UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

The construction of sexual and gendered identities amongst coloured school girls

CLEO R. FIRMIN

202518168

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Cleo Rose Firmin

Student number: 202518168

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coloured school girls

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Supervisors:

Professor Deevia Bhana

Doctor Bronwyn Anderson

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NRF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Stanley and Veronica Firmin who have persevered so much for my academic success. Thank you for believing in, and encouraging me to reach higher potentials.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore how young coloured girls, aged 16-17, give meaning to sexuality. Coloured girls' are often marginalised in South African research and debate around gender and sexuality. This study focuses on coloured girls in two different social and economic contexts in Durban. The one context is Wentworth which remains a predominantly coloured working class area. The other is a middle class former white area in Glenwood Durban. The study draws on qualitative research using interview methods to focus on eight girls in these two areas. Three of the girls emerged from Glenwood whilst five others live in Wentworth. The aim of the study was to understand the ways in which class impacted on their meanings of sexuality. Gender, race and class are intertwined social constructs which assist in the formulation of sexual identities. This study investigated the similarities and differences between the two groups of coloured girls. They differed in relation to: their mindsets regarding everyday life, for example the girls from Glenwood interacted with boys from all four racial groups and had a better understanding of their different cultures. The girls from Wentworth found boys from racial groups other than coloured more attractive due to lack of knowledge of them. Thus the girls from Glenwood were open to multi-racial relationships whilst the girls from Wentworth were afraid to do so, as they would be subject to ridicule from the community. In Wentworth ones status is defined by clothing, cash and cars and in order for these young girls to be successful in this community they must affiliate themselves with boys/men who can provide such things; even if they come at a high price. In this study the girls were similar in that they all wanted to be independent, wanted to finish school, find good jobs, and buy their own cars, thus we see the feminine agency of coloured girls from two different socio-economic contexts.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In this study I investigated South African coloured high school girls' perceptions and attitudes around sexuality and the construction of their sexual identities. The study provides important contextual information about the actual meanings that young coloured girls ascribe to boys, boyfriends and the ways in which class impacts on these meanings. The study is especially important for schools concerned with the sexual well-being of young people. The development of an effective sexuality education programme must meet the needs of young people, as Bhana and Pattman (2009) suggest. However, while there is now an emerging body of work around young people and sexualities in South Africa (Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana, & Moletsane, 2009), there is little research which focuses on coloured girls' sexualities.

There are various ways in which young women aged 16-17 years develop their own understanding around sexuality and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. Young women today are active participants in society; however, despite their societal progression they still appear to be the primary victims of HIV infection. The rate of HIV infection among young people in South Africa is still alarmingly high, possibly due to continued risky sexual practices, early first sexual encounters and living in impoverished conditions, among others.

This was a qualitative study that investigated the lives of eight young coloured women from Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. These young women were from two different socio-economic backgrounds. The study focused on the ways in which gender, race and class impacted on the construction of their sexual identities. A comparison of the two groups of girls was made to test the theory that class has an impact on the construction of sexual identities, but this is not to suggest that this issue is simplistic. It is complex, and I will show that these girls actively construct themselves and others around them.

The community in which people grow up in is usually responsible for the way in which they shape their understanding of 'their world'. As a young girl I was somewhat sheltered from the

effects of apartheid. I grew up in a small multicultural community in northern KwaZulu-Natal, where children of all racial groups played together despite the political struggles 'outside'. The struggle was not only outside but within as well although it may not have been visible in our village.

After matriculating I moved to Durban, where I now reside in a predominantly coloured middle-class community, Treasure Beach. Just one road separates Treasure Beach from the former coloured working class township of Wentworth which is afflicted by many social ills namely high rates of unemployment, gang violence, alcohol and drug abuse. Although I have lived in this coloured community for the past 10 years, this form of separation and sectional living according to race' and class is still new to me. Being a coloured woman myself I find this topic interesting and quite essential to understanding how South African coloured girls construct their own sexuality in this modern era and how class impacts on that construction.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The primary reason for doing this study was my own personal interest in coloured identity and being coloured myself has influenced this decision. I also have a desire to understand the population that has for decades been plagued by negative stereotypes in South Africa. By categorising people according to racial segregation, a label is given to them. There are many stereotypes surrounding the South African coloured population, most of which are negative. Through this study I hope to gain some insight into coloured school girls` sexualities.

The secondary reason was due to the lack of research on coloured girls in Durban and the construction of their sexual identities. There is a need to build on the literature on South African coloured identity. Ultimately, through this study I hoped to gain a better understanding of the discourse of young South African coloured women and how they perceive their own sexuality through their everyday experiences as a unique group in South Africa.

