

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE HOME MANAGEMENT
TRAINING NEEDS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN
SELECTED REGIONS OF THE ETHEKWINI
MUNICIPAL AREA.**

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Pectora laborant cultus ceccit

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DECLARATION

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE WORK CONTAINED IN THIS THESIS IS MY OWN WORK AND HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY IN ITS ENTIRETY OR IN PART BEEN SUBMITTED AT ANY UNIVERSITY FOR A DEGREE.

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SUMMARY

Domestic workers form an integral part of many South African households and enable their employers to be economically productive. Most employers are dissatisfied with their employees' performance, while domestic workers accuse their employers of insensitivity.

Work-related conflict between these parties occurs as a result of domestic workers' lack of knowledge and skills on various aspects of home management. It was essential to determine the level of domestic workers' knowledge on various home management aspects. This would indicate how to intervene in order to increase their productivity and to promote harmonious working relations between them and their employers.

The purpose of this research was to assess the domestic workers' learning needs in home management. Employers' views were also sought regarding both the home management skills they required of their domestic workers and their expectations with regard to a proposed domestic workers' home management training programme, with the aim of determining whether there is a need for a training programme. The data gleaned in this manner would ensure that the ensuing intervention strategy would be relevant to the needs of both groups.

A survey was carried out for the needs assessment process. The research instruments used for data collection from 100 domestic workers, were interviewing schedules using a tape recorder and incidental observation and questionnaires for 100 employers. The SPSS Win programme was used to analyze the data.

Conclusions drawn indicated that all domestic workers involved were females who were heterogeneous in age and levels of education. Most were from impoverished rural areas and were single parents with many dependants. Numerous problems experienced in the workplace had led to a high turnover.

All domestic workers lacked knowledge and skills in various home management aspects. Domestic workers and the majority of employers felt that training in all aspects of home management was essential.

Recommendations based on these conclusions were the following:

- The state should establish and subsidize comprehensive domestic workers' training programmes in order to empower domestic workers with skills, which would ensure increased productivity and reduce unemployment.
- Government officials should facilitate workshops for the employers of domestic workers in South Africa to ensure that all such will apply the relevant laws. This will result in reduced turnover and less conflict.
- The state should make adult basic education and training programmes accessible to all, in order to address the problem of illiteracy, which impacts negatively on the domestic workers' job performance.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that domestic workers are ignorant of various aspects of home management. To address this problem, a holistic home management- training programme is regarded as a solution by both domestic workers and their employers.

OPSOMMING

Huishulpe vorm 'n integrale deel van Suid-Afrikaanse huishoudings, en verseker sodoende dat hul werkgewers ekonomies aktief kan wees. Die meeste van hierdie werkgewers is ontevrede met hul werknemers se werk terwyl huishulpe op hul beurt hul werkgewers van onsensitiwiteit beskuldig.

Werkverwante konflik tussen die partye kom voor as gevolg van huishulpe se onkunde in verband met verskeie aspekte van huishouding. Dit is dus belangrik om die vlak van huishulpe se kennis aangaande huishouding te bepaal. Hierdie inligting kan dan gebruik word met die doel om produktiwiteit te verhoog asook om werksverhoudinge te verbeter.

Die doel van hierdie navorsing was om die opleidingsbehoefte van huishulpe ten opsigte van huishouding te bepaal. Werkgewers se opinies ten opsigte van die bestuursvaardighede wat van huishulpe verwag word sowel as die verwagtinge ten opsigte van inhoud van opleidingprogram is verkry met die doel om te bepaal of daar wel 'n behoefte aan 'n opleidingprogram is. Die data verkry sal verseker dat 'n intervensie strategie bepaal kan word wat in beide partye se behoeftes voorsien.

'n Navorsings vraelys is versprei ten einde behoeftes te bepaal. Die navorsingsinstrumente gebruik tydens die insameling van data vanaf 100 huishulpe vir hierdie studie sluit onderhoudvoering met behulp van 'n kassetspeler en toevallige observasie sowel as vraelyste in. Die SPSS Win program is gebruik om die data te analiseer.

Die analise van die data bevestig dat huishulpe 'n heterogene vroulike populasie is ten opsigte van ouderdom en vlakke van opvoeding. Die meeste huishulpe was afkomstig van baie arm landelik gebiede. Hulle was ook meestal enkel ouers met verskeie afhanklikes. Die groot aantal probleme ervaar in die werksomgewing het ook 'n hoë personeelomset tot gevolg gehad.

Alle huishulpe was onbekend met bestuursvaardighede ten opsigte van huishouding. Die werkgewers sowel as die werknemers het gevoel dat opleiding in hierdie gebied nodig is.

Voorstelle gebaseer op hierdie gevolgtrekkings was as volg:

- Die Staat behoort omvattende opleidingprogramme vir huishulpe te ontwikkel en te subsidieer ten einde huishulpe te bemagtig met vaardighede. Dit behoort produktiwiteit te verhoog en werkloosheid te verminder.
- Staatsamptenare behoort werkwinkels vir werkgewers te fasiliteer ten einde te verseker dat hulle ingelig is ten opsigte van die relevante wetgewing. Dit behoort konflik te verminder.
- Die Staat behoort basiese opleiding en opleidingsprogramme toeganklik vir almal te maak ten einde die geletterdheidsprobleem te verminder. Die gebrek aan gelettertheid het 'n negatiewe impak op werverkrrigting.

Gebaseer op hierdie bevindinge, is die gevolgtrekking dat huishulpe oningelig is ten opsigte van die verskeie aspekte van huishouding. Ten einde hierdie probleem aan te spreek, behoort 'n holistiese opleidingprogram ten opsigte van huishouding ontwikkel te word. Dit behoort beide werkgewer en werknemer te bevoordeel.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

Domestic workers form a very important component of the South African workforce because they enable their employers to hold various positions outside the home, while they look after their households. Employers of domestic workers provide employment to the most disadvantaged group in society and hence contribute towards reducing the unemployment rate in South Africa.

Employers of domestic workers have needs and demands, which necessitate that their employees be skilled in their tasks, which cumulatively enable them to look after households efficiently. Domestic workers need skills to execute their duties properly and safely, further ensuring the safety of households and the household members they look after.

Before embarking on any training for any person, it is important to determine as accurately as possible whether changes needed relate to knowledge, skills or attitudes. Knowles (1980:105) states that "If employees *do not know*, (lack of knowledge), *cannot do* (lack of skill) or *do not care* (lack of motivation), they are obviously unlikely to behave as management desires them to behave. But it is necessary to know which of these is the problem in order to train effectively."

Programme planning or promotion starts by involving all the stakeholders in a need assessment exercise. According to Knowles (1980: 93), "There are three sources of needs and interests that must be considered in adult education programme planning: 1) those of the individuals to be served, 2) those of sponsoring organisations or institutions and 3) those of the community or society at large."

In this research domestic workers and their employers were regarded as the stakeholders whose home management skills, knowledge needs and attitudes towards training were assessed.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

“A large part of the effort of all societies takes place as or in support of household work because household work is essential in the operation of all household units and families” (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1975:142). Household work enables the family to function smoothly thus ensuring the well-being of individuals family members.

The division of household labour or chores in most families is still done along traditional lines with females handling a larger share than males. Women have the responsibility for household chores even if they are employed outside the home. They experience role conflict if they are employed outside the home, as both roles have to be fitted into their limited time and energy. Thus they need outside help in order to cope with both demands. Domestic workers are employed in many households where all adult members of the family are employed outside the home and children attend school. They are responsible for all home management duties.

Efficient management of human and material resources is of primary importance within a family. The management process requires the manager to be skilful and sensible in the use of resources at his or her disposal. The family within the household is viewed as a system in this research. Melson (1980:16) maintains that systems consist of interdependent components and change in one component prompts reciprocal changes in other components in order to keep the system in equilibrium. Family members, including the domestic worker, form the sub- systems. All sub-systems need to function effectively in order to maintain equilibrium within the overall system. If one component becomes dysfunctional, the instability results, which causes

stress and tension. Stress and tension have a negative impact on the family's micro and macro environment.

In most instances, Black urban employers recruit their domestic workers from rural areas. These areas are targeted because of their abundant supply of employment-seekers that have a low standard of education and are unemployable in other sectors.

1.2 THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

In most instances, people from rural areas lack exposure to the urban lifestyle. This lack of exposure necessitates thorough orientation and on-going training in home management of domestic workers from rural areas. Unfortunately, some employers do not have adequate time to orientate their workers as some are left on their own shortly after appointment as employers are at times desperate to find someone to take over all the household responsibilities.

This inadequate orientation and training of domestic workers usually results in conflict. Employers accuse domestic workers of negligence while performing their duties, while the domestic workers accuse their employers of insensitivity towards their predicament including ignorance about certain aspects of their duties, given their background. The tension that results leads to the abrupt termination of service by domestic workers in some cases, which inconveniences all members of the household as they have to share the chores that are usually performed by domestic workers.

Of all the family members, women are mostly affected by the domestic workers' unexpected termination of service as they sometimes have to take care of dependent family members such as the elderly, bed-ridden and infants.

The lack of adequate orientation and on-going training of domestic workers further result in the following problems:

- **Wastage of material resources** such as water, electricity, groceries and clothes, breakage of electrical and other appliances.
- **Malnutrition** to infants, children and the elderly due to ignorance of the different nutritional needs during the life cycle, coupled with poor hygiene practices.
- **High turnover** because of conflict between domestic workers and family members arising from the domestic workers' lack of skills and knowledge and the absence of a clear job description for a domestic worker.
- **Abuse of the highly dependent family members** like infants, children, the terminally ill and old and frail family members stemming out of domestic workers' unhappiness in their jobs.
- **Accidents and injuries in the house** of family members especially children and domestic workers.
- **The disruption of family life and low productivity of family members at work** caused by the unexpected termination of service by a domestic worker due to dissatisfaction.

It is clear that domestic workers' competence in home management is important. Failure to provide adequate home management training can cause many problems within households as illustrated above.

1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

With reference to the problems outlined in section 1.2, the purpose of

conducting this research was :

- To establish the level of home management skills, knowledge, needs and attitudes towards home management training of domestic workers from Umlazi, Lamontville and Kwa-Mashu townships within the eThekweni Municipality
- and
- To ascertain the needs and views of domestic workers' employers on the training of their employees in home management.

It was hoped that this research would establish how much domestic workers knew about different aspects of home management and what employers' needs and expectations were regarding their employees' skills and knowledge in home management. Furthermore, it was expected that the findings from this study would indicate how employers and domestic workers feel about training in household management.

If both employers and domestic workers considered training essential, their views on the training content would be sought. Information obtained could be used in future studies when planning a training programme for domestic workers at their geographical locations.

1.4 THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

The research was conducted at specific areas and focused on specific aspects as explained in the following sections.

1.4.1 The setting

- ◆ The population researched consisted of domestic workers and their employers.

- ◆ The research was conducted at Unit BB Umlazi Township, LTA Section in Lamontville and Unit N at Kwa-Mashu Township within the eThekweni Municipality. These areas were chosen because of their manageable size and a middle class social status. The majority of home-owners in these areas were teachers, nurses, police, social workers and secretaries. They were forced by their employment circumstances to employ domestic workers to look after their households.
- ◆ The majority of residents in the selected areas were adults of childbearing age, with a majority of their children attending school. Some home-owners lived with aged and frail parents. In the African culture, the members of the family look after their aged. If an older female or females is employed outside the home or is very busy, a domestic worker is employed to look after the aged.
- ◆ The total number of households in the three areas was 2485: Unit BB at Umlazi had 1765 households, LTA in Lamontville had 240 households and at unit N at Kwa- Mashu there were 480 households. Two hundred households that employed domestic workers participated in the research.

In the areas of investigation owners had modern houses. Some were designed and built by private contractors according to owners' specifications while other houses were built by developers and purchased by occupants. All houses did not have servants' quarters as domestic workers were regarded as part of the family. All houses had electricity supplies and electrical appliances were used for the performance of daily chores.

The use of electrical appliances necessitates thorough orientation if a domestic worker from the rural area is employed for the first time.

1.4.2 Delimitations of the research

The research focused on exploring the following:

- The training needs of domestic workers in home management skills and knowledge by assessing their current level of skills and knowledge on various aspects of home management and soliciting their views on the provision of training in home management.
- Seeking employers' views on the training needs of their employees in home management skills and knowledge as well as on the provision of training in home management.

The research targeted households that employed domestic workers at unit BB at Umlazi, N section in Kwa-Mashu and LTA in Lamontville residential areas. The specified areas are within the eThekweni Municipality and were considered adequate for the study.

Given the scope of this study, the researcher would refrain from translating the established needs into a training programme, as this should constitute the framework for future studies.

1.5 RESEARCH GOAL

The aim of carrying out this investigation was to obtain holistic information concerning domestic workers' training needs in home management and their employers' needs and attitudes regarding the training of their employees. Employers of domestic workers and domestic workers were expected to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are domestic workers' needs in home management skills and knowledge?
- Is there a need for the provision of domestic workers home management training programme in this geographic area?
- How do domestic workers and their employers regard training domestic workers in home management?
- If training were considered to be important, which home management

aspects would they like to be addressed in a home management training programme?

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Clues as to what people ought to be learning for their own good can be obtained from individuals concerned through interviews, group discussions or questionnaires. Knowles (1980: 99) states that getting information necessary for needs analysis requires the observation of employees at their work as well as studying production and other management data.

For purposes of establishing the stakeholders' needs, a qualitative survey method was used.

1.6.1 Survey as a research strategy

A survey method that aimed at the collection of qualitative data was used in this research. The qualitative method was used because it enabled the researcher to obtain accurate information from all participants. The advantage of using surveys is that they produce empirical data based on the real world observations, have a wide and inclusive coverage and produce required data in a short time at fairly low cost (Denscombe, 2000:27).

1.6.2 Research instruments used

The research instruments that were used for data collection were interview schedules accompanied by the use of a tape recorder, incidental observation for the domestic workers and structured questionnaires for employers.

1.6.3 Sampling procedure followed

The target group was sampled using the non-probability sampling method.

Convenience sampling was used because of problems experienced with random sampling. Brink (1996: 140) equates convenience sampling with accidental or availability sampling which involves choosing readily available people or objects for research.

The population consisted of one hundred domestic workers and one hundred employers from different households. Within one household, only one respondent participated in the research.

1.7 ETHICAL STATEMENT

All participants were assured that their identity would remain confidential and that anonymity would be maintained at all times. They were also informed that information gathered would not be used against them under any circumstances, but was solely for the purposes of research.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this research, the following terms were used within the specific contexts:

- **Household work** is the type of work that includes meal preparation and clean-up, laundering, straightening up and cleaning the house, running errands, child care, care of adults, gardening and animal care, and the travel necessary to accomplish these tasks (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1975: 142).
- **Core areas of home management** include child-care, care for the aged, cooking and nutrition, First Aid, garment-care, principles of health and hygiene practices, the use of electrical devices within the household, and conservation of household



resources both human and material.

- **Home management skills and knowledge refer to:**

- ⇒ **Child-care**, which includes feeding, washing, socialising, ensuring safety in the house and vicinity as well as applying First Aid to children if necessary.

- ⇒ **Food handling, storage, preparation and serving**, which includes the hygienic handling of food, food storage, cooking nutritiously for members of the family according to their circumstantial requirements (the diabetic, infants, the aged and general household members), correct use of cooking equipment and safety measures during food preparation.

- ⇒ **Cleaning the house and managing the resources**, which include time management, dirt removal by picking up, sweeping, dusting, vacuuming, using any cleaning equipment and cleaning agents correctly, avoiding accidents and wastage of resources.

- ⇒ **Garment care**, refers to caring for different types of fabrics by reading care labels, stain removal in garments, basic sewing to replace buttons and sewing back undone hems and seams.

- **Human resources**, are all the means that are vested in people that can be used to meet demands. Deacon and Firebaugh, (1975: 52) identify human resources as "the continuing personal characteristics, cognitive insights, psychomotor skills, affective attributes, health, energy and time." which go into this effort.
- **Material resources**, are all things that serve as a means for meeting demands external to people that are both natural and

processed for instance consumption goods like food, housing, household capital, physical energy, money and investments (Deacon and Firebaugh, 1975: 54).

- **A System**, which Melson (1980: 7) defines as “ a group of units so combined as to form a whole and to operate in unison.”
- **Equilibrium**, is the steady state of the system or balance achieved if all the sub-systems function harmoniously (Melson, 1980: 16).
- **Micro-environment**, is the immediate setting of the family system including the physical and social surroundings of the family or household (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1975: 9).
- **Macro-environment**, involves societal systems that are a significant part of the ecosystem of the family such as its socio-cultural, political economical and technological aspects.
- **Malnutrition** is the state of imbalance in the intake of nutrients which results from over or under-nutrition leading to diseases and poor health status (Robinson, Lawler, Chenoweth & Garwick, 1986,: 345).
- **An Employer** is a person who provides an employee with work and agrees to pay for the work performed for him or who allows any person to assist him in carrying out his business (Badul, 1994: 3).
- **A domestic worker** is defined by Marais (1993: 4) as an employee who is employed permanently or on a regular daily basis in a private household to perform the following duties:

domestic work (household chores), driving of a motor vehicle, gardening and caring for children, the aged, the sick, the frail and the disabled.

