A Relational Analysis of Poverty as a Social Phenomenon

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Abstract

Existing scholarship suggests that despite its material core, poverty is relational and that this relational dimension not only aids its production but its reproduction. Yet, while a plethora of research examines its material aspects, the relational dimensions of poverty remain under-researched and are still not well understood. This research contributes to addressing that gap. Using recognition theory as a theoretical lens, the thesis investigates the question: 'how do social relationships frame people's experience of poverty?' It explores the question through a qualitative case study of people in poverty in a rural district in Eastern Zambia. Zambia's deep values of community and high levels of poverty provided unique opportunities to examine the role of social relationships in the experience of poverty.

The thesis shows that poverty is experienced as suffering involving psychological pain and ontological insecurity. Feelings and the fear of indignity and shame, based in social interaction, are central to poverty. However, this interaction may also insulate people in poverty from some of its consequences such as social exclusion. The thesis affirms poverty as based in forms of recognition accorded to individuals in various domains of their lives. It highlights how lack of recognition in institutional relationships, including citizenship status, underpins conditions of material deprivation which are then reinforced by insufficient recognition at the level of informal relationships. In this way, the work contributes new and unique insights into how poverty is inherently relational and lies at the intersection of processes of exclusion and subordinate inclusion.

The thesis also furthers current theorising about poverty from a recognition standpoint by drawing attention to state-society relations in the experience of poverty and their effects on the identities and agency of people in poverty outside of high income countries where most

previous research on this issue has taken place. This application of recognition theory reveals its potency as an intersubjective theory of poverty. However, the thesis argues for seeing recognition as a continuum which includes both symbolic and material experiences closely entwined.

Broadly, this thesis argues the central importance of the relational dimensions of poverty, showing how they shape the quality of life of people in poverty including the forms of agency and voice that they can possess and enact. The thesis makes a contribution to the small but growing literature on the role of relationality in poverty and raises the question of what social relationships mean for people in poverty in different contexts.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The last decade of the 20th century marked a major shift in the political governance of Zambia and presented mixed fortunes for the country's social and economic development. It started with the grand optimism generated by the October 1991 electoral defeat of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) – the nationalist movement that had governed Zambia since independence in 1964 under the leadership of President Kenneth Kaunda. The new ruling party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) led by Frederick Chiluba, had swept into power on a promise of economic and political reform following decades of one-party rule and economic mismanagement leading to falling living standards.

Chiluba and the MMD's pledge to implement structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) received the support of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who advocated economic and political liberalisation in place of UNIP's state corporatism. SAPs were a group of policies defined by four core aims: a currency devaluation, removal of state activity from the economy, elimination of subsidies and trade liberalisation (Riddell, 1992;Strydom & Fišer, 1995). For the first few weeks, there was a pervasive sense of optimism both from academics working on Zambia and the general citizenry about the future and direction of the country (Bratton, 1992;Larmer, 2009). This optimism, overshadowing national planning, hid the difficulties that lay ahead and proved to be short-lived, thanks to a combination of natural calamities and the devastating effects of SAPs.

The earliest evidence of difficulty appeared in 1992 when the country was hit by a severe drought, the worst in the country's history, which left most Zambians on the verge of

starvation (Benson & Clay, 1998;Cliggett, 2005;Eldridge, 2002;Tiffen & Mulele, 1994). An outbreak of East Coast Fever followed the drought, almost wiping out the entire livestock of most farmers (Foster, 1993). The deleterious effects of HIV and AIDs that had blighted the last years of UNIP's rule continued to cause havoc on both humans and the economy (Foster, 1993;Yamba, 2005). The fast-track implementation of SAPs, which saw the privatisation of nearly two-thirds of the state enterprises by the end of the MMD's first term in 1996 and the liberalisation of both agriculture and the market, left tens of thousands without jobs and redundant (Larmer, 2009;Rakner, 2003). By the close of the 1990s, a general sense of despair had replaced the grand optimism that had earlier characterised the country's first-ever transfer of power. There was a remarkable degree of consensus among Zambians and researchers that the dual transition had largely been a failure (Erdmann & Simutanyi, 2003;Larmer, 2009;Rakner, 2003;Saasa & Carlsson, 2002;Seshamani, 1998).

At household level, especially in rural Zambia, many families were particularly hard-hit by the aforementioned economic context. My parents were primary school teachers during this time, working in one of the remotest parts of Zambia. Their experiences, in many respects, exemplified those of rural Zambians working in the public service. With the wave of mass retrenchments sweeping across the country, rural public sector workers appeared slightly better off than those earning a living off the land, although by the $1 a day measure, they too were in poverty. The difference from others, perhaps, was that as wage-earning employees, they had a steady and reliable income even if it was hardly ever paid on time. Destitution was high and being a wage earner in such destitution was both a blessing and a curse.

Kaunda's ideology of humanism that had preceded Chiluba's liberalism had effectively presented workers in the civil service as an extension of the state. Humanism placed greater emphasis on sharing and community. Thus, if any citizen needed assistance and there was a

government employee within reach, that employee, in practice, understood that he or she could be approached for assistance. Government departments and their employees were, by default, welfare providers.

As the influence of American televangelism on Christianity in Zambia was gaining momentum in the early 1990s, my parents left the Catholic Church where they had been lifelong members and joined a newly formed evangelical church. By 1996, when I was only 10 years old and in primary school, they had become the pastors of their local congregation. The intersection of this new role and their position as teachers took them to the pinnacle of leadership and responsibility for the community. In that phase of Zambian Christianity, church leaders took on greater responsibility for the welfare of their church members, who in turn looked to the church, including fellow members, for tangible material benefits. In one vivid instance, for example, when a church member gave birth to a baby, my mother packed some food items and half of our bag of maize meal onto a bicycle and asked me to deliver the parcel to the mother of the newly born child.

Unable to understand why, I confronted my mother with questions. Why were we giving all this food away when we also needed it? My mother's response was that it was for the newborn but even at the age of 10, I knew very well that newly born babies cannot eat solid food. I pressed my mother for a more persuasive explanation. It was not for the baby, she clarified; 'it is because of the baby.' My parents were giving this woman's family food because the woman was an active church member. She was also her household's breadwinner but would not be able to work for some time. The government had laid off her husband who had once held a formal job as an accountant without paying him his pension and now, he spent most of his life drunk. They were already struggling. Her family needed

the food. I understood my mother's explanation that, as Christians, we had an obligation to help others when they are in need.

Her follow up instruction, however, was difficult to comprehend. She insisted on keeping this act and many other such acts that followed a secret. It was never to be discussed, not even with my siblings. Happy to ride my father's bicycle, I delivered the package. I was also fully aware of the consequences of not keeping the secret so, I kept it, – a secret whose true meaning I only begun to grasp much later in life when I started to study poverty and its symbolisms. As fate would have it, that new born child at the centre of this experience would go on to die at home from malaria in 2001 after three days of illness. I was in secondary school at the time and I attended his funeral with my parents.

These incidents recurred in my childhood. Sometimes my parents were unable to provide assistance; many times, they too needed assistance and often did not get it. For example, they struggled with our school fees when my siblings and I made it to secondary school. The community considered my parents to be of a comparatively superior economic status compared to others. This made it difficult for my parents to turn to the community for assistance in their time of financial need because they were perceived as benefactors rather than potential recipients. My parents appeared to understand this logic, as evidenced by their extraordinarily limited pleas for help. With their status, where would they turn to for support? My fieldwork for this research renewed these previous experiences offering me opportunities to ask my parents some questions about them. I learned, for example, that the logic to my mother's secrecy was biblical. She was following Jesus's teaching from Mathew 6:3 that acts of kindness done by the left hand should never be disclosed to the right hand. This secrecy, it is thought, should enable Christians to focus on meeting another's need while also preserving

that person's integrity (dignity) and having done this, God who sees what is done in secret would reward them publicly.

One may read many things from this personal anecdote. The central theme, however, is poverty in its various manifestations, entwined in the role of the other and bounded in place. Like White's (2010, p. 158) notion of wellbeing,[1] the anecdote reveals that poverty happens in a relationship and that relationship takes various forms, – the individual to the collective, the state, and global actors. These manifestations of poverty and how poverty is understood and experienced in everyday life are the focus of this thesis. Using the lens of recognition theory, the thesis examines the role of social relationships in the experience of poverty among people with direct experience of it in a rural district in the Eastern province of Zambia.

The thesis reveals that poverty is experienced first and foremost as suffering involving material deprivation, psychological pain and ontological insecurity. It demonstrates that feelings and the fear of indignity and shame, based in social interaction, are central to poverty while also showing that such interactions may insulate people in poverty from some consequences of poverty such as social exclusion. Ultimately, the thesis argues the central importance of the relational dimensions of poverty and how they shape the quality of life of people in poverty including the forms of agency and voice that they can possess and enact. In this way, this thesis contributes nuanced evidence to a small but growing literature on the role of relationality in poverty.

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[1] White, based on her work on Zambia and India, concludes that wellbeing arises from 'common life,' the function of living in community. Within the conception, she sees relationships as a medium through which various resources - social, psychological, symbolic and material are transmitted and needs met and also as intrinsic and constitutive to what wellbeing is about.

This first chapter of the thesis has five main sections. The next section details the research puzzle that lead to this research. It describes the central and sub questions which framed the research. The third section explains why the research question is answered by a focus on poverty in rural Zambia. This is then followed by a brief historical analysis of social policy in Zambia to provide the reader with the wider national context of the case study in section four. The final section brings the chapter to a close by offering a brief summary of the structure of thesis.

1.1. The research puzzle

Living in poverty implies experiences of isolation accompanied by stigma communicated to people in poverty in how they are represented in discourse, and treated and talked about in everyday life (Lister, 2004b;Ridge, 2009). Current scholarship demonstrates, among other things, the need for empirical understanding of how material deprivation intersects with complex structures of inequality and subjugation, putting people in poverty in social and economic positions where they cannot access the resources that they need in order to respond to their life situations (Chase & Walker, 2013b;Choudhry, 2014;Gubrium, Pellissery, & Lødemel, 2013;Lister, 2015). This literature intimates that poverty is rooted in the patterns and terms of recognition and representation embedded in particular relationships. In this way, relationships are sites of contestation for social value. While it is generally understood that poverty involves exclusion due to poor quality ties (Dominguez & Watkins, 2003;Woolcock & Narayan, 2000), forms of inclusion that lead to negative experiences like shame are often left unremarked (Cleaver, 2005;Du Toit, 2008;Green, 2006;Harriss, 2007;Hickey & Du Toit, 2007;Portes, 2014). A relational analysis, therefore, enables research to unravel the role of actors who are not in poverty in the production of poverty (Lawson & Elwood, 2014).

The above evidence notwithstanding, how relationships frame experiences of poverty remains poorly understood. It is expected that multidimensional poverty approaches should engage the role of social relationships in poverty. However, most such research is unequally focused on the material dimensions of poverty and is biased towards those aspects which are quantifiable and/or measurable. Social hierarchies which generate negative experiences – including disrespect, shame and humiliation recently shown to characterise poverty (Chase & Walker, 2013b;Lister, 2004b, 2015;Roelen, 2017;Walker, 2014;Walker et al., 2013) are rarely interrogated for how they generate these experiences. Equally, anti-poverty programmes are evaluated for impact on matrixes and frameworks that focus on material outcomes (Devereux et al., 2013;Haushofer, Reisinger, & Shapiro, 2015;MacAuslan & Riemenschneider, 2011). Increasingly, however, there is a recognition that poverty is structural, embedded in social relationships (Lister, 2004b) and therefore better understood if conceptualised as a set of social processes rather than as a status or social state (Walker & Collins, 2004). Furthermore, since people in poverty tend to be less able to negotiate the 'right way of doing things,' to advantage themselves within these relationships (Cleaver, 2005), poverty scholarship should examine how the functioning of these relationships produces and reproduces poverty.

Recently, some scholars (Ingram, 2018;Lister, 2004a, 2006, 2015;Schweiger, 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2015;Schweiger & Graf, 2014a) have used the core ideas of Honneth's theory of recognition to argue for enquiry that sees poverty as an intersubjective experience involving lack of recognition leading to moral injury at the level of personhood. Recognition in this case is conceived as the 'ethically adequate or inadequate treatment of persons' (Laitinen, 2002, p. 465). This treatment acknowledges the others' personhood, ascribing it a positive status (Honneth, 1995). Castleman (2016) has proposed that this may be done by

focusing on how people in poverty are viewed, valued and treated within the various domains of their lives.

Through the language of recognition, dignity, self-respect, and agency are conceptualised as positive self-relations which are necessary for an undistorted sense of self but which living in poverty undermines (Laitinen, 2002). Methodologically, such enquiry prioritises subjectivity, focusing on the direct experience of people in poverty while integrating into the analysis the role of discourses as structures of representation that frame social interaction. The challenge, however, is that these insights have largely remained at the level of theoretical abstraction. The few existing empirical analyses in which they are integrated focus on poverty in the rich democracies of the North, leaving the question of a universal application of recognition theory to poverty research and its value open. Within these gaps, this research was formulated to respond to the questions stated below:

7.1.1. Central research question

Viewed from a recognition standpoint, how do social relationships frame people's experiences of poverty?

7.1.2. Sub questions:

a) What is the nature of the social relationships of people in poverty and how do these relationships shape their experience and interpretation of poverty? And,

b) What role, if any, does anti-poverty policy and policy discourse as institutionalised 'poverty talk' play in shaping the above experiences?

1.2. Rationale of a case study of poverty in rural Zambia

Zambia and rural Zambia in particular makes for a good case study of poverty for several reasons. It is a lower middle income country in Southern Africa (World Bank, 2017b), with a youthful population of just over 15 million (Central Statistical Office, 2016). According to the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey of 2015 by the Central Statistical Office (2016), 54.4% of all Zambians live in poverty classified as households with expenditures below the sufficient level required for basic needs. Of this proportion, 40.8% live in extreme poverty defined as the inability to meet the cost of the basic food basket (Central Statistical Office, 2016). Poverty largely affects rural areas where the poverty rate is at 76.6%. These estimates may, however, be criticised on account of poor measurement. The International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2002) argued, in the Poverty Strategy Reduction Paper (PRSP), that rural areas have higher rates of extreme poverty yet suggested that gender, household size and child status affect the distribution of poverty across various regions differently. Others like Chibuye (2014) concede the high prevalence of rural poverty but argue that the depth and severity of urban poverty is often underestimated due to poor measurement.

Zambia has a physically conspicuous rural-urban divide although there are strong social linkages between the rural and urban populations. Fergusson's (1999) classic work on the expectations of modernity, for example, highlights the difference in urban and rural lifestyles while suggesting that even urbanites with no attachments to rural systems rely on ethnic identities associated with rural systems to forge social networks and to order and classify the people with whom they have to interact. However, while recognising these linkages, rural society remains traditional in nature (Taylor, 2006). In traditional African society, individuals are interwoven within a larger network of relationships with kin and neighbours and in which, as Iliffe (2005) has shown, status is underpinned by various factors including

loyalty, generosity, leadership, acts of peace, hospitality, integrity, wit and style. This configuration makes for a theoretically intriguing case study of how social relationships frame poverty.

Additionally, anti-poverty mechanisms under the department of social welfare rely on community-based committees to identify and select potential beneficiaries. This targeting strategy imbues some community members with substantial power (MacAuslan & Riemenschneider, 2011), suggesting that the work of the department of social welfare, as a formal institution, intersects with relationships at this community level to alter power relations in ways that may have specific effects for people in poverty. Furthermore, the fact that only some members who are recommended for government support receive it brings into question how anti-poverty policy may shape relationships at a community level.

1.3. The political and economic history of social policy in Zambia

It is impossible to understand current policy arrangements against poverty as well as the phenomenology of poverty in Zambia without situating it in the legacies of colonialism and structural adjustment that followed the post-independence era (Surender, 2013). Against that understanding, this section presents the political and economic history of social policy in Zambia to provide the reader with the broader national context within which the case of rural poverty exists. A British protectorate from 1924 to 1964, Zambia challenges McLean's (2002, p. 4) assertion that post independent states in Africa attempted to build expansive social policy projects based on the foundations of infrastructure left by colonial governments. Zambia inherited a very poor infrastructure including inadequate human capital from the colonial regime (Balat & Porto, 2007;Mphuka, 2002). Any infrastructure and the expansive developments observable in the newly independent state were attempts to offset the lack of

such infrastructure which was occasioned by colonial social policy (Clark & Allison, 1989;Noyoo, 2008). The lingering effects of colonial social policy are evidenced by the political minimalism that underpins the residual and targeted approach to social welfare provision in the post-independence state.

Noyoo's (2008) analysis of social policy in the British protectorate and Larmer's (2009) work on the political transition in Zambia demonstrate that colonial social policy was anchored on racial discrimination, exclusion and elitism and that it was implemented as a residual system of welfare. The mining industry took a central role in the provision of social services. Mine management was tasked with the provision of social services to mine workers in mine settlements and as such, workers had access to various social services. However, the European quarters in the settlements had extra facilities and services and there were large discrepancies between the provisions available in these settlements and what was available in the rest of the country, prompting analysists such as Noyoo to argue that the intention of colonial social policy was social control – giving enough to placate natives while buttressing the exploitation of resources of the colony by private enterprise (Noyoo, 2008, p. 67).

To offset the imbalances in human development left by the colonial government, Kaunda's 1964 UNIP government embarked on an ambitious reconstruction project. Using public funds on the back of mineral wealth, he implemented a universal system of social service provision underpinned by humanist ideologies. This project was short lived due to the sudden but sustained collapse of the copper price between 1974-5 (Larmer, 2009). The Zambian economy begun to show signs of failure and stagnation in the late 1970s when copper prices on the international market begun to plummet, leading eventually to the first era of structural adjustment programmes between 1978 and 1987 as stop gap measures. However, this first

phase of structural adjustment was often piecemeal (AFRODAD, 2003), including a stabilization programme which cut back spending on public services.

Although the onset of SAPs had a general negative impact on livelihoods, urban areas were cushioned by subsidies on food commodities. However, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other bilateral donors demanded the removal of these 'unproductive' subsidies and, with debt servicing consuming up to 65 per cent of foreign exchange earnings, the government succumbed to pressure (Larmer, 2011). Further adjustment followed, leading to momentary currency strength. Nevertheless, inflation rose when commodity prices were de-regularised. A further stage of adjustment was engaged, leading to price increases in maize meal and consequent riots and the looting of state stores. The overriding consequence of these programmes was a substantial deterioration in the socioeconomic situation in the country. Worsening conditions led to food riots and the UNIP government broke ranks with the IMF in 1987 and begun to implement its own interim national economic recovery programme.

Without the support of the international financial institutions and depleted reserves, this homegrown programme failed miserably, leading the government to reopen negotiations with the IMF. In 1989 as a prerequisite for a loan from the IMF, the country decontrolled prices of all goods aside from maize (Simutanyi, 1996). In spite of this, the prices of maize increased threefold. Donors and other international agencies pressed the government to continue on the path of economic reform in exchange for a US$450 million loan (Rakner, 2003). The UNIP government was squeezed between the pressure exerted by external partners to stick to the programme of economic liberalisation and the domestic demands of an increasingly outspoken trade union that had taken an opposing stance against structural adjustment and was gaining political popularity (Larmer, 2011).

The government attempted to mitigate the effects of the soaring prices of maize meal by implementing a targeted safety net consisting of coupons for urban areas, a move argued to have been aimed at appeasing trade unions (Rakner, 2003). Yet, criticism from the main trade union, the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), became even more fierce and sustained. ZCTU was now calling for an end to both the one-party state and structural adjustment programmes. In response, the government called for a referendum in 1990 to decide whether the nation should return to multiparty politics.

However, in the same year, the government increased the price of maize meal causing food riots to break out across the capital and nearby regions (Bratton, 1992). The food riots combined with strikes by workers (and a failed coup in 1990) – fuelled by discontent with the economy and political disenchantment at the one-party state, which the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions accused of undemocratic tendencies and of responsibility for the country's return to structural adjustment – eventually forced President Kaunda to call for an early election in 1991.

The 1991 election brought Kaunda's one-party state and 27 year political rule to an end, ushering into government the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) led by President Chiluba who until the election had been the chairperson of the ZCTU and Kaunda's most outspoken critic. Scholars of Zambia's political transition (Akwetey, 1994;Bratton, 1992;Larmer, 2009, 2011;Rakner, 2003;Simutanyi, 1996) argue that declining socioeconomic conditions, the drive from organised labour against structural adjustment and Kaunda's one party state explain Zambia's return to multiparty democracy. This historical period is important because it prefaces the entrenched poverty that currently exists in Zambia. It is in this period that the country was set on a path of decline in which livelihood outcomes were fast diminishing and the neoliberal 'economic growth first' policies took centre stage.

The MMD's political reform project was welcomed by many in the hope that it would alleviate economic problems and the declining standards of living (Abdi, Shizha, & Ellis, 2010). Having to deal with the remnants of an already ailing economy that endured almost two decades of decline, Chiluba's MMD government turned to the international financial institutions in 1992 and begun to implement, in full-fledged fashion, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) inspired SAPs aimed at reducing poverty through private enterprise. Among other things, this more acute phase of structural adjustment entailed liberalisation of the market, privatisation of parastatal firms, liberalisation of the exchange rate, devaluation of the local currency and restructuring of the civil service (Kapungwe, 2004).

Unlike Kaunda's reform project that was met with civil unrest and staunch opposition from the labour movement, Chiluba's return to structural adjustment was not met by immediate discontent and there is no agreement why this was the case. Rakner (2003), for example, suggests that the MMD's reform was perceived as short-term sacrifice for the promise of long-term economic stabilisation and growth. Rakner argues here that the domestic opposition to SAPs under Kaunda was driven by beliefs that his long hold on power was responsible for the observed economic decline. Others (Erdmann & Simutanyi, 2003;Simutanyi, 1996) suggest that the euphoria of the 1991 election victory afforded the MMD government a honeymoon period and that business interests that stood to benefit the most from devaluation, privatisation and price decontrol converged behind Chiluba, decreasing opposition to his SAP reforms. These explanations, while potent, ignore the fact that organised labour, particularly ZCTU which had led the opposition to SAPs under Kaunda, was now in fact part of the MMD. The top officials of the ZCTU, including Chiluba himself who had been president of ZCTU had been imported into the MMD government post

the 1991 election. The labour movement became a weakened institution and lacked the autonomy to critically engage with government policy as it had done before. Even further, mass retrenchment meant that labour unions now only spoke for a special section of society.

It is telling that the IMF offered a half apology for structural adjustment in *'Neoliberalism: Oversold?'* (Furceri, Loungani, & Ostry, 2016). There is considerable evidence that structural adjustment was disastrous for implementing countries. The Human Development Report of 2003 (UNDP, 2003a) concedes that living conditions worsened in most countries where structural adjustment has been implemented and Zambia features prominently on the list of the over 30 countries that were worse off in 2000 than they were in 1990 (Abdi et al., 2010;GRZ, 2003). Mass retrenchment had followed structural reform while expenditure on basic social services such as education and health was slashed, constricting availability and access even further for those members of society who were already struggling (Erdmann & Simutanyi, 2003). School enrolment and life expectancy among other indicators plummeted while infant mortality soared. Zambia was in dire need of a consolidated national response against poverty. Yet, the era is defined by the conspicuous absence of such a policy. This lack of well-defined social policy framework outside the dictates of the multilateral institutions persisted until the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) was launched in 2014 under the Patriotic Front government of Michael Sata. This environment as discussed here provides the backstory of poverty in Zambia and a context within which the analysis in subsequent chapters of this thesis can be understood.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The thesis has eight chapters. Through a critical review of current research evidence, chapter two outlines the relevance of this research and situates it within the broader framework of

multidimensional poverty. The chapter also introduces the theoretical framework of the thesis: recognition theory as an intersubjective theory of poverty. Chapter three describes the methodology for the research. It discusses the design, process of analysis as well as the ethical considerations which emerged throughout the research. Chapters four to chapter seven present the substantive findings of the research. Findings are presented thematically with theoretical considerations integrated throughout the analysis.

Chapter four focuses on the various aspects of poverty at the level of everyday life as discussed by people with direct experience of it and addresses the meanings which they associate with these experiences. Chapter five and six focus on the social relationships of people in poverty and how these relationships affect their lives. Chapter five addresses the domain of informal relationships while chapter six focuses on institutional relationships. Chapter seven is a critical discourse analysis of narratives of poverty within national policy discourses as institutionalised poverty talk. This analysis is conducted against the backdrop of the lived experiences presented in chapters four to six. In this way, chapter seven provides the wider context within which the lived experiences, discussed in the preceding chapters, are to be understood. Finally, chapter eight summarises the main findings of the research, elaborates the contributions of this research to knowledge in the field of poverty studies and reflects on implications for further research.

Chapter Two

Situating the Relational (and Symbolic) in a Multidimensional Poverty Framework

This chapter provides a critical summary of current research on multidimensional poverty. It explores how the relational aspects of poverty (the overarching subject of this thesis) with its symbolic dimensions are nested within current poverty literature, while emphasising the key empirical questions that are not often addressed and which this thesis attempts to answer. The chapter shows the substantial body of scholarship offering a firmly grounded understanding of poverty as multidimensional and within which relational dimensions are acknowledged as important. It also shows, however, that while the importance of non-material dimensions of poverty are acknowledged, their role is largely understudied and, therefore, remains poorly understood.

This gap is due to a combination of factors including the dominance of quantitative research methodologies that tend to focus on what can be counted, and therefore measured, a reliance on theories which emphasise the material aspects of poverty, as well as the emphasis on material outcomes in anti-poverty programmes. The literature discussed in this chapter is critiqued in subsequent chapters of this thesis through the lens of the lived experience of people in poverty. This chapter has four main sections. The first discusses the concept of multidimensional poverty. The second focuses on the role of social relations in poverty with the third section presenting recognition theory as the theoretical framework within which the relational analysis of poverty conducted in this thesis proceeds. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion.

2.1. Multidimensional poverty

Poverty has been explained differently across academic scholarship and development practice, exposing different motivations and often leading to different policy responses. The definitions of poverty are rife with contestation since poverty takes many forms with connotations of moral, cultural and historical value (Ashworth, Hill, & Walker, 1994;Walker, 2014). However, a shared understanding within most definitions is that poverty involves multiple deprivations, interlocked with other forms of marginalisation across the life course. While the material dimensions continue to dominate in discussions of the meaning and measurement of poverty, the relational and symbolic nature of poverty does not receive sufficient attention even within multidimensional poverty literatures.

The Human Development Report of 1997, (UNDP, 1997) and World Development Report of 2000/1, (World Bank, 2000) conveyed the conception of poverty as multidimensional on the global stage. The two reports argued that poverty has many faces – that it is a denial of choices as well as the lack of opportunity to live a life that is tolerable. This foundational idea effectively provided the backdrop for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) developed in 2000 and is embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the first goal of which aims to 'end poverty in all its forms,'(United Nations, 2016, p. 1). These reports were, however, only acknowledgments of what academic scholarship had long demonstrated.

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen (1982, 1983, 1992), for example, argued that the identification of poverty is an acknowledgment of deprivation. When this deprivation is thought of as the object of public action, it immediately becomes apparent that it takes various forms. Others, like Ringen (1988), argued against seeing poverty only in terms of income, pointing instead to a consumption-based conception whereby people unable to live a decent life due to their

low consumption would be considered to be in poverty. Through his emphasis on standards of decency, Ringen insists that poverty must be visible from the way people live. His reference to a decent life brings into the purview of the discussion what is customary; this immediately draws attention to the wider social relations within which poverty exists. However, it was Townsend, writing earlier, who provided an expansive definition of poverty as relative deprivation. To Townsend, poverty was about command over both economic and social resources. It was about participation and membership in one's society:

> "Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities," (Townsend, 1979, p. 31).

This definition of poverty by Townsend, taken as the working definition of poverty in this thesis, brings into sharp and distinguished focus the non-material elements of poverty; social practices and membership and participation in society. Within this view, therefore, the social, the economic and the psychological converge to provide a more accurate picture of what poverty entails. Walker (2014) has argued that seeing poverty in this way enables the understanding that what may in one instance be the cause of poverty may in another instance be its consequence. The challenge, however, as he and others observe is that while poverty is now widely understood as multidimensional, it is often measured at a material level, in a unidimensional manner and, consequently, the policies and programmes designed to combat it are designed and evaluated according to those material targets (Alkire et al., 2015;Devereux et al., 2013;Walker, 2014).

Increasingly, recent measures of poverty such as the Social Capital Index, the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index and the Human Development Index are emphasising the

multidimensionality of poverty and have indeed attempted to incorporate non-material dimensions into the understanding of poverty (Alkire & Foster, 2011;Alkire et al., 2015;Alkire & Santos, 2014). However, even the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index which is now a go to measure internationally and is used by most governments to inform policy, while moving away from a unidimensional income centric approach, focuses only on three dimensions, – education, health and living standards using quantifiable indicators. It is unclear how psychosocial and relational dimensions are accounted for. The emphasis on the multidimensionality of poverty in the above measures notwithstanding, feelings and experiences associated with unmet human needs have been treated in a restrictive way and constrained to a narrow individual level domain, away from income related concerns or the wider social-political context (Jo, 2013;Samuel, Alkire, Zavaleta, Mills, & Hammock, 2018).

A newer measure, the Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) from 2014, acknowledges the limitations of these previous measures in addressing the relational dimensions of poverty and attempts to incorporate the relational by explicitly integrating gender specific deprivations which are based in social relationships (Wisor et al., 2016). In fact, the rationale for the IDM raises a critique to the World Bank's International Monetary Measure and the Global MPI cited above. IDM scholars, criticise the MPI for its lack of grounding in the stated views and preferences of people living in poverty:

> "Although the creators claim that the MPI finds support in various participatory assessments, the three categories – health, education, and standards of living – were not selected over other potential dimensions on the basis of such participatory assessments but rather, selected based on the contingencies of data availability. We believe our participatory research offers an alternative method of selecting dimensions that is grounded in participation," (Wisor et al., 2016, p. 6).

While acknowledging the above problems in poverty measurement, it is important to remember that poverty measurement is not a straightforward activity and Lister's work

insightfully captures the complexities of translating the concept of poverty into measures (Lister, 2004b, 2015). While arguing that poverty is measured with the moral and political imperative to take action against it, she makes clear that measures are but operationalisations of imperfect conceptualisations of poverty. This operationalisation, she asserts, reflects many things including the intentions of the researcher. Lister distinguishes definitions from concepts and measures and argues that measures cannot capture everything about the concept of poverty. In making this argument, she exposes the complexity of poverty as both a political and scientific problem and it is clear from her discussion that poverty's political nature lends it to value judgments which further complicate representations of its scientific nature.

Other scholars (Beduk, 2018;Nolan & Whelan, 2011;Ravallion, 2011, 2012) espouse a similar position as Lister but go on to argue that the mismatch between conceptualisations of poverty as multidimensional and its measures is based in methodological and theoretical ambivalences. For Nolan and Whelan (2011, p. 5), for example, the problem is that transitions from concept to measure are often 'weak' and 'ad hoc.' Beduk (2018) and (Ravallion, 2011, 2012), however, see the problem as being that measurement is data driven without a solid theoretical basis leading to missing dimensions and/or non-identification of some people living in poverty. In light of these challenges, engaging people with direct experience and proceeding from those understandings offers the best chance of understanding what poverty is about and how best it can be measured (Bessell, 2015;Chambers, 1995;Lister, 2004b, 2013, 2015;Narayan, Chambers, Shah, & Petesch, 2000;Walker, 1987, 2014, Forthcoming;Wisor et al., 2016). More importantly, however, as the IDM scholars emphasise, if measures are to be used in assessing progress towards eradicating poverty then they ought to provide guidance in the development of policies and institutional designs

(Wisor et al., 2016, p. 28). Meeting this goal demands the avoidance of arbitrariness – measures must reflect, in every possible way what we claim poverty to be in its various forms (Beduk, 2018;Walker, 2014;Wisor et al., 2016). This demand becomes even more important when one considers the representation of poverty in world leading poverty reports such as the World Bank's Monitoring Global Poverty Report – arguably the world's leading report on poverty. The 2017 report, for example, reiterated the multidimensionality of poverty, arguing that there are 'essential dimensions to poverty in addition to money.' Despite this pronouncement, the report itself largely focuses on economic resources deferring responsibility for non-monetary dimensions of poverty to the work of stakeholders like UN agencies. This disjuncture between acknowledgements of the multidimensionality of poverty and the focus in poverty studies and anti-poverty programmes on mainly material dimensions and especially income is pervasive.

2.2. Relational dimensions of poverty

Research into the lived experiences of poverty intimates that poverty and its correlates of shame, guilt, and embarrassment are relational (Howard & Millard, 1997;Lister, 2004b;Narayan-Parker & Patel, 2000;Narayan-Parker & Petesch, 2002b;Narayan et al., 2000;Walker, 2014;Walker et al., 2013). It is understood that poverty is rooted in the terms and patterns of recognition and representation embedded in particular types of social relations (Walker et al., 2013). Lister (2004b, 2015), for example, suggests psychosocial and symbolic dimensions, communicative by nature, are rooted in people's everyday interaction with wider society. According to the ways that people who live in poverty are treated and talked about, notions of social status are both communicative and evaluative. In this way, social interaction between people in poverty and those who are not is important for its potential to generate

particular experiences for people in poverty. As Ridge (2009, p.20) suggests, the experience of poverty is filled with contestations for recognition of social value. She writes:

> "Poverty is a highly stigmatised social position and the experience of poverty in an affluent society can be particularly isolating and socially damaging. Social difference and 'otherness' – being perceived as somehow different to other people in society as a result of poverty – has a profound impact on people's lives."

The experiences of estrangement generated through poverty are worsened by social and value hierarchies that accentuate the effects of aspirational gaps. As Narayan et al. (2000, p. 2), report, "the psychological experience of multiple deprivations is intense and painful." Poverty is also experienced as social isolation (May & Norton, 1997). The voices of the poor studies (Narayan-Parker & Patel, 2000;Narayan et al., 2000) also cite social isolation and violence as a result of poverty as experiences of everyday life among people enduring material deprivation. Such social isolation appears to have a cyclical relationship to shame and humiliation (Leavy & Howard, 2013;Samuel et al., 2018;Zavaleta, Samuel, & Mills, 2014;Zavaleta, Samuel, & Mills, 2017). However, academic scholarship interrogating the linkages between social isolation and poverty is scarce. This social embeddedness of poverty is thus an area that requires further empirical research and is a gap to which this thesis responds.

2.2.1. Social relationships and poverty

Part of the difficulty in investigating the relational is the lack of conceptual clarity around social relationships in poverty studies. The evidence on the role of relationships in poverty is sometimes outright contradictory. The concept of relationships is often used interchangeably with network ties, leading to a conceptual maze that is difficult to navigate. For some scholars, social relationships are the same as social capital (Tvedten & Nangulah, 1999). However, this thesis follows the conceptualisation of Due, Holstein, Lund, Modvig, and

Avlund (1999). In this view, social relationships are defined by two features: structure and function. Structure includes the individuals with whom one has an interpersonal relationship and the linkages between these individuals. Linkages have two dimensions. The formal dimension includes linkages arising from one's positions and roles in society. The informal dimension of linkages is analogous to social networks, which involve one's linkages to those with whom they have close familial, personal relations and/or affection. Aspects such as reciprocity and density are part of the structure of social relations.

In function, Due et al. (1999) see relationships as covering the interpersonal interactions within the structure of the relations and describe function with respect to three main concepts: social support, relational strain and social anchorage. Social support encompasses both positive and negative aspects and as such is about the level of resources provided by other persons. Relational strain, argued to be different from lack of social support, is conceived as the extent to which functions of social relationships cause emotional or instrumental pain. Hence, relational strain is argued to be the negative function of social relationships. Social anchorage, however, is the degree to which individuals belong to and are anchored within the formal and informal groups and how, in a more qualitative sense, they feel that they have membership to these groups. This concept of anchorage mirrors what Zavaleta et al. (2017) see as social connectedness, that is the extent to which a person feels connected to their community because of their connection to others.

2.2.2. Social capital and beyond

The World Bank has a vast literature on poverty and social relationships but under the concept of social capital. The significant part of this literature, (Bebbington, Guggenheim, Olson, & Woolcock, 2004;Collier, 2002;Narayan-Parker, 1999;Woolcock & Narayan, 2000) addresses what is termed the social aspects of development programmes and how people's

organisations and their linkages with formal governance institutions are critical for their empowerment, inclusion and poverty reduction. Woolcock and Narayan (2000), for example, use the concept of social capital to analyse how networks and ties affect economic development and developmental programmes.

Narayan-Parker (1999) focuses on how developmental programmes can tap into social connectedness to counter exclusionary effects of social relationships and broker linkages between primary social groups and formal institutions to promote inclusiveness and improve economic and social wellbeing. The general theme of this literature explores the complementary roles of bonding, bridging and linking social capital. In particular, how bonding capital based on the more personal and familial ties might be a guard against poverty is discussed at length. The conclusion is that bridging capital created by diversity helps people to get ahead, while linking capital may provide people in poverty with opportunities to influence institutions that make decisions that affect them (Cleaver, 2005;Walters, 2002).

Social capital literature also focuses on networks as voluntary associations in two narratives. The first narrative focuses on distinctions between commodity exchange and the cultural principles of social interaction, which create enduring bonds of mutual dependence. Networks and relations are attributes of social structures which offer possibilities for sustainability and social participation in development projects. Hence, social capital becomes a composite measure of participation in local organisations and trust, a powerful determinant of household poverty (Bebbington et al., 2004). This literature argues that networks, associations and local knowledge should be recognized as valuable development resources that development projects should take into account (Molyneux, 2002). The second narrative which relates directly to poverty takes social capital as the ties necessary to get out of situations of poverty, discussed as bonding and bridging capital (Narayan-Parker,

1999;Portes, 1998). It is suggested in this literature that people in poverty tend to possess the close knit and intensive stock of bonding capital that is necessary to get by but not necessarily the more diffuse and extensive 'bridging' capital that they would require to get ahead (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

This framing of social relationships as social capital is problematic for several reasons. First it conflates the body with one of its features. Social capital is relational because it is based in social interaction but, as Castleman (2016, p. 142) observes, social capital is generalised trust. Its primary function is enabling production by fostering cooperation. Second, the social capital literature is problematic for the way it represents poverty as a deficiency on the part of people in poverty – they possess poor quality ties. Seeing poverty as a function of poor quality ties inverts the relationship between poverty and social relationships. It ignores the role of poverty in generating poor relationships and glosses over the terms on which people in poverty are embedded within those broader systems and institutions of inequality which frame their interaction on a daily basis (Green, 2006). Similarly, Harriss (2007) has argued that constructing relationships as capital enables the identification of people in poverty as those who command less social capital, but this view falls short of addressing the deep rooted but primary questions about how these groups end up with less social capital. This frame of relationships also instrumentalises them – presenting them as valuable insofar as they are a means to a different end. However, it must be stated that these problems with social capital can be explained by the lack of conceptual clarity for the concept of social capital itself. Often, it is deployed in an elastic manner to cover all things social - ignoring that, in actual fact, it is a feature of social relationships. As Portes (2014) argues in the *Downsides of Social Capital*, the notion of social capital should itself be interrogated to unravel the subtle ways in

which inequality manifests itself in relationships that at face value appear to be based on trust and reciprocity.

A second discussion about social relationship draws attention to the social embeddedness of the formal institutions that people have access to and the extent to which they relate and interact with these institutions. Here, social capital as the ties that bind, are also seen to exclude (Narayan-Parker, 1999). Hence, it is argued that lack of connectedness to the institutions of society is a significant part of the social relationships of people in poverty. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) allude to discrimination in institutional treatment in this regard and their discussion revolves around nepotism and discriminatory tendencies that particular social relationships impose on institutional procedures.

Going further, Kabeer (2000) makes a similar argument constructing institutions as rules of access. She argues that disadvantage for groups results when institutions – which allocate resources and assign value – operate in ways that systematically deny certain people resources required to be full members of their society. Here, institutions as rules shape resource distribution. Distribution based on kinship is problematized against membership predicated on rights and entitlements. Kabeer also shows that social relationships feed into sociocultural constructions of gender, which confer differentiated social value between men and women, affecting how they access resources. Against this literature, we can then ask how institutional arrangements of the modern state can keep members of the population dependent and without access to the opportunities of their society (Grootaert, 2001;Molyneux, 2002).

While understanding how certain groups are locked out is an empirical matter, it may be easier to unravel in situations where only small or specific groups are marginalised. The picture becomes more complicated in contexts where exclusion affects the majority, and

poverty is a majority phenomenon. Even further, understanding this exclusion most likely will not inform us about those who are locked out on one dimension but included in another on disadvantageous terms – a process known as adverse incorporation (Du Toit, 2008;Hickey & Du Toit, 2007).

In adverse incorporation, the processes of marginalisation embedded within exclusion are important. However, attention is also paid to those different but additional forms of domination, which make some people outsiders as well as symbolically devalued. For example, the logic of marketisation in structural adjustment programmes assumed that a well-functioning market would produce growth leading to the eradication of poverty. When this failed, it was argued to be a result of market failure. Yet, the actual problem was not that small holder farmers were not participating in markets. They were participating in markets but as (Du Toit, 2004a) has argued about the participation of small holder farmers in markets driven from the centre, such participation is on highly unequal terms. Here then, inclusion on subordinate terms, which is experienced as symbolically demeaning, is made part of the problem leading to a different set of questions. Analysis is also directed at the ways in which the practices of society enable the treatment of some as other and less, therefore, outside the provisions of what full membership entails. Appadurai (2004) contends with this question in his work on the capacity to aspire and draws attention to terms of recognition within social relationships. His work is instructive in highlighting the conditions and constraints under which people in poverty negotiate the norms which frame their livelihoods.

Appadurai suggests that poverty is in part operating under very poor terms of recognition. In this way, marginalised people are encouraged to subscribe to norms whose social effects further diminish their dignity, exacerbate inequality and deepen their reduced access to

resources. He argues people in poverty are only recognised as an abstract political category divorced of real persons.

Lister's, *To count for nothing,* (2015), echoes Appadurai and adds a methodological critique to the over reliance on quantitative analysis in poverty research. She argues that while statistical tools provide powerful graphics of poverty, they likewise obscure the faces behind the numbers and mask the relational and intrapsychic wounds that poverty causes. This intrapsychic and relational pain is based on lived experience often conveyed to people in poverty in their facelessness: they end up internalising the message that they do not matter. These insights mean poverty analysis should also focus on norms, prioritise direct experience and go farther than the binary of inclusion and exclusion.