1.3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

1.3.1 Coloured identity

In order to understand the perceptions around coloured girls, it is essential to understand the meaning of the word 'coloured' and its derivation. Says Hendricks (2005, p. 1), "We cannot have a meaningful discussion on coloured identity in isolation from other identities that shape its expression. When discussing the identity we need to take into account conceptual issues, discursive issues and perceived power relations in South Africa." Coloured South Africans (the label is contentious) are a people of mixed lineage from slaves brought to the country from both east and central Africa, the indigenous Khoisan who lived in the Cape at the time, indigenous Africans and white people (Statistics SA, 2011). Thus, the term coloured is often construed as meaning 'mixed race' (Anderson, 2009, p. 25). "Khoisan is a term used to describe two separate groups who were physically similar in being light-skinned and small in stature. Historically the Khoi (who were called Hottentots by the Europeans) were pastoralists and were effectively annihilated; the San (called Bushmen by the Europeans) were hunter-gatherers" (Statistics South Africa, 2001). Thus, the oppressive label, 'Bushmen' was then commonly used to describe coloured South African citizens during the apartheid era.

Coloured identity was a specifically South African construct with its origins in apartheid, and was not as real or authentic as being black or African. Being neither black nor white made it difficult to divide and position coloured people in South Africa according to racial segregation. It also had a negative impact on the ways in which coloureds identified themselves up until today. Under apartheid laws in South Africa a person's character and future prospects were determined by one's race, class and gender. Being a white male meant one had more power than a black female in South Africa (Helms, 1994). Hence, Durban coloureds dis-identify from blacks, because they feel superior to them (Oakes, 2007, p. 270). Whiteness represents privilege in South Africa (Oakes, 2007, p. 277). Anderson (2009) cites Erasmus (2001, p. 16), who says "that apartheid has played a key role in the formation and consolidation of South African identities". The "history of the coloured community focuses narrowly on the racial oppression that coloured people suffered under white supremacy and on coloured protest politics" (Adhikari, 2005, p. xi).

1.3.2 The Coloured Group Areas Act of 1950

In KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, in 1961, coloured people were formally moved to Wentworth, and first housed in army barracks that had been built by the British Admiralty and housed white ex-servicemen after the war. In 1963, the area, then called Austerville, was proclaimed a Coloured Group Area and was the destination for people removed from various communities in Durban, and later from throughout Natal, the Transkei and the Transvaal (Wiley, Root & Peek, 2002). This ill-resourced area became a dumping site for displaced coloured people, which today is structured around the massive Engen Oil Refinery.

1.3.3 Coloured women in South Africa

As a South African coloured woman and having lived in this country my entire life, I have often heard stereotypical comments being made about coloured women. For example: coloured women consume a lot of alcohol, they would leave their children on the streets for a party, and they would engage in unsafe sex so that they could access drugs. Erasmus (2001, p. 16) states that the labels imposed by whites during apartheid are made and remade by coloured people themselves in order to give meaning to their daily lives. Through my research and own investigation I too have found that these stereotypes are heard more often and even repeated within coloured communities and among coloured people themselves, and the question that I battle with is, how do young coloured girls filter this negative information and how do they deal with it? In engaging with the literature on youth and sexuality, it is evident that there is very little research on coloured girls' perceptions of sexuality - and thus there is a need for it in order for teachers to understand these young people whom they engage with on a daily basis.

There is a need for South African educators to understand that coloured people in Durban have their own culture and one could easily identify a Durban coloured person from their rich accent. I am a typical example of this. I am a shade darker than the typical perception of coloured complexion; I have straight dark hair, a sharp nose and further more English is my home language. (The Durban coloured population predominantly speak English; however, there are many Afrikaans words which they use as a form of slang in their daily speech,

which is evident in Chapter Four. A glossary of these terms is provided in Appendix 1). My physical features are not 'typical' coloured features, and among black and white groups I am often mistaken for an Indian person. However, once I speak there is no doubt to which racial group I belong. From my own experience this accent is a 'Durban coloured accent', which is different to the other provinces of South Africa. In 2009 I worked and lived in Gauteng , and when it was necessary for me to disclose my racial identity it was almost as if I was resisting any association with Indian in a desperate pursuit to be coloured. My accent does not help my case at all outside of Durban. Their ideas, in Gauteng, of what a coloured person looks like is very much boxed up: no matter how fair (light-skinned) you are, as long as your hair has a straight strand you are either Indian or white.

1.3.4 Gender, race, class and sexuality

Gender, race, class and sexuality are all essential aspects which contribute towards how young coloured women are socialised. I have observed that many schools in coloured communities in Durban have a high rate of teenage pregnancy, which is evidence of unsafe sexual practices. Risk-taking behaviour of young people between the ages of 16 and 17 years is common, and through my study I intend to show how both girls and boys are initiators of risk-taking sexual behaviour, which challenges the majority of the literature which states that boys are initiators and girls the victims. Gender roles are changing even though social and cultural expectations of boys and girls roles remain strong (Bhana, 2010). The main focus of my study is to show the contrasting perceptions and attitudes of coloured girls from two different socio-economic backgrounds.

1.3.5 Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status is often defined as having two broad interlinked elements: class and position (Krieger, Williams, & Moss, 1997). The question of whether or not race has an impact on class is essential. In Durban (at one of my research sites, to be specific) there are coloured females represented in private schools, both as teachers and learners, but for the purposes of this study I only focus on the learners. The question of what these coloured school girls aspire to later on in life is crucial.