- ***Female-headed household***, is a type of household with female single parent who is the main income earner and thus responsible for the financial management of the household (Kayongo-Male & Onyango, 1984: 14).
- ***A male -headed household***, is a male only headed family with natural, fostered or adopted children because of divorce or death of a partner or per choice to remain single but to stay with children (Kayongo-Male & Onyango, 1984: 14).
- ***A nuclear family***, is a family at its simplest level, which includes a husband and a wife and their offspring (Kayongo-Male & Onyango, 1984: 11).
- ***An extended family***, refers to families that include cousins of anyone in the nuclear family or other relatives who are not nuclear family members (Kayongo-Male & Onyango, 1984: 12).
- ***Fanakalo***, is a mixture of the Zulu and English language usually spoken as a second language by the English speaking employers and their Zulu-speaking employees.
- ***Communicable diseases***, are diseases that are caused by the direct or indirect spread of pathogens from one person to another (Merki and Merki, 1993: 517).
- ***First Aid or emergency care***, is the immediate temporary care given to a person who has become sick or injured (Merki and

Merki, 1993: 692).

- **Food poisoning** is an illness brought about by eating harmful food (Trickett, 1987: 10).

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

An overview of this research will be presented as follows:

Chapter 1 focuses on the background to the research, the nature of the problem, the purpose of the research, the context in which the research will be conducted, delimitations of the research, research goals, research design and methodology, ethical issues and definition of terms that are used in the research.

Chapter 2 deals with the literature review, which served as a basis for the research as it informed the researcher about the different important aspects of domestic work and domestic workers issues specific to South Africa.

Chapter 3 provides details on the research methodology and design used in the research with motivation for the choice of the chosen method.

Chapter 4 deals with the presentation of findings of the research leading to

Chapter 5 focuses on the discussion of the findings, as well as conclusions and recommendations of the research.

1.10 SUMMARY

The employment of domestic workers in many households is essential as currently most women are employed outside the home. The productivity of these women in their work places depends on the efficiency of their domestic

workers at home to a certain extent. Domestic workers who are employed for the first time require adequate orientation and on-going training before they can become competent in the execution of their tasks. Failure to provide adequate orientation and training results in conflict which in turn, leads to the termination of services. This disrupts the smooth functioning of the household and the productivity of family members.

Orientation and on-going training provision for the domestic worker is the employer's responsibility. If the employer does not have adequate time to do this he or she must seek outside help. The Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998, introduced for the good of the South African workforce, pertains to the set of circumstances described in this study as domestic workers form part of the workforce. As employees, domestic workers need to be skilled in their jobs. As stated in the Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998, employers have a responsibility to provide their employees with opportunities to acquire new skills.

In Chapter 2, different aspects of domestic work and domestic workers are examined by means of the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 INTRODUCTION

“In the Republic of South Africa, the course of history determined that black women have to earn their livelihood as domestic workers.” (De Viliers, 1997:151). In most instances in South Africa, it is the disadvantaged Black women that work for others in the domestic work sector.

Mthinsto (1996: 5) argues that in our patriarchal society women are still faced with the productive, reproductive, community and family management roles. They are expected to balance their public as well as private roles for the well-being of their families. The practical solution for many women has been the employment of domestic labour.

According to Huber & Sack (1994: 4) over one million domestic workers are employed in South Africa as maids, gardeners, childminders, cooks or chauffeurs. In the Government Gazette of the Republic of South Africa (22453: 30) it is stated that domestic workers constitute 18% of all the people employed.

The focus of this research was on African households' domestic workers and their employers' views on the domestic workers' training needs in home management skills and knowledge. Unfortunately no existing research was found on home management skills for domestic workers' in general and those working in the Blacks townships' households specifically.

This chapter provides evidence from literature concerning the domestic workers' sector and domestic workers' issues. In so doing it will address aspects such as: the history of domestic work in South Africa; reasons for

employing domestic workers; recruitment procedures that are supposed to be applied when employing domestic workers; employers obligations towards their domestic workers; domestic workers obligations towards their employers; the status of the domestic workers' sector in South Africa at present; the profile of domestic workers; reasons for seeking domestic worker; functions of domestic workers; the importance of home management training among domestic workers; home management aspects on which domestic workers need knowledge and skills and the advantages of providing training to domestic workers.

2.2 THE HISTORY OF DOMESTIC WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

“In South Africa domestic service is the oldest form of wage labourer for Black women” (Flint, 1988:190). Before the rise of capitalism in Africa, people lived off land and very few people worked for others.

The rise of the capitalist economy in South Africa after the discovery of diamonds and gold in the second half of the 19th century, together with the colonial subjugation of African societies resulted in the Black migrancy (Gelderblom & McKay, 1995:24; Worger, 1987: 64). Gelderblom & McKay (1995: 25) explain that gold and diamond mines needed large numbers of labourers and migration resulted where males were employed as migrant labourers and paid low wages. These low wages forced women to flock to towns and cities seeking employment opportunities, and were employed as domestic workers. Brydon and Chant (1989: 153) also reiterate that women followed the males and migrated to urban areas in search of job opportunities.

There are certain factors discussed below which compel members of the households to employ domestic workers.

2.3. REASONS FOR EMPLOYING DOMESTIC WORKERS

Women are in charge of maintaining the home and caring for all family members. Samson (1997: 8) maintains that generally women are responsible for ensuring that their children and their male partners are fed, cared for, healthy and educated. The employment of women outside the home, coupled with the collapse of the extended family structure for support, has led to the employment of domestic workers within many households. Delport (1993:15) states that the majority of women who employ domestic workers are themselves employees.

Employers of domestic workers need to follow correct employment procedures when recruiting and selecting their domestic workers. They need to bear in mind that domestic workers are catered for by the stipulations of Basic Conditions of Employment and Labour Relations Act (Grant, 1997:65). Following correct recruitment and selection procedure helps in minimising problems in the domestic workers' and employer's working relationship.

2.4 RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYING DOMESTIC WORKERS

There are clearly defined procedures that all employers need to follow in the process of employing workers, including domestic workers. The process of recruitment includes: advertising, short-listing, checking of references, interviewing the candidate, drawing up of a clear job description, drafting and signing a contract and orientating the employee in the job while also ensuring his or her safety (Huber and Sack, 1994).

Ward and Maree (1997: 1) argue that finding a domestic worker who will fit into ones household and comply with all the requirements is almost as big a task as finding a husband. Before starting to recruit a suitable person, it is necessary to sit down and decide exactly what one's needs are.

The interviewing process must cover various aspects that will help enable the employer and the domestic worker to establish if they are willing to have a working relationship.

2.4.1 Interviewing a candidate

Employers are supposed to interview their candidates in order to ensure that they are choosing the suitable candidate for the job. Smit and Grobler (1998: 7) advise that it is essential for employers to interview prospective domestic workers. Interviews must cover the following topics in order to ensure that the right candidate is employed: work history and experience; education and training; career goals and aspirations, and addressing questions from the candidate to gain clarity on certain pertinent issues.

2.4.2 Signing an employment contract

After an interview, an employer and a domestic worker must sign a contract of employment. Huber and Sack (1994: 117); Norton and Dagnall, (1997: 2) state that the contract must include aspects such as their names; date of commencement; job title; job functions; probation; age; nature of employment; days to be worked; the period between start and finish times; hours of work; meal breaks; time off; overtime; wages; public holidays; sick leave; maternity leave (if applicable); compassionate leave; disciplinary code and termination. In their desperation to employ someone to manage the household, some employers do not abide by these guidelines. Disregard for these guidelines may result in problems later on.

Another aspect which employers need to make clear to their domestic workers on employment, are their written job descriptions (Smit and Grobler, 1998: 7). If this aspect is neglected it becomes a source of conflict later as the domestic worker may be required to perform certain tasks that she might think fall outside her scope of employment.

Employers have certain obligations towards their domestic workers as is shown in the section that follows.

2.5 EMPLOYER'S OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS THEIR DOMESTIC WORKERS REGARDING TRAINING

It is essential that each and every employer provide induction and on-going training for the domestic worker employed in order to avoid problems. It must be noted that different households function differently.

2. 5. 1 Induction training

Huber and Sack (1994: 50) state that when the domestic worker first starts working, the employer must put her through the orientation process. She must be introduced to the family, shown how to use appliances and discuss her duties. She must be given an opportunity to practice using the appliances until she masters using them.

This orientation process takes time and patience given the fact that the domestic worker needs to adjust to a different lifestyle from the one that she knows. She must be given an opportunity to do all tasks under supervision until she can comfortably execute them on her own. If the employer is rushing to work on the following day, this process will be rushed, leading to dissatisfaction and tension on both sides later on.

Huber and Sack (1994: 50) further state that special instructions about different tasks or items in the household and how the worker should handle them should be given. Different families prepare food differently and a domestic worker must be shown how food is expected to be prepared in the family that currently employs her. She must be shown how different kitchen appliances work and be given adequate time to practise in front of the employer, asking questions for clarity as the need arises.

In the instances where a domestic worker has to look after the aged, sick or disabled, the nature of a person's illness or disability must be clearly explained to her. The domestic worker must be given written instructions about what she is expected to do when caring for that person. The special dietary needs of that person must be explained. Any equipment to be used, for instance when moving someone from a bed in the case of the bed-ridden must be demonstrated. Further, she must be given time to practise using this equipment in front of an employer. A list of emergency numbers that she may need to use when the need arises must be supplied (Huber & Sack, 1994: 52). Illiteracy can definitely pose a problem in these circumstances. Levy (1992: 27) states that domestic workers should do their work capably and without negligence.

In instances where a domestic worker will be responsible for child-care, she must be told about their special dietary needs, allergies, menus, clothing requirements, school times and contact numbers in cases of emergencies (Huber & Sack, 1994: 52). Other aspects that need to be addressed are phone etiquette, security measures and the special needs of the children for whom the domestic worker would be responsible.

The inability of a domestic worker to read and write poses a communication problem especially in the case of an emergency when she may be required to telephone the ambulance or take instructions on the phone in order to save someone's life.

Ignorance can be the cause of negligence at times and can be eradicated only through education and training, which is a life-long process.

2.5.2 On-going training

Huber & Sack (1994: 54) state that once initial thorough training has been given during the induction period, the domestic worker should be able to

carry out her duties. However, further training is necessary if a new appliance has been purchased or if an employer wants her to improve her skills on any other aspect that may or may not be related to her job.

Employers must train their domestic workers in home management skills and knowledge of their homes, enable them to practise using all available appliances, give them opportunities to ask questions if they do not understand instructions *before* they can discipline or accuse them of poor work performance.

2.5.3 Safety in the workplace

The Occupation Health and Safety Act of No. 85 of 1993 states that it is the employer's duty to ensure the safety of a domestic worker (Ward & Maree 1997: 24). According to this act, it is the duty of an employer among other things to: take reasonable steps to eliminate any potential hazard to the health and safety of an employee; provide information, training and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of an employee.

Empowering domestic workers with knowledge is important for their safety and the safety of those that they look after. Education and training given to employees must include information on HIV/AIDS transmission. Domestic workers must be made aware of the fact that the AIDS virus can be transmitted through the exchange of body fluids like blood, semen, vaginal fluids and possibly saliva as they are also responsible for child minding (Smit & Grobler, 1998: 35). It is common practice for example to suckle an infant's bottle when determining the temperature suitable for an infant. Saliva that may be contaminated may be thus left on the teat. If she is HIV positive or has TB, she can infect the baby out of ignorance.

2.6 OBLIGATIONS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS TOWARDS THEIR EMPLOYERS REGARDING THEIR WORK

Huber & Sack (1994:15) state that the domestic worker has the following obligations towards the employer: making her services available according to the contract; doing her work with due diligence and skill; subordination and acting in good faith.

It becomes difficult to fulfil the above obligations if the domestic worker is illiterate and unskilled in her work. The employer therefore should provide adequate orientation and on-going training in home management skills and knowledge. If the employer is unable to provide this training because of any reason, he or she should seek help from training institutions in home management skills.

2.7 THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The employment of domestic workers is a ubiquitous feature of South African life. The long hours, low wages and few or no benefits make domestic service unattractive to many Blacks. However, the unavailability of alternative employment and lack of any particular skill, forces many people into this sector (Smith, 1982: 167; Flint, 1988: 9). Much information has been published on domestic workers' rights as it has been discovered that they are exploited economically and socially. It has been observed that domestic workers are exploited by their employers who hide behind their lack of training or skills in their jobs.

Working conditions including the domestic workers' working hours, benefits and leave days are important aspects of contractual agreements between employers and employees.

2.7.1 Working hours

The working hours of domestic workers in South Africa are not the same. Some domestic workers work very long hours, while others work for the fewer hours (Smith, 1982: 67). Some domestic workers start work at 03h00 till the employers go to bed, while others start at 06h00 for seven days per week (Mthwecu & Amod 2001: 9).

The different unregulated hours are a clear indication of the exploitation of the domestic workers in South Africa. This exploitation is unchallenged as it has been noted that some domestic workers do not sign contracts with their employers on appointment.

2.7.2 Benefits

There are very few domestic workers who receive benefits like leave days, the 13th cheque, pension (Smith, 1982: 167; Mthwecu & Amod, 2001: 9). A majority of domestic workers do not enjoy leave as they work for seven days per week (Mthwecu and Amod, 2001: 9). The seven days include public holidays.

A majority of domestic workers in South Africa are not properly remunerated for the work they do. "Many domestic workers still remain below the basic breadline, earning less than R1500.00 a month for full-time work." (Robinson, 2001: 3). According to the Domestic Workers' Union some of their members are earning as little as R100 for a full week's work. In contrast to the low salaries that are earned by some domestic workers, others earn up to R1000 per month (Mthwecu & Amod, 2001: 9).

There is no regulated domestic workers salary in South Africa. Domestic workers' salaries are determined by their employers and are non-negotiable. They are expected to accept any salary the employer offers. The South

African government has proposed a minimum monthly rate at R600.00 per month in urban areas and R400 in rural areas, increasing by 7% a year for domestic workers. Unions will not accept anything less than R1000 per month.” (Makhanya & Malcom, 2001: 3). They argue that some employers can afford to pay their domestic workers a living wage of more than R1200.00 per month but are not doing so, which is not humane.

The government is trying to ensure that at least no domestic worker is paid a salary that is below R600.00 as in some households they earn as little as R200.00 per month or even less in others. The Minister of Labour has argued that the government has a responsibility to protect domestic workers' jobs and that if wages were too high, they would not have any jobs (Robinson, 2001: 3).

It has been noted that no reference to training needs has been made in recent salary demands and negotiations by domestic workers and unions. Some employers have stated that if their domestic workers were competent in their jobs, they would gladly increase their salaries to the proposed amount.

2. 8 THE PROFILE OF DOMESTIC WORKERS

It is important to understand the type of people who are involved in the domestic workers' sector. The gender, marital status and educational levels of domestic workers will be discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

2.8.1 Gender

Domestic service is the oldest and most common form of wage labour for black women in South Africa (Delpont, 1990:5; Grant, 1997:61; Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 22453:28). The majority of domestic workers are Black females from the rural areas of all age groups.

2.8.2 Marital status

A large proportion of domestic workers is either single breadwinners or the only breadwinner in their household (Grant, 1997:61). It has been observed that most domestic workers are single parents who are responsible for paying school fees and buying food for the family. A few domestic workers are married, divorced or engaged.

2.8.3 Educational level

Domestic workers have varied levels of education. Some had never been to school or left school at the lower grades while a few had high school education. It is important to note that their educational levels are marginally related to their home management and household attributes (Hendricks, 1997: 153).

The majority of domestic workers were victims of poverty and inequality in their childhood. In many South African families especially in rural areas, limited resources were automatically reserved for boys' education Eagle (1987-1988: 73). Some people in rural areas believed that educating girls was a waste of resources because they were expected to marry and leave their families. The ability to read or write a letter was considered to be adequate education for girls.

Various reasons push and pull people towards the domestic worker sector.

2.9 REASONS FOR SEEKING DOMESTIC WORK

Certain factors influence peoples' decisions to leave their homes and seek employment in other peoples' households. These are referred to as the pull and push factors.

2.9.1 The push factors towards the domestic worker sector

Several authors are of the opinion that certain factors push domestic workers from their homes to the job market. Preston-Whyte (1969: 49); Cock (1980: 307); Gordon (1973:15) and McNeil (1989: 111) cite the following factors as reasons for seeking domestic work: death or inability of the breadwinner to support the family; desertion of family by the breadwinner; the search of or to join a migrant husband or lover; medical attention or confinement of the breadwinner; quarrels with in-laws and husbands, leading to divorce or separation; responsibility for illegitimate children; domestic, seeking food and shelter; personal crises and an invitation by the employer.

Mdladlana (2001: 5) finds that unemployment is affecting many Black South Africans and that more women than men in the under 34 years old age groups are unemployed. He states that poverty and communicable diseases, compounded by poor living conditions engulf the country. These factors push people towards domestic work because they believe that it is better to be employed and earn a little money than to be unemployed.

2.9.2 The pull factors towards the domestic worker sector

Delport (1990:5) states that rural emigrants flock to the city domestic service as it provides an ideal solution to the problem of seeking food and shelter. She further discovers that people from an impoverished rural background enter into domestic service in towns with the hope of providing support for their families back home.

This clearly indicates that domestic workers enter this job market out of desperation and without the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies needed. Their ignorance about the competencies required for their jobs necessitates training.

2.10 FUNCTIONS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS

Domestic workers are responsible for many household tasks and need home management knowledge and skills in order to cope with their tasks and avoid problems. In order to be able to execute their duties effectively, domestic workers need to be able to read, write, cook, operate household electrical and other appliances, look after children, the aged and the frail (Ward & Maree, 1997 : 1).

According to McLachlan and Khuzwayo (1997: 23) care refers to meeting the physical, psychological and social needs of children and other household members” They further state that domestic workers as care givers must meet these people’s dietary and other needs.

