

Understanding the lived experience of Lone Mother's travel patterns: A Thematic Synthesis of the Literature

The role of transport in access to employment and social mobility

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Introduction



- ▶ My PhD is written in an autoethnographic format to reflect my own lived experience and the lives of others and combine the researcher and participant experience
- ▶ Men and women's travel patterns have repeatedly been shown to differ (Church et al, 2000, Rosenbloom, 2004)
- ▶ Women make significantly more complicated journeys as part of their social and cultural roles (Turner & Grieco, 2000)
- ▶ Different access to transport is a major producer of gender inequality- restricts access to knowledge and power

Discourses of Lone Mother's

How to portray teenage parents: less Vicky Pollard, more real stories

Enough with Vicky Pollard-style irresponsible teenage mums in the media, says Prym Face. Young parents are tired of being forced into a certain role in the public eye – and finally the Monkeywood theatre in Manchester is telling their true stories.



Vicky Pollard only ever wore a pink tracksuit in the comedy series Little Britain Photo: BBC

"One of the biggest social problems of our day"
(Redwood, 1993)

"The root of all social ills"

Victim blaming policies

Problematic – seldom viewed in a positive way



Demographic trends in Lone Mothering

1 in 4 households in the UK are lead by a single parent

91% of Single Parent households in the UK are lead by women (ONS, 2015)

Least likely of all groups to own a car.

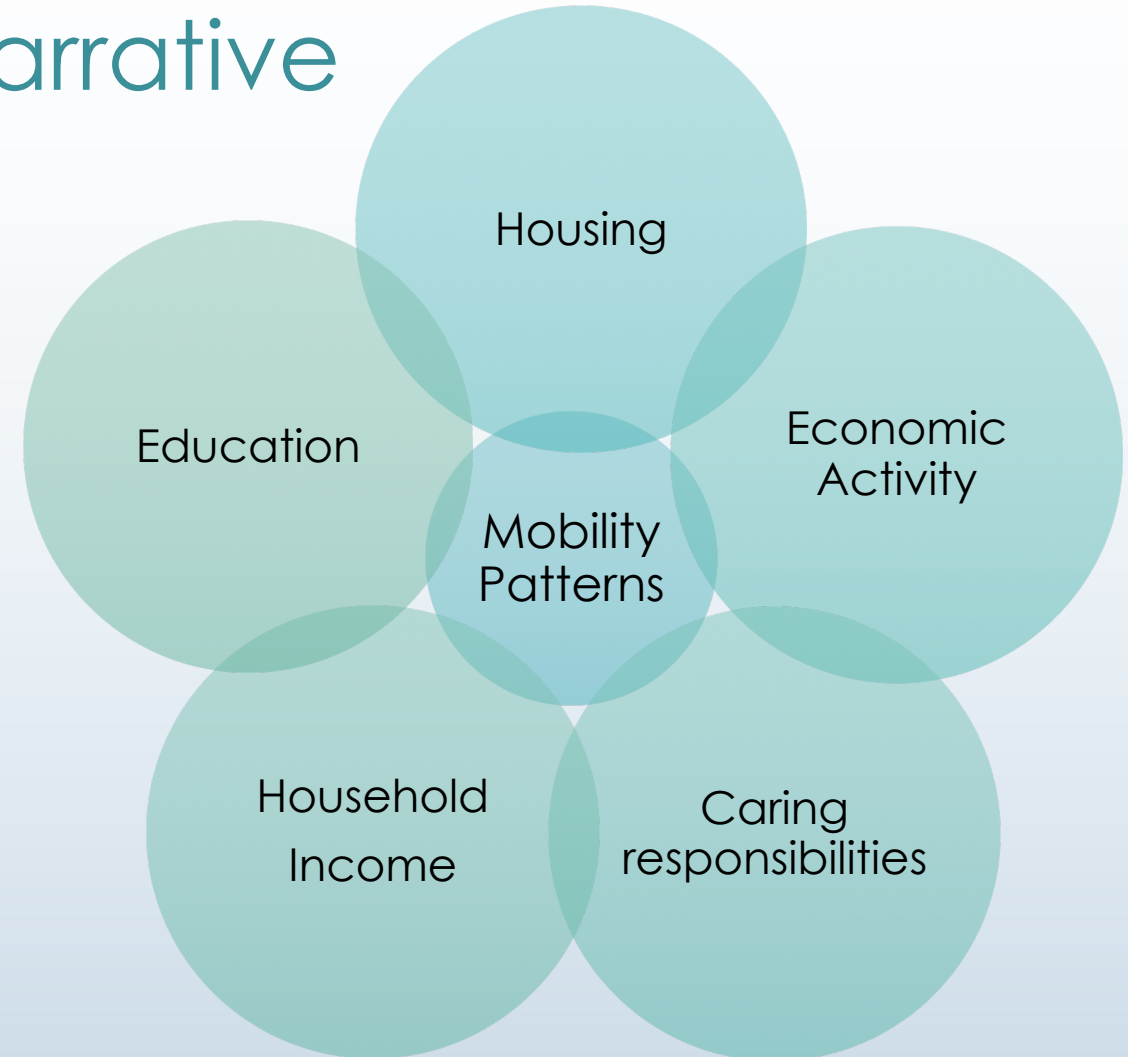
47 per cent of children in single parent families live in relative poverty, around twice the risk of relative poverty faced by children in couple families (Gingerbread, 2018)



