice. The numbers and percentages of the users and the non-users who sought advice from a specific source, are reported.

TABLE 4: ADVICE

Source of advice	User	Non-user
1. Relative	23 (92 %)	22 (88 %)
2. Co-worker	8 (32 %)	5 (20 %)
3. Neighbour	7 (28 %)	17 (68 %)
4. Friend	3 (12 %)	16 (64 %)
5. Community resources	1 (4 %)	-
6. Employer	-	-
7. Doctor	5 (20 %)	5 (20 %)
8. Social worker	8 (32 %)	-
9. Other	12 (48 %)	3 (12 %)

There was little or no difference in the number of users and non-users who sought advice from relatives, co-workers, community resources and medical doctors. Differences were however found in the number of the users (28 %) and the non-users (68 %) who sought help from neighbours.

Great differences were also found in seeking advice from friends with 12 % of the users and 64 % of the non-users seeking help from friends. Thirty-two per cent users reported receiving advice from social workers. A greater number of the users (48 %) compared to the non-users (12 %) sought advice from other sources of support.

The cross-tabulation in Table 5 identifies the network ties to whom single mothers reported talking about their work. The numbers and percentages of the users and non-users who talked about their work to specific network ties are provided.

TABLE 5: TALK ABOUT WORK

Source of help	User	Non-user
1. Relative	4 (16 %)	21 (84 %)
2. Co-worker	8 (32 %)	7 (28 %)
3. Neighbour	6 (24 %)	13 (52 %)
4. Friend	3 (12 %)	14 (56 %)
5. Community resources	-	-
6. Employer	-	-
7. Doctor	-	-
8. Social worker	-	-
9. Other	-	-

Sixteen per cent of the users compared with 84 % of the non-users talked to relatives about work. Thirty-two per cent of the users compared with 28 % of the non-users talked to their co-workers about work. Twenty-four per cent of the users and 52 % of the non-users talked to neighbours about work. Twelve per cent of the users compared with 56 % of the non-users talked to friends about work. Users and non-users clearly did not talk to people in the community, their employers, medical doctors, social workers and others about work.

TABLE 6: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Source of help	User	Non-user
1. Relative	22 (88 %)	19 (76 %)
2. Co-worker	4 (16 %)	1 (4 %)
3. Neighbour	6 (24 %)	7 (28 %)
4. Friend	1 (4 %)	4 (16 %)
5. Community resources	-	1 (4 %)
6. Employer	2 (8 %)	-
7. Doctor	-	1 (4 %)
8. Social worker	18 (72 %)	8 (32 %)
9. Other	-	-

The cross-tabulation in Table 6 identifies the key network ties from whom single mothers reported seeking financial assistance. The numbers and percentages of the users and non-users who sought financial assistance from a specific source are reported.

Eighty-eight per cent of the users compared with 76 % of the non-users sought financial assistance from relatives. Sixteen per cent of the users compared with 4 % of the non-users sought financial assistance from co-workers. Twenty-four per cent of the users compared with 28 % of the non-users sought financial assistance from neighbours. Four per cent of the users compared with 16 % of the non-users sought financial help from friends. Four per cent of the non-users sought financial assistance from community resources. Eight per cent of the users sought financial assistance from employers. Four per cent of the non-users sought financial help from a medical doctor. Seventy-two per cent of the users compared with 32 % of the non-users sought financial assistance from social workers. Neither the users nor the non-users sought financial assistance from other network ties.

The cross-tabulation in Table 7 identifies the network ties where single mothers reported seeking help in matters related to their children. The numbers and percentages of the users and the non-users who sought help with matters concerning their children from specific network ties are listed.

TABLE 7: HELP WITH CONCERNS RELATED TO CHILDREN

Source of help	User	Non-user
1. Relative	5 (20 %)	21 (84 %)
2. Co-worker	4 (16 %)	3 (12 %)
3. Neighbour	4 (16 %)	18 (72 %)
4. Friend	4 (16 %)	13 (52 %)
5. Community resources	1 (4 %)	-
6. Employer	-	-
7. Doctor	5 (20 %)	9 (36 %)
8. Social worker	8 (32 %)	-
9. Other	5 (20 %)	-

Twenty per cent of the users compared with 84 % of the non-users sought help from relatives with matters concerning their children. There was almost no difference in the number of users (16 %) and non-users (12 %) who turned to

co-workers about matters concerning their children. There was once again a large difference in the number of users (16 %) compared with non-users (72 %) who turned to neighbours about matters concerning their children. There was a negligible difference between, and a small number of, users and non-users who sought assistance from community resources, employers and medical doctors about matters concerning children. Thirty-two per cent and 20 % of the users sought help with matters concerning their children from social workers and others respectively.

The cross-tabulation analyses in Tables 2 to 7 show that relatives were an important source of support to single mothers irrespective of whether they were users or non-users of professional services. There was little or no difference between users and non-users in the support reported from relatives in dealing with personal problems, help in an emergency, advice, and financial assistance. However, differences between users and non-users were reported in housing, talking about work and concerns about children.

Many more users (64 %) than non-users (40 %) lived with relatives. Fewer users (16 %) than non-users (84 %) reported discussing work with relatives. A big difference was reported by users (20 %) and non-users (84 %) in the support received from relatives with concerns about their children.

Neighbours and co-workers differed in their importance to users and non-users. Neighbours were found to be a greater source of support to non-users than users in the areas of support investigated in Tables 2 to 7. Co-workers on the other hand were found to be of greater assistance to users in helping with personal problems (Table 2) and providing advice (Table 4).

The users turned to social workers and other formal ties for help with personal problems, advice and financial assistance. Referrals to other appropriate formal professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists and the police were made by social workers.

The non-users seemed to tap more of the informal sources of support than did the users. Non-users also seemed to seek paid assistance from medical doctors for help with personal problems, and for matters related to their children.

There are 21 possible sources of support listed in the *Personal Social Resource Questionnaire* (Appendix B). However, both the users and the non-users utilized a

limited number of sources of support, mainly relatives, friends, neighbours, co-workers, social workers and medical doctors. The use of professional sources of support was extended for users by the referrals made by social workers and medical doctors. The reason for the limited number of sources of support utilized, was not explored in this study but it could arise from a number of factors which are discussed in the literature review.