To add to the above stated functions, domestic workers need to be able to look after the terminally ill at home. The HIV/AIDS victim is such one person. AIDS victims are increasing daily in South Africa and hospitals are unable to cope with the demand for their care. After treatment for their ailments, they are discharged from hospital to be looked after by members of their families. If all members are working, it becomes the domestic worker’s duty to look after them.

Domestic workers need proper induction training and on-going training in order to cope with their tasks and to improve their productivity at work. The Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998 encourages employers to provide their employees with opportunities to acquire new skills.

2.11 TRAINING OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

No reference was found in South Africa on the domestic workers’ productivity in relation to the service that they provide or the wages that are demanded

and recommended for them.

Information gathered from the Domestic Workers Union Representative as well as the Department of Labour confirms that skills training is offered on aspects like cooking, baking, childcare and caring for the aged are offered individually by different providers (Cele, 1999). However, within the eThekweni Municipality the training programme that tackles home management issues holistically considering all aspects of home management like Bergzicht in Stellenbosch, was not found at the time of conducting this research.

Existing studies on domestic workers focus on other aspects of domestic work and were targeting domestic workers that were employed in the suburbs previously occupied by Whites only. No research was found on domestic workers employed in the townships occupied by Blacks only.

Different aspects of home management are discussed next.

2.12 HOME MANAGEMENT ASPECTS.

Different home management aspects like food and nutrition, food storage, food contamination, health and hygiene practices, communicable diseases, First Aid and garment-care are important in the domestic workers' sector. Domestic workers should be knowledgeable in these aspects in order to be effective in their jobs.

The amount and quality of food that they eat determine the well being of humans among other things. There is a saying that goes "You are what you eat." Domestic workers need all the knowledge and skills that they can get on food and nutrition as they are caregivers to some family members.

2.12.1 Food and nutrition.

“The quality and quantity of food that is made available to children can influence their nutritional status. The caretaker or mother acts as a gate keeper of the food channel by controlling the food that is given to the child” (Reitsma, 1996: 14). Reitsma’s statement implies that the nutritional status of those who are dependent on the domestic worker for food is at risk if she does not give them good quality food in adequate quantities.

Domestic workers need to be informed about the functions of food and nutrients in the body as well as the consequences of the shortage of those nutrients. Their ignorance in this regard can lead to malnutrition and other complications for those that they look after.

2.12.2 Food storage

Incorrect storage of food can result in food poisoning, which may cause illnesses. At times this can lead to death (Merki and Merki, 1993:416; Trickett, 1987: 16). As domestic workers are responsible for the day-to-day storage of food within the household, they need to know how to store food correctly in order to avoid food contamination, poisoning and wastage.

2.12.3 Food contamination and cross-contamination

Domestic workers, as handlers of food, need to understand how germs or harmful bacteria spread into food, as well as the consequences of eating contaminated food. Trickett (1987: 10) notes that pathogenic bacteria from food handlers can spread into food usually via the hands during the preparation and service. Domestic workers must be made aware of the fact that they are capable of transmitting germs into food if they do not follow hygienic principles while handling it.

Domestic workers need to understand the causes of food contamination so that they can prevent it (Trickett, 1987: 41). He states that food contamination can be caused by the following factors:

- Using a chopping board, a working surface or other kitchen equipment for the preparation of two types of ingredients without washing it thoroughly after each use;
- Using a knife or other utensil without washing it thoroughly between each use;
- Not washing hands by a food handler in-between preparing different types of food such as raw meat and cooked meat, or after touching any source of bacteria like in the nose, mouth, hair or pets.

Failure to observe these healthy and hygienic practices by the domestic worker can be fatal to them and those with whom they interact.

2.12.4 Health and hygiene practices

Domestic workers must always maintain high hygienic standards in order to prevent the spread of organisms to food, as micro-organisms can be transferred from a person's nose, skin, hands, the bowel and other surfaces (Hobbs & Roberts, 1987: 135). Diarrhoea is very likely to occur in unhygienic environments. A person with diarrhoea loses water and mineral salts which leads to dehydration (Cameron and Hofvander, 1983: 33). If diarrhoea is not treated immediately it can result in death.

It is important to educate domestic workers about the importance of personal hygiene like bathing everyday, washing hands thoroughly before touching food and during food preparation, washing hair regularly, not touching the nose when handling food or washing hands after touching it.

Failure to adhere to all these rules by domestic workers can again result in food contamination or poisoning.

2.12.5 Communicable diseases

Domestic workers need to know about the dangers of communicable diseases and how they spread so that they can prevent it for their own benefit and the benefit of those that they interact with. Merki and Merki (1993: 522) state that the spread of pathogens is two-fold:

- Close contact with an infected person through: influenza, colds, mumps, measles, pneumonia and coughing and sneezing.
- Direct contact with the infection as pathogens are spread when an uninfected person comes into direct contact with an infected area of another persons' body.

Domestic workers should be extra careful that they do not spread communicable diseases or be infected or become infected by the members of the family that they look after, as some family members may be infected.

They have to be educated about AIDS and how it can spread from one person to another, as AIDS is a fatal communicable disease. Small concentrations of HIV have also been found in saliva, sweat, tears, faeces, urine and breast-milk (Merki and Merki, 1993: 556). Information about the consequences of not exercising care with regard to spreading AIDS in any way or getting infected, is critical.

2.12.6 First-Aid

Domestic workers must be get First Aid training especially if they are looking after children and the frail. First Aid is the emergency care given to anyone who has become sick or injured (Merki and Merki,1993: 692) state that the first five minutes of an emergency situation are the most critical. The application of First Aid may help reduce unnecessary suffering and prevent further damage to people involved in accidents.

As domestic workers are responsible for child-care they must have basic training in First Aid in order to prevent tragedies and unnecessary suffering.

2.12.7 Care-giving to children and the elderly

Nutritionally care-giving implies that domestic workers are responsible for ensuring that food is made available or fed in adequate amounts to children and the dependent elderly in order to meet their dietary needs. Withholding food can lead to malnutrition and infectious diseases. The malnutrition-infectious diseases-synergy is another cause of the high infant mortality in South Africa. "Over half of childhood mortality in developing countries can be attributed to malnutrition" (McLachlan and Khuzwayo, 1997: 24). One of the solutions to the malnutrition-infectious diseases-synergy in this group, is education and training in home management skills and knowledge.

Empowering domestic workers with skills and knowledge can have benefits to them as individuals, their employers and the country at large.

2.12.8 Garment- care

Domestic workers are responsible for caring and maintaining the families' clothes. "The care given a textile product is dependent on the fibers used, yarn structure or fiber arrangement, fabric construction, method of imparting colour, type of dyestuff used, finishes and methods of application and geometric factors." (Joseph, 1986: 364). This information needs to be considered when washing or ironing different types of fabrics that are used in the construction of garments.

Domestic workers need to be empowered with knowledge and skills to execute this task properly and avoid spoiling garments. The ability to read labels for care is of utmost importance because at times damage caused in some garments is irreversible.

2.13 THE ADVANTAGES OF TRAINING DOMESTIC WORKERS

According to Huber and Sack (1994: 50) it is advantageous to allow domestic workers to attend training. It may be on job-related skills and knowledge like First Aid, sewing, literacy classes, driving or on anything that appeals to her sense of self-development. "Training for transferable skills like literacy, numeracy and driving are other important aspects that need attention for domestic workers." (Rees, 1998: 53). Providing training to domestic workers will empower them with knowledge and skills, which will make them competent in their jobs.

If a domestic worker performs her duties well, problems like malnutrition in infants, accidents within the household, food poisoning and tension within the home can be avoided. These aspects can enable domestic workers to improve their productivity at work to the benefit of their employer and their family members.

The employers and domestic worker would both benefit from training as discussed below.

2.13.1 Benefits to the employer

If the domestic worker is happy, motivated and productive it promotes harmony within the households (Ndawonde, 1999: 11). Another benefit is that the employer gets value for the salary paid to the domestic worker as the domestic worker serves him her with diligence, skill, respects and loves her job.

2.13.2 Benefits to the domestic worker

Providing training to domestic workers will empower domestic workers with knowledge and skills, which will make them competent in their jobs. It can

make them understand why they are expected to perform certain tasks in certain ways. Empowering domestic workers with knowledge and skills would enable them to understand the consequences of not complying with certain requirements. An example is ignoring good hygienic practices, which may cause food contamination and subsequently poisoning. This in turn could result in diarrhoea, dysentery, hospitalisation or death.

Huber and Sack, (1994: 54) state that one benefit of home management training to the domestic worker is that her job becomes interesting, which motivates and keeps her happy. The domestic workers' self-esteem and confidence in her work increases. The skills and knowledge that the domestic worker gains empower her and can be used anywhere Ndawonde (1999:10). Training employees is a very important part of the motivation process.

2.14 SUMMARY

Different sources of information have proved that the training of domestic workers in home management is essential for competency in their jobs. Unfortunately time constraints prevent some employers from showing their domestic workers everything they need to know for the execution of their tasks, before leaving them on their own. Another regrettable fact is that there are no training programmes, which address home management comprehensively. Black employers have no such avenues where they can send their domestic workers for training, relevant for their needs. Segal (1992:18) states that the onus is on the government and employers to train and help create skilled domestic employees.

The research design and methodology used in this research is discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to assess domestic workers' home management skills and knowledge, their training needs and views on a training programme in home management, as well as needs and views of employers surrounding domestic workers' training needs.

The researcher sought to identify the home management skills and knowledge problems experienced by the domestic workers and their employers. While for every problem there is an intervention strategy that needs to be applied, all intervention strategies need to be informed by the results of a need analysis exercise.

In order to assess the needs of a particular group, its members need to be involved in the exercise for the intervention strategy to be relevant. The needs assessment exercise took the form of asking domestic workers and their employers' questions because according to Knowles (1980:93) clues as to what people ought to learn for their own good can be obtained from the individuals themselves. Questionnaires were designed for the domestic workers' employers and interviewing schedules for the domestic workers as a means of collecting data.

Both employees and employers had to participate in the need assessment exercise because they are the stakeholders in the domestic worker sector.

3.2 THE USE OF THE SURVEY METHOD

In this research, a survey method, which aims at the collection of qualitative data was used. Denscombe (2000: 6) states that the word **survey** means to view something comprehensively and in detail. According to Leedy (1980: 133) the descriptive survey method requires one to purposely look “over and beyond”. He emphasises that looking or seeing is not restricted to perception through the physical eye, as it is done by means of questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Leedy (1980: 133) argues that when using the survey method, the researcher observes with close scrutiny the population, which is bounded by the research parameters and makes a careful record of what he observes. Mason & Bramble (1989: 52) further state that a survey method in research is used to investigate the distribution of characteristics in a population, whereas questionnaires and interviews are usually used to collect information.

In assessing the needs of domestic workers and their employers, questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and incidental observation where possible, were used. The survey method was chosen because it enabled the researcher to obtain accurate information from all participants. The researcher was also able to obtain more information, through the observation of domestic workers at work during the data collection phase where it was possible.

To cater for the education level of the majority of domestic workers', they were personally interviewed. Questions were translated to the Zulu language. Employers were given questionnaires to complete, except for one employer who was uncomfortable with the process. The researcher interviewed her and translated questions into the Zulu language.

3. 3 ENTRY INTO THE SETTING

All households in which domestic workers were employed were targeted for the research. In order to select households for participation in the research, the researcher used maps showing all the households in unit BB in Umlazi, LTA in Lamontville and N Section in Kwa-Mashu within eThekweni Municipality. The twentieth house in each street was randomly selected for participation in the research.

During the process of making appointments, it was discovered that in some identified households domestic workers were unavailable due to many reasons. In other households there was lack of co-operation from owners, which disturbed the sequence of choosing households for the participation. The researcher eventually selected next available household where the employer or domestic worker was willing to participate in the study. One respondent was used per household, in order to minimise or eliminate bias in the data collected.

During the first visit, a letter of introduction from the researcher was presented to the owner of the household (See Appendix 1). If the request was accepted, an appointment was made to interview the domestic worker or to deliver a questionnaire. In households where employers were targeted, questionnaires were delivered and an appointment for their collection date was made.

One hundred employers and one hundred domestic workers participated in the research.

3.4 THE PILOT STUDY

Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel and Schurink (1998: 182) state that the purpose of the pilot study is to improve the success and effectiveness of the

investigation and it must be executed in the same manner as the main investigation. In accordance with their view, questionnaires and interview schedules were piloted with an aim of identifying and addressing any problems that could arise. It was discovered that some questions were intimidating to the respondents. These were then reworded. Sensitive questions were also moved from the beginning of the questionnaire and interview schedule to the middle or end.

The research instruments were piloted to a population with characteristics similar to the targeted one. The pilot project respondents, were all Black South Africans from the Lotus Park, Woodlands and Westville suburbs. Employers were all Black South Africans of middle-class social status. Ten domestic workers and employers from different households were used in the pilot study.

One respondent was used from each household to ensure validity and to eliminate bias in their responses. Permission was sought from the employers to exempt their domestic workers for thirty minutes and provide a distraction-free venue within the house. Privacy was maintained during interviews in order to eliminate distractions and ensure freedom of expression. Employers were each given a questionnaire in their households and a date for their collection was agreed upon.

3. 5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Domestic workers and employers of domestic workers at Unit BB (Umlazi); L T A (Lamontville) and N section (Kwa-Mashu) within eThekweni Municipality were used as the primary sources of data.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Mouton (1996: 156) states that a first general principle in data collection is

that the inclusion of multiple sources of data collection in a research project is likely to increase the reliability of observations. He further argues that “By employing different methods of data collection in a single project we are, to some extent, able to compensate for the limitations of each” (Mouton, 1996:157).

In this study, questionnaires were administered to employers of domestic workers while domestic workers were personally interviewed. During interviews tape-recorders were used in order to ensure accuracy in capturing of data. Domestic workers were also observed at work using the checklist. All these different methods were used for the purpose of increasing the reliability of data collected.

3.6.1 Face- to-face interviews

Interviews were chosen as a data collection method because of their reliability especially when dealing with domestic workers, particularly because some of them are illiterate (See Appendix 2). Knowles (1980: 101) states that interviews are better than any device as they help training officers to understand how people feel and the reasons for their feelings. Babbie and Mouton (2001:232) state that researchers may ask open-ended and close-ended questions. Open- ended and close-ended questions were used in the construction of interviewing schedules.

This research was based on the premise that domestic workers have a lack of knowledge and skills and on various aspects of home management.

Domestic workers were required to respond to the following questions:

- To what extent are domestic workers knowledgeable about food and nutrition?
- What is the information level of domestic workers concerning child care and care of the frail and aged?

- What is the level of knowledge of domestic workers about first-aid and safety in the home?
- What is the level of domestic workers' knowledge in garment care?
- What is the level of domestic workers' knowledge of health and hygiene practices in the home?
- To what extent are domestic workers knowledgeable about the operation of technological appliances within the household?
- How much do domestic workers know about the conservation of household resources?
- What are the views of domestic workers concerning training in home management skills and knowledge?

A tape recorder was also used during interviews. Transcript is attached. (See Appendix 3).

3.6.2 Observation of domestic workers at work

Observation offers a researcher a distinct way of collecting data as it does not rely on what people say they do or think (Denscombe, 2000: 139). Domestic workers were observed while performing their duties during the data collection phase of the research (See Appendix 4). This was done in order to observe if they actually practised what they knew about various aspects of home management.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered to employers to gain an understanding into their expectations on the training needs of their employees (See Appendix 5).

Questionnaires give people an opportunity to express their feelings anonymously and without the anxiety, which can sometimes accompany

many personal techniques (Knowles, 1980: 101). All employers were supplied with questionnaires to complete and these were collected by the researcher on the agreed upon date. The reason for choosing this method of data collection was that respondents were adequately educated and thus able to complete questionnaires.

The research was based on the premise that employers of domestic workers have certain needs that they expect their employees to meet regarding the performance of their duties in home management.

In order to elicit employers' expectations about their employees' training needs in home management, they were requested respond to the following questions:

- What are employers' needs and expectations about their employees concerning:
 - ⇒ Skills that domestic workers need to have on appointment;
 - ⇒ Skills and information that employers provide to their employees on appointment;
 - ⇒ Adequacy of time to train their domestic workers before they assume their duties;
 - ⇒ Problems encountered when training their domestic workers?
 - ⇒ The necessity for external training of domestic workers and benefits thereof and
 - ⇒ Suggested training programme content.

Prior to the construction of questionnaires and the interviewing schedules, two focus groups were formed comprising of domestic workers and their employers. Czaja and Blair (1996: 22) recommend this procedure of using focus groups where small groups of people are assembled to discuss topics or issues which helps in formulating questions that are used when conducting surveys. Five domestic workers and six employers were met at different

times to discuss issues relating to domestic workers' home management skills. The concerns raised by domestic workers and employers were noted for inclusion in the questionnaires and interviewing schedules.

3.7 RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Three research assistants were employed in order to speed up the data collection process. According to Mouton (1996: 159) adequate training of interviewers, research assistants and fieldworkers is a precondition of any research. The three research assistants were trained for only a week prior to the execution of their duties as they already had some research experience.

Training was done to give research assistants clear instructions about their duties. This would in turn ensure the reliability of information that they were supposed to gather. The researcher discussed all the questions in the questionnaires and interview schedules. She then prepared the assistants for various options in the responses so that they could code open-ended questions correctly and assist respondents where possible.

3.8 SAMPLING METHOD USED

In this research a non-probability sampling method and specifically convenience sampling, was used after problems with the probability sampling procedure were encountered. Bless & Higson-Smith (1995: 94) describe this sampling method as the most rudimentary one. All cases on hand are taken until the sample reaches the desired size. Brink (1996: 140) equates convenience sampling to accidental or availability sampling, which involves choosing readily available people or objects for research.