The two groups of girls who participated in this study were selected from two very different environments. The first group of coloured girls were students at a private high school. This particular school is situated in Glenwood, a middle-class urban area in Durban. The second group of coloured girls were selected from a state school located in the working-class community known as Wentworth, south of Durban. As mentioned earlier, Wentworth is a community in which coloured people from all over South Africa were 'dumped' during the apartheid era, and also one that fosters a high rate of teenage pregnancy, domestic and gang-related violence, and alcohol and drug abuse. The community in which these girls live and attend school is a reflection of their socio-economic position.

1.4 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Two different school sites were used to focus specifically on class differentiation and the impact it has on coloured high school girls. Although this study focuses primarily on coloured girls' perceptions, I do take into account that there are coloured girls from all different socio-economic backgrounds. The first school site was a private school in the Glenwood community and the second a public school in Wentworth community. The Glenwood community is a very affluent, developed one (a former white suburban area), whereas the Wentworth community is a working class community, generally of low socio-economic standards. The Wentworth community is well known for violence, ranging from domestic violence to gang-related violence and drug dealing.

Wentworth

Wentworth is a community plagued with violence and social ills such as substance abuse, unemployment, poverty and a high prevalence of HIV and AIDS (Anderson, 2009, p. 1). The population is approximately 35 000 (Kamwangamalu, 2004), with differences that suggest historical, cultural, phenol-typical, and religious heterogeneity (Anderson, 2011, p. 3). Figure 1 and 2 show one of the landmarks of Wentworth – the Engen oil refinery.

Figure 1. Engen Oil Refinery in Wentworth in the 1960s. Source: Google Maps. Retrieved July 2011

Figure 2. Engen Oil Refinery in Wentworth 2011. Source: Google Maps. Retrieved July 2011

Glenwood

The Glenwood community was once home only to white people. Well resourced schools, beautiful parks, churches and many trees planted in large yards and on the pavements were all invested in this area of Durban specifically for middle- to upper-class white people. Since the beginning of democracy people of all races have now moved into this community; it does, however, still appeal to the middle to upper classes. Today the members of this community, who are now of all race groups, continue to reap the rewards of what was once invested in Glenwood (Figure 3).

Figure 3. An aerial view of part of Glenwood, highlighting the greenery and open spaces. Source: Google Maps. Retrieved July 2011

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions in this study were as follows:

    i.   What constructions have Durban coloured girls formed about themselves and their sexual identities?

    ii.   What discourses do these girls have about risky sexual practices?

    iii.   How are gender, race and class connected to the development of coloured girls' perceptions and attitudes around sexual identity?

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

In Chapter One the study is introduced and the research problem, aim of the research and research questions are presented. A description of the research sites is provided.

Chapter Two provides the literature review and theoretical perspectives, which focused on coloured identity and social constructionism. Work in the area that has already been researched and presented by other researchers nationally and internationally is presented.

In Chapter Three the methodology of the study is presented, and the research sites, participants and limitations are discussed here. The data collection method is presented here in depth.

In Chapter Four the data and analysis are discussed. Gender, race, class and sexuality are all essential aspects which contribute towards how these young coloured women are socialised; these aspects, which form the basis of this study, are learned social constructs which are passed down from generation to generation.

Chapter Five is the conclusion where the findings are summarised, implications are discussed and recommendations are made.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This study investigates young coloured girls in Durban and the ways in which they construct and give meaning to their sexual identities through social processes, i.e. culture, race and class which is an area of limited research. This qualitative study used interviews as a means to collect data. The sampling was purposive and only coloured girls were selected as participants in order to collect the desired data. These participants were selected from two school sites, one a middle- class private school and the other a working-class public school. This study looks at young coloured school girls in two different settings as sexual agents so as to make a class differentiation. It investigates whether or not class has an impact on the ways in which young coloured girls making meaning to their sexual identities. It discusses how sexual risk is linked to violence and reflects on the sexual well-being of these coloured girls, who are increasingly becoming agents of change opposing stereotypical gendered roles enforced by society.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the ways in which two groups of coloured school girls from two different socio-economic contexts in the Durban area constructed and gave meaning to their sexual identities. With emphasis on class, this study investigated whether or not these two groups of coloured girls from different socio-economic contexts developed contrasting or similar perceptions of their sexuality. The different socio-economic contexts of the two groups of coloured girls meant their lifestyles gave way to different experiences and ways in which they constructed their femininity and sexual identities.

In this chapter I draw on literature that shows the fundamental way in which class is implicated in the formulation of these girls' sexual identities. However, in all these studies on women and girls sexualities that I have drawn upon for this literature review there is no specific studies on Durban coloured girls. The most recent study that I rely heavily on is Anderson (2009) who explored coloured working class constructions of masculinity. This study engages with social constructionist perspectives, paying particular attention to how gender, race and class are intricately connected and have implications for the ways in which the participants understood and gave meaning to their sexual identities. I review literature from both local and international research and discuss the theoretical perspectives which focused on the socially constructed nature of coloured identity.