5.2 Product-moment correlation

Product-moment correlation using continuous network data (Appendix B) was used to measure the direction of and the association between the network variables. (See description of variables in Section 4.2.)

TABLE 8: CORRELATION MATRIX OF NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS AND SERVICE UTILIZATION

Variable	size	multi-plex	ksize	nksize	kchange	nkchange	density
size	1,00						
multiplex	0,74*	1,00					
ksize	0,43*	0,21	1,00				
nksize	0,80*	0,68*	-0,18	1,00			
kchange	0,60*	0,57*	-0,13	- 0,75*	1,00		
nkchange	0,38*	0,32*	0,37*	0,15	0,08	1,00	
density	0,73*	- 0,54*	-0,24	- 0,61*	- 0,34*	- 0,32*	1,00

*Correlation values greater than and including 0,3 have been flagged by an **
ksize (kin size); nksize (non-kin size); kchange (kin changes); nkchange (non-kin changes)
For r = 0,32 to 0,8, p = 0,03 to < 0,001.
For r = < 0,32, p = 0,1 to 0,6.

Product-moment correlation analysis of the network data in Table 8 indicates the direction of the correlation and a number of highly correlated variables. There was a strong direct relationship between network size and multiplexity (r = 0,74); network size and kin network size (r = 0,43); network size and non-kin network size (r = 0,80); network size and the number of changes in the kinship ties (r = 0,60); network size and the number of changes in the non-kin ties (r = 0,38) and network size and network density (r = 0,73). There was a correlation of 0,68 between multiplexity and non-kin network size; 0,57 between multiplexity and the number of kin changes; 0,32 between multiplexity and the number of non-kin changes and -0,54 between multiplexity and network density. There was a correlation of 0,37 between kin network size and the number of non-kin network

changes. Non-kin network size was negatively correlated with the number of kin changes (r = -0,75) and network density (-0,61). The number of kin changes was negatively correlated with network density (r = -0,34). The number of non-kin network changes was also negatively correlated with network density (r = -0,32).

The high correlations among network variables is to a great extent due to the fact that network size is used to measure or calculate other network variables where for example:

X_1 = network size	$X_1 = x_2 + x_3$
X_2 = kin network size	$X_2 = x_1 - x_3$
X_3 = non-kin network size	$X_3 = x_1 - x_2$
X_4 = network density	$\frac{X}{N(N-1)/2} \cdot \frac{100}{1}$

Multicollinearity is a phenomenon that occurs when two or more independent variables tend to move together in the same pattern and are so highly (but not perfectly) correlated that it is difficult to separate their respective effects on the dependent variable (Hu 1973; Pindyck & Rubinfeld 1981; Hanushek & Jackson 1977).

Two statistical devices may be used to overcome the multicollinearity problem, namely the "Ridge regression" and the "Principal components" technique. Since the coefficients are often biased in the case of the the Ridge regression (Hu 1973:91), principal component analysis was used in this study to analyse the relationships among the variables.

5.3 Principal component analysis

Principal component analysis is used to examine the relationships among the personal, network and service utilization variables. Principal component analysis may be used to study the relationships among variables and to summarize the data by grouping together associated variables into components or clusters which are not correlated with other components. High coefficients show which variables are most strongly correlated and an attempt is made to explain what these variables have in common.

A component is most easily interpretable when a few variables load it highly and the rest do not. Therefore, after the components have been extracted they are normally rotated so as to maximize high correlations and minimize low ones.

Rotation is a technique that improves the interpretability and scientific utility of a solution. It is not used to improve the quality of the mathematical fit between the observed and reproduced correlation matrices because all rotated solutions are equivalent to one another and to the final solution. After rotation, the values of the coefficients within each component show the correlations between the variables and the component. According to Comrey (1973) loadings above 0,71 (50 % overlap in variance) are considered excellent, 0,63 (40 %) very good, 0,55 (30 %) good, 0,45 (20 %) fair and 0,32 (10 %) poor. For the purposes of this study loadings greater than 0,32 - which indicate an overlap in variance between the variable and the component of more than 10 % - are used to interpret a component.

The results of the principal component analysis are shown in Table 9. The principal component analysis automatically extracted five components. However only the first four are reported and used in the analysis because the amount of variance in subsequent components fall far below the arbitrary value of 10 %. The percentage variation accounted for by each component is shown at the bottom of Table 9.

TABLE 9: RESULTS FROM A PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS

Variable	Component number			
	1	2	3	4
User of services	- 0,41*	0,03	- 0,08	0,68*
Income	0,39*	- 0,29	0,45*	- 0,22
Own home	0,21	0,60*	0,00	- 0,46*
Employed	- 0,07	0,22	0,27	- 0,56*
Time single mother	- 0,03	0,24	0,08	0,59*
Age eldest child	- 0,02	0,83*	- 0,30	0,12
Age youngest child	- 0,02	0,76*	0,01	0,02
Physical health	0,50*	- 0,12	0,27	0,45*
Mental health	0,35*	- 0,07	- 0,09	0,22
Network size	0,88*	- 0,01	0,39*	- 0,01
Multiplex ties	0,77*	0,08	0,16	- 0,17
Kin network size	0,03	0,03	0,89*	- 0,01
Non-kin network size	0,94*	- 0,00	- 0,17	0,00
Kin changes	0,83*	- 0,02	- 0,29	- 0,06
Non-kin changes	0,18	- 0,19	0,47*	- 0,14
Network density	- 0,68*	- 0,06	- 0,27	0,07
Percentage of variance	28,9	12,6	11,4	9,4

* *Represents more than 10 % overlap in variance between the variable and the component.*

- **Component 1** loaded and indicated a common positive association between income, physical health, mental health, network size, multiplexity, non-kin network size and the number of kin changes. All these variables had a negative association with service utilization and network density.

- **Component 2** loaded and indicated a common positive association between single mothers having their own home and the ages of the eldest and the youngest child.

