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"I *Cannot* Fall Pregnant!" Unequal Bodies in South African Higher Education

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Abstract

Girls from single-parent households in South Africa (90 percent of whom are Black African or coloured) have significantly lower educational outcomes than other demographics. Through a methodology of life-history interviews, we explore the experiences of 30 women in single-headed households who have been successful in their educational endeavours as university students or graduates. Results show that pressures on girls from single-headed households to look after the family and domestic sphere and to protect their bodies from sexual abuse leave many girls depleted of the time, energy, and mental capacity required to study. Despite these challenges, these participants have escaped the perceived weight of their female burden in a post-apartheid, patriarchal society and reclaim their bodies and sense of agency through educational success.

Keywords

child abuse, female autonomy, female educational attainment, gendered abuse, single parents, single-headed households, success

Introduction

While girlhood (particularly of primary school age) has received growing attention from scholars, practitioners, and policymakers through a range of projects focusing on young girls' education, teenage girls and older girls have not received similar attention. Recentring teenage girls and older girls in debates about education is critical to understanding the persistence of barriers to higher education for girls. By focusing on access to and success in higher education, we explore, in this article, the lived experiences and trajectories of girls from single-headed families coping with navigating life in South Africa. We consider the history of

single-parent and single-headed households in South Africa and what this means for the girls who have achieved educational success. Our research presents the narratives of 30 women from such households who have graduated or are studying towards an undergraduate degree. Their powerful stories capture the stark realities of gendered violence and the socially constructed expectations of girls. The main themes presented here are the commodification of girl-bodies within the household, societal expectations of the female body (the girl-body at risk), and the reclamation of the girl-body (becoming educated to gain agency). The need to overcome these issues to gain autonomy over their bodies is an important part of maintaining their identity and allowing them to continue striving for educational attainment. By not getting pregnant and obtaining an undergraduate degree, the women gain control of their future and become determined not to repeat the cycle of poverty.

Background

South Africa has faced a period of economic redevelopment post-colonization that has exacerbated political tension between and among ethnic groups. Despite noticeable advances in access, Black African, Coloured, and Indian girls remain at a significant disadvantage compared to their white counterparts. Racial hierarchy can still determine who is most likely to be afforded opportunities and who is not. Research indicates that growing up in a single-headed family structure negatively affects children's educational performance (Hendricks 2018; Sadiq et al. 2019). Globally, academic achievement is a likely predictor of poverty levels, income, health, and wellbeing. At the same time, poverty operates as a predictor of academic failure, with the poor less likely to reach higher levels of educational attainment. Identified as one of the key Sustainable Development Goals enshrined in South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030, quality education for all remains an elusive objective.

South Africa demonstrates high levels of female single-headed households at about 47 percent of all family households. Nearly 82 percent of these female-headed households fall below the poverty line and often find it difficult to procure their basic needs such as food, water, and housing (Statistics South Africa 2018). These percentages have increased markedly with the loss of life caused by COVID-19. Since women are over-represented in lower-paying jobs, female-headed households are likely to remain in poverty (Parry and Gordon 2021). Stigmatizing single parenting is still prevalent globally, with children of these families more likely to be in poverty, have low educational attainment, use substances, gain a criminal record, develop ill health, or die prematurely (Barnard 2018; Mulia 2017). For this study, single-headed households are defined as those without a co-resident partner with others (such as a grandparent, neighbor, or friend) who have taken on this role when both parents are absent, or an older child caring for younger siblings in the absence of an adult.

Framing Girlhood Studies

Girlhood scholars have mapped the fluidity of meanings and discourses of *girling* in the neoliberal era, shaped by cultural, socio-political, and economic forces (McRobbie 2007) that direct girls to harness innate potential toward critical gender development and the elimination of discrimination against women. A conceptual definition of girlhood in a culturally diverse, systemically patriarchal, racially fractured, and economically imbalanced post-apartheid neoliberal South African context requires the examination of the term *girl* (Kirk et al. 2010), since it conveys prejudiced and pejorative inferences and suggests a demeaning and complex association between girl children and women (Brown and Gilligan 1993; Mitchell 2016). Economically subjugated working-class girls' positions are sustained by antiquated exclusion, slavery, indenture, apartheid, colonization, and racialized systemic stigma that devalues the girl-child from birth to death (Skourtes 2016). Arguably, race is the most significant intersectional aspect of girlhood experiences, particularly among young Black African girls.