3. 8. 1. The sampling procedure

Maps of all households in Section BB at Umlazi, LTA in Lamontville and

Section N at Ka-Mashu were used for selecting households that would participate in the survey. Every twentieth household was selected to participate in the research. If in the first selected (twentieth) house a domestic worker had been selected for interviewing, in the fortieth house an employer would be given a questionnaire.

Two hundred households were to participate in the research, totalling one hundred employers and one hundred domestic workers. This sample size was assumed to be representative of the whole population of domestic workers employers and the domestic workers within the e Thekwini Municipality.

Problems were experienced in the process of identifying households where domestic workers were employed.

3.8.2 Problems experienced during the sampling process

- ◆ In some households, domestic workers were not available because they had not reported for work from holidays and employers were still awaiting their return. In some instances, their employment had been terminated or they had resigned because of a variety of reasons. In such cases, the next household with a domestic worker who was willing to participate in the survey was visited and an appointment made.

- ◆ In other households, employers denied the presence of their domestic workers or the fact that they were employers. They were suspicious of people who asked questions about domestic workers, given fears about their unionisation and subsequent salary increase demands. As a result of their fears, some employers insisted on seeing the interviewing schedules in order to satisfy themselves that the research had nothing to do with sensitive issues like working conditions and wages paid to employees. The researcher and assistants allayed the fears of

suspicious employers by showing them the letter of introduction and an interviewing schedule.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

As indicated earlier face-to-face interviews accompanied by incidental observation of domestic workers at work and questionnaires were used as instruments for data collection.

3.9.1 Interviews

Self-administered interviews were used to gather information from domestic workers. A tape recorder was also used to capture data for later reference and to ensure accuracy in the coding of data.

Interviewing schedules covered aspects like personal details, employment details, home management related information and domestic workers' opinions on home management training.

- **Personal details** included aspects like gender, area of origin, age- distribution, level of education, marital status, number of children and number of dependants.
- **Employment details** included aspects like length of service in the current post, domestic worker type, training received prior to employment, reasons for choosing domestic work, problems encountered when employed for the first time, training needs and perceptions about training in home management.
- **Home management related information** included aspects like child-care, care for the aged and frail, garment-care, first- aid, operation of technological appliances and economic use of

household resources.

- **Home Management Training perception/opinion** included aspects like the necessity of training in home management, the benefits of training and the proposed content of a training programme.

3.9.2 Incidental observation

Domestic workers were observed while working during the visits to make appointments, to collect questionnaires or to interview them. This was done in order to confirm if they practised what they knew about various aspects of home management.

3.9.3. Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered to one hundred employers. Questionnaires addressed the following aspects:

- **Personal details** covered aspects like gender, age group, occupation, and place of work, marital status and family structure.
- **Recruitment procedure** covered aspects like reasons for employing a domestic worker, the advertising method used, duration of employment of the current domestic worker, length of employment period of the previous employee, reasons for resignation of the previous domestic worker, and the selection method followed when employing a domestic worker.
- **Perceptions regarding the domestic workers' home management skills** covered aspects like competency

expectation, skills provided to the employee on arrival, and opinions on the training needs of domestic workers.

3.10 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED DURING THE DATA COLLECTION PHASE OF THE SURVEY.

Various problems such as the unavailability of domestic workers, uncooperative respondents, language barrier and negative attitudes were experienced during the data collection phase.

3.10.1 Unavailability of domestic workers in some households

Appointments for data collection were made in December 1998 for January 1999. During the data collection phase in January 1999, some domestic workers had not returned to work. Employers did not know whether their domestic workers would do so as they had a habit of not returning from holidays even if their belongings were left in their places of employment.

This problem was overcome by using the next available household where the employer or a domestic worker agreed to participate in the survey.

3.10.2 Unwillingness of some employers to co-operate

Some employers expressed unwillingness to do paperwork as they were resting after examinations. Others were writing examinations, especially those that were engaged in post-graduate studies. This resulted in several trips to similar households for the collection of questionnaires that were not completed. In five cases questionnaires were returned incomplete after several trips to the same households. The researcher found other willing employers who participated in the research and the unfinished questionnaires were discarded.

3.10.3 Language barrier

Some respondents were Xhosa-speaking as they came from the Eastern Cape and thus had difficulty with understanding questions in Zulu. Other domestic workers were from the countries like Swaziland and Maputo.

Researcher assistants were able to translate questions to Xhosa and Swazi as they were all Nguni speakers in particular one research assistant was fluent in both Xhosa and Swazi languages.

3.10.4 Negative attitudes towards answering questions

In some households, employers and domestic workers had a negative attitudes and fears towards responding to certain questions.

3.10.4.1 Negative attitudes of employers

In some households the researcher assistants communicated with husbands in the absence of their wives during the first visits, where appointments were made for data collection. During the data collection phase, some wives were present and were suspicious of data collectors, thinking that they had hidden agendas with their husbands.

Some respondents wanted to know how they were going to benefit from participating in the survey as some companies pay people who do so. As a result of their "what's-in-it-for-me-attitude" some employers did not complete the questionnaires, which led to several unfruitful trips to their households. This problem was overcome by looking for other willing employers to participate in the study.

3.10.4.2 Negative attitudes of domestic workers

Some domestic workers had a negative attitude towards participating in the survey because they feared exposing their ignorance. They suspected that their employers would discuss their responses, which they thought could cost them their jobs. Some domestic workers even expressed fear that the researcher assistants were sent by employers to find out how much they knew about home management so that they could fire them.

They were assured that the information would be held confidentially and their employers would not know how they responded to questions. To ensure confidentiality employers had been asked to provide a venue that would grant complete privacy for a face-to-face interview.

3.11 ETHICAL ISSUES

The aim and purpose of the research was made known to the participants during the first visit prior to interviews or the delivery of questionnaires in the form of letter of introduction from the researcher. The confidentiality of the sources of information was maintained. All participants were assured of anonymity and consequently respondents' names were not written on questionnaires or interviewing schedules.

3.12 PROCEDURE FOR DATA ANALYSIS

The audio-taped responses were transcribed and matched with written ones from interviews to ensure the accuracy of data collected. Open-ended responses were categorised and coded from interviews and questionnaires.

All the codes were captured into the Micro Soft Excel Programme, which was sent to a statistician, who analysed data using the SPSSWIN programme.

3. 13 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research did not include domestic workers and employers from other residential areas like rural areas and informal settlements. It did not address other problematic areas within the domestic worker sector such as wage negotiation, conditions of service and victimisation.

3.14 SUMMARY

For needs assessment to be done properly all stakeholders should be involved in the process. Using domestic workers and the employers of domestic workers from different households as primary sources of data was essential in order to obtain accurate information about their training needs in home management skills and knowledge. Observing domestic workers at work enabled the researcher to see if they practised what they knew in the execution of their tasks. The convenience sampling method was resorted to after experiencing problems during the sampling phase of the research.

According to Gardner (1978: 67) "Often the main choice of method for collecting quantifiable data will be between interviews of one type or the other and self-administered questionnaires." Interviewing schedules accompanied by incidental observation and a tape recorder was used to collect data from domestic workers. Questionnaires were used to collect data from employers.

Engaging the services of three research assistants who had done research methods as students facilitated the data collection process. All problems encountered during the data collection phase such as fears and suspicions expressed by respondents were overcome. All data collected was coded, entered into the Excel programme and taken to a statistician for analysis.

The survey method was used bearing in mind that response errors when interviews were conducted could produce bias either intentionally or

unconsciously. It was for this reason that research assistants were trained and the observation of domestic workers at work was included as a data collection tool.

In Chapter 4, the research findings are presented and analysed.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of interviews conducted on domestic workers, the report on incidental observation of domestic workers and findings from questionnaires administered to the employers of domestic workers are presented. Only the home management training needs findings as expounded by the domestic workers and their employers will be analysed.

The results of the interviews are presented in a descriptive format and in tables. The presentation and analysis of the results are done in the order in which they appear in the interviewing schedule and questionnaire.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE DOMESTIC WORKERS' RESPONSES.

The domestic workers' knowledge and skills in home management were evaluated using open and closed-ended questions on different aspects of home management. The interviewing schedules accompanied by the tape recorder were used as tools for collecting data. Domestic workers were also observed while performing their duties where possible.

In the interviewing schedules, aspects such as personal details; employment history, home management skills and knowledge, perceptions on domestic workers training and incidental observation were addressed.

4.2.1 Personal details

The interviewing schedules covered the following aspects:

4.2.1.1 Gender

It was important to discover the gender of domestic workers in order to understand their needs better.

The results showed that all the domestic workers included in this survey were females. This can be attributed to the fact that employers do not have huge yards or gardens and therefore do not require garden helpers who are usually males.

The domination of the domestic workers' sector by females is confirmed in the literature. Delport (1990: 5) and Grant (1997:61) concur in that the domestic service is the oldest and most common form of wage labour for Black women in South Africa.

4.2.1.2 Age distribution

It was important to know age groups that are involved in this sector as it would shed some light on various issues that affect them.

The results indicated that domestic workers' ages ranged from teenagers who were under nineteen to those over fifty years old. It was discovered that 40.8% fell within the twenty to thirty year old age group while 3.9% were within the under- nineteen and another 3.9% fell on the over fifty -one year old age group.

4.2.1.3 Marital status

In order to fully comprehend factors that push people towards this sector, one has to understand their social roles and responsibilities.

The results proved that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers

(86.5%) were single. The majority of domestic workers never married (69.9%), others were widowed (9.8%) and 6.8% was on separation or divorced. Only 13,5% domestic workers were married.

The fact that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers were single illustrates their level of desperation to find employment in order to support themselves and their families. Preston-Whyte (1969: 49); Cock (1980: 307); McNeil (1989: 111) note that among other reasons, women seek domestic work because of their responsibility to their illegitimate children; death of a spouse; the inability of the breadwinner to support a family; the search to join a migrant labourer husband or lover; or quarrels with the in-laws and husband leading to divorce or separation.

4.2.1.4 Number of dependants

The number of dependants that domestic workers have contributes towards pushing them towards this sector.

It was discovered that 65.5% of domestic workers had one to five dependants while 24.3% had six to ten dependants. If domestic workers become unemployed through retrenchment or resignation, all their dependants could be negatively affected.

4.2.1.5 Areas of origin

This question was included because it is an important factor in understanding the problems of adjustment that domestic workers encounter at their places of employment.

The results showed that 94.1% of domestic workers came from the Kwa-Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Swaziland rural areas and 5.9% came from urban areas of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

It is well known that home management techniques used in rural areas are different to those used in urban areas and therefore domestic workers who are employed in urban areas for the first time need to learn these techniques in order to be able to execute their duties properly. This change in the method of doing household chores necessitates thorough orientation and on-going training by employers.

Huber and Sack (1994: 50) recommended that when a domestic worker first starts working, induction should take place and she should be given an opportunity to practise using the appliances until she masters them.

4.2.1.6 Level of education

Their level of education was included as an indicator of how well they are capable of coping with their jobs because reading and writing skills essential in the performance of their duties.

The results showed that 9.7% of domestic workers never attended school while 27.2% left school between grade one and five which makes them semi-literate. The study also revealed that 31.1% of respondents dropped out of school between grade six to eight while 32% left school between grade nine and twelve.

The low level of education of the majority of domestic workers indicates the extent of difficulties that they experience while trying to execute their duties. This situation could have negative effect on the working relations between domestic workers and their employers.

Mdladlana (2001: 5) states that fifty percent of young people who have completed more than nine years of schooling are unemployed. It is assumed that some of them go into the domestic workers' sector in order to earn money rather than depending on parents for their survival.

The personal details of domestic workers enable us to understand them better as they provide information about their background as well as factors that push them towards this sector.

4.2.2 EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

The following aspects are addressed in the domestic workers employment history:

4.2.2.1 First job

This question was included in order to find out if a domestic worker had been employed previously and the type of job done before working as a domestic worker. The information obtained would help shed light on reasons that compelled them to change jobs. This would give an indication of their experiences in this sector.

A majority of the domestic workers (73.8%) started working as domestic workers while 20.4 % worked as labourers in industries, shops or farms. Only 4.9 % of domestic workers were employed for the first time.

4.2.2.2 Duration of stay in the first job

This question was included in order to discover the rate of turnover in this sector.

The results revealed that 26.2 % of domestic workers had stayed for less than a month in their first job as domestic workers. The highest period served among respondents was two to five years (24.2 %). Only 4.9 % of domestic workers had stayed in their first job for more than five years.

The high turnover cited above indicates that there is something wrong in the

domestic worker sector.

4.2.2.3 Reasons for resignation or expulsion/dismissal

This question was included in order to ascertain reasons for the turnover in the domestic workers' sector.

They cited low salaries (34%), misunderstanding between them and their employers' families concerning different aspects of home management that culminated in relations becoming strained and unbearable (16.6%), as reasons for resignation or expulsion. Other respondents cited reasons such as family mobility (7.8%), pregnancy (3.9%) and 22.2% cited not being needed as the employers' children that they were looking after were attending school. Other respondents (15.5%) mentioned other reasons such as their different family commitments.

If the domestic worker had received adequate training and orientation or induction to her job, some of the misunderstanding could have been avoided as it emanated from work done unsatisfactorily according to the employers' views. It should be borne in mind that the majority of domestic workers as indicated in Section 4.2.1.5 come from rural areas and are used to different ways of performing household chores to those that are required in their places of employment.

4.2.2.4 Reasons for choosing domestic work

This question was asked in order to determine factors that pull domestic workers towards this sector.

The results revealed that 98.1% respondents joined this sector because of lack of employment opportunities in other sectors, as they were unskilled for any job as well as job scarcity. It was interesting to discover that 1.9% did not

regard themselves as employees but said they were helping their relatives and getting paid.

The reasons that pushed domestic workers towards this sector confirm Smith's assertion that although domestic service is unattractive to many Blacks, the unavailability of alternative employment and lack of any particular skill forces many people into it (Smith, 1982: 167).

4.2.2.5 Knowledge about the job

The aim of including this question was find out the advertising mechanisms used by employers of domestic workers for vacancies and obtain information on how domestic workers job hunt.

The results indicated that domestic workers' friends or relatives referred 87.4% of domestic workers to employers while 5.8% went knocking from door-to-door in search of employment and 6.8% were approached by employers for their services. Most of the domestic workers who were approached by employers were found to be the employers' or their friends' relatives.

Failure to adhere to the recruitment guidelines can result in employing a wrong candidate for the job and its negative consequences.

4.2.2.6 Domestic worker type

The aim of including this question was to find out if domestic workers were employed on part-time or full- time basis.

The results showed that 92.3% of domestic workers were employed for more than 3 days per week, which is taken as full-time and 7.7% worked for less than 3 days per week, which is described as casual.

The employment of full-time domestic workers also demonstrated the extent of stress and the tensions that could result if a domestic worker decided to terminate her services abruptly.

4.2.2.7 Interview prior to employment

This aspect was included to find out the recruitment procedure followed by the employers of domestic workers.

The results revealed that 52.4% of domestic workers were not properly interviewed before resuming their duties. Some were asked a few basic questions like where they come from or if they had been employed before but were not given an opportunity to ask details about their responsibilities in the new job. This clearly illustrates the desperation of employers in their recruitment process as they are prepared to welcome total strangers into their households about whom they do not have enough background information and put them in charge of their belongings and dependants.

4. 2. 2. 8 Interview content

Information gained from answers to this open-ended question would indicate what employers considered important to know about their potential employees prior to hiring them.

Of the 52.4% of respondents that were interviewed, 98.1% said that employers were interested in their previous salaries while 92.2% employers asked about their work experience. Other employers (79.6%) were interested in the candidates' personal details like the number and ages of children, where their homes were and their drinking and smoking habits.

The employment history of domestic workers was important because it reflected their period of stay in their previous jobs. The period of stay in the

first job had implications about their adjustment in their subsequent workplace. The recruitment procedure used and the induction training received immediately after assuming duties determined domestic workers' adjustment in their workplace.

If the correct recruitment procedure is followed domestic workers and their employers could have good working relations.

4.2.3 Home management skills and knowledge

Domestic workers need to have adequate knowledge and skills in the following aspects of home management:

4. 2. 3. 1 Food and nutrition

Knowledge and skills in the following food and nutrition issues are crucial in the performance of their duties:

- **Functions of nutrients in the bodies**

This question was raised with the aim of assessing whether domestic workers knew basic nutritional information including functions of nutrients in our bodies. The functions of nutrients were considered important because domestic workers are entrusted with the health of family members.

The results showed that 59.2% of domestic workers knew about the functions of different nutrients in the body while a 40.8% did not have such knowledge.

The lack of knowledge of some respondents was considered to be dangerous to people who are left in their care, especially dependent family members. In some instances, domestic workers can deprive family members of foods that supply certain nutrients out of lack of knowledge, which could result in

irreparable nutritional damage in their lives.

- **Knowledge of food groups**

This further probing was done in order to discover the amount of information workers had about the grouping of foods.

Out of all respondents who said they knew about the importance of nutrients, only 26.2% knew about food groups. Information about the food groups is important because it enables the domestic workers to plan balanced meals for those that they look after.

- **Methods of cooking vegetables**

This question was included in order to assess whether domestic workers knew how to prepare vegetables in such a way that nutrients are retained.

The results indicated that 83.5% respondents knew how to cook vegetables such that nutrients are conserved. The lack of knowledge of the 16.4% respondents needs to be addressed in order to prevent malnutrition.