In this chapter I will review gender and the social constructionist framework. I will discuss the construction of femininities, sexual attraction and feminine agency. I then move onto coloured identity, whereby I begin by looking at coloured people in South Africa before I refine my study to coloureds in Durban.

2.2 GENDER IDENTITY

2.2.1 Gender and the Social Constructionist Framework

The two groups of girls in this study come from two different socio-economic backgrounds, and hence their social contexts differ. Social constructionist inquiry is mainly concerned with explicating the processes by which people describe, explain or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live (Gergen, 1985). In this study this means that the girls' account of their social worlds (one in Wentworth and the other in Glenwood) will be class-specific. Human beings do not exist in isolation, we exist in communities. The coloured community itself is divided along the lines of race and class. The literature tells us that "class is intricately connected to the shape their [the coloured girls in this study] lives will take and the ways that they define themselves" (Anderson, 2010, p. 75). "Richter's (1996) study of the age of onset of sexual activity showed that South African youth became sexually active on average between the ages of 13 to 15 years" (Leclerc-Madladla, 2002, p. 23). Class plays a vital role in the ways in which these young coloured girls give meaning to their sexual identities. Gender and sexuality social constructs. Gender, race, class and sexuality are all essential aspects which contribute towards how these young coloured women are socialised. Sex differences are rooted in biology whereas gender differences influence who men and women are and sexuality will determine who men and women will partner (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010, p. 1). Salo states that the individual's sexuality is her own as well as the society's particular moral, spatial and bodily discipline which is used to understand the construction of the person and her agency (Salo, 2002, p. 405).

2.2.2   Construction of femininities

Gender is fluid and ever-changing, like personality and illness, human sexuality is not a stable phenomenon (Burr, 2003, p. 43). Sexuality includes people's sexual identities in all their cultural and historical variety and while sexuality cannot be divorced from the body it is also socially constructed (Turner, 1984). In this manner sexuality is socially embedded in multiple social relationships and informed by sometimes contradictory meanings (Salo, 2007) as will be discussed in this section.

2.2.2.1 Societal construction of femininities

It has been said by many researchers that it is the expectations of society which place women and young girls in vulnerable positions of sexual abuse, violence and HIV/AIDS infection as women and girls are forced to be submissive to their male counterparts. Bhana, Morrell, Shefer and Ngabaza (2007, p. 135) cite Mcfadden (2003), who stated that "cultural norms and traditions are often used to police women's sexuality and to limit their roles to marriage and motherhood". Typically girls are expected to be soft, nurturers and caregivers. Their domestic ability in the home determines whether or not they are good or bad, hard-working or lazy women. These women and girls must be able to listen instead of give instructions, and never challenge a man's instructions. Women who endorse or enact an emphasised femininity are complicit with the unequal structuring of gender relations and tacitly accept their subordination (Jewkes & Morrell, 2011, p. 2). This system of being overpowered is a particular learned behaviour of submission, it is not natural and it has previously been used by men to maintain their own need for power.

Young women are judged in terms of the societal ideology of domesticity. A young woman's display of modest behaviour or dress reflects her ability to raise children well and to run a respectable household (Salo, 2003, p. 352), this is the dominant discourse of femininity. In addition, regardless of their knowledge and sexual experience, young women face tremendous social pressure to maintain an image of innocence and purity which poses challenges for them in taking precautions against sexually transmitted diseases and in safe sex negotiations (Reddy & Dunne, 2007, p. 163) this is a result of the expectations placed on young girls by society. Female sexuality is defined largely within a discourse of silence wherein girls are forced to deny their sexuality and sexual activity and to maintain positive connections with their mothers (Chadwick, 2010, p. 21). The dominant discourse of femininity stands in direct contradiction to their sexual safety, thus the young women who unquestioningly conform to traditional femininities are implicated in their own disempowerment and in risking their sexual safety (Reddy & Dunne, 2007, p. 166).

2.2.2.2 Virgin/whore dichotomy

Many religious and cultural groups such as Christian, Islamic and Zulu traditionalists all follow this patriarchal regime whereby the man is the head of the household and young people are taught to conform to these notions in preparation for marriage - and yet again these girls are told to submit to their male counterparts. "Virgins" are expected to express their sexualities, if they express them at all, within marriage or another type of culturally monogamous sanctioned union. Women who fail to embody this ideal are known as "whores" (Gottoschall, Allison, De Rosa, Klockeman, 2006).

For many of the young women, the immediate risks to their reputation from being seen to be sexually active or from becoming pregnant were much more real than the fear of AIDS (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe, & Thomson, 1990, p. 343). In work done by Reddy and Dunne, they found that many females suggested that it was easier to submit to unsafe sex than even to raise the issues of safe sex practices and be labeled 'cheap' or 'loose' by their partners (Reddy & Dunne, 2007, p. 163) because there are people, men in particular, who label women into these two categories, "virgin" or "whore".