**I can do ANYTHING,
I'm a Single Mom!**

Auto-ethnography-Themes from a personal narrative

- ▶ The goal of using personal narrative (as research) is to fuse the 'form' with the 'content' and the 'literary' with the 'scientific', creating a social scientific art form, to reveal the hand of the researcher rather than construct authority through absence (Ellis & Bochner, 2000)
- ▶ Autoethnography is a mode of self-reflective or introspective writing that connects personal autobiography and experience with broader social, cultural meanings and contexts (Drabble, 2018)

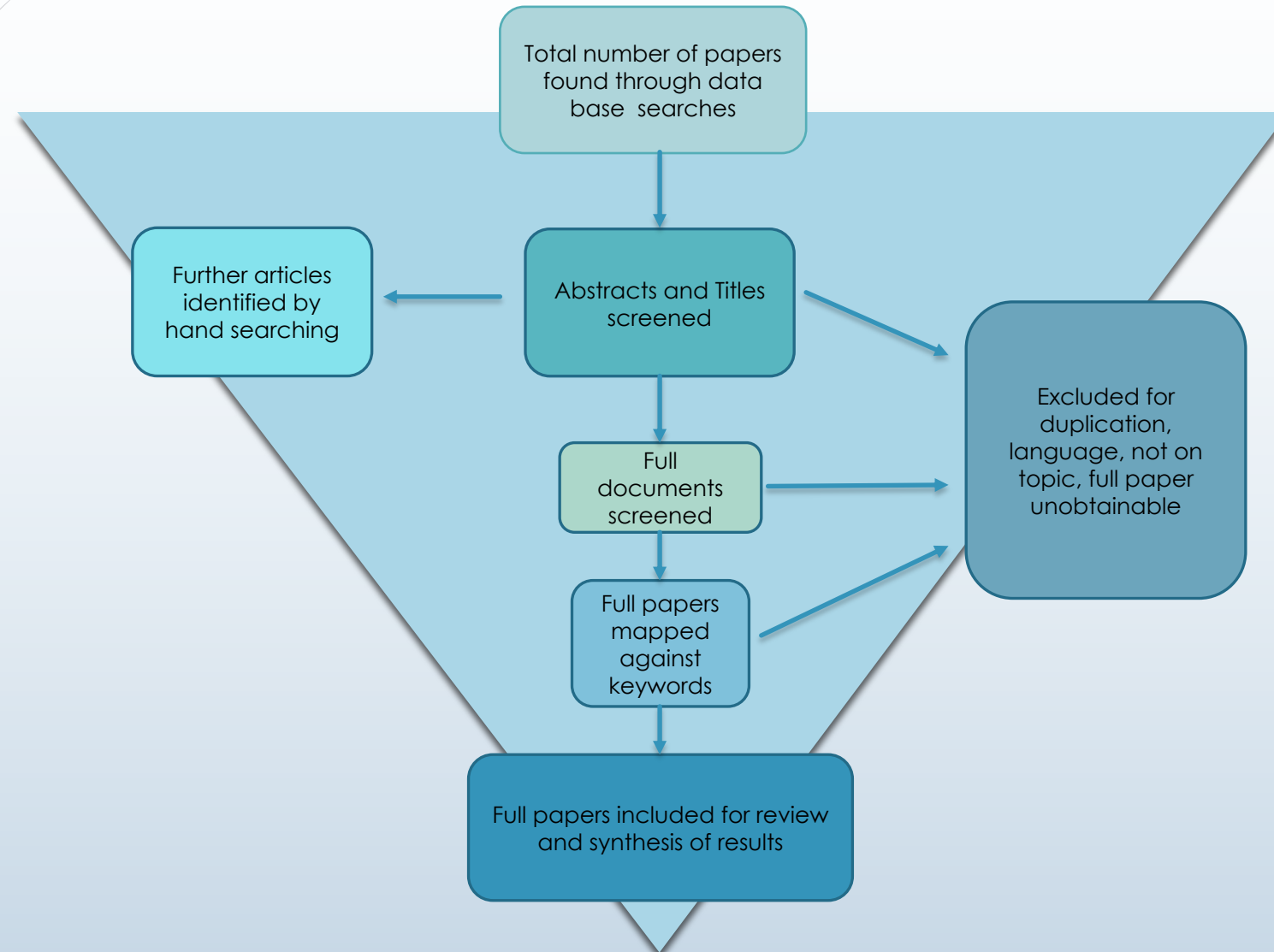




Literature Review – Methodology

- ▶ Thematic synthesis (Thomas 2008)
- ▶ Peer reviewed journal articles & grey literature 2000 to present day
- ▶ Key words driven by an autoethnographic approach
- ▶ Database searches across Transport, Geography, Education and Social Sciences literature

Review Process: Thematic Synthesis





Results

- Dominant themes relating to mobility:

 - Time

 - Economic activity

 - Poverty: economic inactivity strongly correlated with poverty

 - Accessibility: Complexity of journeys, reliance on formal & Informal support

- Lack of evidence of lone mother's travel patterns in relation with labour market outcomes