The social hierarchies within which poverty is embedded also become subject to interrogation. Convention including discourses which sanction the inferiorisation of people in poverty, generating feelings of shame and stigma, have to be uncovered (Chauhan & Foster, 2014;Roelen, 2017;Walker, 2014). How people in poverty experience support systems including anti-poverty programmes should also be investigated. This leads to such questions as, how do people living in poverty as citizens experience the state through the services it provides to them? How does state action through street level bureaucrats affect the everyday life of people in poverty? Lipsky (2010) and Zacka (2017) offer some answers, suggesting that the relationship between street level bureaucrats and people in poverty should be studied through a bottom up approach. Interestingly, in low income countries, despite the prevalence of poverty and anti-poverty programmes, this relationship is never the subject of investigation (Devereux et al., 2013).

2.2.3. Social relationships as a double-edged sword

At the informal level, current research focuses on social support. A unanimous conclusion is that relationships play a significant role in the survival strategies of people living in poverty. Kinship and neighbourhood, often problematized at the institutional level, are seen as instrumental in coping with hardship (Mukherjee, 2002;Sharp & Spiegel, 1985;Tvedten & Nangulah, 1999;Vera-Sanso, 2006). Interpersonal systems and institutions are important aspects of the social support function of social relationships.

Relationships are thought to offer support required for upward social mobility and wellbeing (Dominguez & Watkins, 2003;Knight, Lina, & Gunatilaka, 2009). But the homogeneity of social relationships among people in poverty is a source of concern for anti-poverty programming. Recent evidence (Devereux et al., 2013;Haushofer et al., 2015;MacAuslan & Riemenschneider, 2011) suggests that targeted programmes may in fact rupture local relationships and more empirical analysis is required to understand these dynamics at the local level. Reciprocity in conditions of material deprivation can be problematic.

Differences in relationships and social support might result due to such personal characteristics as gender and age which, while reflecting structural positions, shape both the structure and quality of the relationships (Antonucci, Ajrouch, & Abdulrahim, 2015). Chant (2010) has shown that gender intersects with a host of social, economic, demographic and other cleavages and is heavily nested in culture. These intersections generate webs of resources and needs and in some instances lead to diminished access to resources and control over their utilization, while increasing caring responsibilities for women (Ahikire, 2002). Relationships can also be draining; imposing psychological and material costs on membership, leading to the eventual exclusion of people in poverty (Curley, 2009;Miller-Cribbs & Farber, 2008). Walker et al. (2013), in the poverty and shame studies, show that

family and community relationships can be a petri dish for shame because of the transactional nature of reciprocity.

2.3. The relevance of relational analysis of poverty in low income contexts

Several reasons can be seen in the preceding discussion for why such a study is relevant. First, it has been established that social relationships are important to poverty and there is general consensus that social relationships play a significantly different role for people living in the global South than in the global North. Owing to weak public sectors, and poor access to social safety nets in most low-income countries, domestic groups are a vital source of welfare provision and support against conditions of poverty (Beall, 1995;De Janvry & Sadoulet, 2000;Narayan-Parker & Petesch, 2002b). However, the scope of poverty scholarship in this region is still very much focussed on poverty as a lack of material resources.

Second, it is widely understood that poverty in the developing world is complex. It involves combinations of the forces of nature, markets, poor macroeconomic climates as well as poor governance mechanisms, and various forms of exclusion for a majority of the population. Poverty also has an identifiable rural-urban distinction. The life situations of rural residents differ from those of urban dwellers since the former usually live in areas of acute physical isolation where social services rarely reach. Rural and urban areas are distinguishable by spatial characteristics and differing livelihoods wherein rural areas are associated with agrarian based economics while the urban is industrialised. Rural areas are also usually underdeveloped compared to urban areas where residents tend to have more political voice and consequently higher expectations for service delivery (World Bank & International Monetary Fund, 2013).

Aside from the more evident physical isolation, poverty characterised by high levels of deprivation (dispossession), vulnerability and powerlessness are usually a rural phenomenon (Hickey & Du Toit, 2007). Particularly, Chambers in his large body of work has drawn attention to how poverty is embedded in the ways of life of particular populations. In *Participation and Poverty,* for example, Chambers highlighted what he terms the 'hidden', 'sensitive' and 'neglected' dimensions of poverty, which he argued, are often considered 'too private, sensitive or dangerous to make public or analyse' (Chambers, 2007a, pp. 20-22). Citing the *Voices of the poor* studies, Chambers also identified 'place' and its correlate of physical isolation as well as the 'body' – which this thesis discusses in Chapter 4 in reference to embodied capital, as key elements in the experience of poverty in global South countries. However, while these elements of poverty are reported in the *Voices of the poor studies,* Chambers acknowledged that they became prominent only after they emerged in the analysis of findings and were not foreseen in the planning of the studies (Chambers, 2007a). This acknowledgement can be interpreted as recognition of the need for an intentional and direct inquiry of these aspects of poverty.

In line with Chambers, Beck's (1994) study of experiences of poverty in a rural Indian village chronicles the ways in which people in poverty sought to 'live and be treated as social beings.' Self-respect, Beck argued, often manifesting as the desire to be respected by others, was pronounced among his study participants. Similar to the discussion in Chapter 5 of this thesis, people in poverty used 'respect' to determine which relationships were good or bad for them. Beck concludes that a lack of power to influence not only the flow of resources but also how one is perceived by others in their community is an important feature of poverty. This question of power and its structuring effects in the everyday life is also echoed in the *Voices of the poor studies* (Deepa Narayan & Lant Pritchett, 1999;Narayan-Parker & Patel,

2000;Narayan-Parker & Petesch, 2002b;Narayan et al., 2000). The conception of power as multidimensional is equally reflected in Mosse (2004, 2010). Thinking of power as multidimensional and how it permeates relationships in everyday life for different social groups leading to particular outcomes was instructive for the analysis in this thesis. For example, Mosse argues that power includes influence to set the agenda and, therefore, operates to set the terms on which poverty is discussed and which aspects of it are problematized or not. In most cases, he contends, this process of agenda setting, leads to the depoliticisation of poverty. Using this approach, his analysis of power in self-help groups, including anti-poverty programmes funded by development organisations working for people in poverty showed that these groups are often dominated by powerful members of local communities (Mosse, 2004, p. 57). These insights as articulated here influence the analysis of social relationships in this research. Specifically, the policy analysis in Chapter 7 uses this thinking to demonstrate that policy is an arena in which the power to name and define and therefore set the terms and limits of what is possible action on a social problem is manifested.

The World Bank-led Sub National poverty maps in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, show that poverty varies between regions and within specific communities due to diverse causes. Geography, harsh agro-climatic conditions as well as a lack of infrastructure and access to markets and public facilities are associated with poverty especially in rural areas (De Janvry & Sadoulet, 2000), while failing economies, labour informality, migration alongside rapid urbanization and poor service delivery underpin poverty in urban areas. Within this context, for example, the global monitoring report for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) asserts that more urbanised countries have had greater success at meeting the goal targets (World Bank & International Monetary Fund, 2013).

It is also suggested in this literature that poverty is more widespread and severe in rural than urban areas in most of the developing world, with some exceptions in Latin American countries (Khan, 2000). Other writers (Tvedten, 2004;Tvedten & Nangulah, 1999) argue that urban areas are often characterised by social diversity and fragmentation which affects the nature of lifestyles, kinship and neighbourhood support networks. This potentially makes experiences of poverty in urban areas particularly different from those in rural areas which tend to be more homogeneous and people are more socially connected. It is also acknowledged that social diversity in urban areas is likely to cause new tensions as well as survival strategies, leading to weaker personal relationships (Wratten, 1995), but that at the level of everyday life, the urban and rural are intricately connected through social relationships (Satterthwaite, 2003;Tacoli, 2007;Wratten, 1995). Consequently, to understand poverty from a relational point of view, a theory which provides scope for interrogating intersubjective relations is necessary. Recognition theory provides that answer.

2.4. Recognition theory – an intersubjective theory of poverty

The several gaps in poverty research identified above relate, in part, to how poverty is theorised. This research attempts to fill that gap by applying Honneth's theory of recognition to poverty research. Recognition as an ethically adequate treatment of a person involves practical and symbolic aspects intertwined inextricably – one is seen as Z and therefore treated accordingly. This sends a message to Z about Z's Z-hood and inherently demands that Z be treated in a particular way (Laitinen, 2002, p. 465). This particular way involves both material and non-material aspects which may occur separately or concurrently but are all based in Z's intersubjective relationships. In this way, recognition is seen as both a response to value and precondition to personhood (Fraser & Honneth, 2003;Honneth, 1995;Laitinen,

2002). The establishment of personal identities, of autonomy and ultimately, self-realisation is bases in conditions of mutual recognition.

The recognition approach sees poverty as inherently relational, "a deprivation of recognition and the incapacity for undistorted self-realisation" (Graf & Schweiger, 2013, p.11). Poverty, it is argued, is living under conditions and circumstances that are associated with feelings of denigration and humiliation because they do not allow the experience and benefit of socially prevalent forms of recognition and, therefore, prevent undistorted self-realisation. In this way, and because it is subjectively experienced as painful and is connected with forms of disrespect which distort the ability for self-realisation, poverty is a moral ill. Recognition implies the right to symbolic presence and visibility (vs. marginalization) as well as to dignifying representation (vs. stigmatization); and the right to propagation of identity and maintenance of lifestyles (Castleman, 2016;Lister, 2001).

Recognition theory aims to criticise the material and symbolic injustices that shape people's lives in today's world, which it conceptualises as 'misrecognitions' resulting from a failure to establish lasting relations and institutions of recognition (Schweiger, 2014). According to (McNay, 2008, p. 272), recognition, "describes both the basic intersubjective structure of social relations and also refers to the overall normative direction of social development in that its most fully realised form represents the maximal conditions for positive self-realisation and personal integrity." In this way, recognition is about acknowledging and responding to the inherent value that people have by virtue of being a fellow human being.

We need the affirmation of others in order to see ourselves as worthy of affirmation and develop positive self-relations such as self-respect and self-esteem which, in turn, are important for one to lead his or her life well (Honneth, 2001, 2004;Honneth, Wright, &

Honneth, 1995). Thus, personhood in this conception depends largely on positive self-relations such as self-confidence, respect and self-esteem which are derived and maintained intersubjectively through relationships of mutual recognition and respect (Fraser & Honneth, 2003;Hill, 2001;Honneth, 2001;Honneth et al., 1995).

As shown, positive self-relations are not innate; human beings rely on processes of socialisation and social interaction to develop these relations, particularly the internalisation of affirmative attitudes such as love, respect and the esteem of others. This dependence on others for the positive self-relations required for someone to develop an undistorted sense of self leaves everyone vulnerable to the damaging effects of such misrecognition as disrespect and humiliation. Non-recognition and the moral injury that results from it prevent self-realisation and hence undermines human agency. Therefore, the moral imperative for society and its institutions is to protect all human beings from the harms of misrecognition such as disrespect and humiliation to which they are constitutively vulnerable (Smith, 2012). This means that all basic institutions of society should answer to claims of recognition and that no sphere of interaction is exempt from this kind of ethical deliberation. The individuals' subjectivity, autonomy and agency in the recognition theoretical approach are built in and through relations of reciprocal recognition with others in three interconnected spheres of interaction; love, law and achievement which are all necessary for self-realisation (Maia, 2014;Smith, 2012).

The first of these spheres relates directly to affective relations within primary relationships such as the family and friends. Building on affective bonds of mutual recognition and affirmed autonomy, in a context of interdependence within these primary relationships, enables one to develop the self-confidence necessary to participate in social life. The second sphere is based on the principle of universal equal rights as actualised through legal

frameworks and institutions which communicate equality of status. In this sphere, relations to self are perceived to be mediated by patterns of interaction that are regulated by rights. Being accorded rights is crucial for self-respect, because it communicates a recognizable capacity of the person as an agent capable of acting autonomously and rationally in a broader social setting (Honneth et al., 1995). This sphere thus maps into the individual's self-perception as a subject with the ability to make their own decisions.

The third sphere relates directly to hierarchies of value which confer esteem. Esteem is in this way tied to symmetrical solidarity and arises directly from a recognition of that which makes us unique, special and particular as persons. However this is impossible to achieve in an environment laden with negative characteristics; to have a sense that one has nothing of value to offer cripples the development of a positive identity (Honneth et al., 1995). In this way, achievement is related to symbolic presence and representation and can be seen in the value attached for example to cultural identity or economic contribution. The work of Maia (2014) builds on this insight to make a case for representational aspects of relations. Maia highlights the important role to the recognition-theoretical framework of media as a locus of public articulation, negotiation and dispute, and as a space in which political issues are debated and attitudes of recognition and symbolic representation are constituted. While recognition-based analysis takes the individual experience, it is the social embedding of this experience, and the relations which frame what this individual is able to achieve, that is the focus of a recognition-based analysis. According to Schweiger (2014, p. 268):

> "Recognition theory highlights the importance of the social embedding of human life and the importance of social relations and interactions, but is most concerned with the individual that is recognised or misrecognised, who lives in freedom or non-freedom or who can realise himself or herself, or is hindered in his or her self-realisation."

Although rarely used in the empirical analysis of poverty, the recognition approach is largely compatible with a context-sensitive relational analysis of poverty for several reasons. Recognition theory sees poverty as a problem based in social relations. Living in poverty means not only material deprivation but conditions of less recognition in different spheres. However, it is argued that these conditions, although articulated by people in poverty, are often not heard or are downplayed as a consequence of their poverty (Appadurai, 2004;Chambers, 2007b;Graf & Schweiger, 2014b). Poverty, it is argued is accompanied and exacerbated by experience of disrespect and humiliation and brings with it a lack of recognition which has to be taken into account in analysing how harmful living in poverty is (Graf & Schweiger, 2014b, 263).

Through what Petherbridge (2013) terms the 'phenomenology of suffering,' embedded in recognition theory whereby the theory privileges moral knowledge gained from experiences and feelings of estrangement and powerless, the recognition approach emphasises the experience of people living in poverty in the social critique of poverty. It is argued that the critical perceptions of injustice, of being denied adequate recognition, are located within the individuals' negative real-life experiences of violated expectations and cannot be abstracted from outside (Maia, 2014;Petherbridge, 2013;Smith, 2012). This refocuses attention on the particular agency – defined as capacity to act (Lister, 2015) – of people living in poverty.

In the view of Schweiger (2014), recognition theory offers a framework to conceptualise the adverse effects of poverty on the body and mind, and the social relations of the people in poverty, as forms of injustice that violate universal moral claims based on the needs of recognition of love, care, respect, rights and social esteem. It does not ignore the material hardship of poverty but views it as one of the many dimensions of harm caused by poverty. Consequently, a recognition-based analysis of poverty is not only about what people are able

to do but also how they are viewed, valued and treated by others (Castleman, 2013, 2016) and whether they are disrespected or respected for what they are able or unable to do as members of society (Graf & Schweiger, 2014b;Lister, 2002b, 2005b). This stance is compatible with recent studies that emphasise the role of lived experience in both research and policies designed to alleviate poverty (Lister, 2002a, 2004b;Narayan-Parker & Patel, 2000;Underlid, 2007;Walker, 2014).

Whether or not the recognition theoretical approach adequately addresses the questions of unequal distribution of material resources, and whether or not these material claims belong in the arena of recognition practices, is heavily disputed. Fraser (Fraser, 2000, 2007;Fraser, Bourdieu, & Lovell, 2007;Fraser & Honneth, 2003) leads the charge in this regard. She contends that recognition theory is status-oriented with a bias towards cultural and symbolic injustice rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication. However, she argues, it does not adequately account for socioeconomic injustice rooted in the political and economic structure of society (Fraser, 1995, pp. 70-72). Although Fraser presents this distinction as only analytical, several authors argue that its distinction is without a difference. Symbolic injustice and economic injustice go hand in hand and are embedded in the value hierarchies by which particular types of resources are assigned to some and denied to others (Smith, 2012;Young, 1997). This is also the case when some contributions are inadequately socially esteemed, as is the case with structural misrecognition wherein certain groups such as migrants or women are poorly recognised and their contributions in the labour market poorly rewarded (Schweiger, 2015). Beyond the issue of redistribution, this debate highlights the interlocking nature of social and economic relationships with an underlying current of an undistorted sense of self, a very important consideration with regard to the idea of agency among people in poverty.

While recognition theory offers insightful ways to conceptualise relational and symbolic dimensions of poverty in empirical analysis, its relatively recent application to poverty studies means that it still requires further clarification in different social contexts. Maia (2014) argues, for example, that recognition theory provides a critical benchmark for individuals in everyday interactions to identify and challenge actual experiences of social suffering along with interlocking oppressive institutional arrangements and cultural social meanings. Maia argues, "the three principles of recognition constitute normative standards for 'healthy' forms of social relations against which it is possible to identify a wide range of social suffering and social obstacles that inhibit the full ability of subjects to flourish" (Maia, 2014, p.18).

Castleman (2011, 2013, 2016) has proposed a framework by which experiences of poverty can be evaluated from a recognition approach via three intersecting domains of social interaction which relate to the spheres of recognition – love, solidarity and rights, as articulated by Honneth. The first of these domains *is the household* and *family* setting, which encompasses relationships, roles, interactions, and behaviour around the individual in a more private sphere. The second is the setting of the *community*, and interactions among neighbours, community leaders, and friends; and the third is about formal *organisations and institutional* norms and systems, and interactions within institutions such as schools, places of employment, places of worship, health care facilities, and other service delivery points. While these domains are set out as separate, it is easy to see that their boundaries are permeable and that experiences in one domain can be influence experiences in another. What become primary relationships, in practice, may be more than what is familial.

Within the context of this research, it was, therefore, more useful to adopt and utilise domains in analysing the experiences of people in poverty. The broad categories of domains were

more amenable to the sociological nature of this investigation and the research context while allowing for what can be considered to be psychological effects within the categories to be unveiled. Using domains enabled this analysis to uncover the intertwining of experiences which may otherwise be considered to belong in only one sphere. For example, love and solidarity while in different spheres of recognition can be found within a singular domain of familial relationships. Similarly, the functioning of rights as a sphere of recognition within what can be thought of as the domain of formal organisations and institutional norms has effects on the solidarity sphere of civil society. A structural exclusion from rights may have effect on the nature of solidarity or familial relationships that a person may experience. In this way, therefore, the use of domains was adopted in this research because of its broader sociological relevance to the research context. This choice should also be understood within the broader context of a dearth of work operationalising recognition theory for poverty research. So far, empirical analysis by Lister (2002a);(Lister, 2004a, 2004b, 2005b, 2006) draws on some of these ideas, arguing that recognition, respect and voice to people living in poverty should be central to the agenda of anti-poverty politics. However, to date, this application of recognition theory to poverty research has been restricted to the nations of the global North.

While recognition theory provides the theoretical lens of this research for reasons discussed above, Amartya Sen's capability approach though initially considered, was not used, for the reasons below. The capability approach conceptualises human development in view of people's capability to function (Sen, 1999). This capability to function is defined in terms of the actual opportunities that people have, to engage in the activities and actions they value and to be whom they want to be – also referred to as 'doings' and 'beings' (Alkire, 2005, 2007b;Fukuda-Parr, 2003;Nussbaum, 2000;Robeyns, 2005a;Sen, 1992;Sen, 2009).

According to Robeyns (2005a), the end goal of the capability approach is the capability to function – that is whether people are able to live the lives they value. Sen (1983) set out poverty in this capability view as capability failure. In this way, the approach conceives poverty as restrictions imposed on people – lack of opportunity, limited freedom and the resultant reduced capabilities (Anand & Sen, 1997;Graf & Schweiger, 2014;Sen, 1983, 1999;Sen, 2009;Walker, 2019).

Although the approach devotes most attention to goods and services as a means to capabilities, it also touches upon social norms, traditions, and institutional contexts that frame the lives people are able to live (Alkire, 2005;Anand & Sen, 1997;Robeyns, 2003, 2005a;Sen, 1999). This social nature of the capability approach is even more prominent in the work of Smith and Seward (2009) who argue that the approach has a relational ontology because a person's capability outcome is the result of the interaction of that person's capacities and their position relative to others in society. This ontology is also apparent in what Burchardt and Vizard term the second building block of the approach by which they argue inequality and deprivation should be monitored:

> "…functionings, (realised states of being such as health status or the extent to which a person is living in physical security), treatment (immunity from arbitrary interference, discrimination and other forms of detrimental treatment, such as lack of dignity and respect); and *autonomy* (empowerment, choice and control in relation to critical decisions that affect a person's life)" Burchardt and Vizard (2011, p. 96)

The ability to do or be what one reasons valuable within their context, as articulated here, focuses attention on the individual's capacity to act in their own interest and, therefore, centralises the importance of agency (Lister, 2004b). Agency as the ability to assert oneself is in this way a crucial aspect of quality of life under the capability approach and enables it to problematise structural constraints on individual action. The idea of 'beings' in Sen's specification (Sen, 1992) suggests that agency should be conceived in terms of the persons

success in the pursuit of their goals and not just wellbeing singularly defined. This notion provides an important backdrop to my discussion of how poverty constrains the situational identities of people with direct experience in Chapter 4. However, as I argue in that chapter and conclude in Chapter 8, this conceptualisation of agency while illuminating thinking about outward constraints on agency as the capacity to act has not gone far enough to address the inner processes of self-mobilisation that I will argue are a prerequisite to agency.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the capability approach has provided theoretical insight to various studies of poverty (Alkire, 2005;Kakwani & Silber, 2008;Sen, 2004). It is the central framework behind the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index discussed earlier. Yet, a survey of the vast literature currently available on the capability approach suggests that even though it has been applied to poverty studies, it not a theory of poverty but of wellbeing (Anand, Hunter, & Smith, 2005;Burchardt & Vizard, 2011;Fukuda-Parr, 2003;Gasper, 2007;Nussbaum, 2000;Robeyns, 2005b;Sen, 2004;Sen, 2009). In fact, Robeyns (2005a), a key capability theorist, makes this point clear:

> "…The capability approach is a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual wellbeing and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society… Note that the capability is not a theory that can *explain* poverty, inequality or wellbeing; instead, it rather provides a tool and a framework within which to *conceptualise and evaluate* these phenomena. Applying the capability approach to issues of policy and social change will therefore often require the addition of explanatory theories… (Robeyns, 2005a, p. 94)."

Robeyns's observation is instructive for understanding why the capability approach is used by different scholars to investigate a varied range of social problems as well as why it is too complex as a framework to concretise for use in this thesis. Its orientation and expansive reach as well as inherent focus on wellbeing, however defined, make it a perfectly suitable framework for the Human Development Index developed by United Nations Development Programme (Fukuda-Parr, 2003;Gasper, 2007;Lister, 2004b;Walker, 2019). However that

inherent focus on wellbeing while an important consideration was an impediment in this research since wellbeing is not the same as poverty. Lister (2004b, p. 18) has argued that Sen's (1983) definition of poverty in 'terms of capability failure' conflates the wider notion of wellbeing with poverty. Poverty is conceptually, only a specific aspect of that wider phenomenon and the large body of work on wellbeing seems to agree with Lister's assertion. On a similar point, (Godinot & Walker, Forthcoming) point to further weaknesses with Sen's conceptualisation of poverty due to confusion between cause and effect.

On the distinction between poverty and wellbeing, Dodge, Daly, Huyton, and Sanders (2012, p. 230) whose work chronicles the large body of research on wellbeing, offer a definition of wellbeing from their own research as, "a balance between an individual's resource pool and the challenges they face." In *Wellbeing of the Nations*, Prescott-Allen (2001, p. 5), also sees wellbeing in broad terms, defining it as, "a condition in which all members of society are able to determine and meet their needs and have a large range of choices to meet their potential." Similarly, Robert Chambers, a key poverty theorist, defined wellbeing as, "the experience of good quality of life.." and saw its opposite as ill-being, "…ill-being, its opposite, [is] the experience of bad quality of life" (Chambers, 2007b, p. 140). Sen himself, in *Inequality examined* presents wellbeing as the quality of a person's being involving various elements such as having health, being happy, being adequately nourished, avoiding escapable morbidity, having self-respect and so on (1992, p. 39). There are obvious intersections between those experiences of ill-being and experiences of being in poverty but it is clear that ill-being can occur even in the absence of poverty. Taken against Townsend's (1979) definition of poverty (which is used in this thesis) – as relative deprivation, it is reasonable to conclude just like Lister (2004b) that poverty is different from wellbeing although, because it leads to ill-being, it undermines wellbeing.

To utilise the capability approach as a research frame requires that it is operationalised. Operationalising the capability approach to guide this research proved to be a particularly tedious affair – as the operationalisation of the capability approach is itself fraught with difficulties (Gasper, 2007). While debate continues about whether there is an essential set of capabilities and whether or how these capabilities can be measured, there is no consensus (Alkire, 2005, 2007a;Anand et al., 2009;Anand et al., 2005;Burchardt, 2004;Burchardt & Vizard, 2011;Robeyns, 2003, 2005b, 2016). Sen has himself declined to specify a list of capabilities. He argues against a fixed set of capabilities and favours context specific sets which would arise out of public deliberation (Sen, 2004). However, Nussbaum (2000, 2003), offered, based on Aristotelian principles, a list of capabilities she believes are 'central to a life with dignity' but her work has been criticised as lacking procedural legitimacy for varied political and policy contexts (Robeyns, 2003, 2005b;Sen, 2004) and being overdetermined (Alkire, 2005).

In this way and specific to poverty research, the work of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, and in particular the Global MPI, is the most advanced thinking in operationalising the capability approach. Yet, even the Global MPI approach suffers the criticism of being data driven (Walker 2019).[2] Graf and Schweiger (2014) have commended the capability approach for its normative philosophical core, which they argue enables the social critique of poverty as unfreedom. However, they point out that despite being a crucial aspect of human life, neither the grammar nor the substantive elements of freedom alone, are

[2] At a recent launch of the revised Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, I asked Sabina Alkire how the MPI accounts for relational experiences such as poverty induced shame. She argued it does not do so explicitly because there is no data on these experiences and hence difficult to incorporate into the global MPI

able to capture the other experiences associated with poverty such as disrespect and humiliation which are contained in the concept of recognition. In light of the foregoing discussion, recognition theory was considered a more appropriate theoretical framework for this research even though various issues such as schooling and health which are still captured by the capability approach, as evident in subsequent chapters of this thesis, were revealed during the research.

2.5. Conclusion

Poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon and its effects are deleterious to all those experiencing it. Understanding what constitutes poverty and how to resolve it is a process that requires judicious scholarship, examining most carefully the various socioeconomic, political and environmental factors that create and sustain poverty as well as raising awareness for political action. The literature above has discussed the social embeddedness of poverty by analysing studies of poverty and social relations. It is clear from the analysis that poverty is embedded in social relations but that, to date, investigations into the nature and dynamics of poverty have paid little attention to this reality. The evidence presented that poverty is relational, and that its relational effects such as shame and humiliation have salient negative impacts on the lives of people in poverty, implies that studies of poverty ought to respond by investigating further these conceptual and empirical linkages. This chapter has also made the case that poverty scholarship can be enriched by a relational analysis of poverty in a global south context. Recognition theory, with its focus on intersubjective relations and a privileging of subjective experience in the critique of poverty, provides a potent theoretical lens through which to examine poverty from a relational standpoint.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

I arrived in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia for field work in March 2016 and immediately lodged an application with the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services for authorisation to conduct research in one of the district offices of the Department of Social Welfare in the Eastern Province. The authorisation is a legal necessity for research on issues related to the Ministry. In my case, this authorisation ensured my access to the facilities and resources of the District Social Welfare Office during the fieldwork period. Given my limited research budget, the logistical support of the district welfare office would be crucial for the success of my fieldwork. Once I was granted the authorisation, I contacted the District Social Welfare Office to notify them of my imminent arrival. They informed me that they had already received communication from the Ministry headquarters in Lusaka and were expecting me.

I arrived in the district on a Sunday evening and reported to the District Social Welfare Office on Monday morning in time for the weekly departmental meeting. The District Social Welfare Office had six officers; the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), his deputy the Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (ADSWO), a Programmes Officer (PO) in charge of the Social Cash Transfer programme, an office administrator (the only woman), a general worker and the departmental driver. I was informed at the end of the briefing that I would be sharing an office with the DSWO for the next four months of my stay. Once the departmental meeting had ended, the DSWO informed me that he had to attend another meeting for heads of departments in the district commissioner's office (the head of all government departments in the district) and would return in one hour. Left alone in his office, I used this time to set

myself up and to write down my first impressions of the Social Welfare Office and of the briefing. I made the following notes:

> *Six members of staff – all very friendly and welcoming. Briefing was very open and deliberative. Everyone spoke freely, and everyone seems to know what they are doing for the week, (**observation 1**)*
>
> *There are six officers but only one (office administrator) is a woman and her role is not part of the direct processes of welfare service administration – how does this affect the services provided by the social welfare office? (**observation 2**)*

One hour later, when the DSWO returned, I mentioned to him that for Monday morning, his office was remarkably quiet for a social welfare office. Having trained in Social Work and worked for several months in a district social welfare office before, I was aware that social welfare offices are busiest at the start of the week and so had expected the morning to be busy. However, in the time I had been left alone, there had not been even a single knock on the door. The DSWO responded to me in a casual and joking manner. Yet, his response immediately brought forward questions of positionality and power within the research process causing me to reflect on my position as a researcher situated within his office but also during the whole period of my fieldwork research. The DSWO explained that 'things' did not happen in his office. They happened in the other office where the other members of staff were based. I had been placed in his office to keep me from being disturbed by the constant activity of things:

> "We decided that you should be in this office because it is quiet, and you will not be disturbed. On the other side, there is a lot going on. People keep coming and going, you will not be able to do your work. *Si mu nga ike baku Oxford muja* mu [we cannot put someone from Oxford in that] office. We thought that you would not like it. Here you will not be disturbed. Once you are ready to start your interviews, you can let us know and we will facilitate that for you."

This story of my conversation with the DSWO is instructive in understanding how partners' assumptions and perceptions can influence research processes. Specifically, I had come from

Oxford University, a mythical place for most Zambians. In coming to this rural district, a letter from the Ministry headquarters in Lusaka had preceded my arrival effectively securing my access to the district office. In this way, I had some power. While I was welcome to the district office, I was perceived as an outsider 'looking in to their work.' This created suspicion – a barrier that I felt needed to be resolved. My position needed to be more fluid, to make the officers aware that even though I would be looking as they worked, I was there to learn about and from their work, and not to monitor them. I was also not going to sit in the office and periodically ask them to lead me to interviewees as the DSWO was thinking. To attempt an understanding of the multiple layers of truth, voices and experiences of research participants (Hertz, 1996), I needed to engage with the officers and with the service users they served on a daily basis in rotation but only after understanding the activities and processes of the office. Considered together, my roles changed over time, – participant observer to observer to active interviewer. Likewise, my position changed from time to time and sometimes needed to be negotiated, (Chavez, 2008;Sonya Corbin & Jennifer, 2009).

I explained my position to the DSWO, informing him that I was specifically interested in the very constant activity that he was worried would disturb me out of his kindness. Having had this conversation, we agreed that I transfer to the other office where I remained for the entire fieldwork period. This first day of fieldwork had delivered lessons that would pose as points of reflection along the course of this research and which shaped the process of the rest of the research. It is recounted at the beginning of this chapter as an aperture into the dynamics and process of this research, linking theoretical and practical considerations that will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter explains the decisions and logics that shaped the research process reported in this thesis, to provide the reader with the contextual and methodological background to the inquiry and findings presented. The chapter has four sections,

positionality, study design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation and ends with reflections on ethical concerns.

3.1. Positionality

The subjectivity of the researcher and participant is often seen as problematic in case study research (Simons, 2014) and it is often in this context that the subject of positionality is discussed. Positionality is about the researcher's stance in relation to the participants and the context of the research (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). It is concerned with the relationship between the researcher and the participant, the power dynamics involved and how these shape the research including the reporting of results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

In this research, positionality was perceived, as asserted by Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014), to be multidimensional, and dynamic, changing from one instance to another. The solution, at least in the context of this research, seems to be in the researcher's ability to be critically self-aware, consistently reflecting on one's own experiences, identity and power in relation to research participants. This understanding informed my stance in this research including my interview approach, to the extent that I would question those parts of the research participants' experiences that I found familiar to my own rather than take them for granted. Similarly, the data analysis approach sought not one voice or interpretation of data but rather the multiple layers of experience and their interpretations (Gibson, 2007;Mruck & Mey, 2007).

The narrative at the beginning of this chapter highlighted some key issues about positionality, especially power dynamics that were important to this research. Two further examples can shed light on the insider outsider issue, another key aspect of the positionality debate. The first example comes from how I often introduced myself to participants during interviews.

Since different dialects are spoken in the area, and in a desire not to offend, I would inform participants that we would use their language but, in case I got something wrong, they were at liberty to correct me. The usual response to this introduction was a question about how I learned to speak their language and which part of the country I was from. As part of what I saw as a process of transparency, where as a researcher you give information about yourself to the research participant, I would explain that although I grew up in different parts of the country away from this region, my parents are from the region and I learned these various languages at home. At this point, participants would respond with "ah, ni mwe wasu kansi' translated "you are our child." These remarks were a signal of acceptance, bringing me closer to participants in a way that allowed them to discuss with me aspects of their lives, which they considered intimate. I was after all, one of them.

The second, a common experience when I probed a participant about the meaning of the symbolisms imbued in their statements as in Joyce's case in Chapter 4 – reminded me that I was accepted but as a child who did not grow up in this setting, I was an outsider. Joyce had spoken about her material situation being visible and so dire that rats did not even enter her house. When I asked her to explain what she meant, she proceeded by first pointing out that I did not get the meaning of what she had said because I was from the city.

My questioning of her statement was informed by my research orientation which sought to privilege her subjective experience and interpretation of it. My intention was to avoid assuming the meaning of what she had said from my familiarity with the language she had used. In her view, however, I was asking for her to clarify a seemingly obvious statement because I was an outsider. I did not understand what she said because I had not been brought up in this region. In this way, she had effectively positioned me outside the realm of her everyday life showing that while the researcher may be seen or see themselves as occupying

a certain position, participants may place them elsewhere. This positioning may influence the nature of the insight generated by the research. However, while participants may use the researchers' outsider position to provide performative responses (Pechurina, 2014), Joyce, in this case, saw it as an opportunity to enlighten me about the ways of local life, enriching my understanding of her experience.

Another key issue worth emphasising here is my closeness to the social welfare office. The implication of this is that participants may have thought I had authority over the selection process of the social cash transfer and their participation in the research would help their chances. I understood my ethical responsibility as being honest about the aims of my research and my own position in it. I was cautious to explain my role as a doctoral researcher and that I did not have any power to influence the processes of the social cash transfer. The findings of my research, although important for understanding the meaning of poverty as they experienced it would only contribute to our general understanding of the phenomenon of poverty. Participation in the research would not directly impact their own lives in a way that would improve their material circumstances. Participants seemed to understand my explanation but I am unable to guarantee that they did not believe otherwise.

Admittedly, the dynamics were different when the research participants were key informants interviewed in the policy analysis phase. For example, the social welfare officers had initially emphasised my being an outsider, as shown earlier, yet this changed significantly as we shared experiences on a day to day basis during fieldwork while sharing an office. They had come to learn that I had been trained as a social worker and so they considered me 'one of them.' Furthermore, we were closer to each other in class terms than the group of participants living in poverty. However, the group of key informants who worked in civil society organisations mainly saw themselves as 'critical analysists.' They were more assertive and

tended to drive the conversation and needed to be steered on to the topic of conversation more often. Consequently, the key issue at the various points of this research was retaining a critical awareness of the various influences and how they were affecting the research process.

3.2. Study design (research approach)

This research was guided by the core research question, how social relationships frame experiences of poverty and the sub questions; what is the nature of the social relationships of people in poverty and how do these relationships shape their experience and interpretation of poverty? And, what role, if any, does anti-poverty policy and policy discourse as institutionalised 'poverty talk' play in shaping the above experiences? From the exploratory nature of the core questions, this research was designed as an exploratory qualitative case study in the interpretive tradition. In this research, 'interpretive' is in the sense of Blaikie (2004);Thorne (2014), in which it references the notion that research never occurs in a vacuum and that while there exists a reality apart from perception, the perceptions that humans make of it are shaped by historical and cultural positioning. The process of research itself enables the social actors to reflect on the meanings they attach to their actions and experiences in everyday life. The choice and structure of this design was informed by three interrelated factors. The first, as stated above, was the exploratory nature of the research question which required a flexible, in-depth and context dependent investigation. Since an exploratory qualitative case study design enables an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon in its socio-political context (Audet & d'Amboise, 2001;Simons, 2014;Yin, 2003), it was most suited to the explorative nature of this research.

The second factor was the theoretical insight of recognition theory. Due to what Petherbridge (2013) terms its 'phenomenology of suffering,' a recognition theory approach to poverty

research privileges the world view and experiences of people in poverty in the social critique of poverty. Such analysis is best attained, recognition theory argues, by engaging directly with the experiences of injustice; of being denied adequate recognition as they are located within the individuals' real-life experiences of violated expectations and not to be abstracted from outside (Maia, 2014;Petherbridge, 2013;Smith, 2012). Although not a preserve of recognition theory, this focus on direct experience and how that focus enables what Ingram (2018, p. xii) argues is the situating of 'disadvantaged deprivation and powerlessness as a modality of structural coercion' in everyday life, is a core principle of recognition theory and set the tone for this research.

The third factor, and related to the theoretical insight of recognition on respect was drawn from emergent scholarship on poverty which shows that the concept of poverty is itself often carried in discourses that shame, stigmatise and other people with direct experience of poverty and harms their identities by obscuring their agency in the wake of structural inequality and insecurity (Lister, 2002a, 2004b;Narayan-Parker & Patel, 2000;Underlid, 2007;Walker, 2014). This body of work suggests that it is both useful and ethical to be self-aware of the corrosive nature of poverty discourses and to employ neutral terminologies when discussing poverty with people who have direct experience of it. Taken together, these considerations shaped both the direction of the research and the methodologies that were employed.

3.2.1. Sampling of study participants

The sample for this research was eighty-one participants disaggregated into four sub-groups selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used as it enabled the selection of 'information rich' participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000) or as Morse (2010, p. 231) suggests, those participants who are experts in the phenomenon or experience under study.

This sampling method was in line with the exploratory nature of the study and was practical because the important characteristics of participants required were known (Emmel, 2013;Palys, 2008).

3.2.1.1. People living of poverty (65)

The intended sample of people living in poverty was forty, with equal numbers of men and women. However, the final sample became sixty-five for two reasons. First, midway through fieldwork, it was decided to increase the sample to pursue some emerging themes which were salient but on which the data were not sufficient to provide an in-depth understanding. Secondly, some unintended participants were added to the sample in response to practical issues bordering on ethical concerns during data collection. For example, on several occasions, while walking through the villages trying to find specific participants, some members of the village or neighbours of a participant would insist on being interviewed as well because they had 'issues to discuss'. This was difficult to navigate. However, the community welfare assistant would insist that I interview such people for transparency – to show them that I was conducting research interviews. Otherwise, that person would think that I was enrolling community members into some programmes. The community welfare assistants were concerned that this would the create problems for them once I had left the area as these community members would then accuse them of favouritism or worse.

Interviews with such participants would start off with the issues that they wanted to discuss. Although these interviews were unintended, they provided important information on institutional relationships of people in poverty with regard to the social cash transfer programme implemented by the government. The community welfare assistants' concerns about personal peace, wherein they argued that these community members would resent them

if I opted not to interview them, points to how institutional arrangements may affect the dynamics of relationships at the local level of everyday life in communities where such institutional arrangements are implemented.

Research participants were selected through the social cash transfer programme as it is targeted at people identified by the department of social welfare as living in poverty. The department of social welfare determines eligibility for the social cash transfer based on three criteria; residency, incapacity and welfare. A household must have been living in a catchment area for at least six months, have no adults who are fit for work or a dependency ration equal to or greater than three and be below household welfare threshold set according to the household living conditions index.[3] Beneficiary lists were obtained from the social welfare office from which participants were selected based on gender, receipt or non-receipt of the social cash transfer, proximity of residency to the district administrative offices locally known as the 'boma.' The lists of beneficiaries of the social cash transfer programme and of non-beneficiaries obtained from the welfare office were reviewed for participants who conformed to the criteria above in the different welfare zones.[4]

With the aid of the community welfare assistant from that specific zone, these potential participants were then approached and asked if they would be willing to participate in the research. Receipt or non-receipt of the social cash transfer was a key comparative component

[3] A person is dependent or unfit for work if aged below 19, older than 64 or is between 19-64 but is chronically ill or has a disability that impairs their ability to work (Government of the Republic of Zambia, 2014).

[4] Welfare zones are determined by the district welfare assistance committee and tend to include several villages within a particular chiefdom.

of the research in understanding the role of policy in the lives of people living in poverty and related to this institutional dimension, proximity of residence to the boma was added as a criterion after initial observation revealed that remoteness was a mediating factor in interaction between welfare officers and service users.

Remoteness was an important consideration here with regard to interactions between citizens and the bureaucracy of social welfare as shown by the reflections of officers in chapter four. People who live further away from the administrative centre for social welfare tend to have less exposure to officialdom and are more likely to be vilified in official interaction as being 'backward', further curtailing their ability to engage with processes of service delivery. It was important therefore to understand how distance from the centre affected the various relationships that people in poverty have.

Household size and by implication household responsibility were part of the initial selection criteria but it was removed after learning that it formed part of the selection criteria of the Social Cash Transfer programme and applied to everyone in the population. In total, thirty-one men, sixteen of whom were not recipients of the social cash transfer, and thirty-four women, eighteen of whom were not in receipt of the cash transfer, were included in the study. Of the group of people living in poverty, the youngest was a 26 year old widow who was a mother of three children and was not receiving any social cash transfers while the oldest participant was a 91 year old female social cash transfer recipient. The average age of participants was 57 years old. While the average household size was six persons, the average number of orphaned children was three per household. Only fourteen of the participants were Muslims. The other fifty-one participants belonged to various Christian denominations. About forty of the participants were from households taking care of orphaned children, with numbers ranging from one to eight. None of the participants were in formal employment and

all of them were involved in some kind of subsistence level farming. A detailed breakdown of participant by biographical information is presented in Appendix Seven.