2.2.2.3 Fashioning femininities

South African children are influenced largely by the Western way of life through the media. The media demonstrates to young women that wearing expensive clothing and make-up sends out a statement of class, and it encourages young women to identify themselves and stand out in society.

Mass media culture has taught women to believe that they need to be attractive and desirable, as if their main task were to lie on silk cushions waiting for Prince Charming to come in (Connell, 2002, p. 2) through the door and whisk them off their feet. Sexual attraction is an aspect of femininity (Pattman & Bhana, 2007, p. 350): women should be beautiful with long hair and manicured nails. This form of femininity also places coloured girls and women in great danger as they battle with the realities of making ends meet and their own complex issues. Most coloured girls do not have long sleek hair, light eyes and light skin tones. The point I'm trying to make here is to say that these traits are from European and Indian

genetics, and to how people are admired for having them. This creates a divide in the coloured community between those who do have those features naturally, thus making them the "lucky" ones, and those who do not. This has an impact on the way that coloured girls are raised in coloured communities. In a community that is riddled with unemployment, many young women create a desire in the minds of men. These young women look to men for homes, money and stability. They see this as the only way to compete and to succeed in life.

2.2.2.4 Sexual attraction

Sexuality includes peoples sexual identities an all their cultural and historical variety. This assumes that while sexuality cannot be divorced from the body, it is also socially constructed (Turner, 1984). "Where women's behaviour was previously controlled directly by the State, family or church, control of women is now also affected through the scrutiny of women by visual ideals. Photography, film" and television offer themselves as transparent recordings of reality (Coward, 1984, p. 82). "However, it is in these media where the definitions are tightest, and where the female body is most carefully scripted with the prevailing ideals. Women internalise the damage created by these media; it is the damage of being the differentiated and therefore the defined sex.

> *"Sex, as it is currently socially constructed in its various forms, cannot simply be understood as a pleasurable physical activity, it is redolent with symbolic meanings. These meanings are inseparable from gendered power relations and are active in shaping sexual interaction" (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe, Thomson, 1990, p. 339).*

Women become *the* sex, the sex differentiated from the norm, which is masculine. Women are the sex which is constantly questioned, explained, defined (Coward, 1984, p. 81). Many. As the defined sex, women are put to work by the images. The command created by an image-obsessed culture is 'Do some work! Transform yourself! Look better! Be more erotic!' Through these commands to meet the ideal, our society writes one message loud and clear across the female body: *Do not act. Do not desire. Wait for men's attention"* (Coward, 1984, p. 81). Many women recreate themselves as images of sex, however when coloured women do so they recreate the stereotype of coloured women's sexuality being loose, undisciplined and promiscuous (Salo, 2002. P. 407).

The old nationalist ideology of race defined white, Afrikaner women as the embodiment of racial and sexual purity (Salo, 2002, p. 406). In contrast, the dominant racial meanings of colouredness equated coloured women's sexuality with the degraded, immoral, undisciplined sexuality commonly associated with racial 'impurity' (Salo, 2002, p. 406).

There is also an ideal definition for the male body and this is to have a muscular body. A muscular body portrays the characteristics of power and strength which are hegemonic characteristics of masculinity. Thus boys will engage in various activities, such as exercise regularly, body build and play sport, to obtain this ideal form of masculinity. Men engage in various practices to alter the shape of their bodies and conform to the musculine ideal (Frith & Gleeson, 2004, p. 41). In areas where they cannot enhance their body form, they will use expensive clothing to cover up their 'flaws'. Thus there is a strong link between clothing and body image (Frith & Gleeson, 2004) for coloured boys and men in the South African context.

2.2.2.5 Agency and femininity

Even though my study is on coloured femininity, femininity is in relation to masculinity. There is an increase in the number of girls and young women who resist the gender norm which places women in subordinate positions to their male counterparts. This subordination of women is a cultural ideal found across the racial border which often places women in great danger. Subordination to male partners does tend to affect and impact to a greater extent on the lives of women from low socio-economic backgrounds. However, contrary to this if women do not submit to their partners they can also be marginalised, as is shown below:

> "Just as hegemonic masculinity is given power as a 'cultural norm', forms of femininity that either in whole or in part emphasizes compliance with this are expressed as cultural ideals of femininity, and are usually in some way socially rewarded. Women who adopt femininities based on resistance, or indeed engage in acts of resistance, can be marginalized and stigmatized. Patriarchal societies are heteronormative, that is, they require men and women to demonstrate their gender by

actively participating in heterosexual or affirming heterosexual desire." (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010, p. 3)

It is the cultural norm to think of men as sexual perpetrators and women as the victims; however, in relationships there are girls who want sex and boys who want love (Allen, 2003). Other research shows how girls rationalised their risky sexual behaviour and explained in terms of love and trust why safer sex was not necessary for them (Reddy & Dunne, 2007). The control which young women can exercise over the risk or safety of their sexual practices is constrained by the confusion of their notions of sexuality with their expectations of romance, love and caring (Holland, *et al*., p. 340).

