

**CHALLENGES FACING FATHERS WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT OF
CHILD CUSTODY BY THE LAW IN NZHELELE WEST, MAKHADO LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges facing fathers with regard to the management of child custody by the law in Nzhelele West, Makhado local municipality. The specific objectives of the study were to describe the challenges facing fathers with regard to the management of child custody by the law, to investigate social relationship of fathers to their children, to assess how fathers support their children financially after separation and to explore the coping strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges facing fathers with regard to the management of custody by law.

For the nature of this study, a mixture of methodology was used wherein qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Non-probability sampling and its sub type purposive sampling methods was used to select the respondents of the study. Questionnaire and interview were used to collect data. Two data methods were used, which are statistical analysis (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and thematic analysis.

The major findings of the study are;

- The findings show that challenges facing fathers with regard to the management of child custody by the law are that fathers do not want to follow child custody procedure while others also feel that the law is in favour of mothers.
- The findings show that fathers have good relationship with their children as they can share their life experience, can discipline their children, their involvement in their children's life determine self-esteem of their children and they serve as role models to their children.
- The findings show that fathers maintain their children through the law as it is the best way while others believe that there should be a discussion on how the non-custodian father will support his children whether through the law or by giving children money on a monthly basis.
- The findings show that fathers are not patient with the law and they should let the procedure be followed, they should always be there for their child even when they do not need custody and they should also understand that is about children as such no need to punish each other as parents as they are both important to their children, they have to work together in raising their children.

The recommendations of the study were;

- Fathers should be patient and not give up with the law and follow child custody procedure in order for them to understand what is considered when one is granted child custody if not so they will feel that the law is in favour of mothers.
- It can be recommended that father whether they got custody of their children or not ,they should continue having good relationship with their children as their involvement in their children's life determine self-esteem of their children and they serve as role models to their children.
- It is recommended that fathers should maintain their children whether there is the law involved or not. They should feel proud of being parents and even if they are supporting their children through the law they can still be involved on other financial issues. By financially withdrawing themselves does not only hurt the custodian parent but also the children who are supposed to get that support from their parents.
- The recommendations based on the finding above regarding the strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges facing fathers with regard to the management of custody by law is that fathers should always be there for their children even when they do not need custody.

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