3.2.1.2. Key informants

Three types of key informants – social welfare officers, community welfare assistant and policy experts, participated in this research:

a. Social welfare officers (3)

The three social welfare officers in the district made up the second group of participants. All three were selected into the sample because they manage different programmes generating different types of interface with service users despite working in the same office. This diversity of experience from their engagement with people living in poverty was important as it gave insight into their understanding of the policy and how it functions as well as the decision making in which they engage on a daily basis.

b. Community welfare assistants (5)

Community welfare assistants were the second group of key informants. Community welfare assistants are volunteers elected from amongst community members, representatives of community associations and churches that identify, scrutinise and recommend community members in need of state support to the district social welfare office. They work with social welfare officers to implement welfare programmes in the district (GRZ 2008). As community representatives, community welfare assistants are in direct, everyday contact with people in poverty and have deep knowledge of the communities in which they live. They were included in the study because of their deep knowledge of the communities and their roles and practical experience. A decision was made to select into the sample only the community welfare

participants from the welfare zones from which participants in the primary participants group had been drawn. This logic ensured that concerns raised by people in poverty which were specific to a particular welfare zone were taken up in the interviews with relevant community welfare assistants.

c. Policy/ Civil society experts (9)

The fourth group of key informants, policy experts, were selected based on their knowledge of and proximity to the processes of poverty policy in Zambia (Flick, 2014). These experts were identified through policy analysis. This sample of informants included an official from the ministry, a former minister, policy officers from three policy think tanks focusing on poverty and human development, as well as a specialist form the International Labour Organisation (ILO) who works in collaboration with the Zambian government in the implementation of anti-poverty programmes. On two occasions, an informant was included in the study on the recommendation of another informant. Interviews with this group of key informants were conducted after the policy analysis and towards the end of the fieldwork period. This was done so that these interviews could incorporate key issues arising from already collected data. In this way, I was able to ask questions that were based on experience or issues articulated in policy. Together, the various sub-groups presented above formed the sample distribution shown in the table 1.0 below:

Table 3.1 Sample distribution

Sample Distribution						
	People in poverty		**Community welfare Ass.**	**Social Welfare Officers**	**Policy Experts**	**Total**
	SCT	**Non SCT**				
Men	15	16	4	3	7	45
Women	16	18	3	0	2	39
Total	31	34	7	3	9	84

3.3. Data collection methods

The nature of the research questions required combinations of different types of data. As Flick (1992) argues, different data from varied sources obtained through different techniques lead to a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study. Observation, in-depth interviews and critical discourse analysis were used as shown in table 2.0 below:

Table 3.2 Data collection Methods

Viewed from a recognition standpoint, how do social relationships frame people's experiences of poverty?		
Sub Questions	**Data**	**Data Source**
What is the nature of the social relationships of people in poverty and how do these relationships shape their experience and interpretation of poverty?	Interviews and fieldnotes	People in poverty, social welfare officers, community welfare assistants and observation
What role does anti-poverty policy in these experiences?	Interviews, fieldnotes and Policy discourses	People in poverty, social welfare officers, community welfare assistants and all key informants, observation and policy documents
What role does policy discourse as institutionalised 'poverty talk' play in shaping the above experiences?	Interviews and policy discourses	People in poverty, social welfare officers, community welfare assistants and all key informants, and policy documents

3.3.1. Observation

Yin (2003, p. 444) argues that, "because a case study should take place in the natural setting of the "case," you are creating the opportunity for direct observations." Yin's assertion was particularly true for this research. Since I lived in the same area as the research participants, I had many opportunities to make observations. I could make observations in the social welfare office or when I went to a participant's home to conduct an interview. I would, for example, make notes of the kind of house they lived in, whether it was thatched or tin roofed, whether they had a granary at home or how far they lived from the boma. While observing a research site is almost inevitable, observation in this research was intentional. As explained at the

beginning of this chapter, observation was intended to provide the backdrop to further data collection using in-depth interviews, discussed in the next section.

Consequently, the first month of fieldwork was devoted to observation. While the officers were aware that I was observing their work when we were in the office, service users coming into the office were not. This was mainly because of the practical difficulty in trying to introduce myself to every service user who came into the office. However, in instances where we travelled out for a monitoring, sensitisation or for payment of social cash transfers, I was introduced by the welfare officers as a researcher working in their office for a short period.

The observation technique used in this research borrowed extensively from the kind used in institutional ethnography (Devault, 2006;Smith, 2002, 2005) in its focus on text-mediated relations of ruling in organisational practice. Although I made notes of each day I spent in the welfare office or went out for fieldwork with the welfare officers, my observation focused on the practices and process of welfare administration within the district social welfare office and how officer and service users' interaction shape the service users' everyday life. Another central focus was the understanding of policy dictates among welfare officers. Although open and flexible to serendipity (Fine & Deegan, 1996), the process of observation was structured around these issues. Being stationed in the social welfare office and travelling with the welfare team during their field work sessions gave me an opportunity to observe them in action but also the chance to ask follow up questions on my notes to understand for example, why they emphasised a specific issue during a field visit and not another.

3.3.2. In depth interviews

Semi structured interviews were conducted with the various groups of participants outlined above. According to Galletta (2013, p. 45), "semi structured interviews incorporate both

open-ended and more theoretically driven questions eliciting data grounded in the experience of the participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research" hence the decision to employ them here. The structure and nature of these interviews differed per sub group of participants as explained below:

3.3.2.1. People living in poverty

In depth, semi structured interviews were conducted with people living in poverty to gain understanding of their various life experiences. With prior permission and consent, the interviews were all recorded, and I kept a notebook where I recorded important points. The questions asked focused on daily routines, what they did for a living, their wishes, hopes and aspirations as well as the nature of social interaction. Using a topic guide, the interview relied on the use of sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1969). These concepts were drawn from reviewed literature, policy and theory to explore participants' experiences. Based on what the participants said, I would then probe specific incidents, ask for examples and reflections of why they thought things were that way and what they made of them.

The idea of sensitising concepts, introduced by Blumer (1954, 1969) in his critique of operationalization in research from an interpretivist position, is about using concepts as general reference, to provide clues and suggestions in empirical analysis while allowing for participants, seen as the social actors, to reshape its meaning and nature as per their lived experience. Doing so, it is argued, enables the meaning of concepts and theory more generally, to be drawn from the exposition of what is common, similar or different in empirical experience rather than from definition, (Blaikie, 2000;Charmaz, 2005;Flick, 2009).

Sensitizing concepts such as status within local settings, autonomy, belonging, recognition, dignity, inclusion, respect and identity were used to prompt responses from participants. Interesting ideas were then pursued as the conversation evolved. The loose structure of the interviews offered "flexibility to approach different respondents differently while still covering the same areas of data collection" (Noor, 2008, p. 1602) and made it possible to pursue the different lines of thought including the different concepts that participants introduced to the interview in their discussion of the said sensitising concepts.

In keeping with the philosophy of neutrality discussed earlier, the word or concept of poverty was never floated to research participants. Typically, an interview would open with a request to the participant to give a brief account of who they were and what they did for a living. It was often in discussing what one did for a living that the concepts of hardship and lack often came up, leading to the concept of poverty under the term, "umwasauka", described mainly in chapter four of this thesis.

The interviews also explored participation within community life as well as the notion of relationships of support through the use of social mapping techniques. Mapping techniques such as drawing are often used in research with children and young people (Bagnoli, 2009;Christensen & James, 2012;Copeland & Agosto, 2012;Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005;Morrow, 2001, 2003) and are argued to provoke conversation by allowing the participant to visualise the subject matter and portray it graphically while encouraging individual interpretation. This technique is distinct from related techniques like vignettes, for example, which offer a participant a concrete example of an experience or behaviour and asks them for their comment on which further discussion is then based (Barter & Renold, 1999, 2000).

In this research, mapping was seen as an organic way for participants to reflect on their various relationships, enabling them to represent and then discuss which ones they had most ease of interaction with or found useful, in what sense and why. Participants drew on a piece of paper these relationships as branches flowing from their lives. Often, these drawings emphasised features that defined these relationships such as how close they were socially which revolved around issues of support both material and social, belongingness or being othered, for example, as discussed in chapter four of this thesis.

3.3.2.2. Key informant interviews (Welfare officers and policy experts)

These interviews were conducted after the first phases of field work with people living in poverty and the policy analysis had been completed. This decision was deliberate so that this phase of interviews could be informed by the reflections from the previous phase. Interviews with the social welfare officers and the community welfare assistants focused on their everyday work, their interpretation of policy documents in their practice and their relationships and interaction with people living in poverty and the communities they serve in general at a local level. Interviews with policy experts were more macro in orientation and took a national outlook focusing on their perspectives on the nature of anti-poverty policy, the priorities and politics of poverty reduction and the influences shaping policy making.

3.4. Data analysis and interpretation

3.4.1. Transcription of interview and observation data

The interviews were conducted in Chew, Nyanja, Nsenga, Ngoni and sometimes Tumbuka.[5] Interviews needed to be translated and transcribed into the language of analysis and later the thesis. The languages of the interview represented things in slightly different ways than the language of analysis. Because there were words that I could not fully understand despite having fluency in all the languages, to provide as accurate translations, I worked with my father to first transcribe while translating all the recorded interviews into English by handwriting them into a notebook. I could not afford a paid translator.

However, my father has fluency in all the languages of the province and, having lived most of his life in various parts of the province, I judged him to have the necessary 'intellectual biography,' (Stanley, 1990;Temple, 1997) to offer accurate translations of actions embedded in the meaning of words and proverbs often spoken by participants. Furthermore, deferring translations I could not clearly grasp to him also enabled me to question his translations in real time. Doing the transcription and transcribing during the fieldwork period had several advantages. For example, it gave me the opportunity to learn probing techniques to refine my interviewing technique. For example, I learned after the first five interviews that I had to be direct and precise but very polite in my interviewing otherwise participants would only give me general descriptive replies that did not really answer my questions. It also afforded me the

[5] According to national census data Chewa is the largest ethnic group and most common language in Eastern Province at 34.6% of the population while Nsenga is 20.3%, Tumbuka is 5.6% and Senga is at 0.6%. As a cross language Nyanja is only has a national estimate at 14.8% of the Zambian population (Central Statistical Office, 2012b).

benefit of seeing important emerging threads in the data that I could follow up on or emphasise during subsequent interviews. Further to these advantages, the fact that I translated and transcribed the interviews by handwriting them into a notebook and then typed them into Microsoft word in preparation for analysis in NVivo 11.0, enabled me to develop a deep understanding of the data.

To avoid misrepresentation of participants' discussion, interviews were transcribed verbatim including words such as 'you know' and 'um.' This was important because the analysis focused both on the topic of talk and the features of talk as context of the discussion (Roulston, 2014). This was then followed by a second step in which conceptual equivalence was used to correct the transcriptions where the literally translated equivalents made the text difficult to read or understand (Temple, 1997). This switching between the literal and conceptual was important in informing translations of words like 'respect', which has a literal equivalence in English (the language of analysis) yet carried several different conceptual meanings as experienced and represented by participants in the languages of the interviews.

3.4.2. Analysis and interpretation

Although most of the data analysis occurred after fieldwork, it is right to say that preliminary analysis occurred during fieldwork. My data analysis approach had grounded theory influences even though this study did not employ a grounded theory methodology in describing, classifying and connecting the data (Blaikie, 2000). The first stage of analysis involved reading the typed interview transcripts, a process referred to as deep immersion (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014), to identify core content. Based on this reading and on the sensitising concepts adopted from theory and literature, a coding framework was developed. Open coding was then used to code each transcript by assigning associated conceptual labels to parts of the transcript that conveyed a general idea about the topical features of that section

(Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014;Roulston, 2014;Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). Open, manual coding was preferred to auto coding because the interview transcripts were unstructured.

The initial coding framework included over one hundred codes, some similar to each other. Once this was done, I then coded down to fewer codes that were more specific and with more refined boundaries using repeating ideas. This process of reading transcripts, deciding codes, applying them and them coding down from generic to more specific codes was part of the analytic process of understanding the data and its contents (Gibbs, 2014). I then proceeded to conduct thematic analysis beginning by building up the codes into overarching categories of relevant themes. While the theory and literature provided the sensitising concepts and, therefore, provided the analytic lens, research participants' accounts drove the interpretation. I relied on the query tools in NVivo to search and retrieve codes and used word trees and maps to identify regularities, variations and singularities as well as the connections among them (Blaikie, 2000).

I then used a compare and contrast approach to interrogate regularities, variations and singularities across participant narratives. This approach was possible largely due to the nature of the interview conversations where participants would provide specific examples of experiences or events. Some of the thick description of participants' narratives is retained in the presentation of findings in order to provide context. The coding framework used in data analysis is provided in the table 3.3 below while the final coding mind map is presented in Appendix Eight:

Table 3.3 Coding framework

Code families and hierarchies	
Construction of poverty - meaning of poverty, self-description & identity, positioning of self, status, materiality, feelings and emotions, references used like the 'divine' - Vulnerabilities, risks - Exploitation/ domination/ abuse - Managing/responding/ fight back - Needs vs resources Self-identity - Perceptions of self, location within social relationships; roles and responsibilities, belonging, self-direction (agency) constraints and enablers, confidence, assertiveness, agency Household responsibility - Gender, age, dependency, number of orphaned children - Kind of needs, geography Knowledge of social services - Concept of state, thinking about entitlements - Kinds of services available in the district - Awareness of rules of access, confidence - Location of services Community involvement - Self-positioning - interaction - Responsibilities, - Contribution/roles - Perception of others - Participation - voice - Isolation/ distancing - belonging - Tension, quarrels Networks - Formal/informal, - Connectedness, support - Relationships - Religious and non-religious; of support, material and non-material, experiences of dignity or - Indignity, recognition, (shame) and respect etc. - rationalisation of membership/lack of Recognition - What it means to recognise, forms of - Behavioural aspects, treatment, verbal and non-verbal signals - The basis for recognition, material or non-material Psychological states - Feelings, pain, joy, power(lessness) - Confidence, dignity, shame, exploitation, domination, assertiveness Future concepts - Hopes/aspiration, fears, pains, joys,	**Attached to nature of poverty** How we live – meaning material aspects of lifestyle, nature of livelihood and sources, reference to food, strategies for livelihood, assets such as land etc, descriptives, figures of speech, symbolisms etc **Attached to marital status: single**, type of marriage; also, physical health **Experience of asking for a service** Encounters with officialdom **Examples and incidences of such including justifications** **Linking community involvement with social interaction various level** **Other issues as emerging** Death, loss, fear of death, self as beyond life

3.4.3. Policy analysis

This current analysis treats policy as discourse, an approach that assumes that 'problems are created or given shape in the very proposals offered as responses' (Bacchi, 2000, p. 48). Discourse, in this analysis, is seen as a collective of ideas, concepts and categories that are produced, reproduced and transformed to offer meaning to reality (Fischer, 2003;Hajer, 1995;Kolocek, 2017). In the case of poverty, discourse provides the moral contours of the social space in which people in poverty orientate their lives (Charlesworth, 2000 cited in Batty & Flint, 2010).

According to Apthorpe and Gasper (2014), policy analysis of discourse enables policy analysis to not only focus on the end results of policies but to also examine how the various aspects of policy are linked. The first of these is the formation and use of concepts which are used to name the problem and label targets of policy interventions, which are often used to persuade audiences. Such concepts, as in the case of this current research include concepts like 'rural poverty' 'extreme poor' 'vulnerable', 'dependent', or 'dignity.' The second is framing – what or who is included or excluded in the description of the problem and solution which may be implicit or explicitly stated in the policy statements. The third one is the narratives or stories which are presented as evidence and augmentation to make the problem and its solutions plausible. An example of similar approach to such analysis of poverty can be found in (Gubrium et al., 2013).

It has to be stated, that treating policy as discourse as is done in this research is likely to lead to particular conclusions which may not be drawn if a different approach to policy analysis were adopted (Gale, 2001). The 'what is the problem represented to be' proposed by Bacchi and used in this research, for example, starts at the understanding that problems do not exist out there but are constructed and given form in the nature of proposed solutions (Bacchi,

2000, p. 48) and that these representations affect the understanding of the problem at a particular point in time as well as 'produce and reinforce particular categories of people' who are affected (Bacchi & Eveline, 2015, pp. 111-112).

Based on the above understanding, the relevant documents for analysis in this research were those which address the question of poverty directly and set national direction on action against it. Many documents could be included in the analysis. For example, agriculture policies address the question of poverty in some form but were excluded from analysis because they do not address poverty directly and drew their direction from other documents such as the National Development Plans (NDP'S). In this regard, the corpus for analysis included those policy documents that address poverty directly. These include the Poverty Reduction Paper (PRSP) 2002, the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) 2007-2010, the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) 2011-2015, the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (RSNDP) 2013-2016, the National Social Protection Policy 2014 (NSPP) and the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) reports. The analysis draws on previous policy analysis work on policy framing (Bacchi, 2000, 2009;Dekker, 2016;Walker, 2014) and discourses of poverty, (Chase & Walker, 2015b;Mwiine & Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014;Wale & Foster, 2007;Watkins-Hayes & Kovalsky, 2016;Wenden, 2008).

This form of policy analysis was appropriate for this research because the research was interested in linking policy discourse to experience. As Fairclough (2013a) argues, discourses might, under certain conditions, be operationalized and become ways of (inter)acting, inculcated as ways of being (identities) or might physically be materialised as new ways of organizing space. The framework used to analyse the policy documents was driven by five questions presented below:

a.) How is poverty as a social problem constructed in policy documents?

b.) How are people living in poverty constructed in this policy representation?

c.) How (if at all) has the representation of poverty and people in poverty changed over time?

d.) What elements of the problem are emphasised, which ones are not and what explains the emphasis or omissions?

e.) How do constructions of policy above compare to the experiences of people living in poverty?

The process of analysis involved a comprehensive reading of the policy documents to understand their historical context as well as substantive content. Based on this reading, core messages about poverty were identified. The messages were then coded by theme focusing on aspects such as definitions of poverty, characterisations and classifications of people living in poverty, causes of poverty, effects of poverty, solution to poverty and assumptions. The analysis paid particular attention to the use of words, metaphors and their definitions Maia (2014) as well as the evidence base offered for those assertions. Specific searches were done for words like "poor", "vulnerable", "dignity" or "welfare," and how they are linked in use to reveal moral or ideological underpinnings embedded within the poverty discourses (Kolocek, 2017). Such words, as used in poverty policy have been known to structure social relationships especially in how policy is applied by people in decision making positions (DeVault & McCoy, 2006).

3.5. Ethical considerations

This research received CUREC 2 approval from the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford. The research conformed

to conventional ethical standards such as informed consent and voluntary participation of research participants. It also conformed to the legal requirements of research in Zambia through approval by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare Services in Lusaka. All interview transcripts were anonymised to avoid identification of participants and only participants who agreed to be named have been named. Permission to audio-record the interviews was sought and granted before each interview. Only two participants refused to be audio-recorded and in both cases, I took notes for the interviews.

Broadly, two ethical concerns which arose during the process of this research are worth discussing here. The first is that CUREC 2 approval dictated that I should not use any intermediaries in the recruitment or interviewing of participants due to the sensitive nature of the research which may cause shaming. I was asked to recruit participants directly by calling them on their mobile phones. This condition proved impossible to fulfil. Either the participant did not have a mobile phone or they lived in an area that does not have reception or electricity. Even the department of social welfare still relies on the community welfare assistants who act as messengers by personally taking messages to villages, door to door. The area in which I was conducting research does not have house numbers or postal codes. It is impossible to locate a particular house without a local guide.

Furthermore, I was advised by the Social Welfare officers that, for my own safety, I should only visit households in the company of a known face. I was informed that a researcher from Palm Associates, a research consultancy firm evaluating the Social Cash Transfer with UNICEF, had insisted on visiting households on his own had been attacked by a participant's husband a month before I arrived for fieldwork. In light of this information, my only option was to rely on community welfare assistants as guides to help me locate the houses of

potential participants that I had sampled. However, I limited the involvement of the welfare assistant to this role.

The second ethical issue relates to the researcher's commitment to the plight of research participants. In many instances, research participants in Zambia tend to get reimbursement for their time in monetary form, not as payment but as a token of appreciation. I did not have the financial resources to fulfil this practice. However, sometimes the homes I went to were in desperate need. Sometimes, especially with the older participants, and those participants who explained during the interview that they had failed to take maize to the mill because they did not have the milling fee of K7 [£0.50], I offered them this sum after the interview. To minimise expectation of payment, I did not discuss the subject with participants, but I was conflicted that only a few participants got some form of appreciation. However, I did not have the resources to cover everyone but knew very well that if I did not give them the K7, they would not take their maize to the mill and I could not imagine what that would mean for them.

Chapter Four

Surviving at the Margins: Poverty as suffering involving psychological pain and ontological insecurity

The first of three empirical chapters focusing experiences of people in poverty, this chapter discusses participants' constructions of poverty. It describes the socioeconomic conditions of participants and examines how they make sense of and respond to these conditions. It shows that poverty as they experience it has various aspects which culminate in deep suffering involving psychological pain and ontological insecurity. 'Suffering' as used in this chapter does not denote victimhood. It is used in the sense articulated by Frost and Hoggett (2008) who, building on Bourdieu and Accardo (1999), see suffering as a lived experience of inhabiting social structures of oppression and the hurt and pain that comes from it which includes internalised components of thinking, feeling, responding and acting.

This chapter argues that even though what participants immediately described as poverty was extreme material deprivation – almost starvation – the concepts of psychological pain and ontological insecurity best characterise their experiences culminating in what they describe as living a life of suffering. Psychological pain is defined as how one feels inside, an ache of the mind and heart in response to negative psychological stimuli (Mee, Bunney, Reist, Potkin, & Bunney, 2006;Shneidman, 1999). Ontological insecurity, however, can be seen as the absence of ontological security defined as a stable mental state and sense of self derived from a sense of continuity in one's life events leading to stable emotions based in the avoidance of chaos and anxiety (Giddens, 1991a, 1991b;Hiscock, Kearns, MacIntyre, & Ellaway, 2001;Laing, 1990). Poverty, this chapter argues, is a lack of recognition at both institutional and social levels leading to the various experiences of psychological pain resulting from

aspiration gaps, domination by others and fear of humiliation which participants articulated. Hence, poverty in this chapter is critiqued for the way in which it undermines subjectivities (Schweiger, 2014). By making this argument, this chapter contributes to broader literatures on the meaning of poverty and its various aspects especially in low income countries where vast populations not only experience 'acute' and 'chronic' material deprivation but where these two concepts have increasingly become political and developmental buzzwords. Secondly, and specific to the study context, this chapter affirms the structural nature of poverty and enables an understanding of it as multidimensional, wherein the tendency is to frame poverty in entirely material terms. Overall, the analysis developed here provides the context within which the analyses in subsequent chapters of the thesis are developed.

This chapter is structured according to the three independent but interrelated themes around which participants' constructions of poverty converged. The first theme – contending with material deprivation, presented in the first section of the chapter relates to conditions of extreme material deprivation bordering on starvation which participants conceive as 'suffering' and 'struggles for survival'. These descriptions of life revolved around lack of material resources because of failures in farming, participants' main livelihood activity. The failure of agriculture is explained by several combining factors including productivity loss as a result of: diminished bodily strength due to old age, illness and/or bereavement; environmental processes such as poor rainfall and soil erosion; and the failure of government policy. It demonstrates how individual agency can be constrained by structural factors. Within these experiences, and in a way that frames autonomy as relational (Devine, Camfield, & Gough, 2008), participants explained poverty as living in thin relations where one has no support while also describing it as a life where one cannot find the things they need on their own. However, while experiencing such extreme levels of material deprivation,

participants were keen to contribute to their local churches by making offerings from their harvests, behaviour that undermines their material wellbeing but which they justify around ideals of self-identity. Analysis based on recognition theory suggests that such actions represent both resistance to labels of poverty and a claim to dignity asserted through membership contribution (Fraser & Honneth, 2003;Lister, 2004a;Scott, 2013).

The second section is about unclear futures: of not being able to fulfil aspirations for themselves or their children. It details experiences of a lack of mobility under the theme of aspiration gaps and social and institutional barriers to resources. Likening immobility to 'being tied to the ground such that one never moves,' participants saw poverty as defined by things never going your way, an experience compounded by domination from better off neighbours. Entwined with these were experiences of illness as well as bereavement, which participants argued left them feeling powerless and disoriented. Constructed around the notion of loss and loneliness, repeated experiences of bereavement appeared to accentuate feelings of things not going well, especially among female participants.

Coupled with grief, which most participants argued was difficult to handle while contending with material scarcity, bereavement has negative effects on participants' ontological security. Consequently, participants found it deeply troubling to discuss their futures. In affirmation of previous research by (Dornan & Pells, 2015), imagined futures were dominated by concern for the wellbeing of children, most of whom were orphaned and in which schooling was perceived as the only viable route to a better future. Yet, most were unable to send children to school. This anxiety was even more deeply emphasised among older participants for who imagining the future evoked fears of their own death and what would happen to the orphaned children under their care. Thus, concern for the future wellbeing of children remained a major anxiety and source of stress.

The last theme – demonstrating, perhaps, the social construction of dignity and affirming previous research (Chase & Walker, 2013b;Walker, 2014;Walker et al., 2013) – focuses on participants' discussion of poverty as shaming. These conversations of shame and humiliation included previous experiences of illness or bereavement, and reflections about one's own death. While illness and bereavement feature in the previous two sections, both are central here as vectors of shame due to their becoming social events attended by community members.

Participants described both illness and bereavement as, 'the things that bring shame' because they draw the public into the private physical space of one's home, exposing even the otherwise concealed conditions of material deprivation to strangers. Reflecting a notion of graded deprivation in which participants thought some level of deprivation should remain private, participants with experience of bereavement explained that funerals had unmasked them and revealed to the 'world' that they sleep on the floor or did not have clothing, blankets or cooking utensils. Participants who had not had this experience still dreaded bereavement for similar reasons.

Among older participants, there was an even stronger fear of indecent death where they spoke about needing a dignified house, a proper house for mourners to sit in during one's own funeral as exemplified in the expression, 'a brick house to die in.' Overall, this chapter demonstrates that even though the material may take centre stage in discussions of poverty, its experience involves non-material dimensions which may induce even more psychological pain and a sense of ontological insecurity leading to conceptualisation of life in poverty as suffering.

4.1. Contending with material deprivation

Participants rely on farming as their main livelihood activity in a subsistence economy and this was confirmed in their income needs. Asked to describe their living conditions, participants spoke about their lives using the phrases, 'kunkala mo vutikila,' 'mo saukila saukila,' 'mo soba,' and 'umoyo wau mwasauka.' These phrases – which translate as living in suffering, struggling to live, living (doing) without and life as a poor person – portray life as difficult and negative. Asked to elaborate what these experiences entail, participants' discussions commonly indicated that their lives involved desperate material lack defined by poor and an inadequate nutrition, persistent illnesses and inability to meet care needs of children, including their education:

> "Suffering is in many ways but in my case, it is lacking money, lacking food, being sick and failing to find what the children need. Sometimes you have food but cannot find money to buy relish. Like this year, the rain season was not good," *Standwell, 60, non-cash transfer participant*

> "I struggle a lot...now when we have harvested our crops, I can sell one gallon of maize and buy what we want but other parts of the year, and it is very difficult even to find food… Just like that," *Yolodia, 35, female non-cash transfer participant*

Since most of the interviews took place at the home of the participants, the descriptions of life as involving desperate material lack were often emphasised through gestures and invitations to the researcher to survey the research participant's home or environment to verify the accuracy of their descriptions. In most cases, they would refer to the granary, a symbol of self-sufficiency, wealth and hard work to establish that they did not have any food or demonstrate that they did not have any property or livestock from which they could draw a livelihood. For example, Joyce, an old woman living on her own but within walking distance of her grandchild's house, spoke about the extent of this material deprivation in vividly symbolic terms, stating that rats did not even come to her house because they were better off

in the bush where they had a chance of finding some grains. Suggesting that her 'poverty' was visible and physically apparent, Joyce gestured to me to enter her house and see that she did not have food and that she was 'suffering':

> "Look around here and enter the house. It is not locked, there is no door. See for yourself if there is anything in there to convince you that I am not living in poverty [kuti nine lini osauka]. Rats do not even enter my house. How can I be living in the village and yet rats do not even enter my house?" *Joyce, 78, female non-cash transfer participant*

The symbolisms imbued in Joyce's statement convey the extent of material deprivation prevalent among research participants but also how they feel about it given that, as they suggested, living in the village should mean that one can grow their own food. The abundance of food in one's house should be able to attract rats from the fields to your home. However, beyond the immediacy of material lack described above, the participants saw their lives as lacking the prospect of good things and having limited options. As shown in the quotations below and highlighting the notion of thin relations, life was characterised as having no one to help them with their needs verbalised as a life of suffering:

> "Suffering means you have nothing and *no means* to get the things that you need," *Joseph, 84, male non-cash transfer participant*

> "Umwasauka [poverty] means suffering to me. [It means] not being able to fend for yourself and *having no one to help you in life*. A person like this does not manage to find what *they need for life on their own*," *Lisa, 26 female non-cash transfer participant*

> "Suffering means you *have nothing and no one to help you* get that thing that you want that would help you.... There is something in your heart itching you but there is *nothing you can do about it*; *you are on your own,*" *Casildah, 52, female non-cash transfer participant*

The language of the heart used by Lisa is an important hint of the kind of pain she refers to, one that is deeply felt. As will be shown later, a similar pain was referenced in discussions of imagined futures. A common issue, the notion of 'help' as reflected in the statements above

was particularly illuminating from a relational point of view because participants live in closely-knit communities in which relations of material interdependence would ordinarily be expected. While participants spoke about poverty as a life where there is no one to help you, they also described it as *not being able to fend for yourself* or *find the things you need on your own* – seemingly contradictory positions. However, participants explained the value of material resources in the context of what one is able to do to support oneself and others as well. The first statement represents poverty as being in a position of thin relations and underlines participants' desire for relations of material interdependence which they currently lack. The second part emphasises independence and autonomy – abilities that participants seem to suggest that poverty erodes. That participants construct poverty in this manner is of theoretical importance for this present research. As will be shown both in this and subsequent chapters, that constructions of poverty involve both concerns about independence and interdependence in participants' experiences foregrounds the centrality of relationality to poverty.

For most participants, these conditions of living can be explained by failure at farming. Interrogating this failure raises questions of legal forms of recognition (Schweiger, 2013a). Here, the question first and foremost is about how or whether people in poverty are considered within national policy architecture in ways which enable them to respond to or to deal with such failure. Failure at farming is driven by a combination of factors at the intersection of personal, institutional and environmental factors. These include ailing health and strength, policy failure such as exclusion from government fertiliser subsidies, as well as deterioration of land quality and poor rainfall. As opposed to other contexts where access to land is an issue, participants in this research reported access to land usually passed down from parents to children. From discussions, access to land was easier among women, who,

according to norms of matriliny practised in the area, are the custodians of family land. Yet precisely because the system of land tenure is by inheritance, most of it is now depleted and requires extensive investment. Access to fertiliser is therefore crucial for yields.

However, the common experience was of exclusion from support such as the farmer input support programme, a programme which as will be discussed in chapter seven targets *'vulnerable'* but *'viable'* farmers. This programme require that one has money to subscribe and access fertiliser and yet most people do not have money for the initial investment, generating an endless loop of exclusion. Most study participants are never able to participate. As Monica a participant not in receipt of the cash transfer and Stephen a 65 year old cash transfer recipient quoted below explained, they have the land but due to perennial poor yields, they do not have produce to sell so as to obtain money to acquire such inputs:

> "The land is exhausted. Our friends who apply fertiliser tend to get something. For us, it is difficult…we cannot access fertiliser from the Ministry because it requires money but we do not have the money. What can we use to pay for redeeming it [fertiliser]?" *Monica, 65, female Non cash transfer participant*

> "I have a field but I did not plant anything this year because the soil is exhausted. It is completely eroded and needs a lot of fertiliser but I do not have fertiliser so it is better that I focus my effort on odd jobs where I can get something back…for fertiliser you must pay a certain amount and I usually do not have that money. I buy food with the money we receive [cash transfer] so that the children can eat. It is not enough to buy food and pay for the fertiliser and food is very difficult in the rainy season so I would rather focus on buying actual food…" *Stephen, 65, male Cash transfer participant*

This exclusion from governmental support is well summarised in the quotation below from the leader of the district welfare assistance committee, whose reflection illustrates how environmental changes confound the problems discussed above. In the intersection of such environmental change and policy failure, possession of land which is often thought to be the starting point for security is proving insufficient. This informant argued that in light of these constraints, the agency of individuals including their hard work has a diminished effect:

> "Farming on which the life of this district depends is difficult to manage. It requires resources and good soils but unfortunately, there is little governmental support to the agricultural sector. Before, people who would be poor were lazy but now even the hardworking ones are poor because the soil does not produce any more, it needs fertiliser which we do not have and the rainfall patterns are changing," DWAC chairperson

While female access to land was secured through such gender norms which privilege women, female participants' discussion of their exclusion from access to fertiliser seemed to suggest their belief that their exclusion was gendered. Specifically, widowed or unmarried female participants felt that they could not access fertiliser from the government because they did not have men in their lives to fight for them. To these participants, men are better at getting such things done. Having a man in your life, they argued, makes things easier. Men, they thought, would enable them to access such programmes, which are usually controlled by other men in the village, because men know how to deal with other men. This feeling of lack of symbolic presence was not different for women who were in receipt of the social cash transfer where one would expect that since they are entrusted with money, they may have begun to develop such confidence in themselves.

These observations point to how broader society may shape individual lives including their perceptions of the world. The observations were true to the extent that village committees are dominated by men, a fact which explains feelings among some women that being male or having a man in their lives would enable access to fertiliser. However, when interrogated against the experiences of other participants, being male or 'having a man' in the family had no effect on access to fertiliser, at least among people who participated in this study. None of the married women with living husbands or men who participated in this research had access to such governmental programmes for farmers suggesting that gender may not be the issue as suggested by these explanations.

However, it is likely that even though the experiences of other participants in this research did not substantiate the views of widowed and unmarried women; women's views are based in the wider sociocultural context in which masculinity occupies a position of privilege in public deliberation. Cliggett's (2005) work on aging, gender and famine among the Gwembe Tonga (a matrilineal ethnic group in the Southern province of Zambia) shows that men, even though they do not share family or clan identity with their wives and children, are powerful individuals in control of their social relationships and resources, especially those held in the nuclear family. Hence, this articulated confidence in the abilities of men and women's lack of confidence in their own may be a product of experience.

4.1.1. Enacting identity and belongingness through membership contribution

Despite the conditions of material deprivation discussed above, participants offer significant portions of their farm produce to their churches – a practice that compromises their food security. This practice was as prevalent as it was surprising among Christian participants who were in the majority. Excerpts from interviews with Violet and Avaina, chosen here for how they reveal the layering of social meanings behind what may be considered an irrational practice from a different vantage point, provide a vivid illustration of this practice. The two participants had very small granaries and many dependents. It was clear from their own explanations and the researcher's observation that their grain was insufficient to cover their food needs until the next harvest. Yet, these participants insisted on making grain offerings to their congregations arguing that it is what they do as Christians. Their interviews provide some powerful insights into the idea of identity and belongingness among people in poverty, raising the question of whether poverty enables reflexive agency and highlighting the complexity of human experience (Fleetwood, 2008;Frost & Hoggett, 2008;Hoggett, 2001) :

> "After shelling the maize that we harvest, we all give a portion [50killograms] as *masika* [offering] to the church. Every church member does it… I do not know why we take but we follow the rules and we have been doing it for as long as I have been a child. And because others take, I also take. So, this month of June we are starting *masika*…I do not know what would happen if I did not take. I do not think anything will happen but maybe people will be looking at you and saying she has maize but she did not give an offering. God may not be happy," *Avaina, 77, female Cash transfer participant*

As shown above, Avaina was certain that she would be making this offering even though she was not as convinced about why she should. She also clarified that church members are only encouraged 'as Christians' to take part in *masika* for which there were no immediately discernible consequences for those who failed to comply. However, it appears, at least from her explanation that her fear of the divine and the possible scorn of her fellow Christians motivate her to participate in *masika*. While Avaina could not explain clearly the reason why she participates in *masika* despite her status, Violet who was in an even worse material condition was very clear about her reasons for making the offering. She is a Christian and this offering was customary for her:

> "It is part of what we do as Christians. We make *masika* [offering] with our first fruit harvest. We do it every year, and everyone in the church does it," *Violet, 6, female Cash transfer participant*

The, 'what we do as Christians' in the statement above, a common reference among participants reveals one of the ways in which they self-identify. The 'we' positions both participants within that community of Christians, a socially valuable identity and something that confers a desired form of recognition among peers. That they are able to see themselves this way and that they are able to engage in this activity signals membership. It also demonstrates the crucial role of being able to participate in one community at this local level. It also demonstrates a form of agency. However, it is also not difficult to see how this participation while enhancing one dimension of their own wellbeing is also detrimental to

their material wellbeing. These experiences provide a window into the trade-offs that people in poverty contend with.

4.2. Aspiration gaps and the hidden barriers to social mobility: 'It's like I am tied to the ground.'

Some scholars, (Batty & Flint, 2010;Canvin, Marttila, Burstrom, & Whitehead, 2009;Frost & Hoggett, 2008) argue that the effects of class and limitations imposed by poverty may dampen aspiration among people in poverty because dominant discourses may 'seep into their consciousness' causing them to internalise 'not making it' as personal failure. The views of participants reported in this section touch on these assertions. However, the experiences of these research participants show people who are aware of their aspirations but whose hopes are constrained by their circumstances leading to negative feelings. Often stated in the phrase 'even when you try all you can, you are still on the same spot,' frustration at the direction of one's life or its stagnation were commonly discussed by research participants in their descriptions of what their lives are like and of their imagined futures. Participants discussed aspirations to improve their lives and analysis reveals that what they see as stagnation is intertwined with barriers to support as discussed above as well as the experience of domination by others. Being on the receiving end of this domination reinforces feelings of lack of progress and helplessness. As this section will show, these experiences are best captured by the concept of aspiration gaps, defined as the "difference between the standard of living that's aspired to and the standard of living that one already has," (Ray, 2006, p. 412). Aspiration gaps are potent transmitters of psychological pain and in this case, the concept is useful in enabling this research to understand the participants' experience of poverty as involving a lack of mobility. It also enables a contextualisation of the effects that such experience has on their worldview.

Characterising life in poverty as *umoyo wakuti vintu sivi ku yendela,* to mean a 'life whereby nothing goes for you (your way)' – they made comparisons between their efforts and ambition to move up in life against their life circumstances. In most instances, they were very clear about the ways in which they wanted their lives to improve and articulated frustration at trying everything to make things better but not being able to progress due to various constraints, most of which were structural.

Frustrations at the direction of one's life were most apparent when participants were invited to discuss how they saw the future – frustrations which were underpinned by institutional barriers to resources. While all research participants had difficulty discussing the future or imagining it because things had not been going well for a long time, there were important differences between participants under the cash transfer programme and those who were not. Linking back to the barriers to support presented earlier, research participants such as Velinus quoted below who are in receipt of the cash transfer were relatively more optimistic about the future and, in this way, differed from non-recipients:

> "My future is not very clear but now that I am on this programme, I think it is better. When I was strong, I used to work in my field. But now I do not. So, with this money, I buy an animal and keep so I bought a pig but it will take time for it to help me as days go... but now I feel better," *Velinus, 63 female Cash transfer participant*

Reflecting the potential value of cash transfers and more generally of having a form of support, the optimism among cash transfer recipients highlighted above was also shared by research participants who had only been enumerated but had not yet received any cash transfers:

> "…I have hope because I was told in the second intake, God willing I will be picked for the cash transfer…," *Tembo, 52, male non cash transfer participant*

However, participants like Naomi and Rebecca who were not in receipt of the cash transfer imagined grim futures. To these participants, the future was a distant reality, something that they did not think about. Thinking about the future, they argued, only filled their hearts with pain and made life even more difficult:

> "I look at my *Kusauka* 'suffering/poverty'. This house although it is incomplete used to be my mums and I inherited it when she died. I have no bed and we sleep on the ground even if there is no floor…We need many things but I cannot see how that will change. So, this makes me not think much about the future. It is difficult. You think about what to feed your children, this is a big headache," *Lisa, 26 female cash transfer participant*

> "I do not see a future in this at all… there is no future in a life like this. It is difficult and it is painful. I have no one to take care of me. I live a life of struggle and I think of the children and then I see the suffering that we are going through, I really do not see any future in this. I think about this but there is nothing I can do about," *Rebecca, 62, female non cash transfer participant*

There was unanimity among recipients and non-recipients of cash transfers alike in identifying and emphasising child schooling in their imagination of the futures they desired. In a manner that reflects ambition and encapsulates the theme of aspiration discussed in this section, participants emphasised their desire to educate their children and their distress at failure to do so. These discussions of the future touched on the subject of pain in the heart referenced earlier by Lisa. Reflecting concerns reported by previous research (Dornan and Pells 2015), the future for most participants is only possible if there is a possibility that the lives of their children will be different from their own – something that was conceived as only possible through education:

> "In future, I will be okay if I educate these children because I did not get an education myself but if I can manage to educate them, I will be better," *Felesiya, 39,female Cash transfer participant*

> "I would like for the children to be in school, this is the only future I look forward to," *Chapansi, 63, female non cash transfer participant*

> "For me the future should be about the children's education and food. That is the help I need to make my future better because if I educate the children and find food the problems may be reduced," *Mailesi, 30, female non cash transfer participant*

For participants like Avaina, a grandmother looking after several orphaned children, anxiety about the future involved several conjunctions – meeting the current welfare needs of the children and their education, limited support systems and anxiety about what would happen to them should she die given her advanced age:

> "…I am worried and often I think that if I die, how will these children live? Who will take care of them? I can see even now when I am still alive that no one cares. What about when I die. Would anyone help them? That really pains and troubles me. This boy is an orphan; he stopped school because no one is able to help him. That means he will grow up to be as helpless as I am. I worry a lot but then I have to remind myself to stop because now I have high blood pressure and if I continue it might come again. So, I am not even thinking about it [future] most times. I just live like that," *Avaina, 77, Cash transfer participant*

The expectation that education can deliver better life chances for their children was very strong among participants but the fact that they were unable to do so was difficult to respond to. Understandably, recounting experiences of children being sent back from school for lack of fees and realising that educating their children may not be a possibility made the concept of the future too difficult to discuss or imagine.