It is important to consider that girls are not simply passive victims of boys' rampant hyper-sexualities, but rather some girls have been implicated in upholding masculinities that denigrate and objectify girls (Anderson, 2009, p. 75). The propensity for girls to strike up relationships with older men is a way of accessing "car, cash and cell" (Leclerc-Madladla, 2002), hence the sugar daddy phenomenon. Those involved in these relationships can be manipulated into having unsafe sex with their sugar daddies, who themselves have been found to be promiscuous, thus placing these girls in vulnerable positions of HIV infection.

2.3 COLOURED IDENTITY
2.3.1 History of coloureds in South Africa

Despite the fact that the term 'coloured' is still used to divide and separate a specific race group within South Africa, it is however used mostly by coloured people themselves as they wish to dis-identify from other racial groups as they struggle to find their own unique identity as brown people in this country. The usage of the term coloured when referring to colour is forbidden in certain international countries because it is perceived as derogatory. Thus the common understanding of what it means to be coloured and the term most commonly used overseas is mixed race. This invocation of mixing "inevitably links to a racial binary that relies on two opposing identities of black and white" (Jacobs, 2007), pulling together two completely different cultures. Due to this racial and cultural fusion, it has become difficult to define colored identities.

Under apartheid, coloureds were positioned as different from blacks and whites (Oakes, 2007, p. 78). The historically, socially and economically dominant white majority viewed coloured people as distinct from the African population (Cleophas, 2009, p. 2). This was of benefit to both the coloured population as well as the white, meaning, coloured people could be educated and get jobs and their standard of living was slightly better than that of the black population. This however, was not done without a hidden agenda. The apartheid government did this to improve their own position as the white population is a small representative in South Africa, thus they felt that by separating the coloured population from the black population, the white population would have the additional support they needed from coloured South Africans.

Coloured identity is a product of both apartheid category-making and identity-building on the part of coloured political actors (Jacobs, 2007). We see in the work of Oakes (2007) how coloured people wish to dis-identify from the black population and be seen as westernised in order to progress economically. Coloured people are a marginal group in South Africa not only because they form less than 10% of the population but also because their heritage of slavery, dispossession and racial oppression has left them with little economic and political power (Adhikari, 2002, p. 106). A history of oppression and marginalisation and an identity plagued by derogatory stereotypes placed them in an invidious position from which they have found it difficult to emerge or advance (Anderson, 2010, p. 3).

2.3.2 Coloureds in Durban

As Oakes (2007) informs us, coloured people in Durban are a mix of African, white and or Indian lineage. Being coloured is not simply an amalgamation of bloodlines, it is a culture; coloured people from Durban have their culture just as the Cape coloured people and Malays have theirs. The Cape coloureds have adopted Afrikaans as their language; whilst coloured people from Durban have historically adopted English (Oakes, 2007, p. 80). Thus the term coloured would be very difficult to define overall. In this study I focus purely on Durban coloured people. I believe that the coloured way of life is in direct proportion with their social

dynamics - politics, history and change being the main determinants of their economic situation and social dynamics.

The current communities in Durban which comprise predominantly of coloured inhabitants are Wentworth, Newlands East and Sydenham, Mariannridge and Greenwood Park. These communities have four things in common: they are rife with druglords, violence, unemployment and high teenage pregnancy rates. Wentworth and Newlands East are communities which were strategically situated just outside the city. Driving through these communities, one would see rows of flats and homes built very closely to each other. This communal form of living is an open invitation for violence to flourish, and gang violence is common in these communities even today as many coloured boys feel that their only means of survival in these notoriously violence-driven communities is to join a gang (Anderson, 2009).

Coloured boys in Wentworth have been and still remain marginalised and weighed down by stereotypical images which tend to vilify them. These boys then look to other ways of negotiating their marginalised positions in the way of exhibiting sexual prowess and claiming numerous sexual conquests, and these attributes are strongly and explicitly endorsed by their peer group structures (Anderson, 2009, p. 127). This places young girls in positions where their feminine identities are challenged. As coloured boys negotiate their masculinity, girls too have to negotiate their position in these communities and this is a result of class. Class creates desires in individuals to become agents of change or agents of continuity.

Coloured people were marginalised in the apartheid era and still experience this in the new democratic dispensation (Anderson, 2009, p. 4). However, there is evidence of coloured people in Durban having improved their way of life. More coloured people are residing in urban areas previously reserved for whites, and coloured children are being enrolled into and are attending independent schools. To add to the latter point, the demographic of the independent school in which this study was carried out included a coloured principal and a coloured deputy principal, and the two senior heads of department were also coloured. From my own initial observation and the fact that I myself (a coloured person) had taught in this school for three years, I noticed how almost 50% of the staff and 50% of the learner

population is in fact coloured at this particular independent school, which previously comprised only white learners and staff. This is evidence of change in the new democratic South Africa; however, change does not always benefit everyone. The affirmative action policy in South Africa designed to present greater opportunities and better prospects for employment and life improvement for the previously disadvantaged is perceived to further marginalise coloureds (Anderson, 2009, p. 4). This is clear in communities such as Wentworth, the predominantly coloured community south of Durban from which some participants in my study were drawn.