- **Component 3** loaded and indicated a common positive association between income, network size, kin network size, and non-kin network changes.

- **Component 4** explained less than 10 % of the variance. It did however load and indicate a positive association between physical health and service utilization (an inconsistency with the result in Component 1, see discussion) and a negative association between utilization of social services and, having an independent household and being employed.

6. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Importance of relatives

Relatives were important sources of support for single mothers irrespective of whether single mothers were identified as users or non-users of professional services. Single mothers turned to their relatives for help with housing, personal problems, in an emergency, for advice, financial assistance and help with child care, discipline and behaviour problems of their children.

However the finding on the importance of relatives to single mothers and their children indicated two major differences between the users and the non-users. Firstly, a greater number of the users reported living with relatives while many non-users maintained independent households. The main reasons given by single mothers for not having their own homes were financial difficulties, lack of affordable housing, and a need for child care and emotional support. Secondly, fewer users, compared with non-users, reported talking about their work and

receiving help with their children from relatives. Reasons for the differences between users and non-users with regard to talking about work and help with the children were not investigated in this study. Differences could be due to a number of reasons; for example conflict arising from the fact that the single mother and her children were living with relatives who were not prepared to provide help with the children in addition to help with housing, and a desire on the part of single mothers to keep home and work life as separate issues. Moreover single mothers living with relatives are less likely to report receiving help with their children from household members because such helping is taken for granted.

The importance of relatives as a source of support is to be found in local and American studies. Snyman (1987) reports that financial dependency on relatives and friends was an aspect frequently mentioned by the female heads of single-parent families and that many moved in with parents. American studies found that kin relationships seemed to be important in times of need, stress and crisis (Drabek & Boggs 1968; Croog, Lipson & Levine 1972). Studies by McAdoo (1978; 1980) found that kin provided the most support for a family when compared to friends and various formal sources of support. The existing empirical investigations on single mothers indicate that divorced women tended to turn to their families for financial and material support (Anspach 1976; Colletta 1979). Colletta (1979) found that 24 % of low-income single mothers moved in with their families, compared with 4 % of moderate-income mothers.

Returning to live with her parents has many advantages for the single mother and her children. The advantages include temporary relief from responsibility, reduced financial strains and decreased guilt about neglecting the children. Grandparents can provide help with the children, allowing the single mother to continue or pursue her employment or education. Returning to live with her parents may also fulfil the single mother's need for social interaction (Goode 1956; Weiss 1975).

Wilcox (1981) points out that although kin are often helpful to single mothers by making their homes available, offering services such as child care, and providing emotional support and financial assistance, they are also critical and disapproving. Other studies (e.g. Goode 1956; Weiss 1975) suggest that the potential advantages of support and interaction offered by kin may be moderated by a variety of familial sanctions such as criticism and disapproval of the single-parent status. A number of single mothers in this study reported terminating contact with in-laws after their husbands deserted them or after the divorce or the death of their

husbands. These relationships had been terminated because of interpersonal conflict. Single mothers reported feeling happier once they had terminated contact with persons causing stress in their lives.

6.2 Sources of support

This study found that single mothers who were identified as non-users of professional services turned to their friends, relatives and neighbours for assistance. Neighbours were found to be of greater assistance to non-users than users on all the areas of support. Users rather than non-users however reported that co-workers were important sources of support in helping with personal problems and in providing advice. The reasons as to why neighbours were consistently more important to non-users and the reason why co-workers were important to users in providing help with their personal lives and advice, need further investigation to obtain more detailed information.

6.3 Other

The results indicated that a significant number of single mothers identified as users of professional services sought help from a variety of other formal sources of support in addition to the help received from social workers. Examples include deserted wives who turned to the police for help in finding missing husbands, and depressed mothers receiving medication from psychiatrists. Referrals to the appropriate professional services were made by social workers. The major sources of formal support utilized by the users included social workers, medical doctors, the police, psychologists and psychiatrists. However a larger proportion of non-users - compared with users - used medical doctors for personal problems and concerns related to children (see Tables 2 and 7). Community organizations, which include religious organizations, were used to a small extent by both users and non-users.

6.4 Discussion of principal component analysis

The results from the principal component analysis show a number of common positive associations among the variables representing personal and network resources, and the non-utilization of formal professional services. Personal resource variables include income, being employed, having an independent household and mental health. Network resource variables include the network size, the number of multiplex ties, the number of non-kin in the network and the number of kin changes. The results of the principal component analysis also showed a

common positive association between the network density and the utilization of formal professional social services. This means that an increase in network density was associated with the utilization of professional social services.

Component 1 shows that a large network, particularly of non-kin, and good physical and mental health, was associated with low network density and non-use of professional social services.

Component 2 shows that single mothers with older children were more likely to have their own homes than those with younger children.

Component 3 shows that a higher income and having a large network consisting of kin, was associated with a greater number of non-kin changes.

Component 4 shows that greater use of professional social services was associated with living with others, unemployment, an extended period of single-motherhood and with good physical health. An inconsistency showed up here in the association of physical health with utilization of social services. According to Component 1 good physical health was associated with non-utilization. However, it should be kept in mind that Component 4 explained less than 10 % of the variance.

The results of this study show that an increase in network density was associated with an increase in service utilization. This was an unexpected and inconsistent finding. Other studies have found that less dense networks provide connections to other social systems such as professional helping systems. Studies investigating access to new information and resources not readily available to those seeking help, revealed that less dense networks facilitated entry into psychiatric care (Horwitz 1977; Hammer 1963-64), obtaining a safe and convenient abortion (Lee 1969), getting a job and obtaining child-rearing information (Birkel & Reppucci 1983).

Explanations for the dissimilar finding of this study may be found in the way that the professional social work service is organized in the study area; in the fact that dense kin-filled networks do not usually provide for all the needs of single mothers, and that over-reliance on kin with limited resources may cause conflict, which probably precipitates many of the problems that are taken to social workers.

Professional social work services are well-established in the community and are therefore readily available and accessible to those in need. The "welfare office" is known to almost all the residents of the area, making referrals unnecessary for those seeking assistance.