4.2.1. Barriers to social mobility

The research identified intersecting barriers to social mobility. Most salient were the power and domination of others, exemplified by lack of recourse in social disputes which in most cases had practical implications on material wellbeing, exacerbated participants' feelings of being trapped. Most participants recollected experiences where they had been unfairly treated but were unable to get justice or compensation for the losses they suffered because of the unfair treatment. In such cases, participants explained, the frustration came from the fact that there were usually no avenues for them to seek redress and even when disputes were resolved

locally, the resolutions were never enforced. This was common for people who had lost their crops because they had been eaten by animals.

Others narrated incidents where they had entered into a gentleman's agreement about doing some work for someone, but that agreement was never fulfilled after they had held up their end of the deal. Many put these experiences down to being in poverty, as well as the geographical remoteness of the areas in which they live, such that the only grievance redressal systems are informal and, as illustrated in subsequent chapters, tend to tilt towards the better off. As explained in the quotes below, people experiencing such incidents had to 'just let them go' and in the case of crops eaten by animals, move to another area which may be less suitable for farming without any guarantee that the incidents would not happen again:

> "…we used to farm near the village but goats and cattle used to eat our produce so we stopped farming from there because we saw that we conflicted with our friends, the owners of the animals. We had made several complaints to them but nothing changed, they never even compensated us so we just changed the field but where we are now, the harvest is poor. This year we got only one cart and it will not be enough for us," *Gertrude, 46, Non cash transfer participant*

> "I had arranged with someone to have my son help them with farming and as payment; they were supposed to come plough our field with their animals. After the child worked, they kept postponing and only came when the ground was dry and the plough could not go into the ground… but there was nothing that we could do, it ended just like that. We lost time," Joseph

This lack of recourse was not different among participants receiving cash transfers. As Salome's case illustrates, having the transfer did not improve her power:

> "…I bought some guinea fowls and a pig with the cash transfer money. The guinea fowls were eaten by dogs belonging to one of our neighbours… we opened a dispute with them and they promised to compensate us but up to now [nine months], nothing has happened. The pig also died and the extension officer told us that it was poisoned but we have never been able to find out who did it…it feels like every time I try something, it does not work out…" *Salome, 45, cash transfer participant*

4.3. Illness and bereavement as exacerbating shame and powerlessness

This section reports findings on research participants' experiences of illness, bereavement and chronic powerlessness. There is a widespread consensus in poverty research on the interplay between ill health, bereavement and poverty. The conventional understanding of this literature is that ill health and bereavement can induce poverty and that for people in poverty, ill health and bereavement can exacerbate poverty while preventing them from bouncing back (Banerjee & Duflo, 2012;Baulch, 2011;Krishna, 2010;Nolan & Whelan, 2011;Walker, 2014). Hence, families living in poverty tend to suffer ill health and bereavement and usually this worsens the extent of their material deprivation. Furthermore, living in poverty stresses families to the extent of exposing them to the risk of violence and child abuse (Meinck, Cluver, & Boyes, 2015). Consequently, health is considered part of the human capital endowment necessary to escape poverty (Baulch, 2011). Other studies (Howard & Millard, 1997);Walker (2014) suggest that illness and bereavement are vectors for shame and stigma for people in poverty. However, the extent to which this interplay between ill health, bereavement and poverty engenders a form of powerlessness, shame and stigma among people in poverty is not well understood in these analyses. The findings in this section build on these previous studies and provide some evidence to clarify this gap.

In line with previous studies, the experiences of participants in this study affirm the significance of health – both physical and mental, to the experience of material deprivation among research participants. Living in a subsistence economy dependent on agriculture, the daily survival of participants depends on labour-intensive work. One's health condition often meant the difference between starvation and sufficiency. The cost of treatment did not appear to be an issue to participants as they, in principle, can access free health care under a government fee waiver policy for rural populations, children under the age of five years and

adults above the age of 60 years. The problem, however, appeared to be the lack of access due to distance to health centres as well as poor quality of care. Hence, participants reported that the type, timing and intensity of illness one experienced were particularly critical for their household status both in terms of food security through farming and ability to engage in waged work.

Specifically, participants' accounts illustrate two ways in which ill health threatened their material circumstances and their lives overall. In the first instance, because, as shown earlier, most households never have sufficient food in a year, even in a good farming season, illness had dire consequences for food security. The illness of the productive member(s) of a household at the 'wrong' time of the year, such as the planting period in the rain season, meant that such households would not have harvests in that year, immediately becoming food insecure. Unfortunately, most participants in this research reported having experienced extended periods of illness, often causing them to fail to farm and to do odd jobs to raise wages. For some participants, illness meant relocation to another area with less favourable conditions for farming. This also disrupted familial relationships and activities such as in the case below, the education of school going children:

> "…We moved here when my mother-in-law became ill. My grandchildren used to go to school but it became difficult because of my mother in law's illness, so they had to quit. When my mother-in-law was ill, we could not stay in the town so we came here until when she passed on. Then we decided to stay and just started farming but the fields are not giving us good yields…," Joseph

The second issue relating to illness to come out of these discussions was the burden of care for ailing relatives. In keeping with gendered expectations, caring for ailing relatives was more common among female than male participants. Participants justified this overrepresentation of women in care work along culturally based ideals of femininity in which women are perceived as 'natural' and therefore better carers than men. However, that

most participants in this study came from women-led households highlights the problematic intersection of normative gender expectations and material conditions of poverty. For participants in this study, periods of caregiving had a severe effect on the poverty status, especially of the female-headed households:

> "I have struggled with food for the children and I am looking after them with difficulty. Last season, when the rains started, I was nursing an ill orphaned child at St Francis Hospital. When I came back the season was over. So, this year we do not have maize. I tried but the field gave us nothing [I did not have a harvest]," *Ailedi, 70, female cash transfer participant*

A similar experience was narrated by Ngawa, a participant who brewed and sold 'Kachasu' a local brew banned by the government due to its high alcohol content. She justified her business as her only way of taking care of her sick husband:

> "Yes, I know brewing kachasu is illegal but there is nothing else I can do because as I have told you my husband is sick and he has been sick for a long time now and does not work. I also do not work [unemployed] and farming alone is difficult. What options do you think I have?" *Ngawa, 40, Non cash transfer participant*

Alongside illness, bereavement was a particularly disempowering experience for research participants in this study. They explained that they were always getting sick or tending to sick relatives and all participants had experienced bereavement at least once. These experiences contribute to the feelings of things never going their way as discussed in the previous section. Other issues such as illness and death depleting labour reservoirs within families as well as the material costs of preparing funerals came up in these discussions, but these are well rehearsed in literature (Greener, 2004;Haacker, 2004;Krishna, 2010;McIntyre, Thiede, Dahlgren, & Whitehead, 2006). However, the ubiquity of death and funerals in Zambian society makes them significant for this research especially for the connotations of shame associated with them.

Due to their nature as social events, illness and bereavement were seen by participants as vectors of recognition. These events mobilise extended families and communities (Jasarevic, 2012). As discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the support participants receive from community members during an illness or bereavement is often framed as a sign of being esteemed by others. However, here, participants reflected on the social judgement hidden within these events. In these conversations dominated by participants' concerns about public perception, illness and bereavement were spoken of as 'vuleta nsoni' – causing embarrassment, in how they unmask one's poverty. Unlike other social events, like weddings or church meetings, the nature of support offered to families with patients often entails visitors entering the home of the patient or bereaved family. In reference to a personal and public self, and suggesting, perhaps, the idea of graded deprivation, participants explained that community members entering one's home - a private space, exposed those aspects of their lives that they had kept hidden from the public and undermined one's public image and value:

> "Even when you live in poverty, there are aspects of your life that people do not see. But when my son died people came. They entered the house to prepare for the funeral and they could see 'kuti niliye viya, kuti nu lala pansi,' [I have no utensils, had no beddings and that I sleep on the floor], it was humiliating," *Tilole, 63, cash transfer participant*

Echoing this concern with one's public image and, perhaps, demonstrating the socially constructed nature of dignity, another participant, Chapansi explained that her house was not 'dignified' because it leaks in the rain season:

> "…My house is bad, it leaks and I do not have the strength to go into the bush to cut new grass to patch up the holes in the roof. When I am sleeping and it starts raining, I must wake, carry my blanket and find a dry corner otherwise I will be soaked…"

More importantly, she emphasised, it was not the kind of house she would want her funeral to be held in. She insisted that while she had come to terms with her material conditions, she

would not like people with whom she was not even close to, to find out about her material conditions of poverty at her death. Her wish was to build a brick house with a roof – such a house, is in her view, was dignified enough for someone to die in:

> "…If my allowance from the cash transfer was bigger, I would buy iron sheets and build a brick house to *die* in. I want a house that gives you dignity. A house made of bricks and with a proper roof. Now I am alive but when I die, people will come here. Where will they sit? What will they think? – because when you die everything comes out in the open even if you yourself are no longer there,"

In addition to the accounts of shame above, some participants spoke of forms of physical as well as psychological helplessness and resignation induced by the grief associated with the experience of bereavement. While they referred to the material costs of funerals as well as the loss of breadwinners, for most, it was the repeated experience of bereavement that entrenched feelings of loss and loneliness. This they argued was difficult to handle while contending with the costs of everyday life. Hence, bereavement seemed to heighten the feelings of dispossession experienced in other areas of life as shown in the quotes below:

> "I had six children but they are all dead. I am here alone and have no more children. These I have here are all grandchildren; they are the ones I've remained with. Everyone else is gone," *Malita, 66, Non cash transfer participant*

> "…my husband died in 2008 and my first born who was looking after me died in 2009. These deaths have really troubled me. I had so much grief; I had no strength to work in the field or to find something to help myself with. It was very hard to think about what to do especially when I think about what I lost [husband and children] and how much I needed to take care of my family. But now that I started receiving the help from the government, I see that at least things are a bit alright," *Margaret 66, cash transfer participant*

4.4. Discussion

According to Lister (2004b, p. 100), poverty is "a two-way relationship but one which is largely defined by the 'non-poor' whose discourses, attitudes and actions can have a profound impact on how poverty is experienced." This observation rings true in the experiences of

research participants presented above. Participants were quick to highlight material deprivation as what living in poverty meant to them. Analysis shows that this deprivation is based in power asymmetries at both institutional and social levels which prevent access to resources. Coupled with experiences of maltreatment and failed aspirations in daily life – captured under the vocabulary of (mis)recognition, the dominant experience among participants is one of psychological pain and a deep sense of injustice undermining their ontological insecurity. This notion of ontological security is important here for how it encapsulates participants' feelings of powerlessness, lack of confidence in their own action affecting their lives as well as the difficulty they have with envisioning futures. As Laing (1990) and Giddens (1991a) have both argued, without a sense of ontological security, it is difficult for one to experience their being as alive and develop confidence in a sense of self-worth.

4.4.1. Structural exclusion

The extent of extreme material deprivation observed among participants in this research is common to analyses of poverty among rural populations that touch on the experiences of subsistence farmers (Banerjee & Duflo, 2012;Bernstein, 1998;Bryceson, 1999;Duflo, 2006). In line with such studies, this present case study provides evidence to further argue that innovative (or strategic) individual action is situated (Sen, 1985) and while it is important of itself, it tends to fail in the wake of broader structural factors such as systemic exclusion from resources and the channels of decision making that influence resource allocation. From a recognition standpoint, this exclusion represents a denial of equal citizenship whereby one has an equal claim to the societal resources that would enable them to attain the socially accepted standard of 'normality' (Schweiger, 2015;Townsend, 1979). As the analysis below shows, this denial of recognition at the institutional level had ripple effects. It opens the

possibilities for forms of disrespect associated with the status of lack of material resources as experiences of participants in this study showed.

To offer an example, the lack of access to government-subsidised fertiliser, articulated by participants in this research, is a result of policy failure both at design and implementation levels. Zambia operates two programmes supporting farmers both with a poverty reduction goal. The Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) which takes up 90% of available government funding to agriculture aims to support 'vulnerable but viable' farmers (Jayne et al., 2011;Mason, Jayne, & Mofya-Mukuka, 2013;Mason & Jayne, 2013). Participating households are meant to pay 10% of the cost of the fertiliser up front and pay the 90% post-harvest under the FISP. Analyses by Mason et al. (2013);Sitko, Bwalya, Kamwanga, and Wamulume (2012), show that the targeting criteria selects households that cultivate two hectares of land and possess non-land assets; this excludes households most in need. This criterion makes it easier for farmers with larger landholdings to access fertiliser. Several studies have shown that farmers cultivating over five hectares, – hence least likely to be poor – make up over fifty per cent of beneficiaries (Mason et al., 2013;Mason & Jayne, 2013).

The Food Security Pack (FSP) which should support small holder farmers whose crops are failing is dwarfed by the FISP due to meagre funding (Jayne et al., 2011). Secondly, the delivery of inputs favours those nearest to the district centres within a radius of 4.5 kilometres (Mason et al., 2013). Households most in need tend to live out beyond this radius. Furthermore, social status plays a crucial role in access with evidence suggesting that social connections to village headmen and chiefs increase chances of access to subsidies (Namonje, 2015;Sitko et al., 2012).

Consequently, household members such as participants in this study, do not benefit from subsidized inputs and cannot benefit from government set floor prices because they do not have the extra grain to sell off, leading to the observed 'mountains of maize, persistent poverty,' in the periods when the nation experienced bumper harvests (Jayne et al., 2011). The experiences of participants shown above, therefore, reflect this intersection between structural exclusion and domination from more wealthy groups which severely constrain their responses to their conditions, further accentuating the stress and strain of meeting household needs.

4.4.2 The costs of recognition and belonging

Analysis reveals that poverty as represented by participants in this study is also about esteem and identity which although related to the material are separate from it. Participants' discussion about their identity as Christians provides a unique point of analysis about the effects of poverty that Lister (2004b) – cited at the start of this section – writes about. It is clear that such behaviour is detrimental to participants' material wellbeing. In view of Appadurai (2004), giving your grain to the church, which the church then uses to cover its needs, when you do not have enough would qualify for behaviour that is considered as subscribing to norms that perpetuate one's material deprivation. Such actions have also previously been described as keeping up appearances (Walker, 2014) and, by Bantebya-Kyomuhendo (2015), as resistance against the identity of poverty which is only reinforced when one fails to give the offering. However, inferring from the logics articulated by research participants, the fundamental underlying theme in these previous analyses is that of recognition and esteem associated with material resources within specific relationships.

Being a Christian and enacting that identity, as participants did in this research, enables them access to the status of church membership – a status that then opens up other opportunities for

esteem. This is in itself a form of agency although it is the kind that contradicts their state of material deprivation, a point made by Sen (1985), and reiterated in Townsend's observation that, "people do not live by bread alone and sometimes, they are prepared to forgo the bread so as to meet a more pressing social need" (Townsend, 1979, p. 915).

More importantly, these behaviours can be understood as claims to dignity and respect and struggles for recognition and against invisibility (Fraser & Honneth, 2003;Lister, 2004a;Scott, 2013). That this behaviour was common among Christian participants, whose congregations encourage the practice as opposed to Muslims whose identities were asserted more visibly by devotion to daily worship, speaks to this point. The meaning of poverty as demonstrated by participants' experiences here therefore can be seen in how it erodes the abilities of individuals to exist as multifaceted beings able to enact their situational identities and meet the role obligations arising from these identities without compromising their own material wellbeing. Thinking of poverty in this way makes it possible to understand why participants frame poverty as a situation on the one hand, lacking the resources that would enable them to be independent (in what can be interpreted as a desire for autonomy), while at the same time complaining about having thin relations.

4.4.3. Decent death

Previous research shows that poverty induces shame (Chase & Walker, 2013a;Foster & Woodthorpe, 2013;Gubrium et al., 2013;Howard & Millard, 1997;Lister, 2004b, 2015;Walker, 2014). Experiences of participants in this research affirm these observations and provide further insight on how poverty may be shameful and how this shame causes anxiety among people living in poverty. While in previous work, shame associated with poverty appears to be restricted to concerns while one is living, the unique insight in this research was that participants were particularly concerned about shame during their own

funerals – when their physical lives would have ended – and that those concerns affected their everyday lives. These concerns mirror the concept of decent death through which Jasarevic (2012) explores how national ideals of good life and decent death are underwritten and undermined by debt in Bosnia. She shows that life was dominated by concerns to avoid indecent death to the extent of framing spending habits, and argues that this is because for most people, life is out of reach.

In line with findings by (Jasarevic, 2012), participants in this research were concerned with indignity in death suggesting, perhaps, the existential nature of recognition. Community and family members are expected to offer both material and psychosocial support to grieving families, but increasingly they can be a drain on the material resources of the grieving household. In recent times, funerals have become an increasing burden on grieving families as communities offer less and less material support and more psychosocial support. Grieving families worry about food for mourners, some of whom are strangers. But more than this, participants were particularly worried about the judgement that these strangers will form of them based on what they will see – the lack of blankets and utensils; elements that they consider customary to a decent funeral. The thought that people who they do not know will remember them in this fashion is difficult to bear. Their concerns suggest that bereavement is also about status, power and identity in which wealth plays a crucial role (de Witte, 2003). These observations affirm the assertion that shame is fundamental to understanding how people who live in poverty respond to the social demands they face in everyday life (Chase & Walker, 2013a) and helps understand why poverty as experienced by participants in this research is dominated by psychological pain. Importantly in this research

Another issue worth reflecting on here is participants' experience of bereavement as disempowering. It is apparent that experience of bereavement accentuates feelings of

powerlessness and of things not going their way, notions that undermine ontological security. These feelings of loss were argued by participants to affect not only how they felt but their physical strength to engage in productive activities. Bereavement, therefore, appeared to immobilise, to the great detriment of participants' ability to meet their needs – suggesting interplay between physical and mental health. This is an important observation because bereavement was such a common experience among participants and the discussion of death in social policy literature tends to focus only on its economic effects.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter analysed research participants' understanding of poverty and presented empirical findings on their socioeconomic conditions. The analysis shows that poverty as they experienced it involved various material and non-material aspects. Their experiences converged around material lack, induced by systemic exclusion from resources, as well as psychological pain arising from aspirational gaps and the experience and fear of indignity. Within conditions of extreme material deprivation, participants strive, for example, to engage in behaviour that asserts their identities and affirms their belongingness. The desire to be seen and treated as an equal, interpreted in this research as a struggle for recognition, was so strong as to motivate participants to engage in behaviour that may otherwise be detrimental to their own long-term future. To be recognised both as an individual and as a valuable member of the community bridges participants' experiences of material deprivation with their experience and fear of indignity – even in death. Although participants' immediate references of poverty were of material deprivation, it appears that psychological pain and ontological insecurity resulting from various intersections between material lack and social interaction defined their experience of poverty. Consequently, poverty can be critiqued here for eroding the possibilities of due recognition. Building on this analysis, the next chapter picks up the

theme of the informal relationships within which experiences discussed in this chapter are constructed.

Chapter Five

Recognition and the Everyday Experience of Poverty within Informal Relationships

> "People *recognise/consider* you even if you *do not have money*, just because you are living *by coming to see you*, greeting you and so on…the feeling in my heart is that this person values me/recognises me. They have come to visit me… To *acknowledge* someone is not because they have money. It is something we are born with as humans. To say that we are from the same family, let us go and see or visit that person*," Blackson 76, cash transfer participant*

> "What *influence* can I have? I attend village meetings not because what I say can change anything. Maybe they will listen, but they will not do what I suggest. There are people who when they speak, people listen. It's not just everyone and especially not me. People look at where the person who is speaking lives," Lisa

This chapter opens with the views of Blackson and Lisa, participants who were speaking about the social value accorded to them in everyday interaction. These reveal the intertwining of inclusion and domination and touch upon adverse incorporation (Hickey & Du Toit, 2007;Howson, 2013) – a concept that problematizes forms of subordinate inclusion at the interpersonal level for people living in poverty. The analysis developed in this chapter will demonstrate why and how the two quotes, while appearing deeply contradictory, are in fact complementary. The 'village' features strongly in this chapter and it is important to clarify at the outset that as the basic unit of social organisation at community level, it is an institution. Yet, because it is often governed by unofficial rules and norms – rules that are not 'elaborated deliberately' or 'formalised' (Miller, 2014) it is considered an informal institution in this research. In fact, this categorisation fits with how research participants perceived the village.

The chapter develops against the backdrop of a plethora of studies demonstrating that people in poverty have dense networks of bonding ties but often lack bridging ties (Cairns, 2017;Fukuyama, 2001;Matthews & Besemer, 2015;Narayan-Parker & Patel, 2000;Narayan-Parker & Petesch, 2002a;Narayan, 2002;Warren, Thompson, & Saegert, 2001;Woolcock &

Narayan, 2000). This literature highlights how poverty drives people to rely on their social networks for support and foregrounds the importance of social ties to the experience of poverty. However, this emphasis on bonding and bridging ties, and the representation of sociability as capital to be leveraged to get people out of poverty, while important, obscures the ways in which various configurations of social relationships function to produce and sustain poverty.

Therefore, the analysis developed in this chapter attempts to fill this gap by focusing on the interpersonal dynamics of everyday social relationships among people living in poverty. It answers the question, how are people in poverty viewed and treated within their informal relationships and how does this affect their everyday life? In this way, this analysis brings questions of self-identity, power, voice and agency in the everyday lives of people living in poverty into a more distinct focus.

By using recognition as an analytic lens, this research focuses attention on the interpersonal effects of social relationships on the everyday lives of people living in poverty. The chapter argues that despite extreme levels of material deprivation, participants retain a very high degree of social connectedness and non-material support due to widely held ethnoreligious ideals of recognition. However, extreme levels of material deprivation prevent any significant material resource sharing suggesting, perhaps, the need to decouple concepts of social connectedness from social support in poverty analysis. The analysis shows that alongside high levels of social connectedness, participants experience diminished social status which ultimately negatively affects their sense of self and (public) agency. They experience various forms of domination directly related to their poverty status including exploitative employment, subordination in public deliberations as well as denigration in resource sharing networks. This denigration, particularly among kin relations, appears to influence

participants' decisions to seek material support from non-familial relationships - a finding that brings into question the centrality of assumptions of kinship-based safety nets in conceptualisations of poverty in the rural areas of low income countries. This analysis, therefore, provides some nuanced evidence to support the understandings that in addition to its material core, poverty has an equally important non-material dimension that significantly reinforces its production and reproduction, (Lister, 2004b, 2013;Walker, 2014).

The chapter is divided into four sections that answer specific sub questions. The first section revolves around the meaning of recognition to participants in their everyday interactions. These depictions of recognition provided a prism through which to understand participant's discussion of their everyday experiences of poverty. The second and third sections examine participants' relations of support and the nature of support ties against prevailing understandings of recognition and the meaning of living in poverty within this context. The fourth section addresses the question of identity within relations of material deprivation as articulated by research participants. These sections are followed by and brought together in a discussion. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion.

5.1. Views and understandings of recognition

This section presents the understandings of recognition emerging from discussions with research participants. These understandings, couched in a discourse of the dignity and worth of persons, form the general social framework which shapes the structure and function of social ties discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter. From interview discussions, participants tended to articulate recognition using expressions such as, *count, identify, consider, see, notice, acknowledge and respect and influence.* These expressions as articulated by participants indicate the communicative nature of recognition which theorists

such as Ikäheimo (2003);(Ikäheimo, 2011) and (McQueen, 2015) argue is both constitutive and responsive to personhood. Engaging participants on the expressions they articulated revealed two understandings of recognition which are related in nature but have different structuring effects for the experience of poverty in everyday interaction.

The first of these understandings centres on humanist values of acknowledging the humanity of others while the second involves ideas of voice, influence and social status. The difference is that the second understanding has a material base. With money and material possessions comes voice. However, the material does not have similar influence in the first understanding which is bounded in an ethnoreligious ethic of a common respect for humanity of persons. The significance of these understandings is that they exist side by side and, while lack of material possessions appears to impede voice, the respect for the common humanity of others appears to underpin high levels of connectedness in everyday interaction. The distinction between the two understandings are similar to what McQueen (2015) identifies as 'identification' and 'respect.' The analysis in this chapter will demonstrate how the experience of poverty in the everyday interaction appears to be framed by the practice of these understandings to differing effects on people in poverty.

5.1.1. Recognition as humanist values of respect for common humanity

In this first understanding, participants' discussions centred on identification and acknowledgement of the other person, covered by narratives of respect for the intrinsic worth of others based on their humanity. Participants cited their way of life as the means through which they cultivate these humanist ideas that place the humanity of another being at the centre of social interaction. This value, they argued, is a central core of the organisation of village life and that it is manifest in the everyday life through how people interact with each other. This internalisation of such humanist ideas is, perhaps, traceable to the post-

independence era in which the philosophy of Zambian humanism was the central governing philosophy (Meebelo, 1973). In discussing this respect for the intrinsic worth of others, participants strongly denounced the influence of material resources and insisted that being human was their primary concern. Participants commonly mentioned social gestures performed to convey this value of identification and acknowledgement in everyday interaction. These gestures were varied but as highlighted in the excerpts below, they were similar in how they are imbued with a symbolic meaning of recognition and its non-material base:

> "No, poverty is never feared in this world! There are other people, Christians or even the government who may come in and help. Someone can *notice* you even in your poverty. Maybe you have no proper clothes; people would ask maybe we should take him trousers. That [lacking clothes] is living in poverty but if a person is feared, isolated or never mingled with there must be something wrong with that person. In my view, it could be a person with bad mannerisms or someone who is quarrelsome and used by the devil to inflict pain on others and that is why people avoid that person, not because of poverty," *Betty, 91, female cash transfer participant*

> "…You people have come here now to see me. This is a sign that you *count* me… then there are people who speak with me, come like this person who just came now to ask how I am doing. For me this shows that I am *counted*...other people in the village come here to check on how I am doing and so on. For me that is *recognition*, it is a sign that they *count* me," *Nelia 63, female cash transfer participant*

Further to the social gestures discussed above, participants discussed behavioural attitudes such as how one lives with others, attitudes that they attributed to traditional Zambian society as key determinants of recognition in the understanding under discussion. In these discussions, the subject of respect as a core aspect of recognition became salient. Here, responses echo the belief that recognition and respect rest on living well with others as well as personal attributes such as old age:

> "Even if you are not rich, or maybe I should say even if you are living in poverty, as long as you are a human being you *deserve respect* but as I said, *respect* is in the

> mouth. People will only respect you if you live well with them. If you disrespect others you can't expect to be respected," *Stan, 78, male cash transfer participant*
>
> "*Respect* can come to you on account of your age. Like me when people who are younger see me, they give way to me or may be giving me a seat. This is a sign of respect," *Lina, 50, female cash transfer participant*

The excerpts above reflect two different but complementary issues which are both significant to the overall experience of poverty in the area. The first is the idea of recognition as centred on a basic humanity and that it (should) be accorded to everyone despite material possession. The second relates to how this value manifests in various gestures and practices that participants label as 'help'. The common exchange of these gestures and practices enables people in poverty and people not in poverty to experience a similar kind of belonging and community. This then enables people in poverty to retain a positive identity of a common humanity despite experiencing extreme levels of deprivation.

5.1.2. Recognition as a voice, influence and power

Findings suggest that recognition as voice is about influence in public spheres. Hence, such recognition not only works to affirm subjectivities but also marks one's position on the social hierarchy. In this second understanding, recognition conveys social importance. Participants' experiences converged around issues of subordinate inclusion and a lack of power and influence in those communal spaces where decisions are made. Within this context, participants repeatedly reflected experiences of stifled voice within public deliberation in that they could speak out and their opinion may have been openly sought, but that this voice rarely had purchase.

These experiences referred to as 'kudyakililiwa', meaning being persistently stepped on, and 'kusuliwa', implying being ignored or not being taken seriously, were common to both male and female participants. Although participants clarified that these experiences of continuous

subjugation were not prominent in everyday interaction, they were overly pronounced and felt in communal spaces such as village meetings where, as shown below, status was affirmed:

> "…Even when you go to the village meeting, they want you to attend but whatever you say, they do not take it seriously so that shows that you are not *recognised*…," *Veli, 63, female cash transfer participant*
>
> "What *influence* can I have? I attend village meetings not because what I say can change anything. Maybe they will listen but they will not do what I suggest. There are people who when they speak, people listen. It's not just everyone and especially not me. People look at where the person who is speaking lives," Lisa,
>
> "That's what I said when we started that we have opinions/think differently. *Nowadays* if a person has no money they do not count you as a human being. When you have property at home even your family name will come out more often oh, Mr. Tembo, Mr. Zulu because of the things you have. These years, a person that has property is the one valued. One without property has no influence," *Sandwell, 60, male non cash transfer participant*

The psychological impacts of these experiences are immediately apparent in Lisa and Standwell's expressions of their powerlessness. The meanings of recognition which they articulate directly relate to the 'symbols' that ascribe value and, therefore, bestow social importance within their communities. These articulations of recognition are different from the first, and may even be thought to be contradictory to it. This is because this second understanding of recognition pertains to a different realm of social life. The importance of this recognition lies, perhaps, in that it happens in the public arena and is consequently important for one's public image. Participants' discussions of this recognition highlight how it is conditioned by the social and cultural factors within which it is constructed.

It was also surprising that Standwell situated his reflections in a comparative context of changing social values. This comparative outlook is reflected in the discussion by older participants in their discussion of motivations for material exchange in a later section

suggesting, perhaps, that there is a temporal dimension to relations of material support. As proceeding sections will highlight, these forms of inclusion are problematic and have profound effects on how poverty is experienced. Here, what is evident is that people in poverty are part of their communities including such gatherings as Veli, Lisa and Standwell describe yet they have no influence in those gatherings by way of affecting the decisions made suggesting a broader question about whether or not they can be said to be included in the sense that inclusion is conceptualised in poverty analysis.

5.2. Relations of support: Neighbourhood vs kinship based ties

Previous research suggests that poverty affects social relationships (Beresford, Green, Lister, & Woodard, 1999;Daly & Kelly, 2015;Ridge, 2009, 2011b). Beresford et al. (1999) argue that poverty is destructive for personal relationships including between partners and within families. Similar reflections are made by Ridge (2011a), whose work examines the everyday costs of poverty and childhood. Walker (2014) highlights the shaming effects of poverty within familial relationships. Following the insights from these studies, this current research attempts to retain the focus on interpersonal effects of poverty within social relationships. This current attempt is in contradistinction to the tendency in previous studies of poverty in low-income countries to end at mapping support relations. The discussions of participants in this current research provide an opportunity to problematize support ties.

Against other work that suggests a pronounced role of familial ties as a traditional safety net in coping with material deprivation in African countries (Adato, Carter, & May, 2006;Bertrand, Mullainathan, & Miller, 2003;Kessy & Tostensen, 2008), this research reports neighbourhood, non-familial ties as key support ties for people living in poverty. This may be due to the fact that most of these previous studies focus on South Africa. In this research,

participants' experiences challenged the notion of the family as a traditional safety net. To most participants, kinship as a support relation is an idealised norm – a somewhat historical fact that did not reflect their present realities. Many participants pointed out to the researcher that such thinking is widely held by people who live in cities and have an idealised view of rural life in which it is often assumed that families typically worked to support members in times of material deprivation:

> "For non-relatives, you can get a big help! If you go and request to be helped those who have will give you, sometimes you go to work for them and you are helped. Now on the side of relatives, there is a big epidemic. Where people trusted help (would/should) come from, not anymore. We are only two surviving and my friend also has plenty of people at home," *Ailedi, 70, female cash transfer participant*

> "Where we get help most is from those other people who are not family. Sometimes we get credits from them or from money-lenders. After harvest, we sell our produce and pay back those credits we got," *Charles, 54, female cash transfer participant*

These excerpts suggest the importance of non-familial over kinship ties for instrumental support for people experiencing material deprivation in this research. A question was put to participants for them to explain why non-kinship based ties were more instrumental support ties. A majority of participants argued that the extent of material deprivation was such that most families were destitute and so were not in a position to provide support. In this way, it was easier to get support from people in neighbouring villages than from one's own kin. Things were not significantly different for participants with children or relatives who had migrated to towns. Most argued that they did not receive any significant support from such relatives as most had ended up unemployed, in bad jobs. 'Bad marriages' in the sense of children marrying into other poor families were also commonly referenced. In this respect, participants argued subsistence needs were easier to meet within neighbourhood ties. Hence, there was a sense in which the issue appears to be that most people have nothing to share:

"…you grew up in the city that is why you do not know the kind of life we live here in the village. To be given a gallon [of maize grain] today and again on another day is not possible. Then they will start saying why does she not find her own food. She wants to be depending on us. Families have problems. They will start saying, are we going to keep helping her but if you have your own animals for example, then you can farm your own food and so on and you will know that your future is bright," *Agness, 62, female cash transfer participant*

"The truth is no one helps me. Not even my brothers or sisters, my children, my relatives. To be helped requires you to have someone with capacity to assist you. Maybe you have a child who has done well in life. If when your children are just at home or they are dead like mine, then you have nothing. I have one child but he has nothing," Avaina, 77, *female* cash transfer participant

"The children who are married have also been married to people who are like me so it is also very difficult for them to find anything to help me. And for some of them, I have to give them help especially with food," Charles.

Although the excerpts above explain why neighbourhood relations were more instrumental for support, it was striking that neighbourhood relations were also participants' preferred relations for support. Participants were presented with the sketch of relations below and asked to indicate their preferred ties of support and where their actual support comes from:

Figure 5. 1 Support relationships

Source: Fieldwork

In both cases, most participants selected ‘bantu’ or neighbourhood ties. This was surprising but offered some insight into their social relationships. This theme was so widely referred to that it suggests shared experiences of the nature of kinship-based support relations. For most, the support from familial ties tended to be linked to humiliating practices such as backbiting, gossip and disregard for their individuality. Drawing on notions of respect for them as persons, participants rationalised their preference of neighbourhood as understanding and respectful. They argued that relatives tend to shoot ‘bullets’ at their backs after helping them:

> “Relatives are a problem. Non-relations are much better. Relatives are a problem because when they give you something today, the next bullet will be we are the ones who feed him and his family, this and that. You may not even realise that they are referring to you. They will say things like you eat my food. Sometimes they help you then they tell other people about it…so, the family no! But just other people and church members we cooperate with and work hand in hand,” *Philip, 67, male cash transfer participant*

> “I approached someone for financial help to take my child to school. They did not give me the help I wanted but as I left I could hear them talking saying if I give her money, where will she find the money to pay me back? They did not even wait for me to be gone. In this way, I knew that they had no confidence in me; they did not even count me. This is how you see that our friends who have do not recognize us,” *Chibanga 46, male female non cash transfer participant*

The denigration described by participants when talking about familial relationships seemed to be inherently different from what people who benefit from the social cash transfers detail in chapter six. While both types attack the person and seem to call their character into question, the stigma described in chapter six seems to be a form of backlash.

5.3. Extent of resource exchanges and underlying motivations

The research sought to understand why, despite the observed levels of material deprivation, people were able to draw on a degree of material support and what this support entailed. Hence this section presents two central themes. The first, explaining the extent of material resource sharing, suggests the recognition-based concern articulated earlier. The second

discusses the subsistence nature of material support and the exploitative wage regime within which it is based.

In a manner involving recognition concerns highlighted above, participants discounted reciprocity and drew a clear distinction between what they saw as credit, 'nkongole'-based support, such as borrowing money from a money-lender where there is an explicit expectation of pay back, and 'thandizo', altruistic forms of support offered to others independent of expectations. Nkhongole was associated with the better off while they spoke of themselves around thandizo and couched their responses in an ethnoreligious humanist rhetoric of sympathy and a common humanity:

> "For people to help you, it is in their hearts, their humanity. They see that you are suffering. Not giving you help because you cannot reciprocate is the wrong way to live. If people help you they have helped you. If they do not then they have not helped you. You cannot say it is because they feel that you are not able to return the favour." *Maureen, 46 female non cash transfer participant*

> "Yes, like where I live, I have no relatives but there are people who are compassionate so when they see your suffering, when they have, they come to your aid. Sometimes they help you with mealie meal and other times they help you with maize just like that… you cannot say that because they do not have and they will not give me back I will not give them," *Rebecca, 62, female non cash transfer participant*

For others like Philip, who reflected on his position as a village 'induna' (headman), living in poverty was a double burden as he was expected to respond to the needs of those in the village he thought were worse off. Often times, this meant sharing food with struggling families:

> "I used to manage to go the full year because we were only three of us at home but these days others would come to live with us while others come and go like that so the harvests are not enough. Then also there are those I see that they have nothing, I instruct my wife to call them in the evening to give them something. As an Induna in the village, I do this often… To see a friend/neighbour suffering, struggling touches my heart and makes me feel sympathetic. Even children, if you would come to my home sometimes you would see that it is full of young children who I am not related

> to! When my wife cooks we invite them in to eat with us, so the harvest cannot last like that" Philip

It may appear contradictory that participants held such strong views about sharing material resources yet seldom share. A plausible explanation for this discrepancy is the extent of material deprivation in the region as noted above. Discussing the motivations for material resource sharing showed a strong underlying temporal dimension with sharp distinctions in participants' justifications by age. Unlike younger participants, older participants framed their responses in a historical context suggesting that people have become more self-centred and less concerned about their social relationships:

> "…these people of nowadays are different. It is people of my generation who used to see the old and value them. The young people of nowadays do not care. They are selfish…," Dainess

> "Everyone wants to feed their children. Do you think that someone can feed another person's orphans? That used to happen back in the day but now things have changed, it does not happen anymore. This time people have changed. Even your own children turn against you these days. They [people] even say but we also have nothing, how can we feed you? Sometimes they will even say things like we are not the ones who murdered your children for you to have orphans so why should we be the ones suffering to raise them for you? What can you say? You cannot say anything. You just say to yourself that it is the devil that did this so that I could have this problem but where can I take these children…He who feeds someone else's child is a real human being. Even your own children that you gave birth to it's even you like this the way you were given birth to by my elder sister, your mother you can turn against her," Cecilia, 65 cash transfer participant

> "They [neighbours] do help but it is not something you can rely on; it is very difficult. Usually you find that a person has difficulties with school fees and their child is sent back home. They will just be at home and they cannot find help from someone here because that person also has no fees for their child. Even if it is just giving you credit, people do not usually do that. All of us are suffering so it is difficult. All of us depend on the soil so if the harvest is poor, it is extremely difficult for all of us to find something for ourselves and then to give to others" Yolodia

Older parents who were participants in the study, as is the case with Yolodia above, commonly referred to lack of support from their children. Such reflections were mirrored by younger study participants' references to social expectations that children should take care of

their parents. Alongside the theme of minimal material exchanges; it would be plausible to interpret these findings as a sign of growing atomism – people becoming more and more separated. Indeed, the concept of atomism offers a useful frame for making sense of the supposed decline in resource-sharing behaviour (Walker et al., 2013). Alternatively, these findings could also be a sign of the times getting much tougher.

Another theme to emerge was that the support shared was primarily subsistence based, unpredictable and marginal. It never involved money in currency form, yet the need that participants identified as pressing, such as putting children through school or purchasing fertiliser for improved yields or investing in a business all require the exchange of money. The scarcity of money is enmeshed in a highly exploitative wage and credit regime controlled by better off community members, farm owners and loan sharks whom locals called *briefcase businessmen.* These experiences highlight the disadvantageous terms on which these local farmers engage with crop markets. The briefcase businessmen came mainly from the city during the farming season and offered farmers money for their unharvested crop, often underpaying them. Some participants narrated how after their crop failed, they ended up with debts that they could not offset. In conversations about the nature of waged work available to them, participants explained that the work available involved high intensity and excessively demanding menial labour with informally determined but non-negotiable wages.

Work was typically characterised as very low wage and infrequent because opportunities peak in the farming season and regress the rest of the year. Consequently, participants must juggle waged work opportunities and cultivating their own fields but, because they were often in need of money, they chose waged work at the expense of their own fields. This in part explains the food insecurity observed in the previous chapter. Since waged labour was rare, some participants explained that they volunteered their labour to neighbours to harvest or

weed fields. Out of their gratitude, these neighbours would then repay said volunteers with material gifts usually grain or maize meal. However, these material gifts cannot be demanded and farm owners used their own discretion to offer what they considered humane appreciation. This structure wherein labourers cannot demand payment and payment is decided at the discretion of farm owners also governed waged work. As the participant cited below points out, they strive to work for farm owners who offer a respectable balance between wage and workload. Yet, because of the scarcity of work and extent of their deprivation they often must make trade-offs between what they consider a respectable wage and the immediacy of their needs:

> 'I am normally paid K1 [US$0.11] per line or sometimes a plate of maize meal or a gallon of grain per eighteen lines but the lines are very long, [usually more than 100metres]. People differ, some are considerate while others are not, but if you have a pressing problem [usually the case] then it does not matter. Even if the person is not considerate, you just go and work for them so that your sort out your problem' Joseph

5.4. Ideals of self within relations of material deprivation

Related to the issues of lack of confidence in one's ability to get things done (discussed in chapter four), low esteem and self-doubt, characterised here as a diminished sense of self among participants, was a key theme that emerged from the findings. In a way centering on the ideals of recognition discussed in the first section, participants' discussion of their experience of poverty within their informal relationships reflected on their personal identities. These ideals of personhood converged around their social roles as parents (grand), mother, father, uncle or aunt, brother or sister in which they dwelt on negative personal feelings in response to community attitudes regarding their inability to meet role obligations and social norms.

Younger participants also commonly referred to their failure to provide material support, something that they identified as a constant source of worry. Concerns about inability, constructed as a failure in their responsibility, *'kulephela'* or *'kukangiwa'* carrying connotations of stigma and shame were frequent references. However, participants made distinctions between a personal or private self in which they spoke of their anxieties about the direction of their lives and what they tried to do to overcome them, and a public self in which they emphasised a negative evaluation by others.

In the public self, participants juxtaposed how they wanted to be perceived and treated against how they were responded to by others in their communities. This self-analysis made it clear that the issue was negative public evaluation but participants also dwelt, to a large extent, on what they thought were structural constraints on their ability to meet household responsibilities – attributes which they thought the public judgement ignores. These negative perceptions were accompanied by feelings of inadequacy at the personal level especially in relation to failure to meet household consumption needs and the education of their children. Participants commonly argued that these were the images projected of them in social interaction within the communities and that they felt the images influenced their standing within social relationships. Examples of incidents which they identified as triggers of such judgement included having a child sent back from school for nonpayment of fees or not having uniform or the lack of a grain storage barn at one's home. These incidents, participants argued, because of their publicly discernable nature, affected their public image and, ultimately, their social standing.