- **Special diets for diabetic people**

This aspect was included to establish the extent of information domestic workers had on the dietary requirements of special cases within households such as the diabetic people because they are required to prepare food for them.

The results revealed that 83.5% respondents knew about the special dietary needs of different special cases such as the diabetics, while 16.5% did not. The well being of family members with special dietary needs is dependent on what they are given to eat and if domestic workers prepare their foods

incorrectly, their health can be impaired.

- **Correct food storage**

Domestic workers are responsible for food storage within the home which if incorrectly done could result in food spoilage and wasting.

The results indicated that 83.5% of domestic workers knew how to store food properly. Given the scarcity of money for purchasing food, employers cannot afford to have wasteful employees. Domestic workers need to be empowered with information in order to prevent food spoilage and wastage, which can be a source of conflict between the employer and a domestic worker.

- **Use of recipes**

The reason for including this aspect was to assess how well domestic workers were able to use recipes during food preparation.

Only 31.1% of respondents said they knew how to use a recipe when preparing food. Among them only 25% could explain how a recipe is used during food preparation. The inability of the majority of domestic workers to use recipes when preparing food proved that their employers could not rely on them to prepare certain dishes without supervision.

It becomes the duty of an employer to educate the domestic worker in the use of recipes when preparing food.

4.2.3.2 Care of children and the frail or aged

Children and the frail or aged cannot take care of themselves and are dependent on others to meet their needs within the household.

- **Reasons for frequent nutritious smaller feeds to this group**

Children and the frail or the aged are left in the care of domestic workers in some households. It was important to evaluate the domestic workers' knowledge about feeding of this group, as their nutritional well being depends on the domestic workers who care for them.

The results indicated that 58.3% of domestic workers knew about the importance of offering smaller frequent nutritious meals to this group.

- **Reasons for the sterilisation of infants' eating utensils**

This question was asked in order to discover how much domestic workers knew about the importance of sterilising infants' eating utensils. Lack of knowledge on this aspect could result in diarrhoea and dysentery, which may subsequently result in death.

The results indicated that 58.3% of domestic workers knew the reasons for sterilising infants' eating utensils while 41.7% did not but were just carrying out employers' instructions. It becomes the duty of the employer to educate his or her employee on why and how they need to perform certain tasks in order to prevent unnecessary suffering of their family members.

- **Steps to follow when bathing a baby**

This aspect is important because if domestic workers do not know how to bath the baby correctly, the baby could be exposed to pneumonia, which is one of the contributing factors towards the high infant mortality rate in South Africa.

The results indicated that 80.6% of domestic workers knew the correct steps to follow when giving the baby a bath. A significant minority (19.4%) who did not give a satisfactory explanation posed a threat to the lives of children that

they look after.

- **Checking the temperature of an infants' formula**

This question was asked in order to ascertain how domestic workers check the temperature of an infants' formula bottle before giving a feed. The importance of including this aspect is that failure to perform this task correctly may expose an infant to communicable diseases.

The results showed that 90.2% of domestic workers suckle an infant's bottle in order to determine the temperature of the formula. Only 9.8% respondents said that they pour the contents on the back of their hands in order to determine the temperature. The practice of suckling a bottle exposes an infant to communicable diseases like Tuberculosis, HIV and others, which may be found in the saliva of a domestic worker.

4.2.3.3 First Aid

Administering First Aid can save peoples' lives or prevent the situation from worsening. In this research the following basic First-Aid measures were dealt with: drinking paraffin, falls and burns by boiling water.

- **First action to take if a child has drunk paraffin**

This aspect was included for purposes of assessing if domestic workers had the knowledge and skills to help children who drank any poisonous substance like paraffin.

Only 32% of respondents said that they would take the child to the nearest clinic or doctor. The majority (64.1%) said that they would give milk to the child to drink, which is dangerous and could lead to choking and death while 3.9% did not know what they would do when faced with that situation.

- **First thing to do if a child falls and gets injured**

This question was asked because as a domestic worker reaction to an injury determines the extent of damage that can happen to a victim.

The results showed that 55.3% knew how to administer First- Aid to a person who had fallen prior to consulting medical personnel. The lack of knowledge shown by 44.7% was considered to be detrimental to the victims, because further damage can result if a person does not get proper First Aid immediately.

- **First thing to do if someone is scalded by boiling water**

This question was included to find out how domestic workers would react if someone was burned or scalded by water. This aspect was considered to be very important because domestic workers look after children who are susceptible to burns.

The results indicated that 25.2 % of respondents did not know how they would administer First Aid to a person who has suffered from burns but 74.8% correctly described how they would administer First Aid to the burn victims.

The failure of domestic workers to act immediately could necessitate expensive skin damage corrective mechanisms and may cause scarring for life to the victims.

4.2.3.4 Garment Care

One of the important duties of domestic workers is caring for the families' clothes. Reading and understanding care labels is essential in garment care.

- **Steps to follow if you have a bundle of washing including an infant's clothes.**

The aim of including this aspect was to assess if domestic workers understood that different colours of clothes and fabrics types need to be washed separately to avoid spoilage, and that infants' clothes need to be washed separately from those of adults.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (94.2%) knew that garments needed to be separated accordingly. Lack of knowledge of the 5.8% respondents in this aspect could result in garment spoilage.

- **What to look for before washing/ ironing the clothing items for the first time.**

The aim in including this open-ended question was to find out if domestic workers had any knowledge about the use of care labels in clothes. Failure to read and understand care labels usually results in clothing damage and wastage which becomes another source of conflict between employers and employees

Only 41.7% of respondents knew that they had to read care labels before washing or ironing garments and 44.7%% emphasised checking for left over items on the pockets of shirts and trousers or pants.

- **Methods to use for stain removal**

The aim of including this aspect was to discover if domestic workers knew that different fabrics needed different methods of stain removal as different fabrics react differently to certain chemicals.

It was very disturbing to discover that 52.4% of respondents believed that

bleach solves all stain problems in all fabrics as some garments are damaged when bleach is been applied. Only 41.7% of respondents knew that stains needed to be removed according to fabric type while 5.8% felt that it was better to ask the employer what to do if a garment had stains than removing them on your own.

4.2.3.5 Health and hygiene practices

Failure to practise good hygienic principles by domestic workers can lead to problems for their employers and their family members.

- **The importance of washing hands before touching food**

This aspect was included in order to assess if domestic workers knew the reasons for washing their hands before handling food as that would establish if they know the consequences of failure to practise it.

The results showed that 96.1% of respondents knew the reasons for washing their hands before handling food and 3.9% did it because they had been told to do so. Their lack of knowledge about the consequences of not complying with this requirement can be fatal to those that they serve.

- **Establishing a need to change or wash a chopping board after cutting meat and before chopping salad ingredients**

The aim of including this question was to establish if respondents knew that foods of a relatively higher hygienic standard could be cross-contaminated by the other.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (91.2 %) did not know that it is important to thoroughly wash the chopping board after cutting meat before preparing vegetables. Lack of knowledge in this regard is very detrimental as

food poisoning can have devastating effects in the lives of family members.

- **Reasons for a washing or changing the chopping board.**

This question was asked in order to further probe whether those who said they knew the reason had correct information.

The results indicated that 70.9% of those who claimed to know the reasons for washing or changing chopping boards thought that it had to be done to avoid cross-contaminating the salad and 25.2 % stated that it was done to avoid making the salad dirty. It was disturbing to note that 3.9% said they did not see the importance of changing or thoroughly washing of chopping boards because meat and salads ingredients are all food items.

4. 2. 3. 6 Operation of technological devices

Domestic workers need to operate technological appliances in order to perform their duties.

- **The importance of not operating electrical devices with wet hands**

This question was included for establishing if domestic workers understood how electricity works and the danger that it could cause if not handled properly.

The results showed that all respondents (100%) knew that electricity causes shock if handled with wet hands.

- **Using a steam iron: avoiding breakage and accidents**

The aim of including this question was to establish if domestic workers knew

how to use electrical irons, as they break easily if handled incorrectly. It is also common knowledge that careless use of irons is a contributing factor in child burns within households.

The results suggested that 78.6% of respondents knew of the correct method of handling the steam iron. The 21.4% of respondents who did not have knowledge in this regard are a potential hazard within households.

- **Utensils to use in a microwave oven.**

This aspect was included because in many households microwave ovens are used. The aim was to establish if respondents knew how to use them properly because if wrong utensils are used inside the microwave oven, damage occurs.

The results showed that a 31.1 % of respondents said that any utensil could be used inside a microwave oven while 54.4 % knew that only microwave-specific utensils should be used. Respondents who had not been exposed to a microwave oven did not respond to the question.

4.2.3.7 Conservation of household resources

Domestic workers use household resources like water, electricity and food. It is important that they use them efficiently because they are costly.

- **Method used when washing dirty dishes.**

This question was asked with the aim of establishing domestic workers' practises when using water within the household.

The results indicated that 18.4 % of respondents wasted water within the household as they said that they washed dishes individually by letting water

run over each. By so doing they forced their employers to pay unnecessarily high water bills.

- **The use of powdered soap when doing washing/laundry.**

Establishing how domestic workers used powdered soap was considered important as it can illustrate whether they conserve or waste it.

The results showed that 87.4 % of domestic workers used powdered soap correctly.

- **Steps followed when making a cup of coffee/tea.**

The researcher wanted to find out how domestic workers utilised electricity and water within the household.

The results showed that 21.4 % of respondents were wasteful in their use of electricity and water as they said they boil the full kettle in order to make one cup of coffee/ tea.

4.2.4 Perception about domestic workers' training in home management.

It was important to elicit the views of domestic workers on training in home management. This would give the researcher information on how the domestic workers viewed their job performance.

- **Receiving formal training in home management**

This question was asked to find out if domestic workers had been exposed to any form of training in home management.

It was discovered that 94.2% of respondents had never received any formal training in household management knowledge and skills. Others (5,8%) of respondents had received training in aspects such as cooking and baking.

⇒ **The necessity of receiving training in home management**

This question was asked to probe further on the domestic workers' views on training for their jobs.

The results indicated that 98.1% of respondents said training in home - management skills and knowledge is essential while 1.9 % felt that it was not necessary because all women could perform household chores.

⇒ **Reasons for the response**

This aspect was added as a follow up to the previous question. The researcher wanted to find out what domestic workers hoped to achieve by attending home management training classes should they be made available.

The results showed that of all respondents who felt that training in home management skills and knowledge was essential 86.4 % wanted to gain knowledge and skills in various aspects of home management in order to satisfy their employers by performing their duties well. A significant minority of domestic workers (13.6%) wanted to improve the quality of their lives by acquiring income-generating skills that could help them should they leave their places of work.

- **The suggested content for the home management training programme**

This open-ended question was asked with an aim of eliciting the respondents' views on what they considered as important home management aspects that

could be included as the teaching and learning content, should the need analysis necessitate training.

The results revealed that 87.4 % of respondents wanted training in home management skills and knowledge, especially in cooking while 52.4 % wanted training in health and hygiene practices. Others (31.1 %) felt that First- Aid and child-care or care for the frail needs to be addressed as a crucial aspect in home management. A significant minority of respondents (18.4%) wanted training in the operation of technological appliances while 3.9 % cited various life skills such as flower arranging, driving, literacy and sewing.

It must be noted that as this was an open-ended question each respondent gave more than one response at times. The research results proved that domestic workers lacked certain home management skills in varying degrees.

4. 2.5 INCIDENTAL OBSERVATION RESULTS

The incidental observation of domestic workers at work was limited to home management aspects only. Areas covered were food handling including preparation, First-Aid, garment care, health and hygiene practices, technological devices operation and the conservation of household resources.

Observation of respondents performing their duties was done in different households where it was possible. The observed actions were compared with the responses to questions on various home management aspects. In most households nothing was observed, as some domestic workers were found busy in parts of the house that were inaccessible to the researchers.

Observations were made on only two home management aspects; namely health and hygiene practices and the use of household resources. The

following observations were made:

4.2.5.1 Hygienic practices

- In two households domestic workers did not wash their hands before handling food.
- In three households where they were found preparing food, they used the same spoon for tasting food and stirring the pot.
- In one household, a domestic worker stirred tea for the toddler, tasted for the amount of sugar and used the same teaspoon to add more sugar and stir tea in the cup, which was very unhygienic.

4.2.5.2 Conservation of household resources

- In three households, it was noted that the domestic workers boiled a full kettle of water for making one cup of tea.
- In five households, domestic workers were observed wasting electricity by cooking in small pots on big electric stove plates.
- In one household, it was observed that the domestic worker did not drain water from the steam iron after use, and that she stored it carelessly although there was a toddler in the house.

The findings of the incidental observation exercise confirmed that domestic workers lacked knowledge on some aspects of home management. Their lack of knowledge resulted in the wasting of household resources and could generally result in accidents within the home as well as spreading communicable diseases.

4. 3 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES

It was important to understand the people who employ domestic workers and

the circumstances surrounding employment. Employers' views on training needs and expectations of their employees were also sought.

The questionnaires were based on the following aspects:

- Personal details;
- The recruitment procedure that employers use when employing domestic workers ;
- Their perceptions on domestic workers' training in home management skills and knowledge, including the training programme content.

The results are presented as Tables in the order in which they appear on the questionnaire.

4.3.1 Employers' personal details

Aspects like gender, age distribution, occupation, workplace marital status, occupation of the spouse or partner and family structure were addressed.

4.3.1.1 Gender

This aspect was included in order to find out the gender of those who need help in running their households and whose productivity is negatively affected if the domestic worker does not perform her duties efficiently. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Gender

	Count	%
Male	8	8.0
Female	92	92
Total	100	100

The results showed that 92% of employers are female while 8% are males. The results confirmed that in some households, males were responsible for home management chores. This phenomenon of single males managing their households appears to be increasing amongst Black South Africans living in urban areas.

The results also confirmed that in most households women were responsible for running households. If they cannot personally do this, they employ other females (domestic workers) to help them as discussed in section 2.3.

4.3.1.2 Age distribution in years

The aim of asking this question was to discover the age group that mostly employs domestic workers, as this would clarify the reasons for employing them. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Age distribution in years

	Count	%
>24	2	2.0
25-35	40	40.0
36-45	38	38.0
46-55	12	12.0
56-66	7	7.0
67<	1	1.0
Total	100	100

The results indicated that 40% of employers of domestic workers fell within the 25-35 year age group while 38% fell within the 36-45 year category. These are child-rearing stages. As people enter a stage where children are grown up or the "empty-nest syndrome" sets in, the need for domestic workers decreases. This is evident in the decline in percentage in the 46 -55-

year categories up to 67 years and above.

Employers who are at the childbearing stage and who are employed outside the home are the most dependent on domestic workers' services because they need them to take care of their children while they earn a living.

4.3.1.3 Employers' occupations

This aspect was included in order to establish if employers of domestic workers were employed outside the home or working within the household. Their occupational status would help in understanding their dependency on domestic workers. The results are reported in Table 3.

Table 3
Employers' occupations

	Count	%
Teacher	42	42.0
Nurse	18	18.0
Social Worker	6	6.0
Police	2	2.0
Secretary	10	10.0
Clerk	3	3.0
Other	19	19.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that respondents were teachers/lecturers (42%), nurses (18%), secretaries (10%), social workers (6%), and the police (2%). Some employers (19%) are electricians, municipal workers, dressmakers and caterers, journalists and other professions. The results illustrated the extent of dependency of employers on their domestic workers as an overwhelming majority of employers were deeply involved in their occupations and can not manage their households on full –time basis.

4.3.1.4 Workplace of an employer

This question was included in order to establish where employers of domestic workers worked as this would further highlight the level of dependence that they had on their domestic workers. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Workplace of an employer

	Count	%
At home	16	16.0
Away from home	84	84.0
Total	100	100

The results indicated that 84% of employers worked away from home while 16% worked within the household. This included people involved in sewing, catering and other occupations that are based within the household.

4.3.1.5 Marital status

The question on the marital status of employers was included in order to establish the kind of support system that employers had within the household, financially and materially. For example, in a household where there is both a husband and a wife, domestic chores can be shared if a domestic worker is unavailable. The results are reported in Table 5.

Table 5:
Marital status

	Count	%
Married	72	72.0
Single	16	16.0
Widowed	6	6.0
Divorced	3	3.0
Separated	3	3.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that 72% of respondents were married while 16% were single. Irrespective of their marital status, all employers were dependent on their domestic workers for the smooth running of their households.

4.3.1.6 Occupation of spouse/ partner where applicable

This question was included in order to find out the extent of support that employers had from their partners/spouses regarding home management while they are at work. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Occupation of spouse/ partner where applicable

	Count	%
Teacher	22	22.0
Electrician	9	9.0
Social Worker	7	7.0
Bricklayer	22	22.0
Other	40	40.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that the spouses/partners of employers were also

employed as teachers (22%); bricklayers (22%); social workers (7 %) and 40% belonged to other occupations such as the police, drivers, secretaries, nurses, journalists, insurance brokers and others while some employers did not have spouses or partners.

The findings confirmed that domestic workers are indispensable in many of these households as employers and their spouses/partners where applicable are employed away from home on full-time basis.

4.3.1.7 Family structure

This aspect was included in order to find out the types of family structures that are prevalent in the employers' households. Information obtained would shed light on the support system available for working parents. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Family structure

	Count	%
Nuclear	59	59.0
Extended	24	24.0
Male/Female Headed	17	17.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that 59% of households fell in the nuclear family category while 24% lived with an extended family. The number of male/female - headed households was at 17%. All these factors illustrate that domestic workers manage many households while employers are at work. Of the 24% of employers who lived with the extended family, the degree of dependence on the domestic worker depends on the employment circumstances of the extended family members. If some members of the extended family are not employed outside the home, they help with the running of the households in

the absence of domestic workers.