Many single mothers rely on their families for housing, child care, emotional support and companionship. Many lack the personal resources, or the time, financial and child-care resources to develop and maintain a large non-kin support system. Although these women need consistency and stability in their lives in dealing with the demands of parenthood, they also have a natural desire to build a new life for themselves. In order to develop new roles and extend their social relationships, they need loosely knit, non-kin networks that facilitate change. However it is apparent that many single mothers do not have the resources to develop loosely knit networks that will increase their satisfaction with life. They seem to be involved in merely coping as single parents, and therefore structure their networks in the best possible way to bring up their children. This situation could be problematic for the mothers and their children because of their over-reliance on kin to meet all their needs and their isolation from friends.

The resources available through, or implied by, having a higher income, being employed, living in one's own home, and having older children, as well as good mental and physical health, allow single mothers to develop a relatively large, less dense network. A large, less dense network rather than a small dense network is more likely to have a diverse membership of both kin and non-kin members, with a greater potential for providing appropriate support. Such a support system is more likely to fulfil most of the needs of the single mother, making her less dependent on kin, increasing her mental health and decreasing her need for formal professional social services.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

The findings of the study have several implications for social services.

7.1 Network assessment at intake level

The first step in planning a support intervention is to examine the existing support systems available to single mothers. This may include both formal, semiformal and

informal support systems. Single mothers seeking professional assistance should not only be viewed as individuals but also as members of their families, friendship groups, work organizations, communities and social organizations.

The research instruments used for research purposes can be adapted for use in a clinical setting. Social workers should continue to refine the instruments to a simple, quick and effective assessment tool. Network instruments can be used effectively at intake level to identify the individuals at risk and to plan appropriate services.

7.2 Assessment of support requirements

The type(s) of support required by the single mother should be determined. Single-parent families experience a disruption of their social support systems because of divorce, death, geographic relocation, or conflict, and at the same time their need for emotional support and companionship, child care, housing and financial assistance increases. Mothers are able to cope by drawing on their personal and network resources and, if available, on appropriate formal sources of support.

7.3 Social support intervention

Single mothers with small, dense networks consisting mainly of relatives and uniplex ties, can be helped to restructure their social networks or helped to deal with the deficiencies in their support systems by creating a new support system, training people in the network to be supportive, or by strengthening an existing system (Gottlieb 1985).

7.4 Creating a new support network

Single mothers with networks comprising only relatives need to be encouraged to extend their networks beyond the kin support system to include friendships with peers and others experiencing similar life events.

Work can be undertaken by the professional to enlarge the social networks and to include contact with other single parents in a social support group. Contact with peers with a common life experience is empowering and encourages clients to take control of their own lives because: (1) individuals are helped to understand better the circumstances surrounding the life events or transitions they are facing;

(2) they exchange problem-solving strategies; (3) they support one another's efforts at behavioural and attitudinal change; (4) through the process of social comparison, they reduce feelings of uniqueness regarding their problems; and (5) they develop permanent friendship support systems outside the group.

7.5 Training helping agents

Those single mothers identified as non-users and who have structured their social networks in the best possible way to allow them to cope with their role as single parents could be recruited as helping agents. These women could be trained to help other single mothers cope with their roles. These helping agents could offer emotional support, information about practical concerns, guidance about changes occurring in the network and advice about the potential support available in personal networks.

7.6 Training clients to influence their social networks

The development of social skills would enable single mothers to form, maintain, mobilize, and draw upon their social networks. Sensitizing the mothers to the potential resources within their networks would be another way of encouraging them to influence their networks.

A number of changes in their networks were made by single mothers because of interpersonal conflict. Interventions designed to eliminate conflict in otherwise supportive relationships could be undertaken.

Single mothers with inadequacies in their social networks or with networks with inadequate resources require a social approach to their problems. Interventions with these mothers should be expanded from a focus on the one-to-one relationship to include identifying, supporting and mobilizing their informal resources. Focusing on strengthening informal systems as the major providers of support, and facilitating peer support groups, does not mean lessening the importance of professional intervention. With regard to support groups, professionals have an important role as trained facilitators to motivate single mothers to join groups, organize group meetings, provide the necessary facilities - including the venue - etc.

Furthermore, many single-mother families have special needs arising from dysfunctional family relationships, custody issues, emotional and behaviour problems of children, etc. that require sophisticated clinical treatment.

7.7 Increasing individual, family and community resources

The study was conducted in a low-income community where most of the residents experienced accommodation and financial problems. The homes in the area had two or three bedrooms and the average monthly household income was less than R750. Many of the single mothers interviewed here depended on their relatives for housing (44 %) and financial assistance (82 %). Although the families assisted the single mothers they were doing so with strained and meagre resources. It is very likely that many of the complaints and problems for which users seek help can be traced to overcrowded living conditions, financial difficulties and to an extended over-reliance on networks with limited resources.

The single mothers who seemed to cope best with their lives and who were less likely to seek professional services were those who were financially independent and lived in independent households. These women's networks were bigger and less dense compared with those of the users of professional services. They (the former) were able to draw on the emotional support, comfort and stability provided by relatives and the freedom, sharing and tangible support provided by non-kin relationships.

This study was based on a small, purposive non-random sample and its findings cannot be generalized to the general population of single mothers. However an important finding of this study, namely, that single-mother families who moved in with relatives living in inadequate and overcrowded accommodation were more likely to seek help from social workers for personal problems and problems related to their children, seemed to apply to other low-income single-mother families. Mahabeer (1989) in a sample of 204 low-income Indian mothers and their children from Chatsworth, Durban found that children from nuclear families (including children from single-mother families living independently) were rated more positively on self and social adjustment than children from single-mother families living in extended families. (The children were rated by their teachers on the Child Behaviour Rating Scale (Cassel 1962).) Mahabeer (1989) explains the difference as resulting from the stress experienced by the single mother and her children because of overcrowded living conditions and having to be dependent on married siblings who have their own family responsibilities.