While the above experiences were common to both male and female research participants, they had differential effects. For example, concerns about child schooling were particularly stressful for participants in that they had direct bearing on their (public) social roles as

parents and also an internal aspirational dimension. Yet schooling did not appear to have the gendered effects on participants' status. As reflected in the excerpt below in which a participant discussed her omission from the social cash transfer selection process, participants argued that schooling exposed them to ridicule about their parenting abilities, a negative image that they had to carry around in social interaction. The label of poor parenting associated with schooling appears to feed into the aspirational anxieties that were discussed in chapter four regarding future wellbeing:

> "My children never started school at all. I could not take them to school that is why they are here with me and if they are not going to school, how are they going to be and what will happen in their future? If you are saying that it will take five years [before they can benefit from the cash transfer scheme], how will I be in five years? I cannot afford to take them to school but I want them to go to school. When people see this, they say I am just sitting here at home with them. They think I am a bad parent but it is just the money that I do not have…" *Beatrice, 52, Non cash transfer participant*

> "My children were sent back from school because of lack of fees. The others are at home but I took one to the Muslim school so that she becomes literate. At least there she does not pay anything. Maybe she can take care of her siblings later" Joseph

Unlike schooling, which appeared to have similar effects on both male and female participants, the absence of a granary at a participant's house had worse implications for males than females. While to male and female participants alike, a lack of a granary means food insecurity and apparent poverty, for male participants, it was also about their status as men. Most of them shared experiences of being labelled lazy and incompetent farmers. Couched in a cultural discourse of hard work and wealth in which the size of one's granary is the most obvious indicator of success, these labels of laziness and incompetency stung. The cultural expectation that men should be material providers for their households explains why being in poverty here undermined culturally embedded ideals of masculinity. While both male and female participants argued having a granary signaled food security and wealth, for male participants it signaled both food security and wealth but also responsibility and hard

work which are synonymous with masculinity. The lack of one deprives them of the trust of others and excludes them from positions of influence and 'leadership' as a man. Such men will seldom raise their voices in decision-making as they were considered lazy and unreliable:

> "There is a lot of talk about *ulesi* [laziness]. Because of the size of the family we have problems to meet the [food] demands but some people view it differently. Our harvest finishes quickly because we have a big family. When we get to the rain season the maize is finished. Some people start saying they [I am] are lazy. I do not know how to farm and all that," Charles

> "Homes that farm properly have barns; I do not have one because my harvest does not even last long enough to be stored. It is usually one or two ox-carts. When it finishes, you must find means of getting food but people will be saying he is lazy. He lives in the village but has no maize, what kind of man is he. It is difficult for us," Blackson

These accounts touch on what Rawls (2009) referred to as the social basis of respect, directly illustrative of the kind of recognition that participants argued is predicated on material resources. Perhaps, in contestation of how they felt that people around them view them and treat them, participants emphasised their efforts to improve their circumstances, including their desire to have educated children who would turn out to be materially different from them.

5.5. Discussion

Taking the understanding of recognition as influence, power and voice and what participants articulated as their life experiences, reveals similarities between this research and prior research, particularly by Chase and Walker (2015b), Gubrium et al. (2013), Walker (2014) and Daly and Kelly (2015). Being treated as the other due to poverty dominated participants' narrations around this understanding, with the specific manifestation of othering as being ignored in decision making or being spoken about in ways that they considered demeaning. Participants problematized the family as a source of material support, choosing instead to rely

on non-kinship based ties. Problems with family-based support are not specific to this research and have been highlighted in analysis of poverty-related shame by Walker et al. (2013). However, while parallels can be drawn between this research and that work, the evidence in this research points to specific divergences. For example, in Walker et al. (2013), participants employed a discourse of shame to highlight negative self-evaluation on having to turn to family for material support. The evidence in this current research suggests a pervasiveness of such negative self-evaluation among younger rather than older participants. This is against a strong normative expectation that children should take care of parents. Hence, self-judgement about having to rely on or failing to provide for parents was common for younger participants relative to older ones.

Another difference is that while the normative context of this current research prescribes the family as the primary source of material support in hard times, the reality of most participants is that this never happens and even more, they would rather opt out of kinship-based ties for material support. Evoking a discourse of *(dis)*respect characterised by judgemental attitudes, backstabbing and gossip or *'firing bullets'* about them, participants argued against seeking material support from family ties because they found it demeaning and injurious to their social standing. While in some instances, the extended family was itself experiencing acute levels of material deprivation, negative representation to others was an overriding concern for participants' preference for material support from non-familial ties.

However, poverty research rarely reflects on family-based material support as a site within which people in poverty experience misrecognition especially in low income countries. For example, the voices of the poor studies by Narayan-Parker and Petesch (2002a) and an earlier analysis of the capacity of extended family safety nets for orphans in Africa by Foster (2000) explain the declining importance of extended families in terms of the hardship imposed by

poverty on social networks. These analyses draw extensively on the idea of support relations as draining ties – non-reciprocal social support ties, popularised by social capital literature to explain how poverty stretches material sharing networks.

Yet, the concept of draining ties would need to be stretched beyond its original meaning to cover the findings in this study as it does not sufficiently cover the breath of experiences of disrespect that, as observed in the study, drive participants to seek material support outside kinship ties. Furthermore, draining ties appears more suited to when better-off members exit networks due to excessive reciprocity or contributory burdens are demanded and not when the worst-off exit networks due to denigration.

Further to the above, the difference in understandings of recognition as experienced by participants in social interactions has enabled this research to unravel the disjuncture between forms of respect predicated on material resources and those that are not. This is both a unique and important exposition. It is unique in so far as it explains why participants in this research report a deep sense of inclusion in their communities in everyday interaction while at the same time they are experiencing deep processes of othering. A similar study on neighbourhood poverty and social isolation by Rankin and Quane (2000) in the USA found, against their expectations, that the poorest members retained very high levels of community involvement in inner city neighbourhoods. Perhaps a reflection of that study's context, the authors explain this unexpected finding as 'attempts on the part of residents and communities to deal with the ecological effects of neighbourhood disadvantage' wherein community members mobilise against threats of disorder and deterioration, (Rankin & Quane, 2000, p. 157).

To the contrary, the humanistic values of recognition observed in this research appear to stem from strong religious and ideological underpinnings given both the nation's strong religious orientation and socialist values drilled into citizens in the first and second republic and which were arguably more pervasive in rural areas (Meebelo, 1973;Molteno, 1973;Mwaipaya, 1981). As illustrated above, the humanist understanding of recognition articulated and experienced by participants afforded them a high degree of connectedness, enabling them to avoid the isolation shown by previous research to be typical for people living in poverty (Beresford et al., 1999;Narayan et al., 2000;Samuel, Alkire, Zavaleta, Mills, & Hammock, 2017;Zavaleta et al., 2014). In one way, this confirms the important but nuanced role of social relationships to the overall experiences of poverty.

On the other hand, however, the various forms of domination that participants experienced, such as diminished social status and muffled voices in decision-making, exacerbated the powerlessness they already experienced as a result of material insufficiency. Although cash transfer recipients demonstrated better material outcomes, this chapter has shown that outcomes which participants link to social status such as influence or being counted in public deliberation are not different between transfer recipients and non-transfer recipients. These experiences remain unreported even within recent evaluation studies of social cash transfers in Zambia. Bonilla et al. (2017), for example, who have studied the effect of cash transfers on women's empowerment concluded only limited effect on intrahousehold relationships such as decision making while analysis by van Ufford et al. (2016) focuses on mainly the material effects of cash transfer reporting improved consumption and food security. The intertwining of inclusion and domination in the everyday as adverse incorporation (Du Toit, 2004b;Hickey & Du Toit, 2007;Mosse, 2007), is under researched.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter examined experiences of poverty within the informal social relationships of people living in poverty through the prism of recognition. It considered how norms of recognition within everyday social interaction in these relationships affected experience. Although a case study of a rural district, the analysis in this chapter broadly affirms the importance of social relationships to the experience of poverty.

However, against a plethora of previous studies, the findings in this chapter suggest that non-kinship based informal relationships may be more instrumental for coping with the effects of material deprivation for people experiencing poverty than familial ties. In this research, this is because the extent of material deprivation was extreme and often intergenerational, leading to disruptions in the family's ability to perform its idealised safety-net role (Beresford et al., 1999). Apart from explanations of capacity, participants highlighted concerns with practices within familial support which they considered to be disrespectful and humiliating. This nature of family relationships relates to previous work on shame by Walker (2014).

Another issue emerging out of this analysis is the entwining of experiences of inclusion and connectedness on the one hand and domination on the other. As argued, the domination alongside relations of inclusion demonstrates the utility of the concept of adverse incorporation. In this case, domination occurs with informal networks generating a sustained sense of low status among people experiencing poverty. An issue to note here is how this domination is related in many ways to the performance of social roles. In the first instance, failure to perform these roles lends one to ridicule and opens one to shaming. Second, this ridicule once confirmed relegates such members to positions of low status within communal interaction – with the implication of reduced social influence. In this way, these findings affirm assertions that it is the psychological deprivation of respect as a result of material deprivation that is most pernicious (Serrett (2003) in Curtis, 2009;Lister, 2004b, 2013).

Having established the nature of experiences of poverty within informal relationships, the next chapter will seek to understand the role of the institutional relationships on participants' everyday lives.

Chapter Six

Everyday Experiences of Poverty within Institutional Spaces

The previous chapter focused on the everyday experiences of poverty within informal neighbourhood and familial ties. Building on that analysis, this chapter explores the institutional relationships of people living in poverty and how these relationships frame their everyday experiences of poverty. The analysis developed in this chapter draws on both interview and observational data to describe the nature of institutional ties and the type of interaction that research participants had. It seeks to explain why participants experienced poverty in the manner they did through institutional relationships. While some of the effects of institutional relationships are experienced in the everyday in informal relationships and would, therefore, appear to belong in the discussion in the previous chapter, they are generated by the functioning of institutional relationships. For clarity, they are reported and discussed in this chapter.

There is a long history of research on the institutional relationships of people in poverty. Social capital literature typically highlights the importance of institutional relationships for responding to poverty. Other studies discuss administrative discretion and the problems of need adjudication for targeted welfare services (Adler & Feu, 2009;Bradshaw, 1972, 1979;Lipsky, 2010;Titmuss, 1971;Zacka, 2017). The analysis in this chapter will explore these topics directly but will go further to explore how institutional relationships affect the nature of relationships with others when you live in poverty. More specifically, it responds to the research question, what are the institutional relationships that characterise the everyday lives of people living in poverty and to what effect? The Zambian context of high levels of extreme poverty and deep values of community and shared livelihood offers unique

opportunities to explore the nexus between the institutional and the personal for people living in poverty.

The analysis affirms that institutional ties have a profound influence on everyday life for people living in poverty. In this current research context, the state through the department of social welfare and religious institutions through churches and mosques were the most important institutional relationships for people living in poverty. Findings show that ties to religious institutions foster connectivity and encourage social interaction through congregational activities enabling people in poverty to retain an unusually high level of inclusion. These ties have spill-over effects for community members who are not members of specific churches as they benefit from the webs of social networks generated through congregational activities.

However, this pattern does not appear to apply to material support as congregations tend to provide such support only to their members. Overall, the material support rendered by religious institutions, especially Christian organisations, is intermittent. This makes it unreliable for most beneficiaries. In this regard, state support through the social cash transfer is better as it is both predictable and in cash, a most rare commodity. However, compared to religious institutions, ties to the state especially through social cash transfers had negative effects on participants' lives. Because participants have a strong sense of entitlement to state support, non-recipients of the cash transfers feel, based on its targeting mechanisms, that they are excluded from support for no good reason. They appear to be taking these frustrations out on fellow community members who are beneficiaries through denigrating talk and exclusion from previous resource sharing networks. This analysis affirms previous research evidence of improved material conditions – even though only marginal among cash transfer recipients. However, it diverges from those studies when the question of social status is considered as

transfer recipients do not report improved social status. Instead, they are have experiences in which their voices are muffled.

This chapter has four sections. The first section maps participants' experiences within religious institutions and shows how these ties affect their social interaction and sense of belonging to local communities. The nature of ties, kind of support offered as well as participants' understanding of the role of religious institutions in their lives is discussed. The second section focuses on participants' relationships to the state through the social welfare department and its anti-poverty programmes. It explores participant's understanding of state support and their actual experience of this support. The implications of the targeting nature of state support in a context of extreme deprivation are discussed. A discussion section, which juxtaposes the two types of institutional relationships, and the ways in which they affect daily life, then follows. Here, religious institutions are problematised for their inability to confront structural causes of poverty while state relations are interrogated for their divisive role and effect on muffling beneficiaries' voices. This section foregrounds state-society relations for people experiencing poverty. A conclusion drawing out lessons for relational dimensions of poverty sums up the chapter. This chapter demonstrates that institutional relationships are cardinal to the everyday lives of people in poverty in that they pose opportunities as well as restrain how people respond to poverty.

6.1. Institutional relationships: Religious and state ties

There were many organisations in the district that might potentially qualify for analysis in this research, including various non-governmental organisations working on non-poverty related issues. However, participants identified the state through its agricultural and social welfare departments and religious institutions as having the most significant influences on

their everyday lives. However, while the agricultural department by comparison to other departments has a more physical presence in communities from which research participants were drawn, participants rarely interacted with it. Most participants argued that they had little to do with the agricultural department because they usually lacked the minimum resources to engage in productive agriculture activities through which they would interact with extension officers. The lack of interaction between participants living in a farming belt and a department of agriculture underscores the level of exclusion that poverty induces in rural communities in Zambia.

Consequently, the welfare department and religious institutions were the two most important institutional relations for people experiencing poverty. The salience of the two institutions is in the ways in which they had different effects on social interactions and relations of mutual support. A mapping of the relations revealed that these institutional ties affected everyday life for participants in two sets of ways. The first set is the ties between the individual community member and the institution, while the second is about the relations that community members forge with each other through the medium of the institutions.

6.1.1. Religious institutions: Community enhancing but membership-based ties

Interview data revealed that religion has a significant influence on the experience of poverty among research participants. Although there were spill-over effects to non-members, ties to religious institutions were primarily membership based, a problematic explored further in the sections below. However, it was also evident that religious institutions were very strong in fostering relationships within the wider local communities. Participants' views, confirmed by the researcher's observation, concluded that churches have extensive networks within local communities, creating a very broad reach and a continuously visible presence. It was therefore unsurprising that ties to religious institutions emerged from participant conversation

as a key institutional relation in their everyday lives and with specific relevance to their experience of poverty. Consequently, this section details the nature of these ties and their importance to research participants' experience of poverty. As used here, *religious institutions* imply a religious collective within which research participants have active involvement and will cover the Christian churches and Muslim mosques, the two most common religious collectives among participants. Where specificity is necessary, the research will refer to the religious organisation specifically.

All participants in this research had an active religious affiliation and identified their place of religious assembly as a key institutional relation in their lives. Given the criteria for selecting research participants did not include religious affiliation, this was striking. However, the deeply religious nature of Zambian society may explain this observed dominance of religion in everyday life. Scholars of Zambia's post-colonial history have demonstrated how religion has an enduring influence on social organisation including in legitimising political processes and public action (Cheyeka, Hinfelaar, & Udelhoven, 2014;Cheyeka, 2008;Gewald, Hinfelaar, & Macola, 2008). Historical analysis also confirms the influential role of religion on national ideology. For example, Kenneth Kaunda's post-independence Zambian government was driven by Zambian humanism – a political ideology comprising a mixture of Christian, Socialist and African traditional ethics (Dillon-Malone, 1989;Kaunda, 1974;Meebelo, 1973;Molteno, 1973).

The central idea of Zambian humanism was man-centeredness espoused in principles of egalitarianism, inclusiveness and communalism, self-reliance through mutual aid as well as the virtues of respect, hospitality and generosity as a way to eradicate previous ills of racism and colonialism and promote the dignity and respect of man (Meebelo, 1973;Molteno, 1973;Mwaipaya, 1981). Analysts such as Tordoff and Molteno (1974) and Thomas (1974)

argued that by the end of the first republic, especially in the rural areas which had offered the anti-colonial struggle its most resolute base, humanism had become a very strong organising norm in daily life. Therefore, it was unsurprising that religion and the remnants of Zambian humanism had such dominance on daily life in the current study. However, what was less obvious and more interesting was the nature of relationships with religious institutions, their influence on the experience of poverty among research participants, and how these experiences differed from those under the frame of the state-based institutional relations.

6.1.2. Churches as social interaction hubs

The workings of religious institutions had profound effects on the nature of social interaction among research participants. Participants' discussions reflected this in two important ways. In the first instance, participants thought of religious institutions as responsible for cultivating norms, values and attitudes of empathy towards others. Here, their conversation focused on teachings of the church regarding community life, valuing others and treating them with kindness. These conversations culminated in a dominant narrative about the humanity of others as children of God irrespective of their material status/endowment. This way of thinking about others provides a context in which to interpret participants' behaviours described in later sections of this chapter. In the absence of a counterfactual, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which reported behaviour is in fact driven by religious teaching.

However, what was apparent in participants' discussion and by the researcher's observation was the role of churches as spaces for interaction among congregants and as affirmation of their subjectivities. Participants argued that places of worship gave them a sense of purpose and recognition as individuals. The plethora of congregations and their activities fostered webs of social relationships based on frequent interaction among research participants. These relations, built within a medium of church interaction, seemed to transcend church gatherings

and permeate the everyday life, keeping members connected with each other in an otherwise unusual way for people experiencing poverty.

Congregational activities cited above appear to enhance interaction among congregants but seemed to have spill-over effects to community members at large and to positively affect participants' self-concept. For example, *kuyendela* a congregational activity involving home visitations was most referred by participants as a vector for interactions. In their view, it enabled them to keep connected to others and bridged the social gap between haves and have-nots. It enabled them to identify households in dire need of material support from the church. Because home visitations targeted all community members, they played a crucial role in bringing non-congregants into this cycle of interaction that would otherwise be absent. Discussion of these activities was permeated with religious connotations.

For example, people in this present study framed their own continuous engagement in such programmes as 'doing God's work,' a purely religious frame in which they downplayed the role of material circumstances. They also saw these activities as a way in which, as worshipers, they gave back to their communities. They rationalised this extensive engagement in religious activity as their identity as Christians or Muslims. It was surprising that while these activities were church-driven participants spoke of them in relation to both the church and the local community. Highlighting that social spaces have overlapping influence; church activities were not only about spirituality and religious identity but also broader community life. For example, Akilina, a middle-aged woman, argued that her participation in church activity not only gave her purpose but also a sense of belonging and connectedness:

> "I attend church; people invite me to their homes. I also go to visit people in their homes when we do not see them in the church meetings. I feel I belong here; I am

> very connected to my friends [community members]. I can see that that I am connected because the people around me will call me to meetings*." Akilina, 50, cash transfer participant*

Some other participants who had benefited from such visits tended to interpret them along humanist lines drawing on values of recognition. As Dainess reflected in the quote below, the visits of church members signalled 'being seen,' 'being counted' in a manner that conveyed that she is part of her community and that people care about her:

> "I see that people *count* me, that they care about my welfare when they come here to see me. To find out how I am faring in life and when they want to know how I am… the people from church come to see me a lot…" *Dainess, 65, Non cash transfer participant*

However, some participants – although sharing these views – offered subtle yet different reflections about the meaning of these activities. These participants highlighted distinctions between these non-material forms of social support and the material forms which they considered to be actual support. For example, Veli, a young mother quoted below, distinguished ideas of connectivity and belongingness that are generated by the observed extensive webs of social interaction from the type of support she thought of as 'help with things'. As she makes clear, being part of her community and interacting freely is one thing. Help with things is another:

> "…because of the church, I am connected but just in talking to people and meeting them not that they help me. We meet at church and village meetings but not that these people help me with things," *Veli, 28, cash transfer participant*

The 'help with things' that Veli spoke about refers to material support and her speech best portrays the disjuncture between high levels of social connectivity and the ensuing immaterial support and low levels of material support spoken about by most of the study participants. In part, this disjuncture is explained by the presence of a strong ethnoreligious ethic about the value for the humanness of others that exists alongside extreme levels of material deprivation.

As the sections below will illustrate, this disjuncture offers unique opportunities for thinking about relational dimensions of poverty, especially the related concepts of connectedness and social support.

6.1.3. Religious institutions as reservoirs of material support

While the dynamics described above apply to most study participants belonging to various churches, striking differences among participants were observed when actual material support dispensed by churches was analysed. Traditional Churches such as the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ), the Catholic Church and Church of England, known locally as the Anglican Church, and the Mosques tended to provide a wide range of material support to their members. This contrasted markedly with participants from protestant denominations where such support was rare.

Mosques provided food items and educational support to congregants while the traditional Christian churches leaned towards clothing and food. However, analysis reveals key shortcomings in this support. Firstly, while participants acknowledged the instrumental role of this support in their lives, they problematized its charitable and *ad hoc* nature. In most instances, only the elderly received support. Consequently, similarly situated congregants from the same denomination described having unequal access to the support. As one participant, a retired reverend in the Church of England now serving as a volunteer on the district welfare assistance committee as a community representative explained, the fact that support is unpredictable and not uniform renders it unreliable:

> "Some churches provide support but this is mainly to the elderly. The main problem with this support is, perhaps, that it is neither uniform nor predictable so the person does not know what will come or when it will come," District Welfare Assistance Committee (DWAC) Member

Furthermore, church membership was the criterion on which this support was offered even though occasional support to an elderly non-member was dispensed. Access for non-members was therefore, severely restricted. To clarify, this inconsistence in the flow of material support to congregants only affected churches and not the mosques. However, because access is through membership, there are pockets of people without access to the material support offered by religious institutions.

Additionally, within churches, members of a congregation did not have equal access to this support. To deal with this problem, churches tried to reserve support for first time beneficiaries. This meant that support was unreliable. However, participants construed the practice positively arguing that at least guaranteed them access because support was not going to the same people all the time. This appeared to generate a general feeling of fairness among congregants and participants conceived membership as a selection criterion as fair. In fact, some participants argued that membership was based on self-selection, something they could choose if they wanted. For example, some participants who were new converts to Islam explained that their children could now access education offered at the mosques.

It was clear that church or mosque based material support was predicated on church membership – one needed to be a member of a church to access support from that church. Participants were aware of this rule of access and accepted it without protest. This logic is important for how it contrasts markedly with participants' views on state support, which they argued to be based on citizenship and therefore, should be accessible to everyone. This distinction as will be shown later had several implications for the everyday lives of research participants who were beneficiaries of the social cash transfer programme.

6.2. *'The government is for everyone'*: State support as citizen entitlement

The analysis below juxtaposes ties to the state and religions institutions in their effect on participants' everyday lives. Such juxtaposing is unorthodox in the analysis of poverty in social capital literature which tends to conceive the two as complementary for poverty reduction (Fukuyama, 2001;Narayan, 2002). In this research, the juxtaposition is born of participants' own discussion and reveals the unique insight that this research offers.

As opposed to religious institutions which they saw as justified for offering support based on membership, research participants thought of themselves as entitled to various forms of state support as citizens. These conversations revolved around the notion of the government's universal responsibility for ensuring minimum standards of welfare. Unlike the references of benevolence and charity which they saw as defining religious institutions, citizenship characterised by need was presented as a just criterion for universal provision. Consequently, research participants who were non-recipients of state support problematized the targeting strategies employed by the cash transfer scheme as arbitrary. They questioned the logic of selecting one or two individuals from among many otherwise similarly situated persons. However, for both male and female participants, the contention was not that current beneficiaries were undeserving. Rather, it was the lack of apparent difference in material circumstances between non-beneficiaries and those adjudged as deserving of state support.

When these concerns were highlighted to welfare officials in key informant interviews, the officers acknowledged them and presented two explanations in response to this discontent. The welfare officers explained the discontent as a function of the discrepancies between the degree of need - due to the extent of material deprivation at this local level and the resource allocation to anti-poverty programmes at national level. They then tried to justify this limited

provision by arguing that the state did not have sufficient resources to cover citizen needs and therefore, it was doing what it was capable of undertaking in the circumstances:

> "Complaints happen a lot in the community…because people are very poor and they do not see how this household can be picked while they are left out. For some [beneficiaries] it is straightforward because everyone can tell that they need some form of assistance but for others it is disputed and this is where the problem comes from… the bigger problem is that support is limited so, you have to select someone and leave out someone who may also be considerably poor."

This notion of the state 'doing all it can under the circumstance', articulated by welfare officers here, is rooted in the language of state benevolence imbedded within policy discourses discussed in chapter seven. It provides the context in which to understand the nature of interaction between welfare officers and people living in poverty and illustrates the power of discourse in mediating practice that will be discussed later.

6.2.1. Voice as adverse visibility: Muffled voices and the 'Smart Poor'

Remarkably, participants' strong expectations about state responsibility for welfare provision contrasted significantly with their actual expressed claims for welfare provision. Many demonstrated a lack of awareness that entitlements can be formulated into claims for services and lacked information about where such claims might be directed. While they were keen to discuss these issues with the researcher, they did not think about talking to welfare officers or directly questioning what they perceived as inequitable exclusion from the cash transfer targeting processes or any other state intervention for that matter. Participants would complain to each other but rarely to someone in authority.

Interrogating this gap revealed that many had negative previous experiences with public services, officials and community members in positions of authority and that these negative previous experiences seemed to deter their ability to make claims for service or question the decisions of people in positions of authority.

For example, one participant narrated that he had on one occasion approached a community representative distributing relief maize to inquire about his family's omission from the list of beneficiaries when it was clear that they did not have food. The official's response was that these were decisions made by the government and that an explanation by him was unnecessary. The said participant explained that he understood the official's response was evidence that ordinary people like him should not question state decisions. He explained:

> "…We did not know who to speak to... Once there was a person distributing relief maize, he said he had instructions from the government not to give the relief maize to you. And we did not question because we imagined that he should have had instructions from government," *Dalitso, 40, Non cash transfer participant*

Other participant accounts, illustrated below, couched in a discourse of shame, highlight lack of confidence and powerlessness in the face of bureaucracy underpinned by poverty related negative self-evaluation as a barrier to participants' formulation of claims for material support from the state:

> "…I fear to go to the offices... I do not think they can listen to me as poor as I am. I feel that they will be annoyed with us. Maybe we judge ourselves I do not know but I do not believe that they can listen to me from the village, the way I am looking," Lisa

> "With this poverty, we [I] feel they [officers] will just castigate us [me] and say these villagers what do they want?" Maureen

The words 'poor' and 'villagers' as reflected in the quotes above are not only metaphors for marginalisation but also for bad dress and the 'social backwardness' of villages as residential areas respectively. This was most evident in participants' repeated reference by gestures to their clothing and physical surroundings. These metaphorical representations of themselves and their environment, as will be shown below, play an important role in how people in poverty think of and carry themselves especially in interaction with public officials.

In striking similarity to research participants who were not in receipt of government support, cash transfer beneficiaries exhibited deep ignorance and lack of confidence about other available social services and their assessment of the process of accessing these services was steeped in negative self-evaluations. They did not seem to see any spaces within current support channels to articulate grievances regarding the cash transfer or highlight other areas of their livelihood that they expressed to the researcher as requiring attention. Aside from asking the officers when their benefit would come, they never felt that they could discuss any other matters.

For example, educational need especially the inability to pay school fees for children in secondary school was a very common concern expressed to the researcher in conversation about the adequacy of their cash transfer. Yet, many had never expressed it to social welfare officers with whom they interacted on a regular basis. As Felesiya in the excerpt below highlights, some were ignorant about the availability of such provisions and thought they could not receive any more support from the government because they were cash transfer recipients. Without talking to someone with information, she would never find out. Welfare officers identified the lack of interaction between people in poverty and government structures as a cause of this fear:

> "…I have never asked the officers. Because we are on this programme [social cash transfer], I feared to go and ask them. I thought that one cannot benefit from another programme," Felesiya
>
> "Like I said, they are not exposed to coming to the town centre so they naturally have fear of entering into a government office. I think that fear is there unless we talk to them," Officer 2

However, as part of the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS), the department of social welfare provides school support to 'needy but well performing' children alongside supplementary feeding to infant children whose mothers are deceased. Perhaps, the issue to

point out is that this educational support exists in meagre proportions. Welfare officers explained that the budgetary allocation to the PWAS was so small and disbursement to district offices inconsistent. Furthermore, decisions about how it was administered were made at the local level at the officer's discretion and so it often ended up being allocated to only a very few cases which they considered pressing at that moment:

> "Funding for the PWAS is unpredictable. Sometimes the first sum of funding comes six months into the year and then nothing else. For example, this is the second quarter of the year but we have not received funding for PWAS…the highest amount we have received in this office is K32, 000 and the lowest is K20, 000 and we have to balance the amount by all the pressing needs in the district such as education support and supplementary feeding" Officer 2.

The fact that the scale of PWAS is small and its administration is discretionary may explain why many participants were ignorant about its existence. Although this research did not find evidence of nepotism and corruption, the nature of discretion makes them plausible. This plausibility may add to the feelings of unfairness among community members. However, a review of the operations manual of both the SCT and PWAS and interviews with the social welfare officers confirmed that assertions held by research participants that they were ineligible for educational support, because they were cash transfer recipients, were inaccurate. No such criteria as referred in research participants' discussion were stipulated in the operation manuals of SCT and PWAS. Even when informed of these facts during the interviews, most participants were very reluctant to take up the subject of educational support with officers from the welfare department. Interrogating this reluctance brought questions of power and voice within state society relations into even sharper focus for this research.

Analogous to the notion of not questioning state power and its officers described above, references of conforming to one's position were very strong in these conversations. Reflected in the interview quotes presented below, a strong sense of lack of importance, lowly status

and lack of power to influence decisions characterised participants' views and feelings about their lives. They repeatedly expressed the belief that their views were unwelcome to the state and its officials and expressed doubt that if they spoke, what they said would be taken seriously. For some participants, it appears that previous experiences of being singled out as a troublemaker influenced their behaviour. For example, in a discussion about grievance redressal systems, welfare officers explained to the researcher that they looked out for participants who complained a lot. These complainants whom they labelled the 'smart poor' were said to be people who were not 'really' living in poverty but wished to benefit from services meant for people who are:

> "There are people whom we call the smart poor. They talk a lot and ask a lot of questions but most times these people are just sharp [cunning] they are not poor. They just want to benefit from the programme," Officer 3

The label 'smart poor' associates being inquisitive with being cunning, and assumes people in poverty are not smart. It was observed during the field visits, which welfare officers called monitoring trips and which indeed qualified for the term monitoring, that cash transfer recipients were reminded about what 'proper' use of the cash transfer was about and the consequences that would follow if one departed from this approved usage. Welfare officers interpreted this as useful information, which enabled people to use the money they received wisely. It prevented, in their view, polygamous husbands from taking the money and misusing it. Yet, the manner of these discussions was not based on advice, but on compliance. Welfare officers were enforcing rules based in policy to prevent wastage of state resources. However, this also impacted the relationship between officers and people in poverty, presenting a tenor that that as agents of the state, they must be obeyed and not questioned. People in poverty must obey these instructions and do the right thing. The

officers saw themselves as overseers; they implemented policy, resolved disputes. Ironically, they also thought that they prevent the subjugation of people in poverty through their work.

While officers felt such labelling was justified, the labelling of community members who spoke out as 'trouble makers,' affected their confidence to speak as it signalled to them that speaking out and raising concerns would put them in bad books with public officials. This effectively curtailed voice. Participants were also very hesitant to say anything that would be regarded as critical of the welfare officers or the cash transfer scheme. Their reflections on the social cash transfer programme tended to be structured in the form of praise. Hence, even complaints expressed to the researcher were structured around the themes of their gratefulness at the government's benevolence, so as not to offend welfare officers.

Participants modelled their utterances around welfare officer's' constant reminders of the governments' good will and their comments echoed the idea that the government was doing all it could within circumstances of limited fiscal space discussed in chapter seven. These persistent reminders that the cash transfer was free money given to beneficiaries, despite the government's many priorities, worked to create and reinforce the narrative of benevolence, which undermined participants' notions of entitlement. Taken together, this research observes, these factors have generated a noticeable collective identity of muffled voices, which acts as a structural constraint on individual expression for fear of adverse visibility. Individuals were talking but are doing so among themselves and in low tones so that they cannot be heard. Those with courage also to speak loudly also felt powerless in front of a conformist collective which they argued would render their voiced concerns illegitimate:

> "…A complaint from one person, me can change anything? One finger cannot kill a louse! Even if you complain as an individual when others are quiet, they will say what he is complaining about when everyone is quiet. What is he saying? So, we just wait

> and see how the government will take care of us. So, we keep quiet and say whatever they say they will do for us, they will…" Blackson
>
> "…We [I] didn't know about this current support so how can we go and make complaints? I feared because we are on this programme. I thought that maybe you can't be given any other support if you receive the cash transfer. I don't want them to think I am causing trouble," Cecilia

The self-awareness of personal circumstances was evident in the demeanour of benefit claimants who sometimes came to the social welfare office to inquire about their cash transfer. In the cases observed in this research, irrespective of age and gender, immediately they entered the welfare office, claimants would take off their shoes and kneel on the floor. While kneeling before one's elders is a customary sign of respect, it is unusual for elderly people to kneel before people younger than them. It was, therefore, disconcerting to observe elderly claimants kneeling before officers who were visibly younger than them. Officers would then have to remind them that such displays (acts) of reverence were unnecessary in a public office. Cash transfer recipients justified these acts of reverence along the lines of perceived social distance between themselves and public authority. They explained that they had prior encounters with officers in government departments where they had been ridiculed for their apparel. The officers confirmed these assertions that such maltreatment of people in poverty or others generally was common in government departments in the district arguing that most public officials have no training in how to manage their relationships with service users. Such experience was uncommon for church or mosque based material support which relies on fellow community members.

6.2.2. 'It was my luck': State support as a source of resentment from neighbours

Participants tended to construct state support in very distinct ways from church-based material support. The understanding of church support as membership-based and state support as an entitlement had structuring effects on the social interactions between cash

transfer recipients and non-recipients. In part, this can be attributed to the widely shared idea that the targeting process of the social cash transfer was unfair. These perceptions appear to have crystallised into a kind of social jealousy and backlash against cash transfer recipients which also motivated abuse and stigmatisation of people receiving cash transfers.

Although it is difficult to explain why this is the case, it is reasoned here that part of the problem was the constricted spaces available for non-recipients to express their dissent to the state about the selection criteria for the SCT, considering their own material conditions. Unable to channel these complaints to the department of welfare, this frustration that should otherwise be directed at the state was channelled back at fellow community members who were more easily accessible. As excerpts below indicate, this backlash took many forms including denigration characterised by what participants labelled 'gossip and backbiting,' and exclusion from previous resource sharing networks. Some SCT recipients reported hostility from non-recipients who, they say, threatened their participation in community programmes by asserting that only those who benefitted from state support should carry the burden of community service:

> "…As for me people even say to me that I work at the clinic, what problems do I have? I must tell them that the work I do at the clinic is voluntary, it has no payment…. They say in that case, you the people who benefit from the government's programmes are the ones who will vote and who will be taking part in the community activities, but I tell them that one day you will also have a chance to be on such programmes..." Salome

> "…I have heard people complaining but I tell them that this is my luck. I remind them that even if their names were taken but if they did not come out, it may be just luck. I do not control any of the processes. They say look at them, they are even proud, yet they are receiving money for mwasauka [poor] yet here we are we were left out. If you are a recipient what can you say? I cannot argue with them because they do not feel good that they were left out..." Avaina

> "…There is a lot of talk about the money that we are receiving and sometimes they say to your face that you should not be receiving. Sometimes when you do not have

> something because the money does not come on time and you go to ask for something they will tell you that they do not have and as you leave you can hear them saying she will be receiving money soon so it is like people are deliberately not giving you like to punish you. But you see, the thing is even me, the computer had left me out at first. Their time will come also…" Monica

Interviews with non-recipients of the social cash transfer provide some insights into the underlying basis of this hostility. These participants saw the process of accessing this support as either arbitrary or unfair and questioned why they had been left out when their own circumstances were not dissimilar to those selected for support. In most instances, welfare officers would explain that although they did the enumeration of households, final decisions were made in Lusaka by a computer programme, which makes objective decisions about who should get support or not. However, this explanation about a computer programme was often an unsatisfactory answer to these questions. Firstly, most participants, far removed from the realities of technology, had no understanding of what a computer or computer programme is. Secondly, they did not see the logic of a decision about their circumstances being decided far away in Lusaka by the so-called computer programme and not by the welfare officers who have actually seen their living conditions:

> "I was surprised to see young ones receiving help from the government, then asking them why I was left out, I was told it was the computer. Then I asked why the same computer only omitted me, an old woman? They were selecting in villages over there but here it failed. I went to the boma to ask, you wrote my name when you went around, you came to my home and registered my name, why are these young men receiving? That's when they came with their vehicles, and then I told them I was not receiving the money and I don't have anyone to help me. Especially this year, I don't have any food at all. But this computer, how does it leave me out?" *Naomi, 75, Non cash transfer participant*

> "So, some of us were left out and we will be left out, have you seen! They say it is the computer that left us out. Does the computer know that this one yes, this one no? How does the computer select when it did not see me? You can see here but how this computer select?" *Lonta, 67, Non cash transfer participant*

The third reason is more political in nature and was about how local ruling elites used the social cash transfer to mobilise support for themselves within communities. Social welfare

officers had initially engaged elected officials to sensitise them so that they did not use the cash transfer programme in their campaign messages. However, during the period of fieldwork, it was observed on several different occasions that people came to the social welfare office to ask for money, saying their member of parliament had told them there was money for them at the district social welfare office. Having observed these cases, I asked the said Social Welfare officer to explain why, despite the sensitisation of elected officials, these cases were happening. The officer's response was telling in how it connected the social cash transfer to the tension in the communities and local political dynamics. Speaking to the argument made in chapter seven of this thesis about how in the broader scheme of things, programmes like the cash transfer fit within the general framework of patronage politics practiced in Zambia:

> "What you observed were very polite inquiries and conversations. The more politically charged insult us out rightly. They say we are eating their money and yet there is no money here. But you see, the politicians will tell them that there is money at the district social welfare office, go and get it. To them, these are just words but to the people they say them to, it means money is there at the district office. The politicians are saying that just to preserve themselves. They would rather the people thought the problem is us because they see us every day. The politicians come once in a while but people believe them," (Officer 3)

6.3. Discussion

The findings presented above provide some new opportunities to reflect on the relational dimensions of poverty both in the study context and for poverty research generally. On the one hand, the analysis above confirms the evidence of prior studies on the nexus between religion and poverty especially the role of religion in how people make meaning of poverty (Brimeyer, 2008;Hunt, 1996, 2002;Maxwell, 1998). Frames of poverty as a consequence of divine intervention as well as expressions like 'only God knows', often articulated by participants discussed in chapter four of this research, are a case in point. Beyond meaning

making, there is a large American literature on how religious institutions frame the everyday lives of people living in poverty (Foley, McCarthy, & Chaves, 2001;Norris & Inglehart, 2004, 2011;Saegert, Thompson, & Warren, 2005). In many ways, parallels can be drawn between this previous literature and the current analysis. For example, as highlighted in the findings presented above, the work of Norris and Inglehart (2011) shows that religious institutions foster social relationships among poor communities.

However, in the United States where the influence of religious institutions on the experience of poverty has been extensively studied, disagreements exist about the specific nature of this influence. This present research offers new evidence. For instance, Brimeyer (2008), whose work draws extensively on Hunt (2002), observes that traditional Christian churches such as Catholics, differ from mainline protestants and evangelicals in their explanations for poverty. He argues that Catholics' theological commitment to social justice enables them to favour structural arguments as opposed to Protestants openness to the view of poverty as a consequence of divine intervention which leads them to favour individualist explanations of poverty. These distinctions, he argues, lead to different programmatic action against poverty.

Norris and Inglehart (2011), however, report a stronger pro-poor stance amongst evangelicals and show that protestants, unlike Catholics, tended to be more connected and have a higher than average membership to voluntary organisations within their communities with spill over effects to their everyday lives. Evidently, the findings of this research seem to support the conclusion drawn by Hunt (2002) and Brimeyer (2008) as evangelicals seemed to be only marginally involved with the social lives of congregants. However, a plausible, competing explanation for this observation is that while most traditional churches have a long history in Zambian society and tend to have more elaborate structures within local communities, evangelical churches are relatively recent. It is perhaps important to highlight that the

significance of the religious institutions in matters of social welfare matches both the decline of state involvement in social investment and the subsequent increase in poverty levels post structural adjustment (Larmer, 2009;Noyoo, 2008;Simutanyi, 1996).

In fact, Cheyeka (2008, p. 152), suggests that the proliferation of evangelical churches in Zambia coincided with the decline in standards of living in the years following structural adjustment reforms, a period within which discourses of financial prosperity through religious devotion thrived. A similar logic is put forward by Phiri (2008) in his analysis of the growth of Islam in post-colonial Zambia. Phiri (2008) argues that participants in his research saw Islam as a religion which gave to them rather than took from them in the way that Christian denominations, especially evangelicals demanded tithes and offering. The evidence of participants in this research joining Mosques so that they could take their children to non-fee paying Muslim schools as opposed to fee paying government schools offers some support for Phiri's assertion. The difference in the financial endowment between traditional and evangelical Christians and between Christians and Muslims may explain the extent to which they offer material support to congregants. However, this argument cannot be extended to cover the limited concern with participants' social lives observed among evangelicals who seemed more preoccupied with getting their congregants to heaven and the spiritualisation of poverty in which it is resolvable through prayer and miracles (Maxwell, 1998).