Coloured identities are not simply labels imposed by whites during the apartheid era. These labels are made and re-made by coloured people themselves in their attempt to give meaning to their everyday lives (Anderson, 2009, p. 24) due to the lack of successful role models in communities such as Wentworth. There therefore appears to be a major difference in the ways that coloured people from different socio-economic contexts behave. Coloured boys and girls who grow up in predominantly coloured communities will live in lower-income households and are exposed to violence and poverty on a regular basis. Hence in this situation we will see the apartheid labels and harmful stereotypes about coloured people being reinforced regularly. However, those coloureds who have moved out of the 'townships' and into more affluent communities have begun to create new ways of thinking about coloureds in South Africa. Anderson (2009, p 33) states that there is evidence of progress and upward mobility in the lives of many coloureds, many of whom hail from Wentworth. Those who strive to improve their lives are determined to be successful, to provide for their futures and to rid themselves of the negative stigma associated with this identity. This paves the way for the negative stereotypical perceptions of coloureds to be contested, destabilized and eroded.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Gender, race and class are intertwined social constructs which assist in the formulation of sexual identities. In this study two groups of coloured school girls from two different socio-economic backgrounds in the Durban area were investigated. The focus was on the ways in which these girls constructed and gave meaning to their sexual identities based on their race and class. In the South African context, despite race and class divisions, women in general are subordinate to their male counterparts as a result of a skewed apartheid system. Although there is increasing evidence of female agency that resists both racial and gendered division, this is particularly from females of a high social order. Females from low socio-economic households find it more difficult to be agents of change, since they depend too heavily on the men in their homes financially. In most homes in South Africa men are still the primary bread-winners and decision-makers. Thus, there is only a small female population that has become agents of change in our South African society.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the research design and research method that were used for data collection and analysis are discussed. In this study I researched the ways in which young coloured girls construct their sexual identities in two different social environments, and used qualitative methodology because this involves collecting textual or verbal data (Bertram, 2004, p. 59). I collected and analysed verbal data through in-depth focus group interviews, whose participants were purposefully selected high school coloured girls aged 16 to 17 years, from two different social contexts.

3.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

This study investigated the ways in which a group of young coloured girls from two different socio-economic contexts gave meaning to their sexual identities. I chose to do this study because I have always had an interest in the ways in which young coloured girls perceive themselves and their sexuality and how they formulate relationships with others, boys in particular. As my curiosity increased, I wanted to find out whether or not their social contexts had an impact on the ways in which young coloured girls developed their sexual identities.

Coloured girls in South Africa have been victims of negative stereotypes in and out of school, and I base this on my own personal experience. These stereotypes extend from their hyper-sexuality to alcohol abuse. I am well aware of these stereotypes since I heard them while I was a learner in school, at university and as a teacher myself. Although these stereotypes have grouped and marginalised coloured girls, I believe that my study will provide evidence that they are not applicable to all young coloured girls.

By engaging in focus group interviews, this study sought to explore the commonalities and differences of the two different groups of girls with regard to their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours around sexuality. I believe that this information is of great importance to South

African teachers because it will allow them to see each young coloured girl as an individual, each with a different background depending on her experiences.

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Below are the three key research questions used as a basis for this study:

- How do these coloured girls construct their sexual identities?
- What discourses do these girls draw on around risky sexual behaviours and practices?
- How are gender, race and class connected to the development of coloured girls' perceptions and attitudes around sexuality?

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.4.1   Interpretivist paradigm and approach

Drawing on qualitative methodology and within an interpretivist paradigm, this study explored and attempted to understand the central phenomenon with specific individuals at a certain research site (Creswell, 2008, p. 142). The specific participants who were selected had to be South African coloured girls aged 16-17 years, who were enrolled in either of the two high schools in Durban where I commenced with my fieldwork for this study. The interviews were focus group interviews and an interview schedule was used as a guideline to remain focused. I used focus group interviews in my study to gain a better understanding of the perceptions that these young coloured girls have and most importantly of how these girls formulated these perceptions of themselves in reality. My intentions were purely to try to understand these girls' perceptions and behaviours with regard to their sexual identities thus a focus group interview allowed them to simply speak.