Given the findings it is recommended that the provision of housing for low-income families by the state should be based on family needs, traditional values and preferences. Many single mothers in this study reported a preference for extended

family living, while others preferred independent households. In addressing the question of housing for single-mother families, reference can be made to Snyman's (1987) point that public bodies need to consider easier access to public housing for single-parent families.

Dealing with the underlying causes of the problems presented by their clients, meeting the real needs of those seeking services and implementing appropriate interventions, require that social workers extend their role from the one-to-one relationships in which they provide intangible support to a role aimed at securing tangible resources for their clients, such as affordable and appropriate housing, training programmes to equip single mothers with the skills to obtain well-paid jobs, developing employment opportunities close to home and securing adequate financial resources for those in need.

NOTE

1. It is expected that, as the government's policy of racial differentiation is progressively dismantled, the entire welfare system will change.

REFERENCES

ANSPACH, D.F. 1976. Kinship and divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 38 (May), 323-330.

ANTONUCCI, T.C. 1985. Personal characteristics, social support, and social behavior. In: R.H. BINSTOCK & E. SHANAS (Eds). *Handbook of aging and the social sciences.* 2nd ed. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

ATTNEAVE, C.L. 1977. *Family network map*. Available from the author at 5206 Ivanhoe Place N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105, USA.

BALL, R.E. 1983. Family and friends: A supportive network for low-income American black families. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 14(1), 51-65.

BARNES, J.A. 1969. Network and political process. In: J.C. MITCHELL (Ed.). *Social networks in urban situations.* Manchester, England: Manchester University Press.

BERMAN, W.H. & TURK, D.C. 1981. Adaptation to divorce: Problems and coping strategies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 43(1), 179-189.

BIRKEL, R.C. & REPPUCCI, N.D. 1983. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 11(2), 185-205.

BLOOM, B.L., WHITE, S.W., & ASHER, S.J. 1979. Marital disruption as a stressful life event. In: G. LEVINGER & O. MOLES (Eds). *Divorce and separation: Context, causes and consequences*. New York: Basic Books.

BOISSEVAIN, J. 1974. *Friends of friends.* Oxford: Basil-Blackwell.

BOTT, E. 1957. *Family and social network*. New York: Free Press.

BRANDWEIN, R.A. 1977. After divorce: A focus on single parent families. *The Urban and Social Change Review*, 10(1), 21-25.

BURMAN, S. & FUCHS, R. 1986. When families split: Custody on divorce in South Africa. In: S. BURMAN & P. REYNOLDS (Eds). *Growing up in a divided society: The contexts of childhood in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan.

CASSEL, R.N. 1962. *The Child Behaviour Rating Scale.* Beverly Hills, California: Western Psychological Services.

CENTRAL STATISTICAL SERVICE. *Statistical News Release (P0307).* 1980 to 1989.

COBB, S. 1976. Social support as a moderator of life stress. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 38 (September/October), 300-314.

COLLETTA, N.D. 1979. Support systems after divorce: Incidence and impact. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 41 (November), 837-846.

COLLINS, A.H. & PANCOAST, D.L. 1976. *Natural helping networks.* Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.

COMREY, A.L. 1973. *A first course in factor analysis.* New York: Academic Press.

CROOG, S.H., LIPSON, A. & LEVINE, S. 1972. Help patterns in severe illness: The role of kin network, non-family resources, and institutions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 34 (February), 32-41.

DANIELS-MOHRING, D. & BERGER, M. 1984. Social network changes and the adjustment to divorce. *Journal of Divorce*, 8(1) (Fall), 17-32.

DOREIAN, P. 1981. Polyhedral dynamics and conflict mobilization in social networks. *Social Networks*, 3, 107-116.

DRABEK, T.E. & BOGGS, K.S. 1968. Families in disaster: Relations and relatives. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 30, 443-451.

EDDY, W.B., PAPP, S.M. & GLAD, D. 1970. Solving problems in living: The citizen's viewpoint. *Mental Hygiene*, 54, 64-72.

ELL, K. 1984. Social networks, social support, and health status: A review. *Social Service Review* (March), 133-149.

FISCHER, C.S. *et al.* 1977. *Networks and places: Social relations in the urban setting.* New York: Free Press.

FISCHER, C.S. & PHILLIPS, S.L. 1979. Who is alone? Social characteristics of people with small networks. In: L.A. PEPLAU & D. PERLMAN (Eds). *Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy.* New York: Wiley-Interscience.

GOODE, W.J. 1956. *After divorce.* New York: Free Press.

GOTTLIEB, B.H. 1976. Lay influences on the utilization and provision of health services: A review. *Canadian Psychological Review*, 17, 126-165.

GOTTLIEB, B.H. 1985. Social support and community mental health. In: S. COHEN & S.L. SYME (Eds). *Social support and health.* New York: Academic Press.

GOTTLIEB, B.H. 1988. Marshaling social support: The state of the art in research and practice. In: B.H. GOTTLIEB (Ed.). *Marshaling social support: Formats, processes and effects.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

HAMMER, M. 1963-64. Influence of social networks on psychiatric admission. *Human Organization*, 22, 243-251.

HANUSHEK, E.A. & JACKSON, J.E. 1977. *Statistical methods for social scientists.* New York: Academic.

HORWITZ, A. 1977. Social networks and pathways to psychiatric treatment. *Social Forces*, 56(1), 86-105.

HU, T. 1973. *Econometrics: An introductory analysis.* Baltimore: University Park Press.

JINABHAI, C. 1986. *The apartheid welfare system: From state security to social security.* Paper presented at the Policy Workshop on research priorities for socio-economic planning in post-apartheid South Africa. Durban.

JITHOO, S. 1975. Fission of the Hindu joint-family in Durban. *University of Durban-Westville Journal*, 2(3), 55-62.

KALTER, N. & REMBAR, J. 1981. The significance of a child's age at the time of parental divorce. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 51, 85-100.

KAPFERER, B. 1969. Norms and the manipulation of relationships in a work context. In: J.C. MITCHELL (Ed.). *Social network in urban situations.* Manchester, England: Manchester.

KOOS, E.L. 1946. *Families in trouble.* New York: King's Crown.