Moving past the differences in how religious institutions approach the material circumstances of people living in poverty, there is a broader issue about the efficacy of religious institutions in mounting a significant challenge against structural poverty. The evidence in this research suggests that the anti-poverty approach of religious institutions is *ad hoc* and not organised unlike what is observed in the literature on the USA. A plausible explanation for this discrepancy is the USA's unique history of the intertwining between religious institutions and

the civil rights movement. Given that participants in this research agree to the membership and charitable nature of religious-based social support, there exists little motivation for religious institutions to vigorously take on the structural causes of poverty in the research context. Consequently, if as Lister (2013), UNDP (2003b) and Walker (2014) argue, poverty is a question of human rights, then the role of religious institutions observed in this study still does not meet the desired standard despite its important role in fostering inclusion of people experiencing poverty into the lives of their local communities. This, therefore, raises questions about the forms of civil society that can sufficiently address structural conditions of poverty in different contexts. Furthermore, being membership based, ties to religious institutions, despite their spill over effects, are not ideal as they may function to further marginalise people who do not identify as religious and who may, because of lack of religious conviction, be excluded from religion-based networks.

Ties to religious institutions are distinct from ties to the state in an important way. While ties to religious institutions appear to bring people together, ties to state support did the opposite. This research observes a salient negative framing effect on social interaction amongst community members due to the targeted nature of assistance. For example, against widespread material deprivation, targeted support seems arbitrary and undermines citizen confidence in the state. In addition to experience of domination from wealthier groups, which was common among research participants, the participants who benefit from targeted support appeared to be more despised in their communities. That they often had to evoke discourses of luck (time and chance) to defend themselves against attacks and allegations of corruption in their communities underscores this point.

The evidence presented here draws attention to the disruptive effects of targeted anti-poverty measures especially amongst very materially deprived but tightly knit communities and adds

to current evidence which shows that tightly targeted anti-poverty measures are by design problematic. The poverty and shame studies by Gubrium et al. (2013), Chase and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo (2014) and Walker et al. (2013), highlight the shaming elements of targeting for people living in poverty. This research affirms these effects but also exposes the potential of targeted assistance to break down social relationships due to its arbitrary nature. This evidence is relevant, more so by its absence from research on the impacts of social cash transfers in Zambia. For example, studies by van Ufford et al. (2016) provide elaborate evidence of the economic impacts of cash transfers on material poverty in Zambia. Among other things, the authors suggest that the cash transfers improve recipients' social standing due to their improved material status. This current study confirms the evidence of improved material status among cash transfer recipients.

The evidence presented here draws attention to the disruptive effects of targeted anti-poverty measures especially amongst very materially deprived but tightly knit communities and adds to current evidence which shows that narrowly targeted anti-poverty measures are by design problematic. The poverty and shame studies by Gubrium et al. (2013), Chase and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo (2014) and Walker et al. (2013), highlight the shaming elements of targeting for people living in poverty. This research affirms these effects but also exposes the potential of targeted assistance to break down social relationships due to its arbitrary nature. This evidence is relevant, more so because of its absence in other research on the impacts of social cash transfers in Zambia. For example, a recent evaluation of the social cash transfer by van Ufford et al. (2016) provides elaborate evidence of the impacts of cash transfers on material poverty in Zambia. Among other things, the authors suggest that the cash transfers improve recipients' social standing due to their improved material status. This current study confirms the evidence of improved material status among cash transfer recipients but contradicts their

conclusions of improved social status. The example of women lacking confidence in their ability to influence access to fertiliser because they are women is a potent illustration because cash transfers are mainly paid to women and it is thought that this empowers them by increasing their bargaining power (Bonilla et al., 2017;Handa, Peterman, Seidenfeld, & Tembo, 2016). Another case of this lack of improved status can be seen in the muffled voices of people in poverty like Blackson who receive cash transfers but still feel that they cannot question official decisions or make complaints because they will be exposed, leading to negative consequences, or Veli who feels that people discount her at village meetings and Salome who did not feel she had the power to challenge injustices committed against her because she was in poverty and did not have any influence. In this way, this thesis evidences a further diminished status and reiterates findings of a previous study by MacAuslan and Riemenschneider (2011) on Malawi and Zimbabwe. These authors argue that the impact of cash transfer on social relations is often large and negative. They call for a pause to conceptualisation of impact that ignores social relations in cash transfer programmes. These conclusions about marginal gains in social standing among recipients of targeted support are also echoed in a recent report by UNICEF on universal child grants, dignity and shame (Lichao, Walker, Jiexuan, & Zhang, Forthcoming).

There is also similar evidence from other contexts (Adato, 2000, 2008;Adato & Hoddinott, 2010;Camfield & Vennam, 2012;Ellis, 2012) that targeted assistance is disruptive to social relationships especially due to how it creates new categories among similarly situated people. Adato (2000, 2008) has shown this to be the case in Mexico's PROGRESA where the divide between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries oppose locally held understandings of who is living in poverty led some community members to opt out of community activities as is the case with Salome's explanation earlier. Camfield and Vennam (2012) shows that perceptions

of unequal benefit poisoned community relationships, breeding mistrust and resentment within India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme while Ellis (2012) in his analysis of cash transfers in Zambia and Malawi concludes, broadly, that cash transfers are important but the targeting processes involved in selecting recipients as well as the levels of cash offered led to community tension. This he argues related to the nature of variations of poverty at that local level. This evidence, consistent with the findings in this thesis, therefore, raises key questions about how targeted assistance can work to dismantle the social difference at the heart of poverty especially for deprived but tight nit communities given that targeted assistance appears to be intrinsically divisive and with negative effects on their social relationships.

Additionally, the tension observed above between participants' construction of state support as entitlement and their experience of it as benevolence highlights the importance of state-society relations in the experience of poverty in the everyday life. Participants in this research reported a strong sense of felt entitlement yet they could not translate this sense of entitlement into claims for state support. The observed tension, however, is instructive not only in highlighting how institutionalised norms and practices frame interaction between citizens and the state in such a way as to prevent the articulation of claims of citizenship, but also the important role of public officials as change agents within this space. The analysis in this research suggests that improved material status due to cash transfers while evident especially in relation to household consumption does not appear to lead to commensurate change in social standing. That cash transfers have the potential to rupture social relationships is critical for people living in poverty more so for those in long-term poverty.

This limitation on citizenship through the workings of cash transfer programming have also been reported in Uganda in a recent study by Bantebya-Kyomuhendo (2016). Similar to the

findings above, Bantebya-Kyomuhendo (2016) reports practices of excessive gratitude among beneficiaries which are, as argued by public officials in her research, a consequence of the material hardship that cash transfer recipients endure. However, as the analysis above showed, such practices cannot be divorced from the wider narrative of benevolence in the speech and conduct of public officials – which appear to be based in policy. While these experiences may be dismissed as functions of context, the evidence presented here suggests that they are a fundamental consequence of programme design when we account for the nature of state society relations in the contexts within which they are implemented.

The labelling of people who question the decisions of those in power as the 'smart poor' reveals an important policy dynamic. While being smart is an admirable quality, the way in which the phrase is used here carries connotations of negative perceptions of people living in poverty, –they are not expected to be smart and the smart ones cause problems. This representation of voice as trouble making, and of those who seek to exercise it as smart poor, can be understood as part of a broader discussion of policy framing and of the ways in which policy plays out in face to face interactions between administrators and target populations, (Walker, 2014;Witcher, 2013). As Witcher (2013, p. 181), argues:

> "…if the intention is that policy should promote engagement, participation and social inclusion, the way in which it is delivered must surely take human motivations into account. If engagement requires the affirmation of incapacity or inadequacy, not only could it adversely affect how recipients feel about themselves, it could also affect how recipients are viewed by others in subsequent transactions..."

Tied into this argument is the observed problem of adverse visibility. As observed, collective conformity to institutionalised patterns of expression constrains the subjective voice in a manner that leads to feelings of powerlessness among people experiencing poverty. It was striking that the lack of self-confidence to engage with public officials and knowledge about

support services was as prevalent among participants benefiting as those not benefiting from cash transfers.

6.4. Conclusion

The chapter focused on the institutional relationships of people living in poverty. Findings show that religious institutions and the state through the department of social welfare are the important institutional relationships for the people experiencing poverty who participated in this research. Analysis revealed that both had strong but differing framing effects on the everyday life. Whereas ties to religious institutions enabled non-material support to both members and non-members, the effects were stronger among members and it was members who benefit most from religious-based material support. The overall effect of ties to religious institutions appears to be decreasing social distance among people and fostering bonds of community and belonging. This has enabled people living in poverty who participated in this study to have an unusually high degree of social connectedness with the rest of their communities. This was not the case with ties to the state, which appear to lead to some form of division between recipients of cash transfers and non-recipients, due to perceptions of unfairness among non-beneficiaries. This tension is explained by the seemingly arbitrary nature of social cash transfer targeting given the degree of material deprivation prevalent among participants. Consequently, while cash transfer participants are marginally better off materially, they experience more social stigma than their counterparts who are not in receipt of transfers.

A further implication is that recipients of cash transfers may be excluded from resource sharing networks because of their new material status, something that is problematic given that in some instances, the cash transfers are unpaid for long periods of time. Although

research participants stated categorically that state provision of certain basic needs especially to the needy was a responsibility of the government, they did not convert such expectations into claims for service. If receiving state provided support was an entitlement as some participants revealed, it was expected that such participants would consequently place demands on the government. This was however not the case, as many research participants did not even seem to know that entitlements could be converted into claims for a service.

Participants' inability to voice concerns or question institutional power, due to their self-awareness of low status, created in part by the experience of poverty and in part by informal practices of public officials, increases their feelings of powerlessness. Although conspicuously absent from cash transfer evaluations in the national context, this effect appears to be strong in perpetuating the low status of people in poverty. This research draws out the continued limited capacity for voice and agency even among transfer recipients as cause for concern. The analysis, therefore, has demonstrated how institutional relationships frame the everyday lives of people living in poverty and contributes nuanced evidence to the growing body of literature seeking to understand the relational dimensions of poverty by examining the lived experience.

Chapter Seven

Narratives of Poverty in Zambian Welfare Policy Discourses

The previous chapter focused on the experiences of poverty among research participants within institutional spaces. This current chapter continues the discussion of poverty at that institutional level by examining discourses of poverty within Zambian welfare policy. By analysing the idea of poverty presented in policy, the arguments and the evidence presented for it, this chapter uncovers the macro level thinking around poverty as a social problem worth governmental action in Zambia. This analysis enables the content as well as the social and historical context of poverty policy in Zambia to be made clear.

It is understood in this research that policies as propositions or statements of intent are not automatically translated into decisions by street level bureaucrats at the frontline of service administration and implementation. However, while working within those particular policy ideas, street level bureaucrats shape how these policy ideas are experienced by target populations (Apthorpe & Gasper, 2014;Bacchi, 2000;Lipsky, 2010;Zacka, 2017). In line with this understanding, the analysis in this chapter uses, as a counter point, the experiences of people in poverty presented in chapters four, five and six as well as interviews with key informants who implement policy and those with experience of policy making to illuminate its arguments. This counterpoising of policy narratives with direct experiences, it is thought, reveals the grounding and expression of the ideas that shape, at that institutional level, the context within which the nature and experiences of poverty discussed in this research are contained. In so doing, this chapter particularises the core argument of this thesis: that poverty is framed by social relationships through the recognition accorded to individuals and groups in the different domains of their lives.

Methodologically, the analysis in this chapter treats policy as discourse, an approach that assumes that 'problems are created or given shape in the very proposals offered as responses' (Bacchi, 2000, p. 48). A policy analysis of this nature views discourse as a collection of ideas, concepts and categories that are produced, reproduced and transformed to offer meaning to reality (Fischer, 2003;Hajer, 1995;Kolocek, 2017). The analytic process of the policy documents was informed by the analysis of discourse by Fairclough (2013a);(Fairclough, 2013b) in searching for patterns, exploring the terms used and the content of the documents to uncover meanings, contradictions, emphasis as well as omissions from the representation of poverty in Zambia and how these interact to create a particular image of poverty. Analysis also drew on previous work on policy framing (Bacchi, 2000, 2009;Dekker, 2016;Walker, 2014) and discourses of poverty, (Chase & Walker, 2015b;Mwiine & Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014;Wale & Foster, 2007;Watkins-Hayes & Kovalsky, 2016;Wenden, 2008). As highlighted under the methodology section in chapter three, the corpus of documents for analysis included the Poverty Reduction Paper (PRSP) 2002, the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) 2007-2010, the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) 2011-2015, the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (RSNDP) 2013-2016, the National Social Protection Policy 2014 (NSPP) and the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) reports.

The chapter makes three arguments. First, it argues that poverty is conceived in absolute, material terms despite the references to its multidimensionality in policy documents. Judged against the evidence of what it means to live in poverty in Zambia as documented through the lives of people with direct experience in chapters four, five and six, policy underrepresents the nature of poverty. The evidence base for the policy is largely descriptive and lacks grounding in experience. In this way, it contradicts both the evidence of people in poverty in

Zambia and the large body of literature which shows that it is more useful to think about poverty as multidimensional (Nolan & Whelan, 2011;Seth & Alkire, 2017;Townsend, 1979;Walker, 2014). Thinking about poverty in such a subsistence frame, however, has performed a useful function for various political governments but none so evident as legitimising state intervention that is restricted to targeting subsistence concerns and, as Townsend (2013) and Walker (2019) suggest, makes progress against poverty easy to track and demonstrate.

Second, the analysis in this chapter confirms the evidence presented in Chapter 4, which strongly suggests that poverty in Zambia is both chronic and structural. However, policy documents, stirred largely by multilateral financial institutions, represent poverty as based in microeconomic factors. The strong influence of this thinking on domestic policy making had created a policy hegemony in which poverty was thought of as a primarily economic problem, ignoring its political and social underpinnings. This hegemony foreclosed alternative ways of thinking about poverty and within this thinking; therefore, it could only be resolved through economic growth. This policy context, together with a declining economy meant that it was much easier to implement and justify underfunded, targeted safety net like programmes which focus on the subsistence concerns of only the worst-off despite acknowledgement of the structural and chronic nature of poverty in policy.

Additionally, the framing of poverty as a primarily economic problem has depoliticised it, masking the lack of political will among a political elite who are quick to blame the economy for continued poverty while also utilising poverty for patronage and for political mobilisation by promising to end it during electoral campaigns. Furthermore, while a structural frame was generally used to describe poverty, eligibility criteria for the various safety net programmes individualise it by employing notions of deservingness that emphasise individual viability

and dependency and which have a punitive logic. The use of such concepts in policy reveals the internal contradictions between the situational analysis of poverty given in policy, lived experience as demonstrated in Chapter four, five and six of this thesis and the measures designed to address it.

Third, the chapter argues that while the above has been the status quo, the design and enactment of the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) in 2014 was a paradigmatic shift in the way that poverty is thought about and proposed to be acted upon. Policy rhetoric changed to one involving a transformative logic arguing for anti-poverty action to be seen as an investment and a necessity for growth and not only as a consequence of it and a burden on the public purse. Within this shift, social assistance coverage under the social cash transfer programme, a flagship safety net programme, was scaled up to cover a larger number of households. Recent analyses of this development have concluded that it represents the convergence of populist politics and transnational ideals to enhance poverty reduction within what is considered to be limited fiscal space in Zambia, (Cherrier, 2016;Ferguson, 2015;Pruce & Hickey, 2017;Siachiwena, 2016).

The analysis in this chapter broadly confirms conclusions by (Cherrier, 2016;Hickey, 2005;Hickey, Sabates-Wheeler, Guenther, & Macauslan, 2009;Siachiwena, 2016) that Zambia's anti-poverty trajectory is fraught with difficulties caused by a mixture of factors like a limited fiscal space, local politics and international actors which have either progressed or limited its expansion of anti-poverty action at specific points in time. However, because this chapter examines the ideas contained in policy and how they shape experiences of people in poverty who are subject to them, it concludes that current policy, while overseeing a large expansion in social assistance particularly the cash transfer programme and a departure from previous rhetoric which focus poverty to economic growth is in fact not a significant

departure from previous anti-poverty approaches. Its functioning is of the kind consistent with the nature of politics practised in Zambia which has sustained the chronic and structural nature of poverty presented in previous chapters. This conclusion can be read from the provisions in the NSPP which proclaim a transformative logic but fail to offer citizens entitlement based support due to a lack of the legal framework within which such state support can be offered, the way it is implemented by welfare officers as government benevolence and, as a consequence, how people in poverty experience this implementation. In the end therefore, programmes like the social cash transfer, – the poster child of the NSPP, has expanded quantitatively even within what is considered a limited fiscal space. However, because it is still underpinned by the same logics that guided previous social protection programming, it does not address the relational dynamics such as asymmetrical power relations that underpin material deprivation in Zambia. The chapter has two main sections. How poverty is understood in the national context is presented in the first section while the second analyses the nature of policy responses to poverty. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion drawing out key observations.

7.1. Imagining poverty in the national context

There is widely articulated consensus within the reviewed policy documents that poverty in Zambia is chronic and a majority phenomenon (Central Statistical Office, 2004, 2012a, 2016;GRZ, 2006, 2014a;IMF, 2002). Such consensus is a necessary first step to resolving the problem. However, the disconcerting reality as this analysis will show is that this widely held consensus has neither translated into commensurate nor adequate responses to poverty. Several factors account for this mismatch. Theoretically, as argued by Lister (2004b) in chapter two, connections between conceptions of poverty, its various measures and the policies designed against it, are complex. Since action against poverty calls into question the

(re)distribution of resources and the power to make these decisions, how it is defined and measured are important predictors of the action taken against it (Alkire & Foster, 2011;Walker, 2014;White, Killick, & Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2001). According to Walker (2014, p. 15), the complexity of poverty is because it is never neutral, "it is a product of politics and invariably divides opinion." This politically charged nature of poverty often implies that definitions and measures are selected to reflect the kind of action that particular interest groups find permissible (Piachaud, 1987). Zambia, the case under analysis in this current work, provides useful evidence of how and why this is so.

Generally, the understanding and measurement of poverty have evolved from unidimensional and mainly consumption based measures to multidimensional ones that account for deprivations across multiple dimensions (Walker, 2014). Initial concerns with 'want' and 'squalor' informed measures of poverty that focused on physical subsistence, a panacea of today's absolute measures. Analysis of the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) shows that descriptions of poverty in Zambia are illustrative of a picture of absolute deprivation. Poverty is presented in primarily subsistence terms along basic survival essentials. This focus on subsistence is also apparent in measurement methodology employed in the Living Conditions Monitoring Surveys by the Central Statistical Office (CSO), Zambia's research bureau. These surveys provide the evidence which underpins policy.

The initial Social Dimensions of Adjustment Priority surveys which began in the early 1990s, eventually evolved into a Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), recurring every four years, which sets the parameters within which poverty is officially conceived. The first of the social dimensions of adjustment priority surveys conducted to measure poverty were commissioned in 1993. In keeping with the tradition of consumption-based measures of

poverty, an absolute poverty line was constructed through a food basket measure after the 1991 prices and incomes survey was used to identify people living in poverty. The LCMS of 2010 is most important in this respect because it suggests, as reflected in the figure 7.1 below, that there was a shift in measurement methodology in Zambia in a way that accounts for global developments in measurement methodology:

Figure 7. 1 Image of poverty measurement methodology

Table 12.1: Comparability of the poverty method

Issue	Past methodology	CSO methodology – LCMS 2010 report	Methodology used in CSO 'Poverty trends' publication (2009)
Food basket	Based on observed consumption patterns of households close to the poverty line (5th-6th deciles) in Priority survey 1991	Based on observed consumption patterns of households close to the poverty line (5th-6th deciles) in Priority survey 1991	Based on observed consumption patterns of households close to the poverty line (5th-6th deciles) in LCMS 2006
Update of poverty line over time	1991 food basket updated over time using average food CPI	1991 food basket updated over time using item specific national median prices	2006 food basket priced using item specific national median prices
Spatial price deflators	National price deflators used – no provincial price adjustments	National price deflators used – no provincial price adjustments	Overall price deflator adjusted to reflect differences in prices across provinces
Consumption aggregate Provincial deflator	Not applicable	2010 consumption aggregate expanded to include new food items captured in 2010	1996-2006 consumption aggregates have a consistent list of food items
	Includes remittances sent	Includes remittances sent	Excludes remittances sent
	Includes actual rents	Includes actual and imputed rents	Includes actual and imputed rents
	Includes actual housing expenditures	Includes actual and imputed housing expenditures	Includes actual and imputed housing expenditures
Food to non-food ratios	Use a fixed food to non-food ratio of 0.7 to 0.3	Ratio based on non-food share of HHs with food expenditure close to the food (extreme) poverty line. 2006 ratio is 61 to 39; 2010 ratio is 66 to 34	2006 ratio based on average non- food share of HHs in 5th and 6th deciles: Ratio is 58.5 to 41.5

Source: Central Statistical Office (2012a)

Noteworthy is that the LMCS pronounces poverty as multidimensional:

> "poverty is multidimensional and complex in nature and manifests itself in various forms, which makes its definition not always straightforward," (Central Statistical Office, 2012a, p. 175).

Yet, despite this pronouncement, the LMCS employ a definition that confines poverty to material deprivation. It also employs measures that are primarily income and consumption based:

> "The CSO has adopted the *material wellbeing* perception of poverty in which the poor are defined *as those members of society who are unable to afford minimum basic human needs, comprising food and non-food items, given all their total income*.

It continues:

> "Although the definition may seem simple, there are several complications in determining the minimum requirements and the amounts of money necessary to meet these requirements. In the LCMS analysis, efforts to determine people's *[wellbeing]* in Zambia have, therefore, concentrated on estimating the aggregate value of all consumptive goods and services considered necessary to satisfy an individual's basic needs. The poor have in this case typically been identified by comparing their measure of income (i.e. consumption expenditure) to some absolute poverty line. Since 1991, CSO has been using household consumption expenditure data from the LCMS series when measuring the welfare of the people,"(Central Statistical Office, 2012a, p. 175).

This perception of poverty contrasts markedly with the multidimensional nature of poverty pronounced earlier and is tangential to conventional understandings of poverty as multidimensional (Alkire, 2007a;Anand & Sen, 1997;Bossert, Chakravarty, & D'Ambrosio, 2013;Ravallion, 2011;Tomlinson, Walker, & Williams, 2008;Townsend, 2013). More importantly, it departs significantly from the experiences of poverty as articulated by people with direct experience in Chapter 4. In part, and echoing Lister's (2015) critique of poverty measurement in which she argues that the preoccupation with identifying and counting people living in poverty without engaging with their experiences often presents them as people with their tears washed off, the disjuncture between the poverty as explained in policy here and the accounts of those with direct experience in chapters four to six is the lack of

engagement with their experiences built into the survey methodologies. The living conditions monitoring surveys, in spite of their name, have been overly concerned with the poverty headcount, not the actual experience of poverty. This is despite being the officially gazetted national poverty studies. As the experiences of participants in chapter four demonstrated, poverty involves more than a lack of material necessities. It is now widely established that income and consumption measures are unable to capture other aspects of poverty. As seen in chapter three, people in poverty include many other things such as dignity and respect, the lack of education opportunities including lack of influence in everyday life in their articulation of what poverty involves. These elements are non-material but highly relevant to the experience of poverty (Chase & Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014;Chase & Walker, 2013b;Gubrium et al., 2013;Lister, 2005b;Townsend, 2013;Walker, 2014). Defining poverty around unmet consumption needs, even if looking only at absolute poverty, is narrow and such definitions of poverty lead inevitably, as subsequent parts of this chapter show, to policy measures that focus on consumption smoothing rather than expanded access to social services (Ravallion, 2011;Underlid, 2007).

Another issue in the understanding of poverty is its direct focus on *minimum basic human needs*. Although it is possible to see how the notion of minimum basic needs conveys elements of the absolute core of poverty articulated by Sen (1983), it is problematic because it overlooks prevailing social standards. Poverty literature, (Bossert et al., 2013;Piachaud, 1987;Townsend, 1979, 2013), suggests that it is more useful to think of poverty relative to the prevailing standards of a population and not merely through the minimum requirements for survival.

Rightly, the minimalist perception of poverty identified in the Zambian case naturally leads to measures of poverty that are minimalist. A direct consequence of this is the underestimation

of both the extent and nature of poverty in the national context. There is evidence that poverty in Zambia is underrepresented. Chibuye (2014), for example, shows that preoccupation with the monitory cost of food and non-food essentials in poverty measurement has led to representations in which poverty is depicted as worse in rural than in urban areas. This narrative of rural poverty, repeated in all the living conditions monitoring surveys since 1991, is evident in this quote from the fifth national development plan 2006-2010:

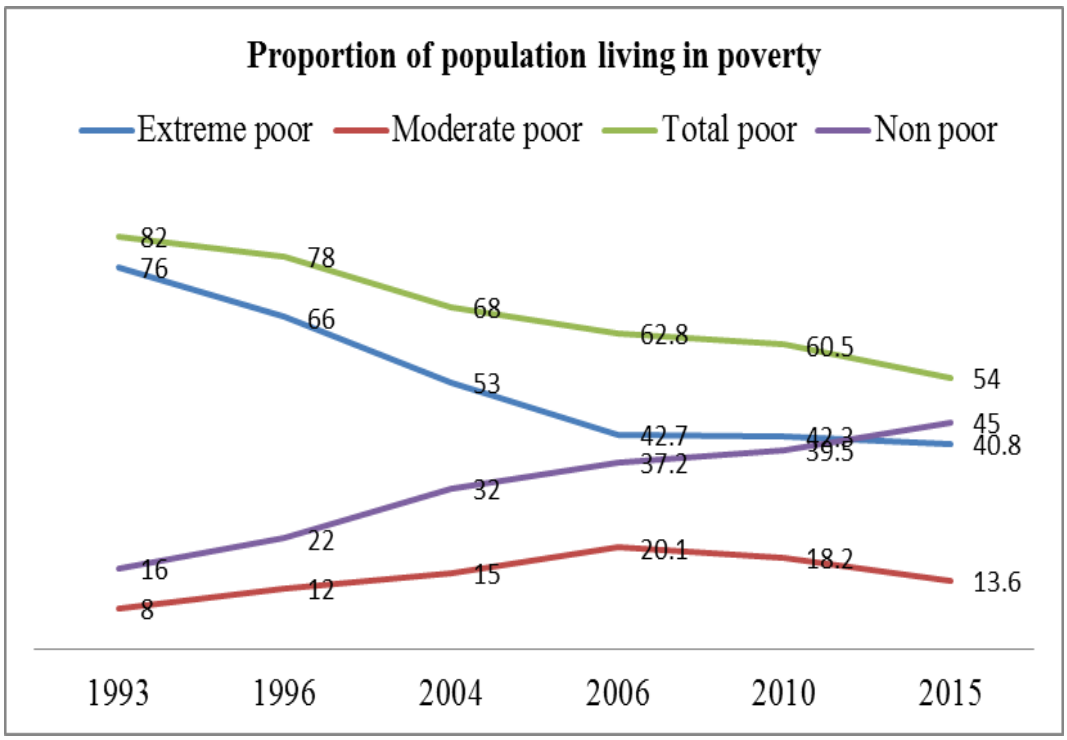
> "The preceding analysis indicates that poverty remains more severe in rural areas. The majority of rural households in Zambia depend on consumption of own produce. Therefore, the high poverty levels in rural areas could be as a result of not having adequate food by the majority of households there. The rural areas have poor infrastructure and marketing systems while labour productivity among the small scale farmers is quite low,"(GRZ, 2006, p. 13).

Nonetheless, using the understanding above, people living in poverty are classified into two categories; 'extreme poor' and 'moderate poor.' The extreme poor are, 'a hardest-hit category of people consisting of those who cannot afford to meet the basic minimum food requirements even if they allocated all their total spending on food,' while the 'moderately poor' are, 'people who can afford to meet the basic minimum food requirements but cannot afford non-food basic needs' (Central Statistical Office, 2004, pp. 111-112). As will be shown later in this chapter, these classifications become important when considered against current anti-poverty programmes such as the social cash transfer and more so, the current targeting mechanisms used by those programmes to select potential beneficiaries.[6] By these

[6] See Appendix one for the eligibility criteria of the social cash transfer under which at least 40 percent of the Zambian population qualifies for support given the poverty head count in CSO standards shown in figure 7.2 below.

classifications, using CSO data, the following lines have been drawn in six rounds of surveys as shown in figure 7.2 below:

Figure 7. 2 Population living in poverty



There are two important conclusions that can be drawn from the figure above. First is that poverty, despite the limitations of the concept applied by the CSO in its analysis, is a defining feature of the Zambian population. The second, and also the stated conclusion of the CSO is the overly positive story that there was a steady and significant decline in the proportion of people living in poverty between 1993 and 2015. However, held up against the standards set out in the latest Monitoring Global Poverty report by the World Bank (2017a), this conclusion becomes less satisfying. The World Bank argues that although it is conventional to represent poverty among a population in proportions, the ultimate concern for poverty alleviation is the absolute numbers of human beings living in poverty. Similarly, Hickel (2016) citing a shift in language from absolute numbers to proportions between the Rome

declaration and the Millennium declaration – a change that is insensitive to population growth – argues that proportions often enable the good news narrative that poverty is declining. Applying that logic of absolute numbers to the Zambian case above reveals that while the proportion of the population living in poverty has decreased, the absolute number of people living in poverty in Zambia has been rising steadily since 1993. That the absolute number of people living in poverty is increasing across decades suggests that that poverty is being passed across generations. This should concern policy makers and prompt questions about the efficacy of current anti-poverty programmes.

7.2. Responding to poverty

7.2.1. Growth first: the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP) era

Analysis shows that the political construction of poverty has employed both structural and individualist frames. Frames as "… the specific concepts and terms used to present choice or decision…" (Iyengar, 1990, p. 20), represent an issue in a particular way showing both what is thought to be its cause and solution. In poverty analysis, structural frames tend to explain poverty with reference to the broader macroeconomic environment and societal structures while individualist frames tend to attribute poverty to individual characteristics, (Grindstaff, 2006;Rose & Baumgartner, 2013). The difference in the two frames, Rose and Baumgartner (2013) argue, is that when policies employ structural factors, the solutions to poverty which follow also tend to be expansive like investing in education and skills development or access to health for excluded groups. Conversely, when individualistic frames are used, more stingy alternatives that have a restrictive focus often referring to dysfunction or dependency result. It is rare that both frames are used at once.

In the case of the PRSP's in Zambia, poverty was seen as a consequence of economic failure, a kind of structural explanation. The core argument was that poverty persisted due to a

declining economy as a result of mismanagement. This explanation points to the broader economic situation drawing in politics only with regard to managing the economy which in this context meant creating a conducive environment for market forces to thrive. This kind of framing while structural drew attention away from politics – like decisions about which groups received investment from the state and the overall distribution of economic resources and opportunities within the national context (Green, 2006;Li, 2007). PRSP's have been described as growth-oriented policies whose poverty focus was in the provision of basic social services and support through the provision of safety nets directed at heavily risk-prone poor communities that were unable to benefit from the adjustment that growth required (Saasa & Carlsson, 2002).

The difference in the PRSP's was the use of a new rhetoric which employed such terminologies as 'growth with redistribution', 'broad based growth,' 'smart growth' and even 'pro poor growth.' To analysts like (Imboela, 2005), this new rhetoric was meant to make PRSP's acceptable and justify continued reliance on them yet they were only a version of adjustment policies but now with a rhetoric sensitive to poverty. Further references to structural causes of poverty included disease, HIV/AIDS, inequality including of access to health, education and income and a failure of agriculture policies. As with other scholars who have analysed the development of social policy in Zambia, the nation's debt burden was identified as a barrier to poverty reduction (Cherrier, 2016;Hickey, 2009;Schüring & Lawson-McDowall, 2011). A high national debt burden was argued to crowd out social expenditure and lack of growth constrained fiscal space.

The PRSP of 2002 explained poverty with reference to high inequality, political governance and poorly coordinated anti-poverty strategies but the headline explanation for the poverty rife among Zambians was poor economic growth. It argued that the worsening poverty in

Zambia was primarily a product of low economic growth against explosive population growth as well as inadequate or inappropriate targeting of poor and vulnerable people within national resource allocation:

> "The foremost barrier to moving out of poverty in Zambia is the lack of sustained levels of positive growth. This has been exacerbated by increased income inequality, the persistence of discrimination against women and the girl child, insufficient investment in economic and social infrastructure to keep pace with requirements for rapid growth, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Significant poverty reduction requires a substantial injection of resources into poverty reduction activities and that is not possible without growth. In its absence, there can be little increase in domestic resources either through savings or tax revenues. Despite the comprehensive macroeconomic reforms that have been implemented in Zambia in the past ten years, there has not been any significant growth in the economy. This issue is developed further, where the overall objectives and strategies are discussed," (IMF, 2002, p. 26)

> "The causes of poverty in Zambia identified above are all important. However, special attention is being placed on the lack of tangible economic growth in the last thirty years while the population continued to grow. The consequences for this on poverty were already outlined. It has, therefore, been considered appropriate that Zambia's first PRSP should place high premium on strategies for reviving broad-based economic growth. These strategies are elaborated in both macroeconomic and sectoral issues in their relevant chapters,"(IMF, 2002, p. 31)

Continuing the marketization logic of the structural adjustment era, lack of or improper insertion into the market, among small scale farmers and people living in poverty were cited as additional causes of poverty (Kapungwe, 2004;Larmer, 2011;Ruckert, 2010). In this thinking, poverty persisted because the economy was underperforming and because of this, fiscal space was limited further constraining governmental expenditure on poverty reduction, a logic represented on page 11 of the PRSP of 2002:

> "Little can be achieved to reduce poverty unless measures are taken to revive Zambia's economy. Accordingly, Zambia's PRSP focuses on measures to achieve strong sustained economic growth," (IMF, 2002, p. 11).

Individuals are featured in this logic only as passive beneficiaries of economic growth. In the same vein, people living in poverty were characterised as helpless victims of structural constraints either because they could not integrate into the market or had weak access to real

assets due to bad laws that prevented their land ownership and productivity (IMF, 2002, p. 11). Simultaneously, by analysing poverty entirely in relation to economic growth, it was made, primarily, an economic issue.

The result of this orientation was a focus on macroeconomic policy as a poverty reduction tool. Poverty reduction was structured around safety net programming in which government was to work in a regulatory role and provide essential services for people experiencing extreme deprivation, while efficient and effective markets would enable growth – employing the same logics of the world development report of 1991 (World Bank, 1991). Direct measures targeting people living in poverty were conceived in safety net terms through the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS), an underfunded social assistance programme targeting the worst off as discussed in chapter five and fee waivers for health services for rural areas and pensioners. Agriculture based subsidy initiatives, such as the Farmer Input Support Programme discussed in chapter one, were encouraged under the assumption that small scale farmers could be inserted into the credit system and therefore integrated into the economy, made more productive and become drivers of poverty reduction:

> "On several grounds, agriculture in Zambia combines the virtues of growth and equity and it is in this regard that enhanced agricultural productivity is being given the highest priority under this PRSP. Zambia has abundant arable agricultural land and supportive agro-ecological zones, which combined with abundant human resource base, can propel increase in output. On equity, it is noted that the poor in Zambia are predominantly in agriculture. If the sector grows and measures are put in place to include the poor in this growth, poverty will be reduced. The creation of conditions that enhance long-term innovative improvement of the productivity of agricultural resources, particularly smallholder farmers, land and labour is, therefore, considered crucial. A similar level of importance is being placed on the building and consolidation of the requisite credit markets for financing new investments in the sector as well as the improvement of marketing infrastructure for a more efficient flow of larger volumes of produce,"(IMF, 2002, p. 11)

> "…On the one hand, assistance will be provided to small-scale producers. This group constitutes one of the most poverty stricken in the country (84 percent of them are poor) and as more of them get uplifted out of poverty the better. Interventions in

> support of small-scale farmers include assistance towards small-scale irrigation schemes, credit, better extension, and enhanced access to markets. Also to be encouraged are sustainable farming methods such as soil conservation and animal disease control to help secure food availability at the household level. On top of this, Zambia intends to draw small-scale producers into commercial agriculture because poverty reduction should go beyond attaining subsistence to reach surplus production at the household level. The lead arrangement for this will be out grower schemes where large-scale estates will support surrounding small-scale farmers in input provisioning and in marketing of output. Already, there are existing arrangements on this model in Zambia for export crops such as cotton, coffee, paprika, vegetables, and flowers and they will be assisted to expand,"(IMF, 2002, p. 126).

The above are accurate descriptions of the material circumstances of subsistence farmers like Monica and Stephen and many others in Chapter 4. However, the descriptions neglect the relations of domination and social distance between people like Monica and Stephen and the various resource networks such as their exclusion from fertiliser support. Status hierarchies such as connections to 'big men' or the physical distance from the centre which were shown in chapters four and five to mediate access to resources within the communities or government departments mean that small-scale farmers referenced in policy remain outside the circulation of resources. Highlighting how such policy pronouncements were far removed from the everyday realities of people who were intended to benefit from them, Neo Simutanyi, arguably Zambia's foremost political scientist and an established researcher on the political economy of Zambia, argued that a key deficiency of these plans was how they were blind to the politics of resource allocation and distribution as it plays out from the micro ministerial level to the everyday life (Neo Simutanyi, interview).

Simutanyi argued that the politics of allocation favours constituencies whose parliamentary representatives are vocal and can bargain or whose constituents are considered important to their political parties for winning general elections. Here, like in Chapter 5, rural and remote contribute to exclusion and lack of access to resources by some groups. Rural arears, he explained, where small-scale farmers are located, usually have parliamentary representatives

who are less vocal and least able to bargain. And then, programmes such as the fertiliser support programme under the tenure of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) government were mainly used as a reward for voting for the ruling party, with those areas voting MMD getting priority in delivery of farming inputs. In this way, people living in poverty were seen and treated as a means to political ends in which their access to public resources was contingent upon their voting behaviour and how important their political representative was to his or her party and how vocal that representative was in parliament.

Another informant, Oliver Saasa, an economist and lead consultant on the FNDP, reiterated the crucial role of the politics of redistribution highlighted by Neo Simutanyi. Saasa pointed out that groups like small-scale farmers were only paid lip service, by the plans. These groups, he argued, were rightly identified but did not count in the same way as other citizens, say urban voters, in resource allocation. Citing patterns in national budgetary allocations which show higher allocations for projects in urban areas where citizens are more vocal and prone to protest, he suggested that agriculture programmes designed to benefit small scale farmers tend to be less funded compared to, for example, infrastructure projects targeting urban areas. These subsistence farmers who are also the majority of people living in poverty were rightly identified as needing state support but they did not command the same respect as other citizens in resource allocation. Reiterating Simutanyi's point above, Saasa made the argument that despite what the policies describe, patronage politics means that political elites can shape the actual direction of resources at allocation stage but also effectively affect the implementation of programmes and who they reach. This dynamic in which political elites are immensely enmeshed within technocratic policy processes was neither understood nor highlighted by the plans.

Broadly, this failing of the poverty reduction strategy papers can be read against the vast literature which critiques the PRSP process itself. These works show that despite being couched in rhetoric of local ownership and participation, being 'country driven' and marketed as guide documents, they were technologies of control (Cammack, 2004;A. Fraser, 2005). The PRSP source book indicates that participation was a crucial part of the PRSP process (Klugman, 2002). Yet, the emphasis on participation has to be understood within the historical context of multilateral organisations' implementation of structural adjustment. Structural adjustment had been implemented in a straitjacket, top down approach. The participation espoused by PRSP's was a response to the criticism of the previous approach and, an attempt to tailor programmes to specific national governments. However, it was mechanistic and not transformative: civil society participation was a representation of people in poverty and structured to check state interests (Cammack, 2004;Prestegard, 2005). In what seems to be a clear case of performance of development discourses – policies are represented in generally acceptable rhetoric but are in practice tangential to what the discourses imply, this model of participation was not genuine. Compared to Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation, for example, such participation mirrors placation and manipulation. In this way, it stood in contrast to the genuine participation, which in Mosse's (2001, p. 16) view, is about reversing the 'hierarchies of power' and challenging 'institutionally produced ignorance from the top.'

In essence, therefore, this participation was largely co-option and disciplinary (Cammack, 2004;Rückert, 2007). Furthermore, the assumption that civil society includes people living in poverty was wrong. A key informant in this research, for example, explained that although participation was itself a welcome divergence from previous forms of engagement, merely

engaging governments meant, on the whole, that if they were previously corrupt or inept, the outcomes of the process would reflect mainly those realities:

> "By participation, the PRSP's meant taking governments and civil society on board. This was a kind of apology for the way SAP's had been handled. However, a big problem with participation, especially of governments was that the quality of governance was taken for granted. Governments were included together with their corrupt tendencies which manifested in the way they implemented PRSPs," (Civil Society)

In the Zambian case, the heavy involvement of civil society organisations at the expense of people with direct experience of poverty led, as shown above, to accurate material descriptions of poverty while leaving untouched its structural and relational causes (Imboela, 2005;Prestegard, 2005). The period leading up to the launch of the PRSP of 2007 saw contradictory messages from within government about this poverty vs growth dichotomy. For example, the director of the Central Statistical Office, the national bureau responsible for living condition monitoring surveys admitted to growth while also arguing that the stated growth was insufficient to reduce poverty:

> "Our economic growth over the last two years has been growing nearly twice the population growth but growth of four per cent is not adequate to reduce poverty. We need growth of over seven per cent, [Buleti Nsemukila, Director – Central Statistical Office], " Monze (2004).