The results of the personal details of employers confirmed that a significant majority of employers depended on domestic workers for the smooth operation of their households.

It is important for employers to employ domestic workers who will fit into their households and comply with all their requirements. This can only happen if employers of domestic workers follow the necessary recruitment guidelines.

4.3.2 RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BY EMPLOYERS

Regarding the recruitment procedure that was followed by the employers, the following aspects were addressed: the need for employing a domestic worker; the type of a domestic worker employed; residence while employed; the method used to advertise the vacancy for a domestic worker; the duration of employment of the current domestic worker; the period of employment of the previous domestic worker where applicable; reasons for resignation or dismissal; as well as the recruitment procedure followed.

4.3.2.1 Reasons for employing domestic workers

This aspect was included in order to establish factors that compelled people to employ domestic workers. The reasons for employing domestic workers would illustrate their importance within households. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Reasons for employing domestic workers

	Count	%
Child- care	26	26.0
Home security	35	35.0
Caring for the aged	1	1.0
Combination of the above	33	33.0
Other	5	5.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that in most households domestic workers were employed to perform the various household chores, provide home security, child-care as well as other duties including caring for the sick and the aged. Other employers wanted someone to keep them company as they stay alone.

Most employers and their partners or spouses worked away from home as indicated in Tables 4 and 6. If it were not for domestic workers, most households would remain locked during the day, which might pose a security risk.

4.3.2.2 Type of Domestic Help

The aim of including this question was to discover the type of domestic workers who are mostly employed as they are categorised as full-time and casual. Responses to this question would indicate the rate of dependency that employers have on their workers. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Type of domestic help

	Count	%
Full-time	93	93.0
Casual	7	7.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that 93% of respondents employed full-time domestic workers while 7% employed the casuals. The high percentage of full-time domestic workers' illustrates the degree of dependence that employers have on their domestic workers.

4.3.2.3 Residence whilst employed

This aspect was included to further clarify the rate dependency of employers on domestic workers. Responses to this question would reveal the number of employers whose domestic workers reside with them. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10
Residence whilst employed

	Count	%
Sleep-in	82	82.0
Sleep-out	18	18.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that the majority of respondents (82%) lived with their employers' families. The majority of these respondents stated that they were forced by circumstances like a long distance from their homes as discussed in section 4.2.1.5 to stay with their employers while others were requested by their employers to stay with them for their convenience.

4.3.2.4 Methods used to advertise the vacancy for a domestic worker

This aspect was included in order to find out about the recruitment procedure that was followed by employers in their quest to acquire a domestic worker. The results are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11:
Methods used to advertise the vacancy for a domestic worker

	Count	%
Word of mouth	76	76.0
Door-to-door search	11	11.0
Domestic Workers' relatives	10	10.0
Other	3	3.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that 76% of respondents relied on the word-of-mouth, relatives and friends as a means of advertising their vacancies. However, 11% of employers recruited people who came knocking on their doors seeking employment. In the case of 10% of respondents, they relied on the relatives of domestic workers to recruit them mainly from rural areas. In some instances (3 %) friends or relatives of domestic workers approached the potential employers to employ their relatives or teachers at school made announcements to pupils to bring their people who want work to the teachers, who then selected preferred candidates.

4.3.2.5 Duration of a current employees' period of employment

The aim of including this aspect was to discover the duration of employment of the current employee in preparation for the next question that focused on the level of turnover in this sector. The results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12
Duration of a current employees' stay in your employment

	Count	%
> 12 months	32	32.0
13-60 months	42	42.0
61-120 months	15	15.0
121 months<	11	11.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that 32% of respondents had domestic workers who had been employed for less than a year (twelve months), followed by 42 % who had stayed with their current domestic workers for up to five years. The longest serving domestic workers had completed ten years and above with their employers and formed 11% of the respondents.

The information stated above suggests that turnover is high in the domestic workers' sector. It is acknowledged that there are many reasons, which contribute towards the high turnover. Haupt (1994: 5) states that "You are probably one of two kinds of people: either you have had the same domestic worker for many years, or you never manage to keep one for more than a year or two." The high percentage of domestic workers who had served their employers between 13–60 months confirmed that most employers do not manage to keep their domestic workers for long.

4.3.2.6 Duration of the previous domestic worker's period of employment

This question was included in order to ascertain the turnover rate in this sector as it has an effect on the smooth functioning of the household and the productivity of family members outside the home. The results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13**Duration of the previous domestic worker's period of employment**

	Count	%
1 - 12 months	45	45.0
13 - 60 months	39	39.0
61 -120 months	13	13.0
121 months <	3	3.0
Total	100	100

Employers whose previous employees had served them for a year or less constituted 45 % of respondents, while only 3% had employees who had served them for more than ten years. This proves that there is a major problem of turnover in this sector, which needs to be addressed.

4.3.2.7 Reasons for the resignation or dismissal of the previous domestic worker

In order to establish the reasons for the high turnover, reasons for expulsion or dismissal had to be sought. It was hoped that responses to this question would highlight problems experienced between domestic workers and their employers. The results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14
Reasons for the resignation or dismissal of the previous domestic worker

	Count	%
Family responsibilities	24	24.0
Going back to school	7	7.0
Insubordination	16	16.0
No longer needed	3	3.0
Other	22	22.0
Not Applicable	28	28.0
Total	100	100

The results showed that a majority of domestic workers 15% resigned due to family responsibilities. In the case of 16% of employers, insubordination emanating from poor work performance was the main reason for expulsion/resignation of their domestic workers. However, 22% of respondents stated other reasons such as theft; drunkenness; poor health; unfaithfulness; seeking greener pastures; the intention to work for a White employer; old age; absconding, and relocation as reasons for expulsion/resignation.

Some of the problems stated above could be eliminated if all parties understood their obligations to one another. Domestic workers and their potential employers should discuss these obligations during an interview prior to the assumption of duties.

4.3.2.8 Selection criteria used when recruiting a domestic worker

This aspect was included to further establish if employers followed a recruitment procedure like advertising the job, interviewing candidates and discussion of job descriptions. The results are presented in Table 15.

Table 15:
Selection criteria used when recruiting a domestic worker

	Count	%
Yes	37	37.0
No	63	63.0
Total	100	100

According to the findings, 63% of respondents did not use any selection criteria while 37% said that they did follow certain procedures in selecting their domestic workers. This showed that some employers were not aware of the selection procedure that they needed to follow when employing domestic workers.

Failure to follow the selection guidelines as discussed in Section 2.4 may result in problems later. It is during an interview for a job that an employer is able to determine if the candidate complies with the job requirements. This is also an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions so that she can decide whether or not to accept the job offer.

As home managers, domestic workers are expected to have skills and the knowledge of running households. Employers as recipients of the domestic workers' service, had certain needs that their employees had to meet.

It was important to find out what the needs of employers were regarding the skills and knowledge base of their employees.

4.3.3 PERCEPTION ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS' HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

In examining employers' perceptions about domestic workers' home management knowledge and skills, the following issues were addressed:

- ◆ skills that employers expect their domestic workers to have on arrival;
- ◆ skills and knowledge that employers provide on domestic workers' appointment;
- ◆ adequacy of time for induction training of domestic workers,
- ◆ problems encountered during the induction training;
- ◆ the necessity of training domestic workers in core home management areas and suggestions for the home management training programme content if it was considered to be essential.

4.3.3.1 Skills that a domestic worker is expected to have on appointment

This open-ended question was included in order to find out if employers had any expectations of their workers on home management duties, on arrival. The results are presented in Table 16. It must be noted that some employers provided more than one response.

Table 16

Skills that a domestic worker is expected to have on appointment

	Count	%
Cooking and cleaning	52	37.4
Children and aged-care	31	22.3
Operation of electrical appliances	10	7.2
None	10	7.2
Other	34	24.5
No response	2	1.4
Total	139	100

Findings revealed that 37.4% of respondents expected their domestic workers to know how to cook and clean the house. Employers who have children or old and frail parents expected their domestic workers to know how

to care for them. The results also revealed that 7.2% of employers expected their employees to know how to operate electrical appliances as they are used in most households. However 24.5 % of respondents cited aspects such as the ability to read and write, conservation of resources, neatness, good communication skills and a willingness to learn.

4.3.3.2 Skills and information provided to a domestic worker on appointment

It was essential to find out if employers provided any training to their employees on appointment, as this is one of their obligations. The results are presented in Table 17. It must be noted that some employers expressed more than one view.

Table 17

Skills and information provided to a domestic worker on appointment

	Count	%
Cooking and cleaning	60	39.5
Childcare	25	16.4
Operation of electrical appliances	15	9.8
Caring for the aged	1	0.7
Conservation of household resources	12	7.9
Other	39	25.7
Total	152	100

The results indicated that 39.5% of employers trained their workers in cooking and cleaning as these are done differently in different households. 16.4% of employers trained their workers in child-care practices while 15% trained them on the operation of electrical appliances. Some of the respondents (25.7%) mentioned different aspects like the telephone

respondents (25.7%) mentioned different aspects like the telephone etiquette, dealing with emergencies (First-Aid); safety measures, including the operation of an alarm system and interacting with strangers.

The results confirmed that home management has many aspects in which a domestic worker needs knowledge and skills.

4.3.3.3 Domestic workers' training

- **Adequacy of time available for effective training of a domestic worker on appointment.**

This aspect was included with an aim of finding out if employers had enough time to do induction training of their employees before leaving them in charge of their households. The results are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Adequacy of time available for effective training of a domestic worker on appointment.

	Count	%
Yes	53	53.0
No	47	47.0
Total	100	100

The significant majority (53%) of respondents stated that they had adequate time to train their employees before leaving them to take over, while 47% said that they did not have adequate time for training them. Considering the background information about domestic workers especially their places of origin (section 4.2.1.5), it was essential to establish what employers considered to be adequate time to train their workers.

- **Duration of domestic workers' training**

It was essential to further probe employers about the amount of time that they made available for induction training of their domestic workers. The results are reported in Table 19.

Table 19
Duration of domestic workers' training

	Count	%
1 hour on weekends	2	2.0
1 day and anytime	25	25.0
1 week – 1 month	20	20.0
>1 month –1 year	10	10.0
Other	2	2.0
No response	41	41.0
Total	100	100

In 20% of the cases respondent indicated that they trained their employees for one week to one month when they return from work or during weekends if they are at home and 25% said that they trained them for one day and at any-time if the need arises. However, 2 % of respondents said that they train their employees as the need arises at anytime. It must be noted that 41% of employers did not respond to the question as they had indicated that they do not have time to train their domestic workers because they are very busy.

The findings indicated that most employers did not have adequate time to train and orientate their employees before expecting them to perform their duties without constant supervision.

- **Problems Encountered While Training Domestic Workers**

This aspect was included in order to find out if there were any problems that

employers encounter while training their employees. Information gained could be incorporated into a training program should its need arise. The results are presented in Table 20.

Table 20
Problems encountered while training domestic workers

	Count	%
Laziness	7	5.6
Communication problems	24	19.2
Time constraint	20	16.0
Slow learning and forgetfulness	13	10.4
Fear of operating electrical appliances	6	4.8
None	18	14.4
Other	8	6.4
Not Applicable	29	23.2
Total	125	100

Only 14.4% employers of domestic worker stated that they did not encounter problems while training their employees. Of all those who had said they encountered problems, 19.2% experienced rudeness, irritability and poor listening skills while 5.6% cited laziness and 4.8 % fear of operating electrical appliances. Other respondents (6.4 %) mentioned reasons other than those cited such as illiteracy and poor hygienic habits.

Problems encountered by employers while training their workers indicated that domestic workers had various communication and other problems that they bring to their places of employment. These problems contributed towards poor work performance, resulting in their dismissal and/or resignation. Solving some of the problems would contribute towards a healthy relationship between domestic workers and their employers thus decreasing the high turnover in this sector.

Having assessed the work performance needs of employers, their views on the home management training programme for their employees were sought.

4.3.4 EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING DOMESTIC WORKERS' TRAINING NEEDS IN HOME MANAGEMENT.

Employers' views on the necessity for external training of domestic workers in All home management aspects were canvassed. This included suggestions For the training programme content should its need be identified.

4.3.4.1 The necessity of training domestic workers in home management core-areas

It was important to establish whether employers saw any need for an external home management-training programme for their employees. The results are presented in Table 21.

Table 21
The necessity of training domestic workers in home management core-areas

	Count	
Yes	94	94.0
No	6	6.0
Total	100	100

The employers of domestic workers who felt that there was a need for an external training programme in home management for domestic workers were 94%. Only 6% of the respondents did not think that a home management-training programme for domestic workers was necessary.

4.3.4.2 Reasons for the necessity of a home management training programme for domestic workers

In order to further probe respondents' views on a training programme, the reasons for their responses were considered important. The results are reported in Table 22. It must be noted that some employers mentioned more than one aspect in their responses to the question hence totals will be more than the total of respondents.

Table 22
Reasons for the necessity of a home management training programme for domestic workers

	Count	%
Improving their performance	79	60.8
Empowerment	13	10.0
Prevention of wasting of resources	9	6.9
Avoiding accidents within the home	10	7.7
Employers' peace of mind	5	3.8
Improvement of human relations	7	5.4
Other (trustworthy etc.)	1	0.8
Fear of leaving after receiving training	1	0.8
Waste of time	5	3.8
Total	130	100

Employers of domestic workers cited various reasons for a need of a domestic workers' training programme on home management skills and knowledge.

Seventy-nine of employers (60.8%) felt that training would help domestic workers to acquire skills and knowledge on household management that would help improve their work performance. Thirteen respondents (10.0%) stated that training would empower domestic workers with skills and knowledge that they could use anywhere for purposes of employment or income generation. Seven (5.4%) respondents cited the improvement of human relations between the employer and employee, which would solve the high turnover problem in this sector.

Only 0.8% of the respondents expressed fear of being left by their employees after training while 3.8% of employers felt that training domestic workers was a waste of time since all females knew how to manage a home.

Overall, this question exposed the need for the training programme in home management skills and knowledge. A majority of respondents felt that it would benefit both the employers and the employees.

4.3.4.3 Suggested training programme content

After a need for a training programme for the domestic workers had been established, it became essential to establish the employers' suggestions on the course content. Information gained could be incorporated into the training programme, which could be part of other studies. The results of this open-ended question are presented in Table 23.

Table 23
Suggested training programme content

Suggested training programme content	Count	%
All home management core-areas	72	73.5
All home management core-areas and self-empowerment skills.	6	6.1
All home management core-areas and communication skills	15	15.3
All home management core-areas and skills for looking after the terminally ill	2	2.0
All home management core-areas and other life skills	3	3.1
Total	98	100

All respondents wanted training to focus on all core areas of home management. Other respondents expressed an opinion that it needs to address other issues as well such as communication skills, which should address aspects like telephone etiquette, self-empowerment or income-generating skills like driving, First-Aid, sewing and flower arrangement and looking after the terminally ill especially AIDS patients at home.

Some respondents (6.1%) wanted the training to include aspects like budgeting so those domestic workers can be able to manage their salaries. Self-defence was also considered to be important for inclusion in the training programme given the high crime rate in the country, as there are instances where domestic workers are raped and killed at work.

The results established that employers expect their domestic workers to have some home management skills and knowledge on appointment. It was also clear that a majority of employers do not have adequate time for the induction training of their domestic workers. A majority of employers identified various home management skills and knowledge training needs for their domestic workers.

Employers viewed the establishment of a training programme in home management as a solution to their problems. They felt that a training programme would help minimise sources of conflict between them and their domestic workers and promote better human relations and stability within their households.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter it was established that domestic workers lacked certain home management skills and knowledge. Both the domestic workers and their employers agreed that there was a need for domestic workers' training programme that would include all aspects of home management and other self-empowerment life skills.

The next chapter discusses the findings of this research leading to conclusions. These conclusions will in turn inform recommendations emanating from the identified problems.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of the problem, the context and the setting in which the research took place and the research approach used, were described in Chapter 1 of this thesis. Literature, which served as a basis for the research was reviewed in Chapter 2, where the various issues pertaining to the domestic workers' sector were explored. The research design and methodology used was described in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the results were presented.

This chapter discusses the research findings and conclusions drawn. Based on these conclusions, recommendations aimed at addressing the domestic workers' training needs in home management are proposed.

5. 2. THE RESEARCH GOAL

The purpose of conducting this research was to assess domestic workers' training needs in home management skills and knowledge. The needs assessment exercise was conducted by finding out how much domestic workers knew about various home management aspects. The views of employers of domestic workers on home management skills and knowledge of their employees were also sought, as they are the recipients of the service from domestic workers.

Domestic workers and employers of domestic workers were required to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are the domestic workers' training needs in home management?
- Is there a need for a formal domestic workers' training programme?
- Is training domestic workers in home management important ?
- If they regard training as important, which aspects would they like the training programme to cover?

This research was conducted with the aim of devising a relevant intervention strategy later on, should home management training needs be established amongst the domestic workers while acknowledging their employers' views.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research results presented in Chapter 4 uncovered many important issues that are dealt with under different sub-topics in this thesis which are discussed below:

5.3.1 Findings On Domestic Workers' Results

The domestic workers' results are discussed according to personal details, employment history, home management skills and knowledge as well as their views regarding training in domestic work.

5.3.1.1 Personal details

The research results revealed that women (as indicated in Section 4.2.1.1) dominate the domestic workers' sector. This female domination dates back to the rise of capitalism in the South African economy where women followed males who had migrated to urban areas in search of job opportunities and were subsequently employed as domestic workers.