LADBROOK, D. 1976. The health and survival of the divorced. *Conciliation Courts Review*, 14, 21-33.

LADNER, J.A. 1971. *Tomorrow's tomorrow.* New York: Doubleday.

LARSON, R. 1978. Thirty years of research on the subjective well-being of older Americans. *Journal of Gerontology*, 33, 109-125.

LEE, N. 1969. *The search for an abortionist.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

LESLIE, L.A. & GRADY, K. 1985. Changes in mothers' social networks and social support following divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (August), 663-673.

LETLAKA-RENNERT, K. 1990. Soweto street children: Implications of family disintegration for South African psychologists. In: L.J. NICHOLAS & S. COOPER (Eds). *Psychology & apartheid.* Cape Town: A Vision/Madiba Publication.

LITWAK, E. 1978. Agency and family linkages in providing neighborhood services. In: D. THURSZ & J.L. VIGILANTE (Eds). *The management of human services.* New York: Columbia University Press.

LITWAK, E. & SZELENYI, I. 1969. Primary group structures and their functions: Kin, neighbors and friends. *American Sociological Review*, 34, 465-481.

MAGWAZA, A. 1989. *Voluntary and involuntary migration in a selected South African black settlement: A government problem and psychological correlates.* Durban: University of Durban Westville, Department of Psychology (D.Phil. dissertation).

MAHABEER, M. 1989. *The effects of father absence on child and family adjustment.* Durban: University of Natal, Department of Social Work (D.Phil. dissertation).

MARTIN, E.P. & MARTIN, J.M. 1978. *The black extended family.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

MARTIN, J. & MARTIN, E. 1985. *The helping tradition in the black family and community.* Silver Spring, MD: National Association of Social Workers.

McADOO, H.P. 1978. Factors related to stability in upwardly mobile black families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 40, 761-778.

McADOO, H. 1980. Black mothers and the extended family support network. In: LA FRANCES RODGERS-ROSE (Ed.). *The black woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

McCALLISTER, L. & FISCHER, C.S. 1978. A procedure for surveying personal networks. *Sociological Methods and Research,* 7(2) (November), 131-147.

MITCHELL, J.C. 1969. The concept and use of social networks. In: J.C. MITCHELL (Ed.). *Social networks in urban situations.* Manchester, England: Manchester University Press.

MITCHELL, R.E. & TRICKETT, E.J. 1980. Task force report: Social networks as mediators of social support. An analysis of the effects and determinants of social networks. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 16(1), 27-89.

MUTRAN, E. & SKINNER, G. 1981. *Family support and the well-being of widowed: Black-White comparisons.* Paper presented at the 34th Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Toronto.

OFFICIAL YEARBOOK OF REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. 1974.

PEARLIN, L.I. & JOHNSON, J.S. 1977. Marital status, life-strains and depression. *American Sociological Review*, 42(5), 704-715.

PINDYCK, R.S. & RUBINFELD, D.L. 1981. *Econometric models and economic forecasts.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

SIMKINS, C. 1986. Household composition and structure in South Africa. In: S. BURMAN & P. REYNOLDS (Eds). *Growing up in a divided society: The contexts of childhood in South Africa.* Johannesburg: Ravan.

SNYMAN, S.A. 1987. Single parenthood: Some findings. *Welfare Focus*, 22(1) (June).

SNYMAN, INA. 1987. *Ondersoek: Betaling van onderhoud*. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing (Verslag BBS/ASS-3). (Unofficial translation used for this report.)

SPANIER, G.B. & CASTO, R.F. 1979. Adjustment of separation and divorce: An analysis of 50 case studies. *Journal of Divorce*, 2(3), 241-253.

SPANIER, G.B. & HANSON, S. 1981. The role of extended kin in the adjustment to marital separation. *Journal of Divorce*, 5 (Winter), 33-48.

STACK, C.B. 1974. *All our kin: Strategies for survival in a black community.* New York: Harper & Row.

SUNDAY STAR. 1990. *Queens of the road*. 2 Dec.:14-18.

SUNDAY TRIBUNE, 1990. *Towards the new Natal*. Special section, 14 Oct.

TAYLOR, R.J., JACKSON, J.S. & QUICK, A.D. 1982. The frequency of social support among black Americans: Preliminary findings from the national survey of black Americans. *Urban Research Review*, 8(2), 1-4, 11.

THIBAUT, J. & KELLEY, H.H. 1959. *The social psychology of groups.* New York: John Wiley.

TOLSDORF, C.C. 1976. Social networks, support, and coping: An exploratory study. *Family Process*, 15 (December), 407-417.

TSHABALALA, M. 1986. Kinship networks: An analysis on the use of kinship systems for the promotion of mental health among the Nguni. *Maatskaplike Werk/Social Work*, 22(2), 72-79.

WEISS, R.S. 1975. *Marital separation.* New York: Basic Books.

WEISS, R.S. 1979. *Going it alone: The family life and social situation of the single parent.* New York: Basic Books.

WILCOX, B. 1981. The role of social support in adjusting to marital disruption: A network analysis. In: B.H. GOTTLIEB (Ed.). *Social networks and social support*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

ZILL, N. 1983. *Happy, healthy, and insecure*. New York: Doubleday.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE SELECTION GUIDE

You said you were
(1) Separated (2) Widowed (3) Divorced (4) Never married?

How many children do you have?

What are their ages?

How long have you been a single parent?
Where do you live?
(1) your own home
(2) with parents or other family members
(3) with friends
(4) other

Here are some of the ways in which people receive their income. Which ones are sources of income for you? Check as many as apply.
(1) I have no income of my own
(2) Wages or salary
(3) Child support
(4) Rental or investments
(5) Unemployment insurance
(6) Disability payments
(7) Welfare payments (Maintenance Grant)
(8) Other (What) _____

What is your date of birth? _____
Month Day Year

What was the highest standard you completed in school? ☐ ☐
Primary school: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
High school: 7 8 9 10
College/University: 1 2 3 4 5
Technical/Business/Trade: 1 2 3 4 5 plus

Have you had professional counselling since becoming a single parent (individual/group)?