The PRSP of 2007 which became the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) for 2005 to 2010 (GRZ, 2006) continued the discussion of poverty by emphasising that poverty reduction was not an option but an imperative for the government. Ironically, the motivation for reducing poverty was not directly linked to citizenship-based livelihood and dignity concerns, (Lister, 2004a;OHCHR, 2006). Despite using descriptive references to images of indignity, the FNDP retained the centrality of the economic narrative presenting poverty along economic and political lines as a threat to economic growth, prosperity and political stability:

> "…National statistics show that the poverty level in the country in 2004 averaged 68 percent while the rural regions' average is much higher. Under such conditions, poverty is slowly compromising the sustainability of all that the country has achieved since independence.…In this regard, the challenge of reducing poverty is perceived by the Government not as an option but as an imperative for under such high poverty conditions, the social and political stability that is so pivotal for the revival of the country's growth and prosperity becomes vulnerable to real and potential societal tensions,"(GRZ, 2006, p. 1)

The growth narrative continued as the central theme of the FNDP:

> *"Firstly*, the Government recognises that wealth creation through sustained economic growth constitutes the most important element in poverty reduction and, consequently, a very high premium is being placed on growth-stimulating interventions..."(GRZ, 2006, p. 1)

However, unlike the PRSP of 2002 which had explained poverty in terms of lack of economic growth, the FNDP reported sustained economic growth rates but alongside increased poverty and deepened inequality. So, while the growth narrative was still central, the tone and language had changed to include the nature of growth and by raising the issue of inequality, the question of distribution of that growth. A key reform, subsidy based anti-poverty programming which had typified the programmes under the PRSP of 2002 was now presented as inimical to economic growth:

> *"…Thirdly*, the Government maintains that the needed linkages between growth and poverty reduction can be developed in a sustainable way, but only through an approach that allows everyone to share the benefits of growth. Although, under the right circumstances, sustained growth does often result in poverty reduction, rising inequality adversely affects this and it is in this regard that the role of social protection is considered an important FNDP component. Notwithstanding this, empowering the poor to earn a decent living income is perceived to be a much more effective approach in addressing their plight than the often-unsustainable subsidy programmes that tend to destroy the very financial and human resource bases that are expected to facilitate positive growth through productive investment; and…,"(GRZ, 2006, p. 2)

> "…The persistently high income poverty observed in 2004, is in sharp contrast to the rapid acceleration in economic growth experienced since 1999. This implies that the country's improved economic performance over recent years has not translated into significant declines in poverty. There are several important factors that may explain the persistence of high poverty levels. They include the changing structure of growth,

> which during the period 1998 to 2004 was largely driven by the improved performance of the mining and construction sectors. Agriculture, upon which the majority of poor people depend, did not perform particularly well over the recent years, with wide fluctuations in production and a relatively low average growth rate. This reflected considerable variation in weather patterns as well as inadequate infrastructure and generally poor market access. Much of the growth that has taken place has been driven by cash crops such as cotton and tobacco, which are concentrated in specific areas of the country. This may explain why poverty incidence is still highest among the rural small-scale farmers,"(GRZ, 2006, p. 14)
>
> "In terms of the Gini coefficient, which defines the level of income inequalities, Zambia had a coefficient of 0.57 in 2003. This contrasts with the ratio of 0.61 for 1996 and 0.66 for 1998. Coefficients of this magnitude manifest high poverty levels in society. They are indicative of uneven income distribution in Zambia. Income inequalities are more pronounced in the urban areas with a Gini coefficient of 0.61 than in rural areas with a coefficient of 0.42"(GRZ, 2006, p. 16)

These concessions were repeated in the Living Conditions Monitoring Surveys (Central Statistical Office, 2004, 2012a, 2016), the Sixth National Development Plan (2010 – 15) as well as in the National Social Protection Policy (GRZ, 2014a). By conceding there had been growth in the economy, poverty and inequality simultaneously, the FNDP acknowledged the weakness of the economic growth first model to poverty reduction. This was the beginning of the change in the thinking that had previously been so strong that poverty reduction can, *ipso facto*, result from economic growth. More importantly, this concession could be seen as opening the scope for alternative narratives of poverty in the national context. In a sense, this was not a complete departure from trickle down logic but, in theory, at least, it shifted the frame of discussion to a distributional one.

The 'important role of social protection' highlighted in the FNDP was not reflected in enacted policies or in budgetary allocations. Safety net type interventions such as the targeted food security pack (FSP) which targeted *'vulnerable'* but *'viable'* farmers (Noyoo, 2008), and the underfunded Public Welfare Assistance Scheme, (PWAS) persisted as the core of anti-poverty mechanisms under the FNDP. A donor funded pilot social cash transfer scheme (Ferguson, 2015), alongside various agricultural subsidies, typified governments anti-poverty

action under the FNDP continuing much less in the tradition of the PRSP of 2002. The resistance to social protection reform in this period of Zambia's social policy trajectory has been extensively discussed in literature. Schüring and Lawson-McDowall (2011), observe that Zambia lacked commitment to social protection although this lack of commitment proves difficult to explain. They, for example, assert that it is based in institutional factors such as the lack of fiscal space generated by the long decline of the Zambian economy and the structure adjustment reforms which followed that decline alongside the personalised nature of the bureaucracy such that decisions were never seen as a representation of collective interests as explanatory factors. The fiscal space argument which was overly amplified by the Zambian government as shown above and that of institutional capacity are also articulated by several analysts of social protection in Zambia including Cherrier (2016) whose work has focused on the expansion of social protection programmes in sub-Saharan Africa and the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2008a, 2008b;Ortiz, Cummins, & Karunanethy, 2015). These authors also cite, as does Hickey (2008), a political space dominated by patronage and clientlistic networks which work to reduce accountability and make it possible for policy to be used for rent seeking as argued also by the key informants Neo Simutanyi and Oliva Saasa earlier. Taking these arguments into context, Seekings (2017), writing on affordability of social protection in Zambia, Botswana, South Africa and Zanzibar provides further insight when he argues that the question of affordability for social protection programmes is in fact more normative than it is empirical. In his view, when local political elites raise the issue of fiscal space in discussions of social protection, it is often a fusing of technocratic (the effects of higher taxation) and normative issues (who should bear the cost and who is to benefit), (Seekings, 2017).

As sections below will show, it is important to pay attention to the framing of the policy and not only its existence. For, example, the discourse of economic viability used to distinguish between the 'impotent poor' targeted by PWAS and Social Cash Transfer from the 'poor but viable' targeted by the FSP discussed in chapter five was incorporated into the National Social Protection Policy. As discussed in chapter 4 and 5, these notions of viability are detached from the nature of poverty among research participants. In this way, the NSPP reflects a broad acceptance of the terms of structural adjustment which sought to minimize state involvement in social investments and favour targeting only the 'poorest of the poor', while distinguishing the deserving from undeserving amidst high poverty (O'laughlin, 1998).

It is clear however, that representing poverty in terms of economic growth and the subsequent technical fixes proposed in the PRSPs, not only normalised the narrative of poverty as an economic problem but also performed a political function. While the economic argument forms part of the explanation of why poverty persists in Zambia (Cherrier, 2016;ILO, 2008a, 2008b), the dominance of the economic growth narrative in the national policy space, at the expense of everything else, generated hegemony of thinking about poverty (Cornwall, 2010;Eade, 2010;Ouma & Adésínà, 2018;Rückert, 2007). Alternative thinking about poverty was cut out of the discussion. Important here is how political elitism in Zambia is removed from the discussion, especially the manner in which it has created and sustains a metropole/satellite model of governance which perpetuates the asymmetrical socioeconomic relations – including between urban and rural Zambia as discussed by key informants above. Chronic poverty, agreed to be the nature of poverty in Zambia, is an inherently political problem created and sustained by the institutionalisation of norms and systems of exclusion legitimised through political process of representation, as noted by Hickey and Bracking (2005).

At the local level, the economic narrative functioned to depoliticise poverty in Zambia (Prestegard, 2005). Depoliticisation, in the view of Ferguson (1990), implies processes by which questions of a political nature are represented through rhetoric as technical or functional problems. In the Zambian case, this representation of poverty as an economic problem, has reified it as a problem that could only be fixed by astute economic policies, ignoring the politics and basic social inequalities underpinning those policies. This framing has given national ruling elite room for political manoeuvres. They are able to divorce poverty from the politics they practice recasting it instead as a product of global economic factors which are out of their control. Specifically, this has enabled them to defer responsibility for poverty reduction while firmly keeping it alive as an electoral mobilisation strategy through messages of emancipation from poverty once they are elected into office and through effective clientelism (Cromwell & Chintedza, 2005;Szeftel, 2000;Theobald, 1982), – through vote buying activities during electoral campaigns. Simutanyi, in his interview summarised these political dynamics as having assumed a transactional nature by arguing that the Zambian electorate now understand that political elite are in it for themselves and so they too will benefit during electoral campaigns:

> "Politics in Zambia is about giving each other chance to have access to [state] power and resources that increase their advantage to further their [politicians] own interests. This is the framework that defines redistribution of wealth and poverty reduction in Zambia. Proper redistribution threatens the quantum of resources available for elite use and access. Within this framework, there is an implicit agreement between the Zambian people and the political elite. Once they are voted into office, they go to Lusaka, to the national assembly to eat, and only return to the constituencies at the next election, bringing with them sugar, salt and vintenje's [clothes] to give to the electorate who also see this as their turn to eat."

The Sixth National Development Plan (2011-2015), themed sustained economic growth and poverty reduction (GRZ, 2011), was reformulated into the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (R-NDP 2013-2016), an investment plan themed as people centred

economic growth and development (GRZ, 2014b). The SNDP largely continued the message of the FNDP. The SNDP of 2011 approaches poverty directly in the section on social protection and highlights the various objectives of social protection along four objectives for undefined groups as indicated in figure 7.3 below:

Figure 7. 3 Objectives of social protection

Table 110: Objectives, Strategies and Programmes

No.	Objectives	Strategies	Programmes
1.	To empower Low Capacity Households (LCHs).	a) Provide access to finance, agricultural inputs and training to vulnerable groups; and b) Expand social security coverage to formal and informal sectors.	Empowerment of Low Capacity Households
2.	To provide Social Assistance to Incapacitated Households.	a) Provide regular, predictable transfers to the chronically poor to support basic needs and human development; and b) Provide discrete transfers in response to shocks to people at risk of rapid deterioration in economic & social wellbeing and security;	Social Assistance to Incapacitated Households
3.	To provide care and support to vulnerable children and youth.	a) Provide places of safety, vocational and life skills training to vulnerable children and youth; and b) Support school attendance of vulnerable children and youth'.	Support for Vulnerable Children and Youth
4.	To ensure the protection of human rights and provision of services to vulnerable groups	a) Establish one stop centres and places of safety in all the Provincial centers; and b) Provide empowerment for survivors of violence & human trafficking through the provision of livelihood services.	Enhancementof Access to Justice for Vulnerable groups

Source (GRZ, 2011, p. 175)

As can be seen from the above, the distinction between social assistance and livelihood interventions is around the notion of incapacity which although undefined in the SNDP can be understood from its use in other documents such as the RSNDP (GRZ, 2014b, p. 125) in which people are referred to as vulnerable but viable with viability implying economic productivity. The RSNDP improved on the SNDP by adding a fifth objective to extend social security coverage to the informal sector and including people living with disabilities to objective number three above. Broadly these objectives transformed into the four pillars of the NSPP discussed in the next section.

7.2.2. NSPP 2014: Transformative Social Protection – A new rhetoric for age-old approaches?

The National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) also continues the understandings of poverty carried in the Living Conditions Monitoring Surveys and other policy documents analysed above. In the NSPP, poverty is defined, consistent with the CSO definition, in material terms in relation to unmet basic needs as:

> ".. . the inability of an individual, family or community to attain a minimum standard of living. This is evidenced by inadequate access to basic needs and services such as food, clothing, shelter basic health care facilities and education,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. vi).

The NSPP also echoes the widely-held consensus that poverty in Zambia is chronic, arguing that this chronic nature of poverty erodes citizens' ability to withstand shocks and echoes the message of the fifth, sixth and revised sixth national development plans of economic growth alongside growth in poverty and inequality:

> "…This is in spite of Zambia sustaining an impressive level of economic growth in the 5 to 6 percent range on average over a 10 year period. Zambia is hailed to be one of the few fast growing economies in Africa resulting in the reclassification of the nation to a lower-middle income country. Nonetheless this positive trajectory has not changed the circumstances for the majority Zambian population. This growth has largely been unequal, reflected in a Gini coefficient of 0.65 which among the highest in the world showing the extent of income inequality,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 3)

However, ideologically, the NSPP was a turning point in the temporal trajectory of social policy thinking in Zambia generally, and especially anti-poverty programming (Cherrier, 2014;Ouma & Adésínà, 2018). The NSPP can be seen as the first policy designed specifically to bring various anti-poverty mechanisms under one policy roof, and an attempt at a consolidated response to poverty as a national problem. It recognised the lack of a coherent policy framework against poverty in previous policy periods despite rhetoric in government policy documents reviewed above which highlighted the urgent need for one:

> "Historically, social protection sector interventions have been implemented without a coherent and harmonized policy framework resulting in uncoordinated and fragmented efforts to reach the poor. The absence of a policy has also meant there has been no comprehensive and robust monitoring and evaluation system to effectively evaluate the performance of key Social Protection programmes. This has invariably perpetuated implementation of costly yet poorly targeted and ineffective programmes that are marred with poor performance. Weak monitoring and evaluation has also hampered prioritisation of programmes with a demonstrated poverty impact and favoured the status quo of multiple, low coverage, poorly performing programmes," (GRZ 2014, 4).

By proclaiming and emphasising a transformative social protection approach, as articulated in the introduction of the policy, the NSPP pioneered a paradigm shift from the segmented safety net approaches underpinned by trickledown logic of the PRSP era:

> "This policy therefore pioneers a paradigm shift in Social Protection implementation in Zambia. The shift is based on Devreux and Sabates-Wheeler transformative framework that champions a more comprehensive and integrated approach to Social Protection as a tool for sustainable poverty reduction. The transformative paradigm is four-dimensional, clustering initiatives under protection, prevention, promotion and transformation. These four dimensions further inform the classification of Social Protection in this policy into four definitional pillars namely: Social Assistance, Social Security/Social Insurance, Livelihoods & Empowerment, and Protection,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 1).

As part of the context and justification of this paradigm shift, the NSPP cites the International Labour Organisation (ILO) recommendation 202 on social protection floors (International Labour Organisation, 2012). The NSPP is, in this way, the Zambian government's response to the call for ILO member states to develop and implement national protection floors and, in this regard, it is reasonable to assess both its messages and provisions against recommendation 202. The NSPP presents the low budgetary allocation which had remained below two per cent of the national budget, mainly because the national orientation to social protection had been that it is expenditure rather than social investment as what had been the biggest challenge to social protection in Zambia has been:

> "the lower allocation is due to few people employed to contribute to the national economy. This low allocation feeds off the argument and misconstructed perception

> of social protection as a consumption expenditure rather than an investment in human capital development and a comprehensive strategy to influence inclusive growth," (GRZ, 2014a, p. 4).

The rhetoric of transformative social protection and references to minimum guarantees embedded in the social protection floor which the NSPP espouses sets it apart from previous anti-poverty mechanisms. This language brought the policy in close alignment with the antipoverty discourses of multinational organisations such as the International Labour Organisation while drawing it away from multilateral financial institutional like the IMF and World Bank whose ideological logics formed the core of the poverty reduction strategy papers. The development of the NSPP has been used to draw lessons about the politics of policy making in Zambia and related contexts. Several analysts see it, especially the upscaling of the social assistance pillar which covers social cash transfers, to be discussed below, as evidence of the convergence of international policy ideas and national progressive politics for policy reform (Cherrier, 2014;Cherrier, 2016;Harland, 2014;Michelo, 2015;Ouma & Adésínà, 2018;Seekings, 2017). The development and enactment of the NSPP coincided with President Michael Sata and his Patriotic Front's ascension to political office in 2011. Ouma and Adésínà (2018), however, based on their analysis of Kenya conclude that the adoption of such policies as the national social protection policy reflects processes of power and exclusion in policy making in which international agencies have controlled the policy agenda through the insertion of experts, exclusion of certain domestic actors and various process of depoliticisation of the policy space.

In Zambia's case, Michael Sata, nicknamed the 'man of action' in his previous spells in government, had run a successful electoral campaign through populist promises of socioeconomic and political reform (Sishuwa, 2016). The NSPP remains one of his most significant policy achievements and his populist politics provide an instructive context for

understanding it. While Sata's seemingly pro poor politics features as a strong factor for the adoption of the NSPP as explained by studies cited above, these analyses end at the macro level of policy making and do not consider how this reform in its contents affects the lives of people in poverty especially those who benefit from the cash transfer scheme as shown in chapter five. Policies born from populism, Weyland (2013) observes, tend to be enacted swiftly. By 2014, Sata and his Patriotic Front designed and enacted the NSPP having taken over political office in 2011. This was a significant achievement given that the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), the party that had ceded power to Sata, had failed to come up with such a policy in 20 years of being in power. However, as this analysis will demonstrate, and in line with Weyland (2013), the speed with which policies born of populism are developed often comes at the expense of good design, careful implementation, fiscal and political consolidation.

To provide an example, poverty in the NSPP is described through a rhetoric of marginalization, vulnerability and a severe lack of access to basic needs and food insecurity (hunger), seen as self-sustaining, due to depleted human capabilities (capacities) leading to what the policy terms "a vicious cycle of poverty," (GRZ, 2014a, p. 4). The NSPP is presented against this background, as a means to, 'to graduate or move households from states of vulnerability and poverty to resilience and increased capacity and food security through the acquisition of livelihood assets.' It refers to structural barriers in access to vital services and amenities among people in poverty and presents these structural rigidities as cause for the erosion of ability to withstand shocks. However, it is difficult to discern the substantive policy aims, due to the lack of clarity in the policy. The stated vision is "a middle income nation free from constant or period critical levels of poverty, deprivation and extreme

vulnerability by 2030" (GRZ, 2014a). Yet, there is no specified set of targets or measures for this aim.

7.2.2.1. NSPP interventions

Of the four pillars of the NSPP, social assistance, social security, livelihood and empowerment and protection, social security does not necessarily respond to Zambia's current poverty situation because of low coverage. Access is restricted to workers in formal employment although there are current efforts to extend coverage to the informal sector. According to the latest Labour Force Survey (Central Statistical Office, 2014), only 16.1% of the economically active population is in formal employment while 83.9% is in informal employment. By the NSPP's own admission, "89% of the labour force absorbed by the informal sector are excluded from social security services" (GRZ, 2014a, p. 6). Yet, despite pronouncements in the NSPP that a legal framework was required to harmonise social security coverage between informal and formal sectors, the *status quo* remains. On these grounds, this pillar is left out of this analysis.

7.2.2.2. "Incapacitated households": Social assistance

Under the social assistance pillar, the objectives of the NSPP are to reduce extreme poverty and destitution among vulnerable and poor households, to enhance food and nutrition security for vulnerable populations and to build the human capital of extremely poor households to stop inter-generational transfer of poverty. These are to be achieved through the provision of regular and predictable transfers to poor and vulnerable households, by strengthening linkages and by ensuring coherence among social assistance programmes with other basic social services and providing support in the face of natural disasters among other things. Other goals are also stated in broad sweeping phrases such as, "enhance access by poor and

vulnerable populations to productive resources and skills" or "protect vulnerable populations from all forms of abuse and violence, discrimination, denial and neglect,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 11) How these are to be met is unstated.

Analysis of the mechanisms under the social assistance pillar reveals that social assistance has been used as the umbrella theme of various governmental schemes previously provided for poverty relief: the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) and its offshoots the Nutrition and Supplementary Feeding and Resettlement schemes and the Social Cash Transfer (SCT) Scheme discussed in chapter four. Although all these programmes exist on paper, interviews with officers in the district social welfare office revealed that funding priority has been given to the Social Cash Transfer:

> "From our department, I can only speak of two programmes, the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) and the Social Cash Transfer. PWAS is in kind, we buy stuff like maize meal or cloths for beneficiaries. Unfortunately, the government allocation is not forthcoming. The SCT is the only functional one although the understanding is that it is merely a supplement to whatever beneficiaries have, to be able, may be to have two meals a day. The amount itself is not enough because we are talking of K70 per month, but looking at the current maize price for example, a 50kg bag is K75. So if someone gets K70 they cannot afford to buy a bag of 50kg Millie meal," Officer One.

> "We have two programmes, the PWAS and the Social Cash Transfer. The PWAS is unpredictable. It is not like the Social Cash Transfer. With PWAS, sometimes we get funded once a year and sometimes we get it two times. We never know when the money will come or how much it will be. It is not like the social cash transfer where you expect payment for the next two months and so on" Officer Two.

As the above officers point out, the social cash transfer is the centre of attention even among the international discussion of anti-poverty programmes in Zambia. Likewise, the government's attention has been devoted to the social cash transfer programme. In chapter five, welfare officers admitted to the limited provision of state support against the extent of need in their communities as generating discontent between recipients of the social cash transfer and non-recipients. Here, they pointed out that had the public welfare assistance scheme been receiving sufficient funding and been able to function as it should be, it would have been useful for cushioning the need left uncovered by the social cash transfer. The officers could not explain why the public welfare assistance scheme is so severely

underfunded although they put forward the direction of donor preferences as a potential problem as well as thinking among government officials that such programmes are an unnecessary burden on the public purse. Given the tensions between community members who benefit from the social cash transfer and those who do not but feel that they should, considering the similarity in their circumstances, programmes like would provide the necessary cushion.

7.2.2.3. "Vulnerable but Viable": Livelihood and empowerment

Interventions under this pillar are intended to provide support to households and groups lacking sufficient capacity to generate adequate reliable income to strengthen their livelihoods. These individuals are characterised as "having limited capacity in terms of human and social capital, as well as physical, financial and/or natural resources,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 6). Interventions under this pillar of the policy include provision of agriculture inputs such as the farmer input support programme, (FISP) discussed in Chapter 4 and chapter six, the food security pack, the women's empowerment fund as well as micro credit facilities. Key informant interviews about interventions provided under the livelihood and empowerment pillar revealed two things. First is that the same notion of deservingness used in the PRSP and the RSNDP underpins their implementation. The livelihood and empowerment pillar is, in fact, distinguishable from the social assistance pillar by the intended beneficiaries. The welfare officers interviewed in this research argued that livelihood interventions target people deemed vulnerable but viable and, by this logic, cannot be administered by the department of social welfare which is seen as best suited for providing services meant for the 'destitute poor,' – people who are both vulnerable and non-viable. Viability in this criterion is constructed in economic terms. These notions of viability are imbued, at the rhetorical level, with the logic of productive contribution to the economy and

are reminiscent of the PRSP logic where investment in poverty reduction was seen as expenditure. Yet, what was observed in Chapter 4 and 5 is that people living in poverty cannot access agriculture inputs because they do not have the capacity to make advance payments and hence these inputs end up going to the better off generating the mountains of maize and persistent poverty pictorial discussed by (Chapoto, Banda, Haggblade, & Hamukwala, 2011;Jayne et al., 2011). There are also dynamics such as the symbolic experience of women in chapter five who felt that they have no influence because they are women. On account of these feelings, these women argued that they do not have the courage to seek out such livelihood interventions and thus do not even try and are therefore always neglected. As a determinant of worthiness, viability moralises poverty (Watkins-Hayes & Kovalsky, 2016), and directly contradicts both the reality of poverty in Zambia and the structural frame within which it is presented as chronic.

In pointing out that this viability criterion disqualifies people who are otherwise in need from other programmes, welfare officers emphasised that most livelihood interventions do not respond to the needs of people in poverty with whom they have direct interaction and who, due to the limited coverage of social assistance mechanisms remain unsupported:

> "… People on the cash transfer programme are those who do not qualify for other programmes like the fertiliser support programme because they are not viable, they are just vulnerable and FISP targets vulnerable and viable people. In my experience, people would rather receive the cash transfer than be enrolled in the fertiliser programme because most of those who are registered for it never even get to see the fertiliser because they cannot redeem it, or it comes to them when it is too late," Officer Two.

> "As explained before, our department only has the PWAS and SCT. There are other programmes like the Youth Empowerment Fund, and the Fertiliser Input Support Program that are handled by other departments and we try to advise beneficiaries left out of the SCT to try these other programmes. The challenge is that these programmes are targeting the vulnerable but viable, people who can are economically active but most of the population here cannot be said to be active so the pressure still comes back to us on PWAS and SCT," Officer Three.

The second issue, which is evident from the preceding paragraphs, is that although the NSPP is framed as a consolidated response to the poverty question, its intent does not translate into a systematic delivery of programmes. Aside from its overly generic nature and lack of detail on the specifics of interventions to be implemented, it is also a disjointed conglomeration of the various governmental schemes that preceded it. Its programmes are implemented by different government departments without synergy and its four pillars, presented as incremental, in the policy rationale do not speak to each other. Particularly with regard to the empowerment principle, programmes are spread across different departments such as the department of community development or even the Ministry of Sport.

Reflecting on the same issue, and perhaps highlighting Devereaux's (2002) assertion that these programmes are more than a transfer of resources to marginalised groups and constitute a power relationship with significant effects on everyday life for people in poverty, a human development researcher from the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) argued that livelihood interventions are largely *ad hoc*, without clear logic and, therefore, open to political manipulation. He argued that it is difficult to see how these interventions address the nature of poverty experienced in Zambia because they are removed from its reality and are open to political manipulation:

> "It is difficult to discern the logic of empowerment programmes because they do not appear to have defined criteria. Programmes like the fund for market women and the youth empowerment fund were born out of a political pronouncement at a rally. For the youth fund, for example, successful applicants were handed cheques by the minister of sport who was also a member of parliament at a rally like ceremony. An evaluation was commissioned after concern from the ministry of planning about the amounts of money invested in the fund but we struggled with beneficiaries because they would protest against being interviewed. Most told us that they did expect to ever pay this money back. They would ask us to speak to their MP instead because to them, this was money secured by their MP as a result of their votes for him. So, you ask, if this is youth empowerment through loans, why are they so politicised and their criteria so unclear to beneficiaries?" (Researcher, ZIPAR).

Social welfare officers interviewed also reflected on this politicised nature of empowerment interventions and recounted experiences even with the social cash transfer scheme which they argued feeds into the public mistrust surrounding targeting discussed in chapter five and feeds community tensions. They explained for example how during campaigns for the 2016 general elections political candidates from the ruling party would send people to the social welfare office to collect money claiming that the government had money available for everyone. This, the officers argued, created undue pressure because community members see physical evidence of the cash transfer. Non beneficiaries therefore feel that their exclusion, given that they too are living in poverty, may be because they do not have the political connections to secure support from the livelihood and empowerment-based interventions or because they are thought to belong to a different political party. These sentiments erode the transformational basis of the NSPP focus on entitlement.

7.2.2.4. Protection

Protection, the last pillar of the NSPP, is actually its fundamental pillar in so far as it underpins and defines the argued paradigmatic shift. Protection sets the tone of the institutional framework within which social protection mechanisms ought to be implemented, firmly anchoring them within the transformative paradigm articulated by Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2010, p. 70) as the 'need to pursue policies that integrate individuals equally into society, allowing everyone to take advantage of the benefits of growth and enabling excluded or marginalized groups to claim their rights.' This pillar makes clear both the aspirational nature of the NSPP as a reflection of transnational policy ideas and specifically the influence of ILO's recommendation 202. Its approach on how it foregrounds the human rights orientation to social policy programming is stated in the policy rationale:

> "…the policy is therefore Government's resolve and instrument to protect and promote the rights of the Zambian populations, especially the poor and vulnerable at individual, family and community levels and thereby contributing to national development,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 9)

As well as the guiding principles that emphasise participation, dignity and equity:

> "Participation of all stakeholders is vital for effective service delivery, improved access and increased sustainability of social protection…"
>
> "Social protection service providers should respect and recognise the dignity of persons they serve in accordance with national, regional and international conventions and protocols. All Zambian citizens are born equal in dignity and rights. They are entitled to all rights and freedoms contained in the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the Republican Constitution. It follows; therefore, Zambian citizens should live in conditions of dignity and security and must be free from all forms of marginalization, discrimination, exploitation and abuse. They must be treated fairly and with respect"
>
> "The principle of equity will ensure that social protection measures to reach the poor and vulnerable are affirmatively introduced to ensure that groups that are greatly disadvantaged are reached meaningful to narrow the inequality gap with rest of the population. The measures must also recognise the needs and status of different individuals such as age, gender, disability health and socio-economic conditions,"(GRZ, 2014a, p. 10).

Protection is articulated as the need to diminish vulnerabilities that result from human rights violations among people living in poverty, including to risks such as aging, gender-based violence, orphan hood and widowhood, which have accentuated abuse and exclusion from services and resources. It is thought of as underpinning the other pillars of the policy and to be best achieved through the strengthening of legal rights of citizens. Programmes under this pillar include, "rehabilitation of street children, provision of places of safety and children's homes, anti-sexual and gender-based violence, anti-human trafficking and child labour, correction services and legal services. Against the scale of poverty in Zambia as demonstrated in previous chapters of this thesis and scholarly analysis by, among others, Lister (2004b),Walker (2014) and Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen (2011), a transformative framework offers the strongest possibilities for recognizing and enhancing the dignity of persons. It brings into policy programmes an expansive focus from material inadequacy to

'social difference' and power dynamics. Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen (2011) have argued that a transformative agenda changes the orientation of social protection from a focus on dealing with the risks that people face to addressing the social spaces which give rise to those risks. A transformative approach is rooted in rights-based practice which itself demands a synergy between policy and legal frameworks which would mitigate the rise of arbitrary social difference. However, they also argue that this nature of transformative approach makes them inherently political and less like to have the support of key stakeholders.

Given the above considerations, the protection pillar as articulated here, however, exposes the contradictions between the policy rhetoric and its structures, perhaps revealing its characteristic as a populist project. Grounding social policy in the bill of rights, (Magdalena, 2014;Walker, 2014), offers a normative and legal imperative for the provision of social protection mechanisms. Dignity is a core element of human rights and recognizing and respecting a person's dignity involves a complex notion of the individual which includes, among other things, recognizing their identity, respecting their autonomy and responsibility as well as understanding that they are a part of a larger collective which influences the kind of individual that they are (Schachter, 1983). The procedural impositions of this understanding evoke recognition at institutional level. Such recognition entails viewing individuals and groups as having an essential and inherent dignity, which if unmet is damaging to their sense of personhood. However, this is only possible within a framework of rights which guarantees equitable access to resources (Magdalena, 2014).

Against this rights framework, the NSPP's articulated transformative paradigm falls short. Firstly, by its own admission, there are no explicit provisions for the provision of social protection within the Zambian legislative framework (GRZ, 2014a, p. 5). Social economic and cultural rights are not justiciable in the Zambian constitution. Social protection in Zambia

is not an entitlement and cannot be claimed as a matter of right. Although the NSPP is said as human rights based, it lacks the legal framework to mandate judicial enforcement. This distinguishes Zambia from, for example, South Africa where policy rhetoric is backed by constitutional provisions, which are judicially enforceable (Devereux, 2011;Fuo, 2013;Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). Furthermore, the persistent references to viability in eligibility criteria reflect a contradiction to the ideals of dignity pronounced by policy rhetoric (Sepulveda, 2014). A recent and growing body of literature shows that such pejorative classifications have corrosive effects on the intended beneficiaries of policy measures (Chase & Walker, 2015a;Lister, 2004b;Sepulveda, 2014;Walker, 2014;Watkins-Hayes & Kovalsky, 2016).

Highlighting the political contestation surrounding social policy reform, an attempt was made by the governing Patriotic Front party to institutionalise social protection in the national constitution in August 2016. A referendum poll was called to amend the constitution in a move that critics argued was also window dressing to gain votes in the 2016 general election by the ruling party. Firstly, the referendum was rushed and appeared to be both an afterthought and a political maneuver by the governing party. While the actual constitution was amended in January 2016, the referendum was decided on and advertised to the public with only about 90 days before the 11 August 2016 general elections. The referendum was itself conducted alongside a general election in which Zambians voted, for the first time for mayoral candidates in addition to presidential, parliamentary, council candidates. The referendum added to what was for most people an already complex election. Furthermore, the referendum question was itself framed in a way that was not easy to understand by the layman:

> "Do you agree to the amendment to the constitution to enhance the bill of rights contained in part III of the constitution of Zambia and to repeal and replace Article 79 of the constitution of Zambia" (GRZ, 2016, p. 1).

The process was also riddled with technicalities. The pass threshold for the referendum was 50 per cent plus one of 'those entitled to vote' not those registered to vote or actual voters. Yet, the number of those entitled to vote was unknown. With the previous census six years ago and the next one four years away respectively, the base number of eligible voters was determined through a projection generating further political controversy (Nkonde, 2016). Voting in the election required a voter's card but voting in the referendum only required a national registration card further complicating the process in view of the limited sensitisation about both the process and content of the referendum.

Aside from the technicalities above that compromised the process, organisations such as the Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC), an umbrella body for civil society organisations working on gender and development, argued that the pairing of the referendum with a general election added political sensitivity to the issue, effectively turning what would have otherwise been a national issue into an expressly partisan political one (NGOCC, 2016). The ruling Patriotic Front campaigned for a Yes vote, arguing that it was cost effective to have the referendum alongside the election while opposition political parties campaigned for a No vote and civil society organisation called for the referendum to be postponed due to a flawed process and lack of sensitisation (Musonda, 2016). Consequently, the referendum failed. The ruling Patriotic Front was retained as the governing party and has blamed opposition campaigners for the missed opportunity for reform.

However, a review of the proposed amendments suggests that the reform would have been inadequate even if it had succeeded. The framing of Article 45 of the draft Bill of Rights shows that although some level of provision would be expected to be made, the constitutional

court would still not interfere with regarding resources between the state and citizens beyond whatever level the state deemed itself capable of – reflecting, perhaps, the political ambivalence, contradictions and inconsistencies of the processes that characterize action against poverty in Zambia:

> "45 (1), the state shall take reasonable measures for the progressive realisation of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, (2) where a claim is made against the state on the nonrealization of an economic, social, cultural and environmental right, it is the responsibility of the state to show that the resources are not available, (3) *the constitutional court shall not interfere with a decision of the state concerning the allocation of available resources for the progressive realisation of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights"* (GRZ, 2016).

This continued lack of a legal framework undermines pronouncements made about the human rights basis of the NSPP. Effectively, this means that the poverty agenda in Zambia remains on its historical residualist, safety net trajectory despite a pronounced *transformative* approach. The experience of people receiving the social cash transfer in chapter six, for example, demonstrates that the implementation of policy has not been able to deliver this sense of dignity. Specifically, this research observed that people in poverty do not feel that they can articulate their grievances to implementing officers despite having a strong sense of felt entitlement because they are consistently reminded of the limited fiscal space within which the cash transfer is delivered to them. This has generated narratives of gratefulness among people in poverty who now see the cash transfer as government benevolence. Furthermore, the grounding of social protection provisions in legal frameworks divorces them from the faces of political players who may use them in a partisan way as shown with the case of empowerment above.

Further problems within the NSPP include its use of vague and ambiguous language. For example, vulnerability and marginalisation are key concepts and referenced frequently in the

policy. Marginalisation remains undefined, while a generic definition of vulnerability – one that does not clarify what it means in light of the context of poverty in Zambia is given:

> "Susceptibility to the impact of risky events, as a result of particular weakness or lack of defences and resulting in a worsened situation for the suffer (s). The long-term poor are clearly vulnerable," GRZ (2014, vii)

Cornwall and Brock (2005) have discussed the use of familiar concepts in policy which are used in an undefined fashion as often purposeful and not innocuous omissions of a technical process. These 'buzzwords' – terms with ambiguous meaning – tend to be a purposeful performance of development discourse (Cornwall & Brock, 2005;Eade, 2010) and their function is to give policies a sense of "purposiveness and optimism." In view of NSPP, mere references to increasing productive resources and skills without a specification of the steps of this expansion reflect most accurately the populist politics within which the NSPP emerged. Adesina (2011, p. 458), notes, protection from vulnerability demands that the "structural causative factors that are deeply embedded in the sociopolitical context of society are addressed." Given the scale of poverty, it is unclear from this analysis, whether a policy structured in the manner of the NSPP is capable of diminishing its scale, or whether action born of such imprecise design can be monitored, and/or evaluated.

The importance of such ambiguous statements, however, rests in their power as discourses of validation. Dekker (2016) argues, for example, that that ambiguity exists often in those policies related to politically contested issues such that the political opposition loses power. The ambiguity in the Zambian case reinforces the construction of poverty as a primarily economic problem but makes it difficult for dissenters to disagree without looking like they are playing politics. In this way, as Du Toit (2004b) and Cornwall and Brock (2005) observe, vague and ambiguous discourses enable policies to command partial ascent from the various stakeholders while policies' core messages pass unquestioned. Consequently, the unequal

power relations that sustain high levels of poverty have become institutionalized while the inadequate policy responses have been cemented as the best that can be done in the circumstances. The situation has been worsened by the apparent lack of public contestation of these policy narratives, explainable by the very low national literacy, weakened labour unions and opposition political parties and an inhibited and uncritical media, (Banda, 2005;Rakner, 2003;Sishuwa, 2016).

7.3. Conclusion

This chapter analysed discourses of poverty in Zambia by examining policy documents for narratives of poverty, to understand how poverty is thought about and how action to resolve it is constructed at macro level. In this way, it built on the analysis of experience at the micro level of everyday, enabling these experiences to be placed within their broader institutional context.

The analysis shows that poverty in Zambia has been predominantly discussed in terms of unmet material needs pertaining to subsistence. This thinking has set the tone for how it is measured and responded, to despite references to the concept of multidimensional poverty in government policy. Within this construction, poverty has been framed as a primarily economic issue, removing it from its political nature. The centrality of this economic narrative has foreclosed options limiting provision to safety nets built around notions of economic viability. Anti-poverty policy is designed top down through a heavy-handed approach by multilateral financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank far removed from the everyday experience of poverty. Without direct engagement between experience of poverty and policy formulation, aspects of poverty such as shame, indignity and ontological insecurity experienced by participants in this research have not featured in

policy responses. However, the discourses of limited fiscal space peddled in policy are enacted and reproduced through the direct work of welfare officers, generating expectations of gratefulness among programme beneficiaries. This filtering through of notions of government benevolence explains the muffled voices reported among beneficiaries of current programmes.

This chapter also observes that there have been shifts in the rhetoric in which poverty is discussed, the most significant being the design of the national social protection policy in 2014. The policy was also responsible for the expanded coverage of the social cash transfer programme. It is itself a product of a merging together of transnational ideas about social protection from cooperating partners and a national mood swing to populist politics under the Patriotic Front leader, Micheal Sata. This shift is significant in how it emphasises a transformative approach to poverty reduction, based on ideals of dignity and rights. Ordinarily, this new paradigm should require a different institutional order, one that would accord individuals equal status in the allocation of resources. However, the observed shift has only been rhetorical. Substantive policy provisions have remained the same. The nature of poverty observed in Zambia, this chapter observes, is based in the institutional order that accords recognition to statuses close to the centres of power. This experience of the NSPP demonstrates how Zambia has appropriated new global policy rhetoric to dress what is largely the same policy architecture. Consequently, this institutional framework has remained the same while the rhetoric describing poverty has shifted. This serves to put the experiences of poverty observed in this research in context.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions

This chapter summarises the main findings of this research, while highlighting its unique contributions to poverty scholarship. This research sought to contribute to the understanding of poverty as a relational phenomenon. A review of recent evidence shows that despite its material core, poverty has relational and symbolic dimensions. These relational and symbolic dimensions have been posited as aiding the production and reproduction of poverty in society (Chase & Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014;Gubrium et al., 2013;Howard & Millard, 1997;Lister, 2015;Walker, 2014). As Mosse (2010), noted, poverty is situated at the intersection of historically developed economic and political relations and the process of social categorisation and identity. This literature has also shown the usefulness of using the direct experience of poverty to gain insight into the wider social relations of poverty in order to describe, analyse and explain the causes and meaning of poverty.

These insights notwithstanding, the literature on poverty focuses on its material dimensions. The relational and symbolic dimensions remain under researched and are still not well understood. This is the knowledge gap within which this thesis was formulated. It answers the central research question, "how do social relationships frame people's experiences of poverty?" This question was answered through a qualitative methodology using an interpretive case study of people living in poverty in a rural district in Eastern Zambia. Zambia's deep values of community and high levels of poverty provided unique opportunities to examine the role of social relationships in the experience of poverty. Theory provided the prism of analysis by grounding it in the experience of individuals. As highlighted in chapter one, this focus on individual experience acts as an aperture into the social relations of poverty

rather than a preoccupation with the attributes of individual participants as people living in poverty, (Deranty & Rancière, 2016;Mosse, 2010;Tilly, 2007).

This research followed a qualitative research methodology and was conducted as a case study in the interpretive tradition. Participants with direct experience of poverty were purposively sampled, based on gender, residential area and participation in the social cash transfer programme. Observation and in-depth interviews were used to collect data for analysis. Drawing on techniques used in institutional ethnography (Devault, 2006;Smith, 2002, 2005), observation was conducted in the district social welfare office to understand the practices and process of welfare administration and how officers and service users' interaction shaped the service users' everyday life. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 65 men and women in poverty and with 16 key informants. Analysis was done in Nvivo 11.0 using a thematic analysis approach. A critical discourse analysis of anti-poverty policies in Zambia was also conducted following the approach by Fairclough (2013b; 2013a) and previous work on policy as discourse (Bacchi, 2000, 2009;Pantazis, 2015) and policy framing (Dekker, 2017;Walker, 2014) . The corpus for this analysis included the Poverty Strategy Reduction Papers (PRSPs), the National Development Plans (NDPs), the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) and, where necessary, newspaper articles on the subject of poverty.

This thesis identifies two types of relationships, informal and institutional as relevant to the experience of poverty. It affirms that social relationships are vectors of recognition and that the recognition accorded to individuals at various levels of their lives shapes what they experience as poverty as well as how they experience it. By analysing experiences within these domains, the research demonstrates how poverty involves a lack of material resources. These deprivations lead to and are sustained by exploitative relationships as well as subjugation of status within social hierarchies. Such experience, the thesis has argued, is the

result of lack of recognition. Overall, this thesis contributes to poverty scholarship by demonstrating that living in poverty simultaneously involves inclusion, exclusion and domination. Combined with lack of material resources, this generates a life experience described by people in poverty as, 'suffering.' Poverty is lived and felt. It is about a lack of material resources and about how one is viewed and treated by others. The chapter starts with a recap of the two domains and proceeds to point out some key lessons about the meaning of poverty. It ends with a brief sketch of the limitations to the study and directions for future research.

8.1. Summary of key findings and contributions to knowledge

8.1.1. The contradictions of informal relationships: Inclusion without influence

The domain of informal relationships is crucial to the experience of poverty in salient but sometimes contradictory ways. Informal relationships as vectors of recognition at the local level of everyday life, mediate and structure access to power, forms of support resources, as well as hierarchies of status. Underpinned by ethno-religious ideals of recognition, informal relationships provide a buffer against poverty but also sustain it.

Strong ethno-religious ideals of recognition provide for strong attitudes towards resource sharing, despite the observed extreme levels of material deprivation. People spoken to highlighted that the extent of material sharing has declined in comparison with historical times. However, they justified resource sharing around a relational notion of reciprocity where keeping the cycle of support going is seen as more important than whether or not, they themselves benefit. What is interesting is that despite this ethos, non-familial relationships were found to have a stronger material support function as opposed to familial relationships. Non-familial relationships were also the preferred relationships of support. For most participants, families were judgemental: if someone within your family helped you, they

would then talk about it to other family members. This being talked about, interpreted as disrespect, was given as the reason people in poverty avoided seeking material support from their families. Young people emphasised that families expected them to provide for older relatives and in this way, it was humiliating if they asked for support from family members who are older: "they will see you as irresponsible or a failure, but non-family members do not judge you like that." In the end, either because of extreme deprivation or the perceived social judgement that comes with material support from the family, the family often ceased being a primary safety net for people experiencing poverty in the current study.