Domestic workers were found to be heterogeneous in age and educational background (Sections 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.1.6). The very low levels of education

of some domestic workers confirmed Eagle's (1987- 1988: 73) statement that in some South African families especially in rural areas, limited resources were reserved for boys' education. They believed that educating girls was a waste of resources because they were expected to marry and leave their families. Hence the illiteracy of some domestic workers which is a hindrance to their work performance.

The findings revealed that the majority of domestic workers are single with many dependants (section 4.2.1.4). Makhanya and Malcom (2001:3) confirm that most domestic workers are single parents who are responsible for supporting their families. They are motivated by their family responsibilities to persevere even under worst working conditions.

An overwhelming majority of domestic workers come from poverty stricken rural areas (Section 4.2.1.5). Delpont (1996: 5) confirms this by stating that people from an impoverished rural background enter domestic service in towns with the hope of providing support for children and parents. Their lack of exposure to an urban lifestyle accompanied by low levels of education or illiteracy in some, are possible reasons for their difficulty in adjusting to their work situation. This results in many resignations or dismissals. The importance of adequate induction training of domestic workers on appointment is therefore highlighted.

5.3.1.2 Employment history

The results confirmed that most respondents started working as domestic workers and had changed employers due to various problems experienced (Sections 4.2.2; 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2). Among the stated problems, salaries and unsatisfactory working conditions are the main reasons for changing employers in this sector. This demonstrates the importance of sensitising employers and domestic workers to their obligations towards one another (as is stated in Section 2.5)

Domestic workers' problems are at times a result of a flawed recruitment procedure, accompanied by the inadequacy of the induction process and the lack of continuous training in home management. The results revealed that due to desperation, some domestic workers went from door to door looking for any available job (Section 4.2.2.5).

Some domestic workers were offered jobs without any interviews and had to comply with whatever demand their employers made on them. There were instances where domestic workers who do not like children, were compelled by employment circumstances to look after them. This causes problems for children, employers and the domestic workers themselves.

The high turnover in the domestic worker sector can be attributed partly to improper recruitment procedure and disregard for the obligations of employers to domestic workers and *vice versa*. Employers of domestic workers need to be aware of the importance of following the proper recruitment procedure like all employers in other sectors in South Africa.

5.3.1.3. Home Management Skills and Knowledge

Domestic workers are responsible for managing all household resources. They need to be skilled in the use these resources. As they are tasked with looking after some family members, they should be very cautious as those family members' lives can be harmed if they are not properly cared for. The following home management aspects are discussed below:

- **Food and nutrition knowledge**

The research results revealed that a significant minority of domestic workers did not have the basic knowledge about nutrients and their functions in the body as indicated in (Section 4.2.3.1). Their lack of knowledge in this regard can put the lives of dependent family members at risk and may result in

irreparable nutritional damage.

Domestic workers need to be informed about the basic functions of nutrients in the body so that they can understand the reasons for offering certain foods to those they look after, and the consequences of withholding those foods on their health status.

As domestic workers are responsible for food storage and preparation, they need to store and cook food such that they retain the nutrient value for the well-being of those who consume it. Incorrectly stored food can result in food poisoning which may cause illnesses and even death (Merki and Merki, 1993: 416). The results showed that a significant minority did not have this information (Section 4.2.3.1).

Most domestic workers are recruited from the rural areas and are not familiar with urban style cooking. It is essential that they are able to read recipes so that they can prepare any dish that the employer requires. However, the majority of domestic workers could not use a recipe (Section 4.2.3.1). It was also established that an insignificant minority of domestic workers had never been to school, which means that they could neither read nor write (Section 4.2.1.6).

These issues can be addressed by adequate and proper training in home management and of literacy classes.

- **Children and aged care**

Domestic workers are supposed to look after children and the aged, which includes preparing food and ensuring that they eat. Reitsma (1996:14) states that the nutritional status of children can be influenced by the quality and quantity of food that is offered to them, and that caretakers act as gatekeepers of the food channel by controlling the food that is given.

A significant minority of domestic workers (Section 4.2.3.1) did not know reasons for offering small frequent and high quality feeds to this group. Their lack of knowledge exposes children and the aged to unnecessary illnesses due to malnutrition. When people become malnourished and suffer from various diseases, it becomes costly to the employers and the state because of medical costs needed to correct their mistakes.

Furthermore, it is noted in (Section 4.2.3.1) that a significant minority of domestic workers did not know the reasons for the sterilisation of infants' eating utensils. This lack of knowledge exposes infants to diarrhoea, dysentery and even death thus increasing the children mortality rate in South Africa.

A significant majority of domestic workers knew the correct food preparation methods for diabetics but the insignificant ignorant minority needs to be helped as indicated in (Section 4.2.3.1) in order to eliminate the danger to which they expose their dependants. A significant minority of domestic workers as indicated in (Section 4.2.3.1) was ignorant about the correct procedure to follow when bathing an infant. Their lack of knowledge exposes many infants to pneumonia, which contributes to the high infant mortality rate in South Africa.

A very disturbing factor revealed through the research results was that some domestic workers suckle an infant's bottle if they want to check the temperature of the formula (section 4.2.3.1). They do not understand the dangers to which they expose infants. Communicable diseases like tuberculosis and the HIV virus from domestic workers may be transmitted to infants because infants can ingest their saliva, which remains on the teat.

It can be concluded that only educating domestic workers on childcare and the care of the aged can rectify all problems stated above with. It is hoped that education can help change domestic workers' attitudes and behaviour

while improving the quality of life of those that they look after.

- **First-Aid Skills and Knowledge**

In cases of emergency, domestic workers need to know what to do in order to save the lives of others. Merki and Merki (1993: 692) state that the first five minutes of an emergency are the most critical. Failure to act correctly at this time may cause death.

In instances where children drink paraffin, fall and get injured or sustain burns, some domestic workers were found ill-informed about what to do in order to contain the situation (Section 4.2.3.3). A significant majority of domestic workers proposed offering milk to a child who has ingested or drunken paraffin, which would in fact worsen the situation and might even result in death.

With regards to falls and burns, the majority of domestic workers knew how to administer First Aid. The minority, who did not know how they would react when faced with these situations, poses a life threat to the family members that they look after.

It can be concluded that First Aid training should form part of the induction and further training in home management for all domestic workers.

- **Garment-Care**

It is the responsibility of domestic workers to do the washing or laundry within the household. They therefore need to understand how different fabrics should be treated in terms of washing, stain removal and ironing temperatures. This is usually a source of conflict between employers' families and domestic workers as most garments are damaged due to lack of knowledge of about care for different fabrics.

Joseph (1986: 364) clearly states that the care given to a textile product is dependent on the fibre or fibres used, yarn structure or fibre arrangement, fabric construction, method of imparting colour, type of dyestuff used, finishes and methods of application and geometric factors. The majority of domestic workers (Section 4.2.3.4) said that bleach could be used on any fabric as a stain remover. Their lack of knowledge about garment care is very costly to their employers, as some garments are totally spoiled because of the use of bleach. At times spoiled garments are not re-usable and have to be discarded.

The research results revealed that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers knew about the importance of separating childrens' and adults' clothes before the laundering process. However, a majority of domestic workers were ignorant about the use of care labels on garments. Lack of knowledge about reading the care labels results in treating other fabric types wrongly. Without doubt, this causes problems between employees and their employers because some garments are spoiled.

It can be concluded that in order to solve the problem of lack of knowledge, empowering domestic workers with skills and knowledge on different types of fabrics and their care offers a potential solution.

- **Health and hygiene knowledge**

Domestic workers need to understand the importance of maintaining high hygienic standards at all times, to prevent food contamination and subsequent poisoning.

An overwhelming majority of domestic workers knew about the importance of washing their hands before touching food (Section 4.2.3.5). In three households, it was observed that domestic workers did not wash their hands before preparing food. This proved that they do not always apply their

knowledge. Their behaviour can be attributed to the fact that they do not understand the reasons for and implications of not washing one's hands before handling food.

The domestic workers' lack of knowledge on how micro-organisms spread can endanger the lives of those they prepare food for, and result in serious health problems. These problems can be prevented if domestic workers are made aware of the reasons for the importance of strictly adhering to the hygienic principles in the kitchen.

It can be concluded that educating domestic workers on how micro-organisms spread, is important for the safety of everybody within the household.

- **Operation of technological devices**

A significant minority of domestic workers (Section 4.2.3.6) did not know how to use and store a steam iron correctly. Careless use and storage of irons is another cause for burns in children. In some households where microwave ovens were used, a few domestic workers knew how they are safely operated (Section 4.2.3.6). Steam irons and the microwave ovens were included in this research because they are the commonly used electrical devices within households and failure to operate them correctly could result in problems.

Thorough training of domestic workers in the use of all electrical appliances within the household is crucial for the smooth functioning of households.

- **Conservation of household resources**

The economical use of household resources by the domestic workers saves money, which means that more money can be used to cater for other household needs.

The results demonstrated that the majority of domestic workers used water, electricity and soap properly and economically. However, there was a significant minority of domestic workers (Section 4.2.3.7) who needed to be educated on the economical use of these resources. Education on the economical use of household resources is essential because it enables employers to save money, which is a dwindling resource within households.

5.3.1.4 Views on domestic workers' training

Huber and Sack (1994: 50) emphasise the importance of adequate orientation of domestic workers before they assume their duties. They argue that it is every employer's obligation towards her or his domestic worker as it is during this period that the latter is given the special instructions on how she is expected to execute her tasks.

The research results confirmed that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers who participated in this research had never been exposed to training in any aspect of home management (Section 4.2.3.8). An overwhelming majority of domestic workers felt that training in home management was necessary, as it would empower them with knowledge and skills. They felt that proper and adequate training could help them to overcome their shortcomings at work and would enhance their personal development (Section 4.2.3.8). Very few domestic workers (1.9 %) felt that there was no need for training because all women supposedly knew how to do housework.

The overwhelming majority of domestic workers felt that formal training in home management was essential, and proposed that all home management aspects and self-empowerment courses be included in a training programme (Section 4.2.3. 8). This is in line with suggestions made by Huber and Sack (1994: 54) that anything that appeals to the domestic worker for her self-development other than job-related issues should also be included in their further training.

An overwhelming majority of domestic workers acknowledged that they had shortcomings in their work performance. They regarded the formal training in household management as a solution to their problems. Furthermore, they felt that training would help them with transferable skills that they could use to seek employment elsewhere.

5.3.2 Findings On Employers' Results

The research findings from the employers of domestic workers' responses are now discussed referring to personal details; recruitment procedure and views on domestic workers' training.

5.3.2.1 Personal details

The research results indicated that a majority of employers and their spouses or partners worked away from home, which compelled them to employ domestic workers (Table 4). Most employers had nuclear families (Table 7) and hence could not depend on other family members for home management duties while they were at work.

The failure of domestic workers to perform their duties efficiently disturbs especially female employers who are at the child-bearing stage as they cannot go to work periodically. Their absenteeism can be detrimental to their families and the country's economy.

5.3.2.2 Recruitment procedure

Employers are supposed to interview their candidates in order to ensure that they select suitable ones for the job (Smit and Grobler, 1998: 7). During interviews they should address aspects like work history and employment, education and training, career goals and aspirations, and questions of clarification from the candidate. After an interview an employer and a

domestic worker should sign a contract stipulating every detail of their working relationship. It is during an interview, that an employer is able to ascertain the intensity of training and orientation that the domestic worker needs in order to execute her tasks properly.

The results revealed that a majority of employers did not follow proper recruitment procedures for advertising, selection, interviewing, presenting a job description to employees before appointing them and signing the an employment contract (Table11). This can be attributed to both desperation and lack of knowledge on the part of employers.

Omissions such as these, result in problems that contribute to the high turnover in this sector, as some domestic workers accept employment without understanding the full details about their duties. Employers too are unpleasantly surprised later on after offering a job to their workers, which forces them to dismiss their employees within a week or month. In Table 13 it is indicated that 45% of domestic workers resigned, absconded or were fired within a month.

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that employers do not follow the correct recruitment procedures. This results in various problems that result in the high turnover in this sector.

5.3.2.3 Problems encountered while training domestic workers

It is the duty of the employer to take a newly appointed domestic worker through an induction process, as Huber and Sack (1994: 50) suggest. Induction of a domestic worker who is employed for the first time from the rural areas (sections 4.2.1.5 and 4.2.2.) needs to be done over a long period of time before workers become competent in home management. Unfortunately most employers do not orientate their domestic workers adequately due to time constraints (Tables 18 and 19).

The research results showed that the majority of employers encountered problems when training their domestic workers at home (Table 20). They felt that it would be better if someone else did training so that their burden would be eased. Given the high turnover in this sector, some employers regarded the induction process as tiresome because they had to do it repeatedly once they employed a new person, which happens quite often in many households.

5.3.2.4 Views on domestic workers' training

The overwhelming majority of employers (94 %) felt that a holistic training programme for domestic workers was essential (Table 21). Employers advanced several reasons for the importance of a training programme. Their reasons included the acquisition of skills and knowledge in home management; improvement of performance; empowerment; preventing accidents within the home; economical use of household resources and employers' peace of mind and the improvement of human relations between the two parties, as both would understand their obligations towards each other.

However, 5% of employers felt that a training programme in home management would be a waste of time, as all females knew how to manage a home even if they are employed for the first time from the rural areas. There were also employers who feared that once a domestic worker had received training she would leave and seek employment elsewhere (Table 22).

It can be concluded that an overwhelming majority of employers agreed that domestic workers' training programme was essential.

5.3.2.5 Suggested content for a training programme

The majority, namely 72% of employers felt that the main focus of the training

programme should be on the core areas of home management (Table 23). Some employers emphasised communication skills while others included self-empowerment skills training like sewing, flower arrangement, glue applique and other income-generating skills. They wanted to enable their domestic workers to generate an income in order to supplement their salaries and to use their skills even on retirement.

Employers felt that the training programme for domestic workers should focus not only on home management skills and knowledge, but should also empower their employees with transferable skills.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SURVEY FINDINGS

Conclusions from analysis of domestic workers' data and those derived from the analysis of employers' data are presented separately.

5.5.1 Conclusions from domestic workers' data

This research results revealed that the majority of domestic workers come from rural areas (Section 2.4.1.5), which implies that they require thorough home management training in order to cope with all their duties. All domestic workers were ignorant of various aspects of home management (Sections 4.2.3.1.7). The research established that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers were aware of their shortcomings in various home management aspects. They regarded training in home management as a solution to their performance-related problems, as none had ever received any formal training in home management (Section 4.2.3.8).

Domestic workers suggested that all household management aspects be included in their training as well as other life and income generating skills for their empowerment (Section 4.2.3.8).

5.4.2 Conclusions from the employers' data

The research results revealed that the majority of employers were employed outside the home (Tables 3 and 4), which implies that domestic workers were indispensable in their households. It was also established that a majority of employers of domestic workers were in the childbearing stage, which is between 22 and 45 years (Table 2). According to the data analysed, most families were not living within the extended family where some unemployed family members could help manage the household while others are at work (Table 7). These circumstances compelled families to hire and depend on domestic workers in running their households.

For various reasons, employers did not have adequate time to train their domestic workers on all home management activities (Table 19). 94% of employers expressed a need for training domestic workers in all home management skills and knowledge as is indicated in Table 21, in order to enable them to cope with their tasks.

An overwhelming majority of employers felt that training domestic workers in home management would improve their work performance, empower them with skills and knowledge, prevent accidents within the household, improve human relations and contribute towards the employers' peace of mind (Table 22). It was also established that employers wished that the training of domestic workers could be done externally as they experienced various problems during the orientation training of their workers (Table 20).

However, there was 6% of employers who felt that training domestic workers in home management was a waste of time as they would demand better salaries and leave after receiving training (Tables 21 and 22).

It can be concluded that the majority of employers felt that there was a need for a formal home management-training programme for domestic workers.

They felt that having well-trained employees would improve work performance, minimise work-related problems between them and their employers, and ensure good working relations and harmony within their households.

5.5 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

A summary of the findings from domestic workers' responses is presented separately from that of employers.

5.6.1 Domestic workers

The main purpose of this research was to determine domestic workers training needs in home management, as well as employers' views on their employees' training needs.

In answering the question on domestic workers needs in home management skills and knowledge, the research results revealed that domestic workers were ignorant on various aspects of home management and some were illiterate.

With reference to the importance of the domestic workers' training programme, an overwhelming majority of domestic workers expressed the need for a holistic training programme in home management. They regarded it as a relevant intervention strategy towards eliminating lack of knowledge and subsequent problems as well as empowering them with transferable skills.

With respect to aspects that they would like covered in the training programme, home management skills and knowledge as well as other life-skills including income-generating skills, were recommended.

5.6.2 Employers

The importance of domestic workers' training programme was established since an overwhelming majority of employers expressed the need for a training programme. Research results also confirmed that the majority of employers did not have enough time to adequately train their domestic workers in home management. Regarding the content of a training programme, employers also felt that it should address all core aspects home management and other life skills including income-generating activities.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The research established that domestic workers experienced the following problems, which require relevant interventions:

- Lack of knowledge in various key aspects of home management, which poses a threat to the lives of family members that they serve;
- Illiteracy, which makes it difficult for domestic workers to execute their tasks properly, and
- A high turnover causing instability in the lives of all stakeholders, due to various problems including bad working conditions.

Based on the findings the following recommendations are made in order to improve the situation and contribute to the smooth running of households:

It is recommended that the state establish and subsidize comprehensive domestic workers' training programmes.