Have you joined an informal support group since becoming a single parent? (Parents without Partners, etc.)

Has your child received counselling since birth/the divorce, desertion or death of spouse (individual/group)?

APPENDIX B

PERSONAL SOCIAL RESOURCE QUESTIONNAIRE

(Each single mother in the sample was questioned about her social network and social support system before and after the event using the following questions and the attached *Network Map*.)

In our everyday lives there are problems that we must deal with. We often turn to certain people for help with our problems. Some of these problems are listed below. Please consider each statement in the light of your own situation and name the person(s) who helped you or would help you with a specific problem.

1. If you had to experience an **emergency**, who would you turn to for help? ☐ ☐

2. Some people never talk with anyone, either on or off the job, about how to do their work. Other people do discuss things like decisions they have to make, work problems they have to solve, and ways to do their work better. Is there anyone you talk with about how to do your **work?** ☐ ☐
   (1) Yes
   (2) No
   IF YES: Who do you talk with about how you do your work?

3. When you are concerned about a **personal matter** - for example, about someone you are close to or something you are worried about - do you talk about it with someone? ☐ ☐
   (1) Yes
   (2) No
   IF YES: **Who** do you talk with about a personal problem and **when**?

4. Often people rely on the **judgment** of someone they know in making important decisions about their lives - for example their decisions about their family or their work. Is there anyone whose opinion you consider seriously in making important decisions? ☐ ☐
   (1) Yes
   (2) No
   IF YES: Who do you talk with about making decisions?

5. If you needed to get **a large sum of money** together, what would you do - would you ask someone you know to lend it to you; go to a bank, savings and loan, or credit union, or do something else? ☐ ☐
   (1) Ask someone you know. Who would that be?
   (2) Bank, savings and loan, or credit union
   (3) Both the above
   (4) Something else (SPECIFY)

6. Who do you turn to for help with **child care?**

Who do you talk with about **problems you have with your children?**

In answer to the last set of questions, you've given me the names of some of the people who have helped you. Now I'm going to pick out the names of a few of those people and ask you to give me a little more information about them.

7. **Below is a list of some of the ways people are connected with each other.**
(ROLE/STATUS OF TIE)

8. **Some people will be related in more than one way. So, when I read you a name, please tell me all the ways that person is connected with you right now.**
(MULTIPLEXITY OF TIES)

How is (NAME) connected with you now?
PROBE: Any other way?
(WRITE RELATIONSHIP NEXT TO NAME ON LIST FORM)

01. Relative (PROBE: How are you related?)
02. Co-worker (someone you work with or see regularly at work)
03. Neighbour
04. Friend
05. Community resource/helper (specify)
06. Employer, supervisor or boss
07. Family doctor or specialist
08. Social worker
09. Psychologist
10. Psychiatrist
11. Lawyer
12. Police
13. Spiritual advisor
14. Store owner
15. Teacher
16. No one

Is there anyone who is important to you who doesn't show up on this list?

(1) Yes
(2) No

IF YES: Who is that? (ADD NAME. GET INFORMATION ON THAT PERSON.)