The term girl-child provided one of the many ways of entrenching deep psychological wounds by creating a stigmatizing perception of inferiority based on gender, class, and racial differences.

Working with narratives from predominantly young Black African women raised and living in South Africa, we address expectations of and conformity to gender roles and representations and discuss how participants negotiate these intersections and terrains defined by structural and material contexts.

Method and Research Strategy

We adapted methodologies focused on memory, participatory research, and policy to capture the life-stories of participants to help break the "relative silence" (Moletsane et al. 2008: 3) in the research literature on growing up female in South Africa. Our research method draws on feminist perspectives of the researcher/participant dynamics, the conducting of narrative life history interviews, and the sensitivities involved in researching such complex and sensitive stories (Brown and Gilligan 1993; Gilligan 1982, 1983; Mitchell 2016). While qualitative research in limited numbers cannot be generalizable to an entire population, our narrative interviews highlight the importance of core issues and provide unique insight into the lived experience of women during their girlhood in South Africa. Gilligan (1982, 1983) notes that girls who speak out can put themselves in danger. Having women speak on behalf of the girls does not endanger them; they can speak out to help girls who are still silenced by the threat of danger; such experience in our sample is a powerful indicator of the need to address issues of gender, race, and related abuse.

This study is part of a larger one entitled "Higher Educational Attainment Inequalities and Single-Parent Families in South Africa (HEAPS): Differences by Region, Gender, and Race," supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund. A total of 40 people (from single-headed households who had graduated or were working towards an undergraduate degree)

were interviewed. These participants were selected by a non-probability snowball sampling method. They all signed informed consent documents and were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time if they so wished. Pseudonyms were used in the data analysis, and participants consented to the digital recording of interviews. Of these participants, 30 of whom were women, 20 were students, and 20 were staff/alumni from the University of KwaZulu Natal and the University of Stellenbosch, and their responses are the focus of this article. Of these participants, 22 women described themselves as Black African, 5 as white, 2 as Coloured, and 1 as Indian. Their ages ranged from 20 to 49 years of age, and most of them (22) described themselves as Christian.

One female researcher conducted all the interviews online or on the telephone because of the lockdown restrictions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interviews took place between April and June 2021. The participants were paid R250 (approximately USD14) each in vouchers for their time and the internet data required for the interviews. The same researcher conducted and transcribed the interviews, and this enhanced standardization between interviews, as did the use of an interview guide devised by the research team. This is a more naturalistic approach to transcription in that it achieves a more holistic representation of data (Oliver et al. 2005). Silences and perceived emotions are accounted for in the transcription, thus providing the wider research team with prompts that they can discuss collaboratively and that can serve to challenge (and mitigate) the interviewer's possible bias. The research team, working in pairs, divided up the interviews to identify common themes and begin the data analysis. The whole team discussed these themes, and consensus on them was used for coding. A statistician was employed to code the interviews in NVivo. The rest of the team coded 20 percent for accuracy.

We were acutely aware that the experiences related during the interviews raised issues about trauma, experiences of violence, rape, and severe sexual assault against minors.

Describing the past can have the effect of re-traumatizing such participants in bringing up unwanted memories and feelings, or it can give them power and autonomy since they are discussing their memories on their terms (Sikes 2010).

Findings and Discussion

By bringing together participants' narratives on the role of the body in their educational trajectories, we explore the multi-faceted realities of the girl-body in the single-headed household. These powerful stories capture the stark realities of gendered violence and the expectations of girls. We identify some of their implications concerning schooling and education. Three interlinked themes are presented here: the commodification of girl-bodies within the household; expectations of the female body (the girl-body at risk); and the reclamation of the girl-body (education to gain agency).

The Commodification of Girl-bodies within the Household

The expectations of girls growing up in single-headed households were very different between and among the Black African, Coloured, Indian, and white families in our study. The resources, structure, and emotional and financial support of white participants differed from that of the other participants.

> My dad paid for my studies. My mum was very supportive; she encouraged me and was positive; she was really a beautiful soul. My dad bought me a little Golf that I could drive around. Anything I needed he would get for me. I didn't struggle for anything. (Danielle, white)

> School wasn't difficult to access. I was in a private school, and it was great while I was at school. I was well provided for and had a good allowance. When I went out with friends, I had a credit card. In primary school, when my mum

> or one of my parents took us to the movies or for ice cream, I knew I had enough funds, so I didn't need to work at all. (Lisa, white)

In Black African families, the caregiving and domestic duties in the household were given to the female children. This was prioritized before any studying could be done or homework completed.