The ideals of recognition discussed above also underpin a strong network of non-material support described by people experiencing poverty as ensuring that they did not suffer the exclusion typical of poverty. In fact, they interpreted this strong network of support as a form of recognition, that society sees their humanity and responds to it. In this way, they felt connected to their local communities with most of them active participants in community life. Therefore, informal relationships ensured connectedness and inclusion in social interaction.

However, these high levels of connectedness and inclusion existed alongside subordination of status. Most people spoke about lacking influence. They participated in local life and made contributions. They could speak in meetings and were often heard but their views were rarely taken into account. In those types of events, it was the views of those who were better off materially that carry weight. Material wealth, as some participants explained adds value to your name and gives it weight. This leads to a higher ranking in social status which itself leads to further privileges. This experience appears as a contradiction to the ethno religious ideals of recognition that underpinned social support. What seems clear is that although there was an underlying form of recognition that secured connectedness, there was another form of recognition predicated on the possession of material resources that secured status. Lacking

material resources relegated one to the bottom of the status ladder but being at the bottom of the ladder implied that you cannot challenge your position because you did not have influence. In this way, therefore, people in poverty experienced inclusion and exclusion simultaneously. If poverty means both inclusion and exclusion simultaneously, how should anti-poverty policy respond? Should inclusion among people in poverty be conceptualised as a typology like participation?

8.1.2. The domain of institutional relationships

The domain of institutional relationships shows that poverty is buttressed by the lack of recognition of persons as citizens with entitlements. Institutional relationships of people in poverty are not rooted in legal frameworks that enforce citizenship status. This kind of recognition determines access to institutional resources and equality of treatment. In the end, therefore, institutional relationships reinforce what is experienced within informal relationships. For most people, these are negative experiences. In the first instance, it has been shown that people living in poverty have very few institutional relationships.

The research found that religious institutions and the state through its department of welfare were the most relevant institutions for people in poverty in the present study. Religious institutions because of their reduced social distance to the everyday life were important to people in poverty. Membership in these institutions enabled support both material and non-material, although non-material support was often extended to non-members. Thus, these institutions seemed to foster bonds of community and belonging, lessening the social distance between people in poverty and those who were not.

Relationships to the state through state support, however, were problematic. Because institutional support from the state is severely targeted, it goes against widely held ideas of

citizen entitlement. People in poverty, saw themselves as citizens and therefore as deserving of state support. The lack of clear distinction between people who received state support and those who did not rendered state support divisive. As a result, while cash transfer recipients were marginally better off materially, they experienced more social stigma than their counterparts who were not in receipt of transfers.

For most people, the domain of institutional relationships amplified the nature of subordinate inclusion observed within informal relationships. It is worth reflecting here on the role of targeted assistance in the context of materially deprived but close nit societies. This thesis has added evidence to current scholarship on the divisive nature of targeted assistance as discussed in chapter six. Additionally, this thesis has demonstrated the role of policy discourse in generating particular experiences for people experiencing poverty under particular institutional arrangements. In the Zambia case, notions of 'viability' and 'dependency' employed in deciding the beneficiaries of anti-poverty programmes, underscore state benevolence, while not recognising citizen entitlement in implementation despite citizens' strongly felt sense of entitlement.

In the larger scheme, these enable the perception and treatment of people in poverty as passive beneficiaries of governmental benevolence. It has been shown how these narratives permeated the everyday work of welfare officers with adverse consequences for citizen voice. People in poverty were expected to be grateful for state support and voice was condemned with negative labels such as the 'smart poor'. In the end, people in poverty spoke but in hushed tones, because while they can speak, they cannot afford to be heard. Fundamentally, people in poverty remain clients in the political system that perceives anti-poverty action as a political reward. This is in spite of the rhetoric of anti-poverty policies significantly changing in recent years. These experiences undermine the intended goals of empowering people in

poverty to see themselves as full and equal members of their societies. In light of these revelations, what do people living in poverty see poverty to be about?

8.1.3. Poverty is 'suffering,' involves ontological insecurity.

Material deprivation was what was immediately reported to be poverty by people with direct experience. Its symptoms were visible; lack of resources, money, food, education, property, health and the like. Yet, in discussing how they got on, what most people described as a difficult life, focused on psychosocial and relational aspects of life, involving emotional pain, being over looked or counting for less in public deliberations, being humiliated in social interactions as well as occupying the bottom place in social hierarchies.

Often times due to material deprivation, people in poverty fail to meet social expectations. This failure is met by ridicule and labels of incompetence that exacerbate the stress already felt at a personal level. For example, parents who failed to send their children to school because they could not afford the cost were labelled incompetent parents – a label often applied to both men and women. However, other labels such as that of laziness were gendered. Based in cultural ideals of masculinity, men who lacked local symbols of wealth such as granaries were deemed lazy or incompetent farmers. At a personal level, these labels were particularly upsetting and hurtful. Socially, they hurt the reputation of people living in poverty further diminishing their social status.

Due to a history of unmet needs, the constant scrutiny of others as well as feelings of stagnation wherein they felt that whatever they tried things never changed, most people living in poverty experienced ontological insecurity. The result was a sense of self that was particularly fixed in the present, lack of confidence and an increased sense of fear and anxiety about the future. For the most part, this conclusion that poverty involves ontological

insecurity mirrors Underlid's (2007) analysis of poverty in a Norwegian context. Underlid (2007) identified insecurity, fear and anxiety as key to the meaning of relative poverty in affluent welfare states. While the contexts are dissimilar, Norway being one of the richest countries in the world and Zambia one of the poorest, the experience of insecurity and anxiety among people in poverty in both contexts suggests that while the material contexts of poverty may differ, its felt elements are comparable. A plausible explanation for this is that regardless of its context, poverty induces acute aspiration gaps – the difference between one's current standard of living and the standard of living to which one aspires (Ray, 2006). The emotional and psychological effects of these gaps on people's lives are similar.

Additional to the above discussion, age and gender have been shown to be important intersections for the wellbeing of people in poverty. While previous research has focused on material aspects especially meeting material needs of orphaned children among older female carers in Sub-Saharan Africa (Anne & Angus, 1998;Case, Paxson, & Ableidinger, 2004;Cluver, Gardner, & Operario, 2009;Duflo, 2003;Freeman & Nkomo, 2006;Noble, Wright, & Cluver, 2006), most of it is based on South Africa. This present research extends that evidence but also offers new insights into how gender intertwines with age leading to negative experiences among people living in poverty with childcare responsibilities. Older people, mostly women, with care responsibilities spoke extensively about these responsibilities but in relation to their own existence. They spoke of being constantly worried about the future when due to old age they would be incapacitated or as they emphasised, dead.

Using rhetoric of emotional pain, they pointed to this experience as a problem for which they could not see a solution stating that it caused them 'constant pain in the heart.' This anxiety can be understood against the evidence that the extended family system which has always

been thought to deal with problems of poverty informally is failing while current anti-poverty mechanisms are extremely targeted and focussed on consumption soothing. This leaves such grandparents with difficult questions about the future of the children under their care, causing them the observed distress. With the evidence that the extended family system is weakened and anti-poverty mechanisms such as the social cash transfer have a narrow consumption soothing focus, this intersection of gender, age, and wellbeing has critical policy implications for people in poverty in Zambia and other similar contexts.

8.1.4. Poverty impairs agency by interfering with self-mobilisation

Linked to the concepts of ontological security, and aspiration gaps discussed above is the question of agency – as the capacity to act (Lister, 2015) among people in poverty. It is now generally understood that agency is situated. This understanding has enabled people in poverty to be seen as active agents within their circumstances rather than as passive victims. Indeed, this research has demonstrated the agency of people in poverty in various ways. Importantly, it has also shown, following on from Wolff and De-Shalit (2007), that people in poverty are resourceful.

However, due to the multiple disadvantages that they have to contend with on a daily basis, their agency is limited, which may mean transgression or may compromise their long term wellbeing. This is true for people who may engage in illegal activity like brewing and trading in illegal alcohol to make ends meet or giving farm produce to their church to assert their membership when such offering compromises their own food security. This is not to suggest that people in poverty are victims or that they act irrationally but rather to emphasise that living in poverty limits the universe of behaviours that one can undertake without compromising their own wellbeing or getting into trouble with the law. In this way, while

agency can signal the ingenuity and resilience of people in poverty, it may also compromise their material wellbeing.

Beyond these personal characterisations, this research has shown that agency is dependent on the action of others and requires psychosocial wellbeing. Hence, it is a capacity that itself, develops. However, this research notes that poverty research often treats agency among people in poverty as already existing. Most studies then proceed to identify agency's manifestations or how it is constrained. Few studies (Alkire, 2008;Kabeer, 1996;Lister, 2015;Walker, 2014), suggest looking beyond the manifestations of and constraints to agency to include the processes that enable its development.

Seeing agency in this manner, this research has shown that poverty impairs agency because it interferes with the processes of the mobilisation of self that are necessary for agency to develop. What we see then is that while people in poverty demonstrated agency, their agency was limited. They were clear, for example, about how the fear, insecurity and anxiety and ridicule from others affected their ability to gather themselves to engage in productive activities. Someone could wake up and go to the field but whilst there get overwhelmed by the issues in their life and return home without doing any work. The constant judgement, exploitation and humiliating treatment sometimes made it difficult to get up again and again because it made doing so seem pointless.

These negative experiences were shown to prevent people from developing the confidence that would enable them to act leading to the observed consequences. However, by focusing only on the actions of people in poverty and not their inaction, poverty research over emphasises the manifestations of agency and in the process underplays the ways in which poverty also impedes agency. In view of the evidence presented in this research, this thesis

argues for a broadening of the conversation on agency to include how poverty interferes with the development of this capacity and not just its manifestations. Here, the issue is not whether agency is inhibited or exercised but rather whether people have in the first instance at the personal level, the ability to self-mobilise in order to develop a capacity to act. The state of ontological insecurity experienced by people living in poverty undermines that ability and consequently their agency.

Another key issue from this research which builds into Sen's specification of agency, relates to how agency should be conceived in terms of a person's pursuit of their goals (Sen, 1992). Building on that analysis, Burchardt (2009), emphasises agency goals where in people may aspire to goals different from their immediate wellbeing. As discussed in chapter four in the case of 'situational identities', the finding that participants see their membership to particular social groups as an important part of their identities and are were willing to make contributions to affirm that membership even if such behaviour put their material status at risk, is an important addition to the literature. Particularly, it raises the question of how the agency of people in poverty should be evaluated in those anti-poverty programmes which have a narrow specification of what people in poverty should do with the material support provided to them.

8.1.5. Shame is central to poverty

This thesis centres shame in poverty by theorising it as based in patterns of recognition accorded to individuals in their everyday lives. Mostly reflected in participants' concern for a dignified self-image; shame is so crucial that it shapes interpretations of social support as well as decisions about which relationships to use for material support. For example, while people in poverty who participated in this research acknowledged the altruism of others, they emphasised that they avoided relationships where they had experienced disrespect such as

those where people who offer them material support spoke ill of them or broadcast to the community that they had rendered help to them. The gravity of this injury can be inferred from the fact that faced with a decision between exploitative waged work and material support from denigrating relatives they preferred the exploitative waged work. These considerations echo conclusions from the poverty and shame studies, which call for a dignity-sensitive provision of material support to people in poverty (Chase & Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014;Gubrium et al., 2013;Walker, 2014).

In addition to how one is treated in social interaction, sensitivity to personal dignity also covers questions of reputation and ultimately, self-identity. Linked to what this research has described as a person's public image, which is different from a private image, shame makes social support problematic. People in poverty saw social support from community members as a form of recognition of their humanity but were also concerned that it could 'expose' their private image leading to judgement by others.

While concerns with how one is viewed by others were important to all, they seemed to become more acute with age. Older participants, who discussed poverty in the context of their own imminent death were particularly fearful of dying in poverty and consequently, in indignity. They were intensely aware that they would lose control over that image once they died. Consequently, what kind of food would be served to mourners at their funeral or if their house was good enough to host their funeral were recurrent thoughts among older people. The centrality of the self-image and sensitivity to personal dignity in daily life and beyond, – to the extent of causing them such difficulty in imagining futures indicates that indignity is a central feature of the insecure and unequal social relations of poverty and with negative effects on self-identity.

8.1.6. Recognition as a continuum (?)

In applying recognition theory to poverty research, this thesis follows the lead of only a minority of studies (Graf & Schweiger, 2013;Lister, 2002a, 2005a, 2015;Schweiger, 2014;Schweiger & Graf, 2014b;Walker & Day, 2012). The distinction, however, is that this thesis is the first known empirical analysis of poverty from a recognition theory stand point in a global South context. In itself, this enabled the research to contribute to the theorisation of poverty from a recognition theory view outside of the global North contexts in which the theory was developed.

The experience of people in poverty has shown that recognition has various forms some applicable to the informal relationships while others other are more amenable to institutional relationships. People visiting your home when you are ill or experiencing bereavement are forms of recognition just as much as people not speaking about you as though you do not exist. Being accounted for in decision making and having your views heard and taken into count in public deliberation is a form of recognition while getting your entitlements or resources due to you as a member of society is another. Some of these forms are symbolic while others are material but they are all manifestations of a basic ideal, the acknowledgment of the inherent worth and humanity of the individual by others in his or her life. The lack of this acknowledgment in the various areas leads to the consequences discussed in this research.

In this way, this thesis argues that recognition should be seen as a continuum on which it's various forms are different but interrelated and leading to different outcomes. This view of recognition as a continuum aligns with Honneth's version of the theory in which recognition is understood as underlying even the redistribution of material resources (Honneth, 2001;Walker & Day, 2012). In this way it departs from Fraser's concept of recognition in

which only the symbolic belong to the realm of recognition while the material belong to the realm of redistribution. This conclusion that what Fraser calls redistribution is contained within the realm of recognition is mirrored in the idea of relational justice by Wolff and De-Shalit (2007). Citing Tawney, the duo makes the point that redistribution, which Fraser (Fraser, 2000;N. Fraser, 2005;Fraser & Honneth, 2003), insists is about material resources and therefore separate from recognition, is not only about the material once we take a relational view of it. They argue:

> "…Thus distribution – and redistribution – on this rather communitarian view, concerns not only the possession and transfer of material wealth, but the diverse ways in which people's lives can be affected by government policy, by the nature of the society hey live in, and by how they regard and treat each other,"(Wolff & De-Shalit, 2007, p. 6).

8.2. Limitations and areas for further research

As a case study, there is a lot of ground that this research left uncovered. First, Zambia's multi-ethnic nature means that the values and social norms that govern the relationships, which underpin social life may vary from region to region. Second, although the dynamic linkages between the urban and the rural are acknowledged, this research focused on rural Zambia. This focus means that poverty and how it is experienced in urban Zambia is out of the scope of this analysis even though urban poverty is itself an important subject. I observed during fieldwork that disability has a bearing on social relationships. However, this important area of life was outside the scope of this investigation but understanding the intersection between poverty and disability through the lens of social relationships would deepen our understanding of poverty even further.

The methodological limitations of this research leave opportunities for further research. One such opportunity is how social relationships frame experiences of poverty in the urban as

compared to rural areas. A similar investigation that focuses on the urban setting or makes a rural-urban comparison could further improve insight gained from this present research. Although this work has unravelled the salience of psychosocial aspects such as emotional pain, anxiety, fear and insecurity, there is scope for work that centres these aspects of poverty as a core aspect and how policy design can account for them. The conclusion that poverty is felt in the way other people view and treat you has implications for how poverty is measured but it is unclear at this point how this could be achieved.

This research has shown that inclusion in one domain of life does not necessarily lead to inclusion in other domains, when you live in poverty. What sort of conceptualisation of inclusion would be meaningful for people living in poverty? At policy level, the understanding that policy as an institutional framework generates spaces that make poverty worse is worth interrogating further. In fact, this case in which policy rhetoric has been shown to change while substantive policy provisions remain the same presents research ideas. One could opt to investigate the extent to which shifts in global poverty rhetoric shift national anti-poverty action.

Lastly, in using recognition theory this research centred the relational in the analysis of poverty. It has also been able to offer a critique of recognition theory itself as a theory of poverty. However, it still questions the appropriateness of recognition theory to poverty analysis. This requires more empirical analysis. While the theory offers much scope to conceptualise poverty, the fact that it is only beginning to be used in the analysis of poverty means that much work still has to be done to refine the theory for application to poverty analysis especially outside the global North.

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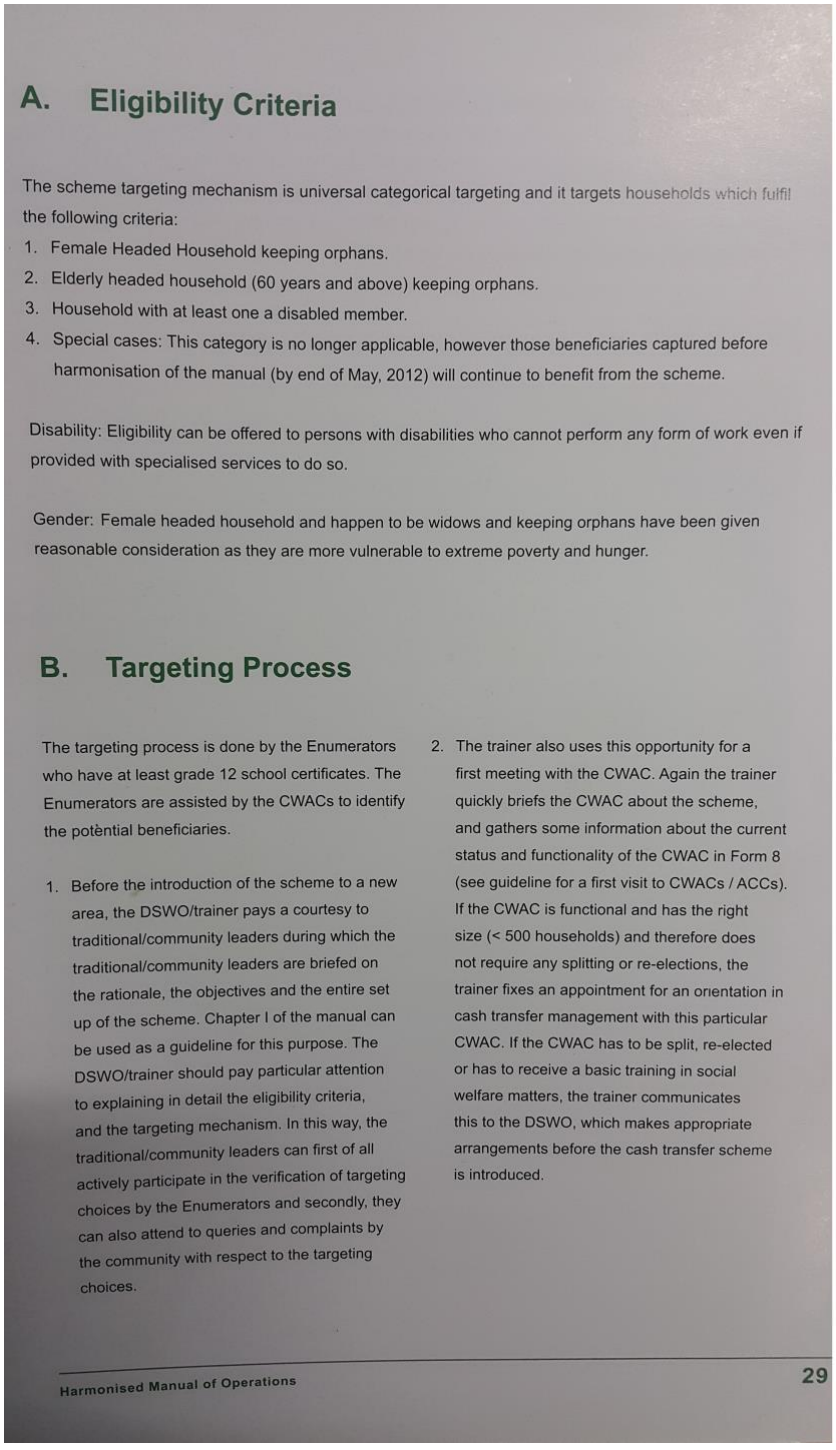
Appendices

Appendix One: Eligibility criteria for social cash transfer from harmonised manual



A. Eligibility Criteria

The scheme targeting mechanism is universal categorical targeting and it targets households which fulfil the following criteria:

1. Female Headed Household keeping orphans.
2. Elderly headed household (60 years and above) keeping orphans.
3. Household with at least one a disabled member.
4. Special cases: This category is no longer applicable, however those beneficiaries captured before harmonisation of the manual (by end of May, 2012) will continue to benefit from the scheme.

Disability: Eligibility can be offered to persons with disabilities who cannot perform any form of work even if provided with specialised services to do so.

Gender: Female headed household and happen to be widows and keeping orphans have been given reasonable consideration as they are more vulnerable to extreme poverty and hunger.

B. Targeting Process

The targeting process is done by the Enumerators who have at least grade 12 school certificates. The Enumerators are assisted by the CWACs to identify the potèntial beneficiaries.

1. Before the introduction of the scheme to a new area, the DSWO/trainer pays a courtesy to traditional/community leaders during which the traditional/community leaders are briefed on the rationale, the objectives and the entire set up of the scheme. Chapter I of the manual can be used as a guideline for this purpose. The DSWO/trainer should pay particular attention to explaining in detail the eligibility criteria, and the targeting mechanism. In this way, the traditional/community leaders can first of all actively participate in the verification of targeting choices by the Enumerators and secondly, they can also attend to queries and complaints by the community with respect to the targeting choices.
2. The trainer also uses this opportunity for a first meeting with the CWAC. Again the trainer quickly briefs the CWAC about the scheme, and gathers some information about the current status and functionality of the CWAC in Form 8 (see guideline for a first visit to CWACs / ACCs). If the CWAC is functional and has the right size (< 500 households) and therefore does not require any splitting or re-elections, the trainer fixes an appointment for an orientation in cash transfer management with this particular CWAC. If the CWAC has to be split, re-elected or has to receive a basic training in social welfare matters, the trainer communicates this to the DSWO, which makes appropriate arrangements before the cash transfer scheme is introduced.

Harmonised Manual of Operations 29

Appendix Two: Ethics Clearance

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
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26 February 2016

Mr Cleopas Gabriel Sambo
Department of Social Policy & Intervention

Dear Mr Cleopas Gabriel Sambo,

Research Ethics Approval (CUREC 2)
Ref No: R44165/RE001
Title: A relational analysis of poverty as a social phenomenon

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the IDREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project, which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application, you should submit details to the IDREC for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling
Research Ethics Manager and Secretary SSH IDREC

cc: Gemma Roche

Appendix Three: Recruitment letter

Barnett House 32 Wellington Square Oxford OX1 2ER United Kingdom Telephone: +44(0)1865 270325 Fax: +44(0)1865 270324, Email enquiries: info@spi.ox.ac.uk

LETTER OF RECRUITMENT

Dear Interview participant

I am writing to ask if you would accept to be interviewed in person for a research project entitled "A relational analysis of poverty as a social phenomenon." This research aims to explore how people's experiences of poverty are influenced by the nature of recognition accorded to them in their various social relationships. You will take part in only one interview and it is my hope that you will be willing to help me with my study.

If you agree to participate, I will interview you in person for about 45 to 60 minutes at your preferred location provided it is secure and confidential. During the interview, I will ask questions about your life experiences especially the ways in which the people you relate to in your formal and informal relationships view and treat you. I will be asking for and about specific incidences and places where you have experienced this particular treatment and how it has affected your life. I will also ask about your access to and control over resources within these relationships as well as your sense of belonging. I will also be interested to know about your degree of participation in local activities and why and how on a personal level you think about yourself, your aspirations and status in the community.

I have attached to this letter an information sheet that explains the research in more detail and explains your rights as a participant in research conducted through Oxford University. Please read the material carefully and ask questions where you are not clear. By accepting to participate in this study, it is implied that you have read and understood your rights.

I will call you or visit you to ask if I can schedule a time to interview you. In the meantime, if you have questions, feel free to ask me or you can you can bip me and I will call you back to discuss them.

Cleopas Gabriel Sambo
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Mobile +260964 016726/+260973 254532 (Zambia) +44 7771911360 (UK)
Email: cleopas.sambo@sant.ox.ac.uk

Appendix Four: Information sheets

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INFORMATION SHEET FOR EXPERT INTERVIEWEES

Thank you for showing interest to participate in this research "**A relational analysis of poverty as a social phenomenon**." This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. This form details the aim of the study, why you have been invited to take part and your rights.

AIMS OF THE STUDY
My research analyses the processes by which social relations frame experiences of poverty by examining how people in poverty in Zambia are viewed, valued and treated in their social relations. During the interview, I will ask questions about your experiences in administering social support to people in poverty. More specifically, I will ask about how your scheme conceives "poverty" and "people in poverty" and how these conceptions are manifested in your work. I will also ask about practical ways in which this scheme accounts for the autonomy and dignity of recipients and your assessment of their social status pre and post participation in the scheme.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?
You have been invited to take part in the present study due to your knowledge/experience working with people living in poverty through a support scheme.

YOUR RIGHTS AS INTERVIEWEE
I encouraged you to ask any question about the study before you decide whether to participate or not. If you decided to participate, you still have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason and you will **NOT** face any penalty. If you decide to withdraw your participation, **ALL** the information you provide will not be used in the final write up (thesis) of this research.

To help me accurately transcribe and analyse the information that you will provide, I request your permission to record the interview. In accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998 and research ethics guidelines of the University of Oxford, I will store all recordings and transcriptions in a password-protected drive with restricted access. The material will be stored for three years and after will **be deleted**. If you do not wish to be recorded, you have the right to say so and I will **NOT** record you.

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY
I will anonymise your identity under a pseudonym to protect your identity and the information you provide in this interview will only be used for purposes of this research. I request your permission to directly quote you in the final write up of this research. I will not use quotations in a way that can be traced back to you. However, if you do not wish to be quoted even under a pseudonym, you have the

right to say so and I will **NOT** quote you. Feel free to ask me any question you have about the research. I thank you for your contribution to this research.

CONCERNS

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to me or my supervisor Professor Robert Walker (tel. no. 01865280374) who will do his/her best to answer your query. I will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how I intend to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (using the contact details below) who will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner: Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD.

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Thank you for showing interest to participate in this research "**A relational analysis of poverty as a social phenomenon**." This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. This form details the aim of the study, why you have been invited to take part and your rights.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

My research analyses the processes by which social relations frame experiences of poverty by examining how people in poverty in Zambia are viewed, valued and treated in their social relations. I wish to know about your life experiences and will ask questions about the ways in which the people you relate to in your formal and informal relationships view and treat you and the messages that you get about who you are from these experiences. I will be asking for and about specific incidences and places where you have experienced this particular treatment and how it has affected your life. I will also ask about your access to and control over resources within these relationships as well as your sense of belonging and respect. I will also be interested to know about your degree of participation in local activities and why and how on a personal level you think about yourself, your aspirations and status in the community and how this affects your life i.e. the things you do to help and improve your life.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been invited to take part in the present study due to your knowledge/experience of living in poverty.

YOUR RIGHTS AS INTERVIEWEE

I encouraged to ask any question about the study before you decide whether to participate or not. If you decided to participate, you still have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason and you will **NOT** face any penalty. If you decide to withdraw your participation, **ALL** the information you provide will not be used in the final write up (thesis) of this research.

To help me accurately transcribe and analyse the information that you will provide, I request your permission to record the interview. In accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998 and research ethics guidelines of the University of Oxford, I will store all recordings and

transcriptions in a password-protected drive with restricted access. The material will be stored securely for three years and thereafter **deleted**. If you do not wish to be recorded, you have the right to say so and I will **NOT** record you.

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

I will anonymise your identity under a pseudonym to protect your identity and the information you provide in this interview will only be used for purposes of this research. I request your permission to directly quote you in the final write up of this research. I will not use quotations in a way that can be traced back to you. However, if you do not wish to be quoted even under a pseudonym, you have the right to say so and I will **NOT** quote you. For smooth communication, I request your permission to use a translator if necessary. This person will sign a confidentiality agreement and like me is bound to hold in confidence our conversation and to protect your identity. You have the right to decline, if you object to the translator and we will not involve one. Feel free to ask me any question you have about the research. I thank you for your contribution to this research.

CONCERNS

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to me or my supervisor Professor Robert Walker (tel. no. 01865280374) who will do his/her best to answer your query. I will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how I intend to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (using the contact details below) who will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner: Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD.

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Email: cleopas.sambo@sant.ox.ac.uk

Appendix Five: Consent and Confidentiality Agreements

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
Department of Social Policy and Intervention

Barnett House 32 Wellington Square Oxford OX1 2ER United Kingdom Telephone: +44(0)1865 270325 Fax: +44(0)1865 270324, Email enquiries: info@spi.ox.ac.uk

Research Assistant Confidentiality Agreement

I ……………………………………………………………, do hereby agree to maintain full confidentiality when serving as a research assistant for this project.

I will be performing the following tasks during the project:

- ☐ Helping the researcher to set up interviews
- ☐ Verbally translate information during interviews whenever necessary
- ☐ Transcribe the recordings in which I acted as a translator from the local language into English

I verify that I posse the qualifications to accurately perform the translations.

Specifically, I agree to:

- ☐ Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g., recording, notes, transcripts) with anyone other than the primary researcher.
- ☐ Hold in strictest confidence the identification of any participant revealed during the research project
- ☐ Not make copies of any raw data in any form or format (e.g., recording, notes, transcripts), unless requested to do so by the primary researcher.
- ☐ Keep secure all raw data that contains identifying information in any form or format (e.g., recording, notes, transcripts) while it is in my possession. This includes:
    - Keeping all raw data that has been digitalised in computer password-protected files
    - Delete permanently any email communication containing the data and
    - Use closed headphones if transcribing recordings
- ☐ Give all raw data in any form or format (e.g., recording, notes, transcripts) to primary research when the tasks above are completed and destroy all information that cannot be returned to the researcher.

Name of Research Assistant: **Address:**

……

Signature……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Phone No………………………. ………………………………………………………

Primary Researcher: Cleopas Gabriel Sambo, DPhil student in Social Policy, University of Oxford.

Primary Researcher's Signature: ___________________________ **Date Signed**: ______________

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Walker & Dr. Elaine Chase, Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford.

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CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWEES

Please note that an oral consent will be recorded if the interviewee is unable to read and write

This research is entitled "A relational analysis of poverty as a social phenomenon" is being conducted as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Policy at the University of Oxford. The research aims to explore how people's experiences of poverty are influenced by how they are viewed valued and treated in their various social relationships. I will ask questions about your life experiences especially the ways in which the people you relate to in your formal and informal relationships view and treat you. I will be asking for and about specific incidences and places where you have experienced this particular treatment and how it has affected your life. I will also ask about your access to and control over resources within these relationships as well as your sense of belonging, autonomy and respect. I will also be interested to know about your degree of participation in local activities and why and how on a personal level you think about yourself, your aspirations and status in the community.

Participants understanding

- ☐ I understand the aim of the study and have received answers to any questions.
- ☐ I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee
- ☐ I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.
- ☐ I understand that the researcher will protect my identity and that this interview will be kept in strict confidence
- ☐ I understand that participation in this research will neither increase nor decrease my chance of receiving support from the government.
- ☐ I understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any point of the process.
- ☐ I understand that I will not suffer any penalties or any adverse consequences for withdrawing my participation if I do so.
- ☐ I understand how the research data will be stored, written up and published
- ☐ I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint
- ☐ I consent to being audio recorded
- ☐ I consent to being quoted directly in any research publications
- ☐ I consent to participate in this study.

Participant's Full Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____ **Date Signed**: _____

Researcher: Cleopas Gabriel Sambo, DPhil student in Social Policy, University of Oxford.

Researcher's Signature: _____ **Date Signed**: _____

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Walker & Dr. Elaine Chase, Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford.

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ORAL CONSENT SCRIPT

Hello again, I am Cleopas Gabriel Sambo. I am a PhD student from the University of Oxford and I wanted to talk to you about the project I gave you information about yesterday. To recap, the broad aims of my project are to explore the ways in which experiences of poverty are shaped by social relations and how this happens.

Are you interested in taking part in the project?

That's great. I just wanted to go over again some of details of the project to make sure you understand what's involved for you. These were that:

- It's a project about experiences of poverty and it's being used for my postgraduate project
  If you take part, I'll need you to do a 45 to 1 hour.
- This interview may be distressing as I'll be asking for your opinions about your life experiences
- You don't have to say yes to the project. You can ask me any questions you want before or throughout and you decline to participate if you want to. Whether you take part or not has no effect on whether the CWAC will recommend you for support and whether your support continues or stops. If you decide to participate, you can also withdraw your participation at any stage during the interview and there will be no effects to you.
- You know how to raise a concern or a complaint
- You understand that the researcher will protect my identity and that this interview will be kept in strict confidence
- You know that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee
- That we may use a translator if need arises and that the translator will sign a confidentiality agreement
- You know how the research data will be stored, written up and published
- Are you happy to be audio recorded?
- Are you happy to be directly quoted in research publications?
- You are still willing to take part

If you're happy with all of that, and have no more questions, let's start.

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Appendix Six: Interview Guide for People living in poverty

TOPIC GUIDE

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Occupation
5. Length of stay in area

1. Personal

- Occupation, personal resources, household responsibilities
- Kinds of friendships /associations
- Understanding of poverty/reflections on national narratives
- Hopes, wishes, aspirations
- Needs, stressful life events (feelings, emotions & perceptions)
- Coping mechanisms
- Spaces, places or arena of life with best moments *best experiences, feelings etc.

2. Family & Neighbour relations

- Type/nature of family, kin, Level of connectedness, types/nature of bond & support/costs/demands, reciprocity & satisfaction with support
- type and nature of interaction/kind of treatment & impressions & feelings

3. Community relations

- Type/nature of community,
- types/nature of bond & support/ costs/reciprocity & satisfaction with support
- Level of connectedness, type and nature of interaction
- Participation in the social life of the area/community
- Social functions in area, meaning to the person, attendance, reasons
- Kinds of experience, treatment

4. Institutional relations & ideas about respect

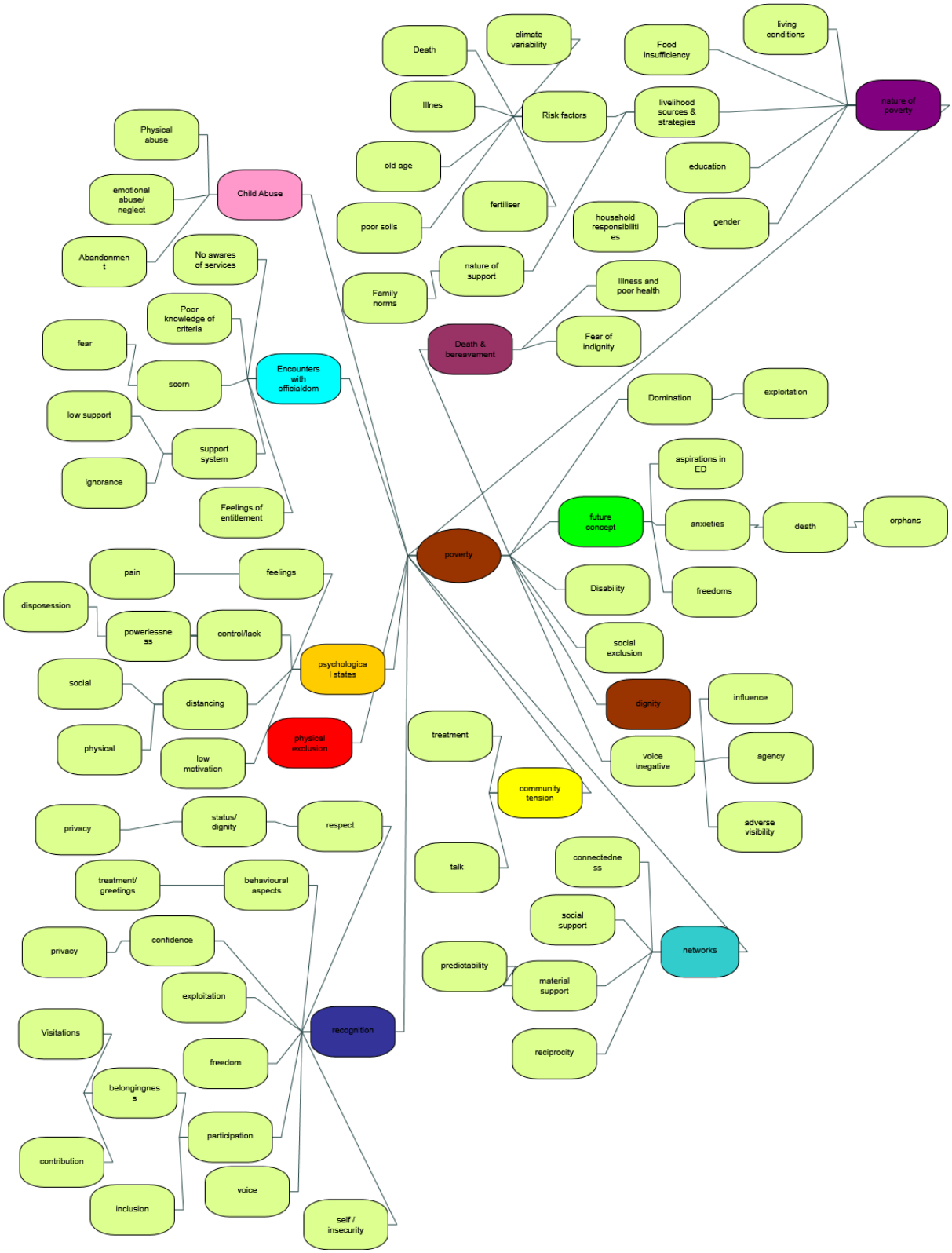
- Type/nature of institution, nature of dealings/support (health, education, welfare etc),
- Awareness of services, type and nature of interaction/engagement, kind of treatment
- Satisfaction with support
- Perception about policy and services, engagement

5. Self-image/identity, reasons

- Thoughts about life situation, perception of self**,** esteem, sense of belonging/ connectedness, future aspirations, view of public perception of self.

Appendix Seven: Participant biographical information

Name	Age	Gender	HHsize	M Status	Marriage	Orphans	SCT	R
Ngawa	40	F	7	M	M	4	No	C
Standwell	60	M	5	M	M	0	No	C
Yolodia	35	F	5	M	Polygamous	0	No	C
Salome	45	F	9	M	M	4	Yes	C
Philip	67	M	8	M	M	0	Yes	Muslim
Charles	54	M	13	M	M	0	Yes	C
Agness	62	F	4	W	M	3	Yes	C
Ailedi	70	F	11	W	M	7	Yes	C
Akilina	50	F	3	M	M	1	Yes	Muslim
Avaina	77	F	7	W	M	3	Yes	C
Betty	91	F	7	W	M	0	Yes	C
Beatrice	52	F	6	W	M	5	No	C
Blackson	76	M	7	M	M	5	Yes	C
Casildah	52	F	6	W	M	1	No	C
Cecilia	65	F	3	W	Polygamous	2	Yes	C
Chapansi	39	F	5	S	S	4	No	C
Chibanga	46	F	10	M	M	8	No	C
Dainess	65	F	1	W	M	0	No	C
Gertrude	46	F	10	M	M	8	No	C
Joseph	84	M	4	M	M	2	No	Muslim
Veli	28	F	7	M	M	2	Yes	C
Lisa	26	F	4	W	M	3	No	C
Lonta	67	F	2	M	M	0	No	C
Mailesi	30	F	5	M	Polygamous	0	No	Muslim
Malita	66	F	5	W	M	4	No	C
Margaret	66	F	10	W	M	8	Yes	C
Monica	67	F	5	M	Polygamous	0	No	C
Maureen	46	F	6	W	M	5	No	C
Naomi	75	F	3	W	M	1	No	C
Rebecca	62	F	6	W	M	5	No	C
Tembo	52	M	6	W	M	2	No	C
Lina	50	F	7	W	M	4	Yes	C
Mwanza	37	F	9	M	M	2	Yes	C
Joyce	78	F	1	W	M	0	Yes	C
Stanley	78	M	2	W	M	0	Yes	C
Stephen	65	M	8	M	M	2	Yes	C
Violet	63	F	4	W	M	3	Yes	C
Nelia	63	F	6	W	M	5	Yes	C
Nelia	63	F	1	W	M	0	Yes	C
Velinus	63	F	4	W	M	2	Yes	C
Albert	37	M	7	M	Polygamous	2	No	Muslim
Shadreck	39	M	8	M	M	2	No	C
Gideon	48	M	8	M	M	3	No	Muslim
Martin	59	M	6	M	M	4	No	Muslim
Clement	66	M	7	M	M	3	Yes	C
Abelesi	37	F	4	M	Polygamous	0	No	C
Lyson	47	M	8	M	M	3	No	Muslim
Mike	56	M	7	M	M	2	No	Muslim
Victor	66	M	7	M	M	5	Yes	C
Asiya	70	M	5	W	M	3	Yes	C
Fanwell	64	M	7	W	M	6	Yes	Muslim

Enes	71	M	9	M	M	4	Yes	Muslim
Lemekani	80	M	8	W	M	5	Yes	C
Edward	69	M	7	W	M	3	Yes	C
Kangachepe	74	M	9	M	M	4	No	C
Eliphasi	67	M	9	M	M	6	Yes	C
Mose	40	M	8	M	Polygamous	3	No	Muslim
Sanford	63	M	9	W	M	5	Yes	C
Mainga	51	M	7	M	M	2	Yes	C
Maliko	48	M	9	M	M	3	Yes	C
Dalitso	52	M	8	M	M	0	No	Muslim
Felesiya	39	F	11	M	M	2	Yes	C
Yvonne	53	F	7	W	M	4	Yes	C
Alick	62	M	8	M	M	3	No	Muslim
Cephas	45	M	6	M	M	0	No	C

Appendix Eight: Coding Map from Nvivo 12.0