For the solution of domestic workers' problems in home management as indicated in Section 4.2.3, the state should establish subsidised home management training programmes through the Department of Labour throughout the country. Mother tongue should be the medium of instruction.

Both employers and domestic workers should pay a minimum fee so that they can be committed to the training exercise.

Comprehensive training programmes can be beneficial to employers, domestic workers and the government. This reciprocal advantage would ensure good service to employers and empowerment with transferable skills to domestic workers. Furthermore, as domestic workers would be skilled in their field, they would be in a better position to negotiate for a living wage. The state would benefit by having a stable and productive workforce and lower unemployment given new stability and harmony that could prevail in the domestic worker sector.

It is recommended that Government officials facilitate of workshops for employers of domestic workers.

It was reported in Section 4.2.3 that employers did not follow proper selection procedures before appointing their domestic workers. Employers of domestic workers are ignorant of their obligations in terms of the recruitment procedure, orientation of their employees and general conditions of employment of their domestic workers.

Employers need to be empowered with knowledge so that they can treat their domestic workers as fairly as they expect and demand to be treated by their own employers. Knowledge would enable employers to act in accordance to the laws that govern all employees in South Africa like the Labour Relations Act, Skills Development Act and Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Employers would also be sensitised to the fact that domestic workers are also employees with rights in order to eliminate their exploitation and ensuring the smooth running of households.

It is recommended that the state ensures accessibility of adult basic education and training centres to everyone .

It was reported in Section 4.2.1.6 that some domestic workers are illiterate, which is problematic for them personally and with regard to work performance.

The state should intervene by ensuring access to literacy classes to all the citizens of South Africa. Currently there are few adult education centres or night schools that are operational in the townships and rural areas. More centres need to be established in public schools or community halls.

5.7 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that both employers and domestic workers in the researched areas felt that home management training programmes for domestic workers servicing the Black South African communities are essential. The training should be relevant to the needs of employers and enable domestic workers to become competent in their jobs.

It is anticipated that if both parties (employers and domestic workers) are satisfied in their employment relationship, there would be stability in the domestic workers' sector and higher productivity in the South African economy. Less money would be spent on hospital and medical bills that are spent as a result of the domestic workers' lack of knowledge within the household. Examples of the results of their lack of knowledge can be attributed to the spread of TB, HIV, malnutrition of certain family members, child burns, pneumonia and food poisoning.

Furthermore, the unemployment rate would be reduced in the country if all domestic workers were adequately skilled and able to hold their jobs.

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APPENDIX 1

Letters Of Introduction

3 Silvergull Mews
110 Silvergull Drive
Lotus Park
4110
8 December 1998

Dear Respondent

As an employer of a domestic worker, you are hereby invited to participate in a survey on Home Management Skills and Knowledge of domestic workers. This research focuses on employers of domestic workers and their employees.

Your participation in this exercise will enable the writer to obtain information for the fulfillment of requirements for a Masters Degree in Adult Education currently studied at the University of Stellenbosch. Depending on the outcome of the study, your participation could contribute towards the development of a Domestic Workers' Training Programme on Home Management Skills and Knowledge.

As a participant in this survey, you are requested to respond to a questionnaire provided. Please note that your response will be treated in strictest confidence and anonymity will be ensured.

Yours sincerely

B. E. Ngidi

3 Silvergull Mews
110 Lotus Drive
Isiphingo
4110
8 December 1998

Dear Employer

Your domestic worker is invited to participate in a survey on Home Management Skills and Knowledge. Kindly allow her to be one of the respondents in this research.

Her participation will enable the researcher to obtain information for the fulfilment of requirements for a Masters Degree in Adult Education currently studied at the University of Stellenbosch. Depending on the outcome of this research, her participation could contribute towards the development of a Domestic Workers' Training Programme in Home Management Skills and Knowledge.

Permission is sought to interview your domestic worker on the above- mentioned topic. Please note that her response will be treated in strict confidence and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Anonymity will be ensured.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

B.E. Ngidi

APPENDIX 2

An Interviewing Schedule For Domestic Workers

INTERVIEWING SCHEDULE

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Gender :

M {01}

F {02}

2. Age Group :

< 19 {01}

20-30 {02}

31-40 {03}

41-50 {04}

51< {05}

3. Marital Status :

Married {01}

Divorced {04}

Never Married {02}

Separated {05}

Widowed {03}

4. No. of own children :

5. No. Of dependents :

6. Area of origin :

7. Duration of stay in an urban area.

8. Level of education

>SSA {01}

SSA - STD 2 {02}

STD 3 - STD 6 {03}

STD 7 - STD 10 {04}

TERTIARY LEVEL {05}

B. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

9. For how long have you been employed generally?.....

10. What was your first job ?

11. For how long did you hold it?.....

12. What was the reason for resignation or expulsion?.....

13. For how long have you been employed here?.....

14. Why did you choose to be a domestic worker?.....

15. How did you know about this job ?

16. What type of a domestic worker are you ?

Full- time (employed for more that 3 times per week) {01}

Casual (Employed for less than 3 times per week) {02}

17. (a) Were you interviewed for this job?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(b) If you were interviewed which questions were you asked if you still remember?

.....
.....
.....

C. HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

I. FOOD AND NUTRITION

18. (a) What are functions of nutrients that we obtain from food in our bodies?

Give us energy, repair worn out-tissues, protect us from diseases {01}

Do not know {02}

(b) Into how many groups are food items classified? Name them.

Three, four and five- food groups {01}

Do not know {02}

19. How should vegetables be cooked in order to preserve nutrients?

- Do not add too much water and overcook {01}
- Do not know {02}

20. (i) Why is it important to have special diets for people suffering from different illnesses such as diabetics and others?

- They have special dietary needs because of their illness {01}
- Do not know {02}

(ii) How should food diabetic patients be prepared?

- It should be boiled (not fried) and table sugar should not be added {01}
- Do not know {02}

21. Why is it necessary to store food items properly according to their composition?

- To avoid food spoilage and wastage {01}
- Do not know {02}

22. (i) Can you cook anything following a recipe?

- Yes {01}
- No {02}

If your response was yes, how do you use a recipe? Give a step- by- step explanation.

.....

.....

.....

II. CHILD- CARE AND THE FRAIL AGED- CARE

23. Why should infants children, and the aged be fed nutritious foods frequently and in smaller portions at a time?

- Their systems can not process large volumes of food simultaneously which could lead to discomfort. {01}
- Do not know {02}

24. Why is it important to sterilize an infants' eating utensils?

- To destroy germs {01}
- To make them clean {02}
- Do not know {03}

25. Which steps need to be followed when bathing the baby?

- Know {01}
- Do not know {02}

26. If you want to check an infants' bottle temperature, what do you do?

- Suck it {01}
 Pour it on to the back of your palm {02}

III. First Aid**27. If a child drinks paraffin what would be the first thing that you would do ?**

- Call a doctor / take the child to the doctor or clinic {01}
 Make the child to drink milk {02}
 Other {03}

28. If a child or the aged falls and gets injured, what is the first thing that you would do ?

- Know {01}
 Do not know {02}

29. If someone gets badly burned by boiling water, what is the first thing that you would do?

- Know {01}
 Do not know {02}

IV. Garment- Care**30. If you have to do a bundle of washing with an infants' clothes included , how do you do it.**

Explain the process that you follow step by step.

- Know {01}
 Do not know {02}

31. What do you look for before you wash and iron your washing?

- Care labels {01}
 Left over items {02}
 Do not know {03}

31. If you discover that a certain garment has a stain what do you do?

- Remove the stain according to fabric type then wash it {01}
 Jik the garment {02}
 Report to the employer {03}

V. Health and Hygiene Practices**32. Why is it important to wash your hands before you touch food?**

- To avoid contaminating it with germs. {01}
 Do not know {02}

33. Why should you cover your minor cuts before handling food?

To avoid spreading germs and viruses from the cut to food. {01}

Do not know {02}

34. (i) After cutting meat, can we use the same knife and chopping board for chopping a salad ingredients without thoroughly rinsing it?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(ii) Why ?

To avoid food cross contamination {01}

To avoid making the salad dirty {02}

It does not matter because it is all edible {03}

Do not know {04}

VI. Technological Devices Operation**35. Why is it important not to operate any electrical appliance with wet hands?**

Avoid electric shock {01}

Do not know {02}

36. How should we use steam irons to avoid their breakage and accidents in the house?

Pour water for steam before use, drain it after use and store it in a safe place. {01}

Do not know {02}

37. Which utensils are we supposed to use when cooking with a microwave?

Any utensil {01}

Microwave specific utensils {02}

Do not know {03}

VII. Conservation Of Resources**38. If you want to wash dirty dishes do you :**

Hold them individually over the sink and let water run over them? {01}

Put water and soap in water and wash all dishes {02}

39. How do you use powdered soap when doing washing?

Pour soap, add water to stir foam, add washing {01}

Pour water, add clothes, pour soap {02}

40. If you want to make a cup of coffee, how do you go about it. Explain starting from fetching water from the sink.

Pouring a cup of water into a kettle, boiling it , and adding all the ingredients. {01}

Boiling a kettle full amount of water , then adding all the ingredients. {02}

D. PERCEPTION ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS TRAINING

41. Have you ever received any training on home management or domestic work?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(i) In your opinion is it necessary to receive training in home management skills?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(b) Why ?

.....
.....

42. If your response was yes above what do you propose as the content of the training programme?

.....
.....

APPENDIX 3

Interviewing Schedule Transcripts

INTERVIEWING SCHEDULE TRANSCRIPT**A. PERSONAL DETAILS**

Q - Gender

A - Female

Q - In which category do you fall?

A - I fall under 41 - 50

Q - What is your marital status?

A - I am widowed

Q - How many children do you have?

A - They are two

Q - How many people do you support with your income?

A - I support five people

Q - Where is your home?

A - I come from Ndwendwe.

Q - For how long have you stayed in an urban area/township?

A - I've stayed in a Township for four years.

Q - What is your highest standard passed?

A - I left school at standard 1

B. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Q - For how long have you been employed generally?

A - I have been employed for three years.

Q - What was your first job?

A - I started working as a domestic worker

Q - For how long did you hold your first job?

A - I worked there for a year

Q - What was the reason for stop working for that employer?

A - My employer moved to Johannesburg

Q - For how long have you been employed here?

A - I've worked here for two years

Q - Why did you choose to be a domestic worker?

A - As I am not educated, I couldn't find any other employment

Q - How did you know about this job?

A - I was contacted by another woman who told me there is work here.

Q - Do you work here on full time or casual basis?

A - I work full time and go home on month ends

Q - Were you asked any questions before you were offered this job?

A - Yes they did ask me some questions

Q - Which questions were you asked by your employer?

A - She wanted to know if I ever worked for any person and how much was I paid.

C. HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

I. FOOD AND NUTRITION

Q - What are functions of nutrients that we obtain from food in our bodies.

A - We eat food in order to live but I do not know the nutrients functions are in our bodies.

Q - Into how many groups are food items classified?

A - I do not know

Q - How should vegetables be cooked in order to preserve nutrients?

A - You must boil them. It's depends on your preference and you can time it.

Q - Why is it important to have special diets for diabetic people?

A - Diabetic people must not eat too much fat and rich food but must it boiled food.

Q - Why is it necessary to store food items properly according to their composition?

A - So that food will not be spoiled.

Q - Can you cook anything following a recipe?

A - No I do not know how to use a recipe.

II. CHILD- CARE AND THE FRAIL AGED- CARE

Q - Why should infants, children, and the aged be fed nutritious foods frequently and in smaller portions at a time?

A - So that you will be able to measure it because if you give them more food, they will be sick. You must measure food.

Q - Why is it important to sterilize infants' eating utensils?

A - So that they will be clean and not come into contact with germs.

- Q - Which steps need to be followed when bathing the baby?**
A - If I wash a baby, I mix cold water and boiling water, take the soap and then undress the baby and give it a bath.

- Q - If you want to check an infants' bottle temperature, what do you do?**
A - I hold it in my hand or pour it on my hand to see if it's suitable for the baby.

III. FIRST AID

- Q. If a child drinks paraffin or any poisonous substance what would be the first thing that you would do?**

- A -** What I know is that I must offer milk to drink and then take it to the Clinic or doctor.

- Q - If a child or the aged falls and gets injured, what is the first thing that you would do?**

- A -** I can take a cloth and wrap it around the injured part and take that person to the Clinic because you cannot hold her if he/she has broken anything.

- Q - If someone gets badly burned by boiling water, what is the first thing that you would do?**

- A -** I can take her/him to the Clinic.

IV. GARMENT—CARE

- Q - If you have to do a bundle of washing with an infants' clothes included, how do you do it. Explain step by step.**

- A -** I start with the adults clothes then throw water away then wash children's clothes. I do not mix them.

- Q - What do you look for before you wash and iron your washing?**

- A -** I look at the clothes to see if they need to be ironed or not.

- Q - If you discover that a certain garment has a stain what do you do?**

- A -** I use Jik to remove stains

v. HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRACTICES

- Q - Why is it important to wash your hands before you touch food?**

- A -** Because if I've been doing something else, if I handle food I must wash my hands.

- Q - Why should you cover your minor cuts before handling food?**

- A -** I do that in order to avoid having food in contact with the blood in my cut and avoiding hurting myself if food comes into contact with my cut.

Q - After cutting meat, can we use the same knife and chopping board for chopping a salad ingredients without a thorough rinse?

A - No we must wash them.

Q - Why

A - Because a salad is not the same as meat. If you don't wash your knife and chopping board, your salad will have a red colour from blood.

V. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES OPERATION

Q - Why is it important not to operate any electrical appliance with wet hands?

A - I'm scared of being hurt by electricity.

Q - How should we avoid the breakage of steam irons and their causing accidents in the house?

A - You must switch it off so that it will not waste electricity and burn clothes.

Q - Which utensils are we supposed to use when cooking using a microwave?

A - I do not know because they have never shown me how it works.

V11. CONSERVATION OF HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES

Q If you want to wash dishes, do you hold them individually over the sink and let water run over them or put water and soap in water and wash all dishes?

A - I select them, I don't wash them at once.

**Q - How do you use powdered soap when doing washing? Do you :
Pour soap, add water to stir foam, add washing
Pour water, add clothes, add soap**

A - I pour soap, add water to stir the foam and add my washing.

Q - If you want to make a cup of coffee, how do you go about it.

A - I boil enough water for a cup of tea.

D. PERCEPTION ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS TRAINING

Q - Have you ever received any training on home management skills or domestic work?

A - No

Q - In your opinion is it necessary to receive training in home management skills?

A - Yes. It can help a lot.

Q - How ?

A - Because I can learn so many things about my work.

Q - If your response was YES above what do you propose as the content of the training programme?

A - Cooking and cleaning the home must be taught.

APPENDIX 4

An Incidental Observation Checklist

INCIDENTAL OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

1. Food Preparation And Storage

2. Child Care And Care For The Aged

3. First Aid

4. Hygienic Practices

5. Operation Of Technological Devices

6. Conservation Of Household Resources

7. Operation Of Electrical Appliances

APPENDIX 5

Questionnaire For Employers Of Domestic Workers

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond by putting **CROSSES** in the appropriate brackets and filling-in the empty spaces provided.

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Gender:

M {01}

F {02}

2. Age Group in years

< 24 {01}

36 –45 {03}

25-35 {02}

46-55 {04}

56-66 {05}

67 < {07}

3. Occupation:

Teacher {01}

Police {04}

Nurse {02}

Secretary {05}

Social Worker {03}

Clerk {06}

Other {07} (Please specify)

4. Workplace :

At home {01}

Away from home {02}

5. Marital Status:

Married {01}

Divorced {04}

Single {02}

Separated {05}

Widowed {03}

6. Occupation of spouse/partner (if applicable)

Teacher	{01}	Police	{05}
Nurse	{02}	Social Worker	{06}
Clerk	{03}	Driver	{07}
Electrician	{04}	Bricklayer	{08}
Secretary	{09}		
Other	{10} (Please specify.....)		

7. **Family Structure:** Please fill in the following table about family members in your household where applicable e. g. son - 4 years

Relationship	Age

B. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

1. **Why did you employ a domestic worker?**

.....

.....

.....

2. **What type of domestic help do you have?**

Full- Time (employed for more than 3 times per week)	{01}
Casual (employed for not more than 3 days per week)	{02}

3. Place of stay whilst employed

Stay - in {01}

Stay - out {02}

4. How did you acquire your domestic worker?

.....
.....
.....

5. For how long has your domestic worker been in your employment?.....

6. For how long was your previous domestic worker in your employment?

.....

7. What was or were reasons for resignation or expulsion ?

.....

8. (i) Did you use any selection criteria when employing your domestic worker?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(ii) Was it formal or informal?

Formal {01}

Informal {02}

C. PERCEPTION ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS' HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

9. Which characteristics do you look for when employing a domestic worker ?

.....

.....
.....

10. Which skills do you expect a domestic worker to have on arrival ?

.....
.....
.....

11. Which skills and information do you provide to your domestic worker on arrival?

.....
.....
.....

12 . (i) Do you have adequate time to train your domestic worker before you leaving him or her with all the household responsibilities ?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(ii) If your response was yes, for how long do you train your domestic worker?

.....

(iii) Which problems do you encounter with regards to training your domestic workers? Please state them.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

13. (i) Is there any need for training domestic workers on the following core areas of home management? child- care, the aged care, cookery and nutrition, first aid, garment-care, health and hygiene practices, the use of electrical devices and conservation of resources within the household ?

Yes {01}

No {02}

(ii) Why?

.....

14. If your response was yes, what would you suggest as the content for the domestic workers training programme? Your response should be according to core areas e. g. Child- care etc.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....