> I had to clean the house, plus I had to do extramural activities. All that was done after school. I also had to cook. I had to go to the library to study because at the location or Township, it was very noisy. There're always gunshots, loud music, screaming and shouting. It was impossible to study in the location. (Atile, Black African)

> School stuff trying to do homework was difficult because we come home, we have to do with the washing of uniforms and getting ready for tomorrow, getting all the younger children ready and by the time we're done with all our chores it was, it was getting dark. It was difficult at home; there was no space. We are on top of each other trying to do homework in the house, trying to share a paraffin light and sometimes, if we don't have money for paraffin. It was impossible circumstances. (Ntombi, Black African)

Black African girls could not go to school if they had to look after younger children or unwell family members. Schooling held the least priority for girls when they had chores to attend to and siblings to look after and was seen to be unimportant for girls in obtaining a life skill. By the time they could study, they often had no access to light in their homes. They would have to wake up at dawn, complete their chores, and go to school early to complete homework tasks.

> My sister was three months old, and I was five years, and my brother was ten. We had no other family. No, wait, we had family, just no one who wanted a bunch of charity kids. So, we lived alone. My neighbour helped with Khethi (the three-month-old). We didn't know how to look after a baby. My father refused to give her money, so my brother used to work in the spaza shop to help pay her to look after Khethi. (Mbali, Black African)

> I was the older child, so I had to do chores. My cousins were younger and noisy. They troubled me a lot. I had to play with them and keep them busy. It meant I couldn't study. My aunt said it's not important to study and I was wasting my time. She would always leave the children with me even on weekends because she would go visiting. The children were very naughty. (Tlali, Black African)

These female single-parent households still uphold patriarchal views. Several participants mentioned that the boys of the family were treated differently. They got food before the girls did and were expected to study to achieve an education rather than do chores.

> When you are so many people in a small house, you have to share everything. But in the house, it's better to be a boy because boys get things first, and what is left over, the girls get. (Bhokang, Black African)

Not all girls' experiences were negative. Some participants stated that they were not expected to do chores at all and that their parents were very financially and emotionally supportive. Some women stated how their parents or other caregivers had strived to help them achieve an education, recognizing the importance of it over and above learning how to take care of a household.

> I had support from my mum to this day. They always put me first and made sure that I was always provided for. Many of my friends had to do chores growing up but I only did chores in school holidays. I only studied. (Tebo, Black African)

> My mum and granny made me who I am. Their love and support. My brother was the oldest in the house. He took care of us like a father (Batho, Black African)

Two of the women stated that they lived in child-headed households at some point during their childhood. This left them vulnerable, and a participant confirmed that she and her 16-year-old cousin (head of the household) were at risk of violation from the neighbour. (The lack of support from males who impregnated girls is explored further in the next section.)

> When I was 10, I went to stay with my 16-year-old cousin for 7 months. I was tired of all the noise. We lived alone. I had to wake up really early to cook and clean the house. I had my first job now at 10 years old. I cleaned the house and wash[ed] clothes for the neighbour next door. He would pay me R20 per day. I didn't work every day. He used to give me cosmetics too. He worked in a cosmetic factory. He lived alone. The one day, he tried to grab me and force himself on me. I went back home. I wanted out of this life. My cousin got pregnant at 16 with the same neighbour's child. He left her no money, nothing. (Noma, Black African).

The expectations of female children in single-parent households varied according to their ethnic background, with Black African girls faring particularly poorly. Many of these girls had to find jobs to buy food, and they had to labour in the domestic sphere. Several participants said they had to protect themselves and their siblings from violence and abuse while navigating paid and unpaid domestic work. These narratives suggest the commodification of the girl-body that is treated as a resource and reduced to physical and domestic labour. Girls' agency is subjugated to the corporeal, and their

intellectual/educational needs or desires are denied. Therefore, their investment in education and studying was extremely difficult, or in some cases impossible, since being educated lies outside the realm of expectation for the girl-body.

Expectations of the Female Body: The Girl-body at Risk

The narratives in this section are particularly harrowing. The women who participated in this research were very open about their experiences in the hope that this may prevent other girls from having the same experiences.