9. Work out if network members know each other **(NETWORK DENSITY)**

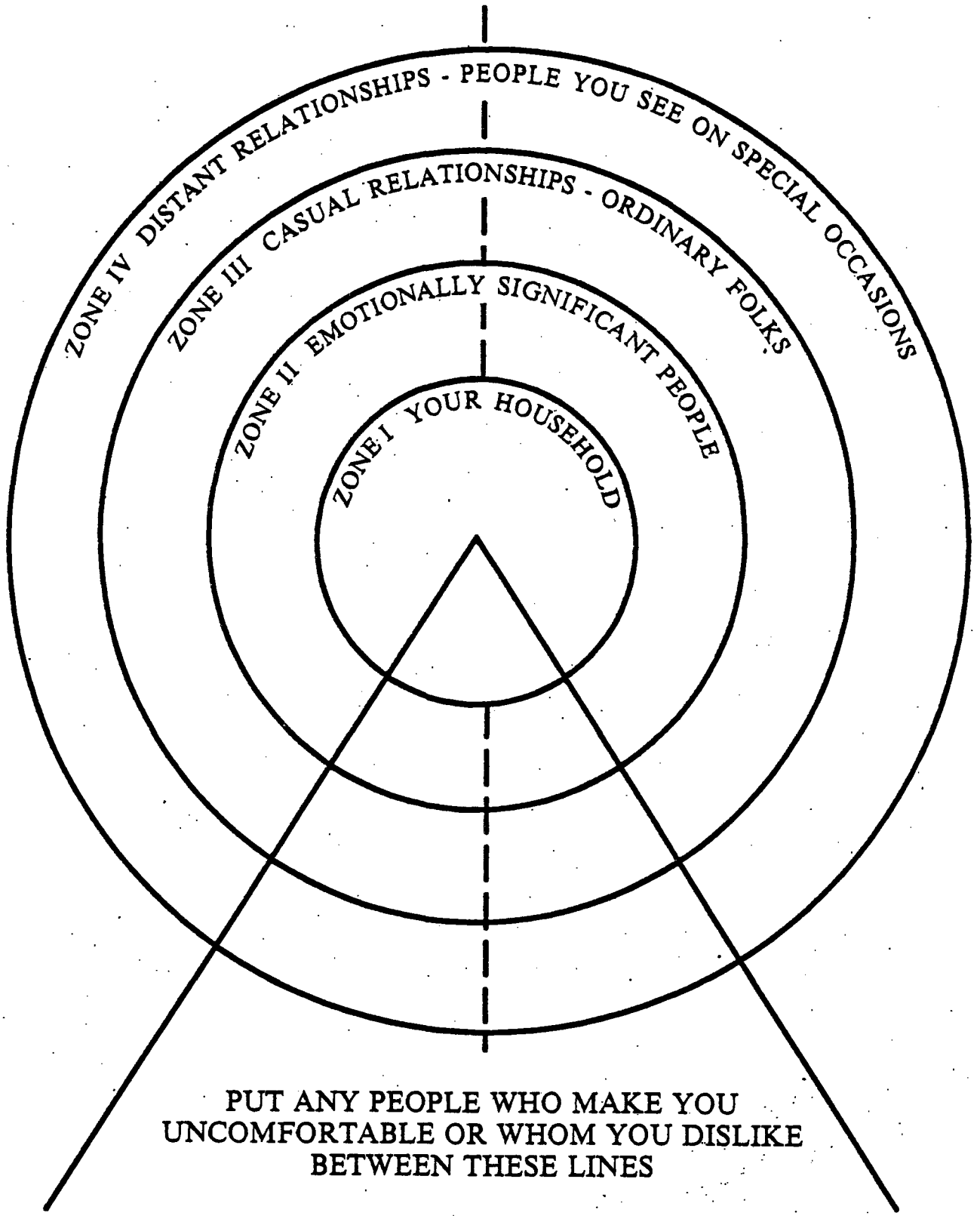
THE NETWORK MAP

The Network Map is based on Attneave's Family Network Map (1977) which is adapted to obtain information on network size, kin network size, non-kin network size, the number of kin changes, the number of non-kin changes and the number of multiplex ties in the network. The diagram on Page 5 (Attneave 1977) is used to obtain information on the single mother's network before the birth of child, the divorce, the separation or the death of the spouse. The same diagram is then used to obtain details on the single mother's present network. Differences in Diagram 1 and Diagram 2 are noted and used to calculate the number of kin changes and the number of non-kin changes.

Diagram 1: Network before birth of child, divorce, separation, death of spouse.

PUT ALL FAMILY &
KINFOLK ON THIS SIDE

PUT ALL NON-FAMILY
ON THIS DIDE
(friends, neighbours, *et al.*)

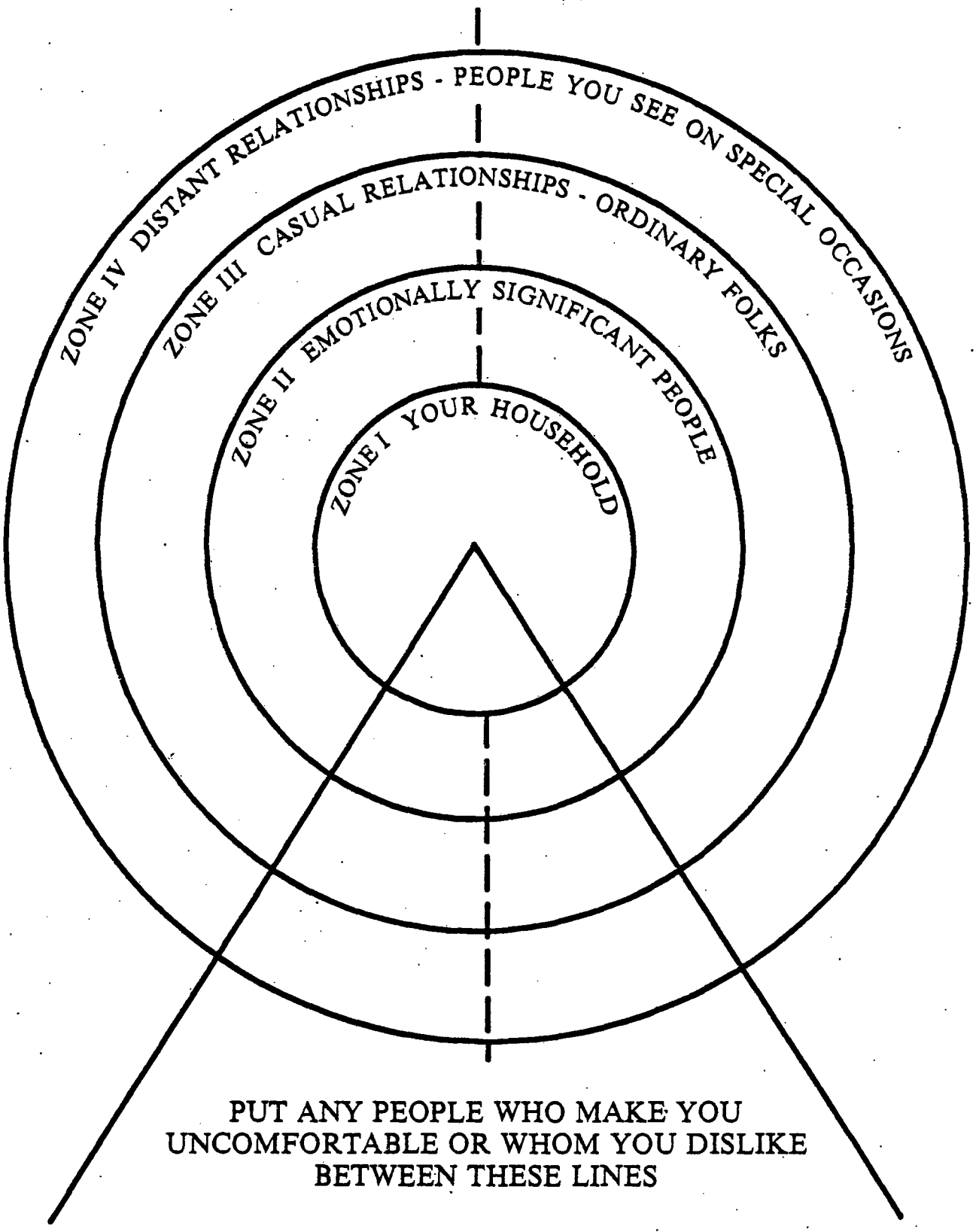


PUT ANY PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU
UNCOMFORTABLE OR WHOM YOU DISLIKE
BETWEEN THESE LINES

Diagram 2: Present network of single mother of spouse.

PUT ALL FAMILY & KINFOLK ON THIS SIDE

PUT ALL NON-FAMILY ON THIS DIDE
(friends, neighbours, *et al.*)



PUT ANY PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE OR WHOM YOU DISLIKE BETWEEN THESE LINES

Doc no 287859
Copy no 287862

BIBL... HSRO LIBRARY

R?