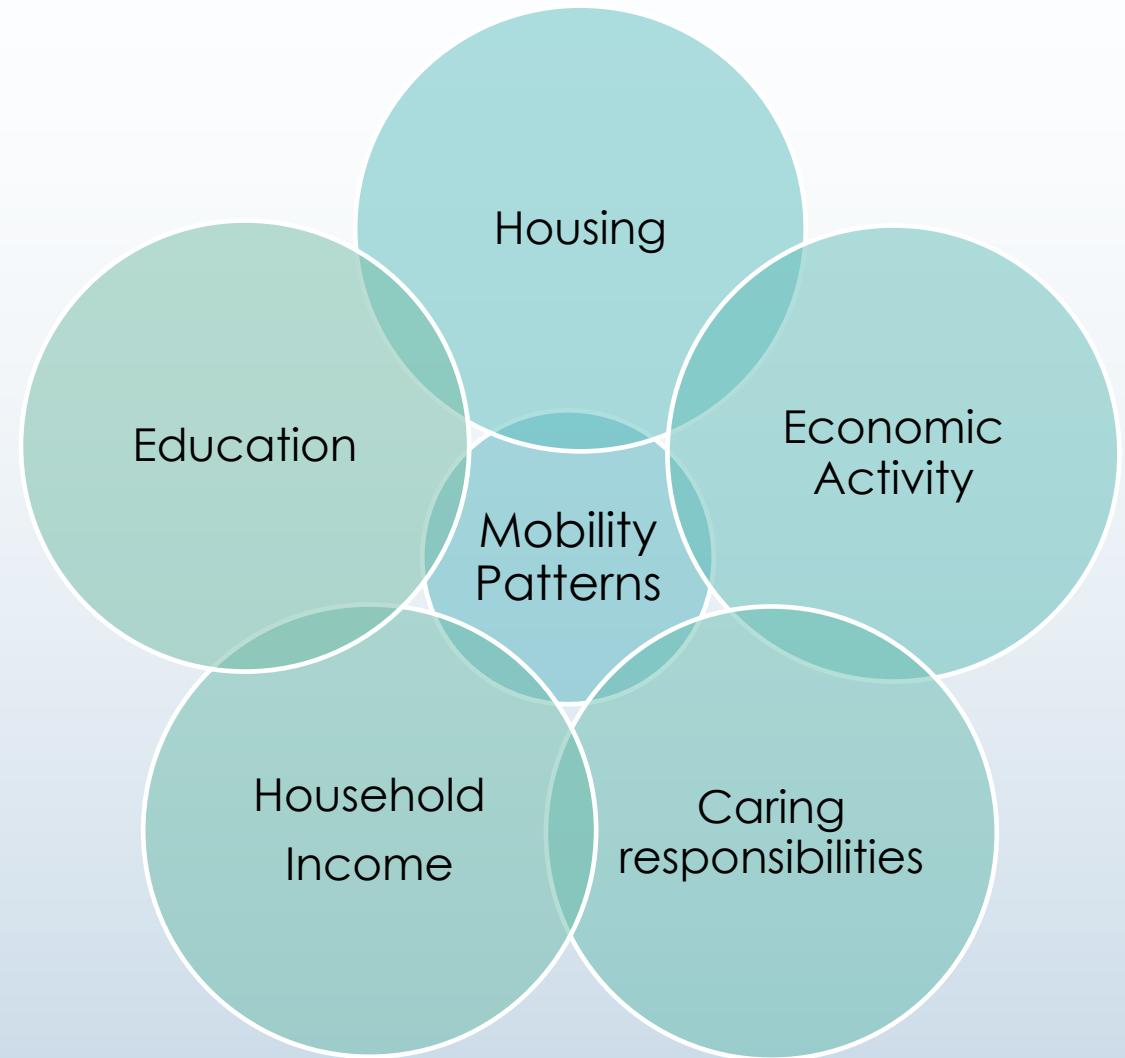


Mobility patterns: Time

- Most preferred mode of transport - the car – seen as necessary for juggling time/spatial constraints
- Walking – promoted as positive for health but not always practical-limits distance
- Mobility significantly constrained by time-complex trip chaining
- Shorter commute times to employment – limiting opportunities

Accessibility across the domains

- ▶ Access to transport is a key issue in finding and sustaining work (SEU,2003)
- ▶ Cost and availability of transport is a factor in reconciling jobs with caring responsibilities (Graham & McQuaid, 2014)
- ▶ Lack of access to transport restricts access to healthcare and resources such as food shops
- ▶ Location of work childcare and school key determinants of effective co-ordination
- ▶ Transport problems (experienced or anticipated) act as a disincentive to work



Lone Mother's in Employment

- ▶ Employment for single parents at an all-time high in the UK
- ▶ Sustainability reliant on the interdependence of many factors
- ▶ Time poor
- ▶ More likely to be in low paid work-poor contracts
- ▶ Forced car ownership
- ▶ In work poverty

Welfare-to-work policies pushing single mothers into 'precarious' work

Study finds women are being forced to take contracts without sick leave or superannuation



▲ A study by Good Shepherd Australia found a woman with a masters and a fledgling art conservation business was only offered work in a biscuit factory by her Jobactive provider. Photograph: Mark Pinder for the Guardian

Lone Mother's: Economically inactive

- ▶ Value of stay at home parenting
- ▶ Vulnerable to isolation
- ▶ Conditionality of welfare support
- ▶ Worsening picture for larger single parent households
- ▶ Perceptions/fears that work doesn't pay

Benefit cap: single mothers make up 85% of those affected, data shows

DWP records show 134,044 households had support capped, with single mothers accounting for 114,337



▲ A 2013 demonstration against welfare cuts including a benefit cap trial. Photograph: Patricia Phillips / Alamy/Alamy

Any Questions?



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