One of the participants described how disappointed she was in her mother for choosing prostitution as a way of providing for the family. She judged this an unnecessary choice that automatically made her a bad parent. Her mother had also involved her younger brother in prostitution, taking money over ensuring the health and autonomy of her child. This choice had further-reaching consequences than she had even realized as a child, and this was revealed only through tragedy.

> I grew up with my mum. She's dead now from COVID. I thought HIV would have killed her much sooner. I know that is a harsh thing for someone to say about their mother, but she won't win mother of the year. I lived with my brother and her. She was a prostitute, like a hooker. No, I am not embarrassed because I am a way better mother than she ever was. She wouldn't work as a domestic, but she would open her legs for hundreds of men. She would say it's to put food on the table. She used to take my younger brother, saying that he must stay with another friend. I only found out years later after he hung himself that she was making men fuck him. (Minnie, Black African)

Although the above example is about a boy losing bodily autonomy, girls were frequently forced to use their bodies to protect themselves and provide for their families.

> They took Khethi and were playing with her like uncles should, making like funny faces and things. I was happy because she was laughing. Then they opened her nappy and start to touch her private. Bonga dropped the pot and went to grab her. My dad grabbed him and punched him and pressed his face on the hot pot. They didn't do anything to Khethi, and they threw her to the floor. She was screaming. Bonga was dead, I thought, but these men were laughing and drinking and playing loud music. I was crying over Bonga when the two men grabbed me. I blacked out watched my father laugh. It was the day before I turn six. I woke up, and my body was hurting and bleeding. (Mbali, Black African)

Although Bonga was not killed, Mbali was brutally raped, yet she had to continue carrying out the role of the female head of the household and look after the siblings that her father allowed to be abused. Older female siblings like Mbali and her brother tried to intervene to their detriment. This incident left Bonga with severe disabilities, taking care of which Mbali had to incorporate into her caring for her family.

Sex is not often a choice for girls and is often something that men and boys feel they can take when they want it or in exchange for something that the girl needs, such as a lift to school. However, when girls are raped, they are seen to have disgraced the family, and they suffer in silence, dealing alone with the physical and mental effects of having been raped. This can lead to a detrimental relationship with their own body and with significant risk of catching a disease or being infected with HIV.

> So, I was raped by my mum's boyfriend when I was seven. After months of it happening, my mum caught him, and she gave me a beating. I used to get blisters, and only now did I realize that this man gave me STIs [Sexually Transmitted Infections]. He also gave me HIV, but I collected all the two rands [coins] he gave me, and I could buy Smarties [candy] whenever I wanted. That's how I made money when we didn't

> have food. So, I would prostitute myself, so I could feed my siblings. It's not like anyone would give an 11-year-old work. Every time there was rain, the shack would wash away. I struggled. But even if I missed school, I would sit and study. I used to work very hard on my schoolwork. (Bena, Black African)

> Things are bad, and there are bad people. I had to learn how to speak English properly so that I was respected. That's how I got into Stellenbosch [University]. Black people have to use their bodies to survive, and there is no shame in it, but it's sad. (Bena, Black African)

> Not safe [to get to school], but you walk with people. Sometimes my uncle would take me with the car if I had sex in the morning. (Lindelani, Black African)

These transcripts highlight how Black girls are seen as commodities by men and discarded easily. There was no indication from White or Indian participants of forced sexual relationships. However, they still found themselves having children at a young age with the children's fathers no longer around. Danielle did not focus on her university studies since she constantly changed courses and did not concentrate in class. She habitually dated older men who were her father's friends. She now has two children and is angered at having to work as an administrator.

> I got a boyfriend when I was 16. He told me all the right things. He was good to me and bought me clothes and handbags. It was the first time anyone was so kind to me, and he spoke so lovingly. He told me that not all men were like my father and that he loves me and will take care of me. He was the first and, till today, the only guy I slept with. I will never trust another man. He was 19 and at university. He came from the area. His parents were businesspeople. I got pregnant. They asked me to have an

> abortion, and they will pay for everything. I didn't agree. I wrote my exams pregnant. (Reena, Indian)

> Most of my dating happened with me and my dad's friends and one of their son[s] so I haven't had the best luck in dating. Nothing's worked out I've got two kids. They are amazing everything I do it's for them. Their dads are not really much in the picture, we cut ties, and of course, they pay maintenance for the children but other than that, there is no relationship. I enjoy casual relationships. (Danielle, white)

All these participants had the perception that once girls accept gifts, they will get pregnant, and the men will leave them. All the women shared their low expectations of men that came from their own experiences and those of women and girls around them. However, as evidenced in Noma's testimony (above), it was also accepted that one way to get out of poverty or pay for food, clothing, or shelter was to find a man who was willing to buy one gifts. This was usually with an expectation that sex was part of the deal once gifts had been accepted.

Experiences of sexual exploitation among participants vary in age and contextual circumstances. There is evidence that sexual socialization, grooming, and gifting culminate in establishing the benefits of sexual acts, including the financial. Sexual predators employ opportunistic strategies in responding to the wants and basic needs of girls from impoverished communities. Driven by poverty, needs, and wants the girl-child is manipulated into believing that enduring inappropriate sexual demands from an adult is necessary. The girl-child's age and socio-economic conditions increase her risk of being used for sex.

> I was 10 and I was talking to a teacher who was giving me advice. One day he wanted to give me a lift home because there were some fighting somewhere around. He said that he will give me R5 to touch his private, but he also made me do other things, very

> dirty things but not like sex. He would buy me things and give me money sometimes. Some boys at school saw me with Mr . . . [teacher] and caught me after school and raped me. I went home crying and my mother called me a whore. My father belted me. When I went back to school some few days later, Mr . . . didn't want anything to do with me. My story was all over in my area. Mr . . . said I am used goods and that he was saving me for him. (Lihle, Black African)

Lilhe's was raped, stigmatized, and burdened by this sexual violence imposed on her through no fault of her own. Her reputation at the age of 10 was tarnished irreparably in her community. Sustained patriarchy ensured that there were no punitive measures for the statutory rape committed by her teacher and boy rapists.

The research participants were open and honest about the hardships they faced and the abuse they had endured but, although they were determined to succeed in life, they still felt ashamed of the bodily violations that had occurred during their girlhood. The stigma of having had sexual relationships, albeit unwillingly, is exacerbated by the fact that they received gifts in exchange. This makes them feel as though they were accepting of what was happening rather than recognizing that they were being abused by people who were supposed to care for them.

> I am ashamed that's all. I only came to know that it was rape recently or maybe I knew and I ignored it. My uncle would rape me every chance he got because he said I had to pay to live there and eat their food. He bought me nice clothes and a cell phone. I got my first baby at 14 and another at 16. My aunt was very happy because she didn't have babies. I didn't want them (Lindelani, Black African)

Lindelani's aunt allowed the rape to happen so that her niece would get pregnant, and she could then raise the babies as her own. This complicity in the sexual abuse of young girls

by women makes it difficult for girls to find someone to trust. Further, it supports the brutal patriarchal system for those in the lowest economic positions.

This section shows, quite powerfully, through the uncensored narratives of our participants, how the girl-body as a commodity is regarded as disposable. It is treated as a disposable resource, to be used, abused, and discarded (and not to be invested in through formal education). The women recall harrowing experiences of physical abuse, sometimes endured without their recognising the offence. Often this abuse was accompanied by the provision of necessities such as food and shelter, as well as luxuries such as good clothes or cosmetics that locked the girl-body into dependency relationships of power and control, again denying their agency.

The Reclamation of the Girl-body: Education to Gain Agency

Many women who shared their stories stated that they were desperate for change. They saw education as a way of changing their lives and that of others. Education was their way of empowering themselves and taking back control of their bodies. In doing so, they set to upset the patriarchal power relations that governed their bodies and reclaim them through the agency afforded by education. A common statement, especially among the Black African participants, was "I cannot fall pregnant!" uttered in a strongly assertive tone. They were emphatic about pregnancy creating a barrier to the educational attainment that would rescue them and sometimes their family members or female siblings from the cycle of poverty and abuse.

> I will go to school and get my degree to show people, especially my mother I am not a whore. (Lihle, Black African)

They use examples of the people in their lives to illustrate how they do not want to end up. They recognize the injustice of the patriarchal expectations of them to get married and have children, but also how this does not usually turn out well for women from their socio-

economic and racial backgrounds. If they did end up getting married, they wanted it to be on their terms and in a way that positively affected their position in society.

> The only plan was to feed our hungry stomachs. I don't want to be like my mother. To have children from all different men. She goes to church. I don't want to get married, and I don't want to be like other Black girls to get pregnant in school. They do that and the boy leaves them, but they get a child grant to buy airtime and shoes and clothes. (Thando, Black African)

> I didn't want to get pregnant before marriage. It was important for me to achieve everything first. (Tebo, Black African)

The expectations concerning girls' autonomy and their bodies need to be changed. Some women were determined to use their education to change things for other girls who have experienced, or are likely to experience, the abuse they had to endure. However, this acceptance of abuse is so ingrained in some sectors of society that it can be difficult to impart this knowledge to those who allow it to continue its generational cycle.

> There are too many of my sisters who are going through this. Now I am studying, and I want to help them. My younger sister now is 14 and is having sex and doesn't listen to me. (Lihle, Black African)

Through education, the women who have faced these barriers stand a chance of a better future with increased wellbeing as an outcome. Education has provided them with opportunities for independence through work and greater autonomy over their bodies. There was a clear perception among the participants that falling pregnant would put an end to educational endeavour. They saw a baby or pregnancy as a curse that kept them in their cycle of poverty and prevented them from attaining success.

> No one must fall pregnant [s] we try to do well at school, and we tried to get funding to university. This was a big thing. [W]e had 4 of the 6 that went to university and 2 are working. (Ntombi, Black African)

> I won't be that girl to get pregnant outside marriage and ruin my life. (Yiba, Black African)

The racialized nature of this narrative needs to be highlighted. While having children and/or education were deemed possible paths to happiness for white women, this was not the case for their Black African, Coloured, and Indian counterparts for whom education offered the possibility of the practice of freedom (hooks 1994) and agency. For these women falling pregnant was presented as an end to hope and this again highlights the significance of the body in the girl-child's life chances. Notably, pregnancy itself is not regarded in agentic terms.

Conclusion

In this article, we have explored the role of the girl-body in girls' educational trajectories in South Africa. In particular, we found that Black African girls are denied control over their bodies through particular lived experiences of childhood and adolescence. For many, their bodies are mobilized as resources for domestic work and sexual abuse by men. This reduces them to physical rather than intellectual and emotional beings, stripped of agency. The Black African girl-body is treated as a commodity separated from the girl-mind, leaving little room for investment in education. In our analysis, we highlight the significance of the commodification of the Black African girl-body and the attendant disposability of Black African girls in segments of South African society. At the same time, we emphasize the importance of education for the reclamation of the body. In interviewing women who had accessed higher education, we highlight the importance of educational success for women's agency and control over their bodies in social circumstances where abuse is prevalent. The

presence of men does not necessarily herald a more conducive environment for children's education. Gendered norms reinforce patriarchal systems concerning schooling in some households, leading to gendered outcomes of educational experiences. In South Africa, girls do not get equal support and encouragement to attend school. In addition, when families make gendered decisions about who should care for those living with HIV and/or AIDS, tuberculosis, and other debilitating illnesses, the schooling of girls is sacrificed to secure care in a context of failing and overcrowded public health services (Chikulo 2015). Such experiences relating to gender norms and the costs of going to school are aggravated in single-parent households; this requires more research.

Most of the women interviewed stated that their aim in life was to help other vulnerable young people escape the experiences that they had endured. They wanted to go to university and gain a high level of education to break the generational cycle from harming their children (if they had any). Many of these women endured abuse as children to gain basic provisions for themselves and their families, including travel to school, food, and shelter. It is clear that South African policymakers need to support rural schools by funding them to ensure safe passage for girls to and from school. They must provide safe spaces for girls to study outside the domestic sphere.

Moreover, the domestic sphere must be recognized as being frequently a key barrier to girls' educational success. Girls are expected to hold households together through domestic labour and this leaves little time or energy for education. Initiatives to combat this through a focus on girls' participation in external extra-curricular activities would be welcome. [1]However, this would not be possible without investment in supplementing household incomes and the labour gap left by girls' participation in a world beyond the domestic realm.

Bios

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Note

[1] South African universities have a good range of funding streams available to students from previously disadvantaged families, but not all participants had accessed these. Funds such as National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NFSAS) provide funds for undergraduate studies. Many students in rural schools are unaware of these grants. Unless teachers make them aware and help them complete the required documentation, attending university for these women is impossible. It takes time for students to receive the funds, and many of these students have no money to get to the university from their homes. A lot of awareness needs to be raised and education about this must take place in a process that is far from seamless.