I have used the interpretivist approach in analysis of the data. An interpretivist researcher believes that as human beings we are always interpreting or giving meaning to the things we see in the social world (Bertram, 2004, p. 41). This approach provides the opportunity for researchers in the social sciences to study people's behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions; hence in my study I studied the attitudes and behaviour of a group of coloured

girls from two different social backgrounds, observing their similarities and differences. Interpretivists also believe that the world is changeable and that it is people who define the meaning of a particular situation (Bertram, 2004, p. 40). This point contrasts with the notion that people each grow up a certain way, depending on their own social environment. This in fact means that it is not their social environment which shapes people's attitudes and behaviour, but rather it is their experiences and the ways that they choose to deal with them. The data I received from the interviews agreed with the above statement.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.5 .1 Location of the study

Two different school sites were used to focus specifically on class difference. Although this study focused primarily on coloured girls' perceptions, I took it into account that there are coloured girls from all different socio-economic divisions. Thus in this study I investigated whether or not their perceptions of sexuality differ based on their social environments. I looked at whether or not the school context (be it public or private) has an influence on the perceptions that these girls have about their own sexual identities. The first school site was a private school in the Glenwood community and the second a public school in Wentworth community, both in Durban, South Africa. The Glenwood community is a very affluent, developed one, which is well resourced and maintained (as it is a formerly white suburban area) which is made up of elite homes, schools and parks.

In comparison, the Wentworth community is of a low socio-economic standard. Surrounded by air pollution from the rather large Engen Oil Refinery, this community is also well known for unemployment, alcohol abuse and violence, ranging from domestic to gang-related violence and drug dealing. The two communities differ vastly, which piqued my interest in the possibility of different responses from participants due to their varied social backgrounds.

3.5.2 Description of research population

I chose to do purposive sampling because I wanted to interview a specific group of girls for a particular purpose. Purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices about which people to include in the sample. The researcher targets a specific group, knowing that the group does not represent the wider population; it simply represents itself (Bertram, 2004, p. 67). I, the researcher, purposefully chose my participants to fulfill the outcome of this study. To fit the criteria for this study the participants had to be high school, coloured girls aged 16-17 years. I chose two schools from two different socio-economic contexts. The first school was an independent school, which I chose because I had taught at this school for three years so was familiar with the school set-up, the staff and a few learners. The girls in this sample belong to middle-class families, and thus this enabled me to make a clear distinction between classes. The second school was a public school in the community in which I reside. Despite the fact that I am not entirely familiar with this school, gaining access to it was very easy. The girls in this group are from working-class families and some broken homes.

As a teacher I have always had an interest in the behaviours of young coloured girls. I have often observed them in and out of the classroom and questioned why they do certain outrageous things. Often their unruly behaviours stem from attention-seeking to try to dominate other girls. Issues of love and control seem to permeate the lives of these girls. The reason I chose to interview only coloured girls was because "the sample must be representative of the population about which the researcher wants to draw conclusions" (Bertram, 2004, p. 75).

3.5.3 Data collection method

In this interpretivist study I decided to use two in-depth semi-structured focus group interviews to collect data. These interviews were used to gain understanding of the ways in which coloured girls construct their sexual identities. An interview schedule was used in the interviews for this study. I used the same interview schedule for both groups of participants (in their individual research sites) as I attempted to see if there were any similarities or

differences between the two focus groups. I then tried to scrutinise and highlight any obvious differences found in the transcripts. There were a few differences which I noticed through thorough analysis of the transcripts. The interview schedule used in the interviews was made up of open-ended questions which allowed for discussion within the focus groups.

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007, p. 373) point out the following advantages of using group interviews in research: they are often quicker than individual interviews and thus time saving; group interviews can also generate a wider range of responses than in individual interviews. A focus group interview was essential for me since I had very limited time to do these interviews; the year 2010 was a much disrupted one and the school calendar was affected by it. The 2010 Soccer World Cup and teachers' strike impacted on the learners' time at school. Even when learners were back at school, teachers were reluctant to waste any more time, so time for interviews was scarce. However, despite the disruptions, the effectiveness of the focus group interviews provided enough data for my study because this methodology allowed me, not only to elicit themes but also to discuss how the group constitutes an opinion.

The group interview can also bring together people who have varied opinions, or as representatives of different collectives (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 373). With the focus group interview the participants are given a topic or a series of questions which they respond to and discuss and argue among themselves with the researcher there as a facilitator, guiding and leading the discussion. It is from the interaction that the data emerge. Focus group interviews are highly advantageous as they produce a large amount of data in a short period of time (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 376).

However, one of the major disadvantages of interviews which I looked out for was that in an interview "one participant might dominate over the others" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 373). I found this to be true in both of my interviews. There were individuals or 'leaders' in both who were more outspoken and allowed their opinions to be voiced first and the loudest. While I was aware of this I did not intervene in the interview, I simply allowed the girls to proceed with the discussion at their own pace as I observed. At first I did appreciate their contributions, but later on I noticed how the introverted girls were not able to fully participate in such a set-up.

3.5.4 Coloured girls in a private school

Doing my interviews at the private school was very exciting as I had previously taught at this school for three years. Upon arrival I was greeted by the teachers and learners who remembered me. The three learners who were chosen to be a part of the interview process were girls I had taught previously. Initially I felt as if this would hinder me from trying to receive the information I intended to find; however, to my surprise it did not. The girls participated freely and were quite open.

I was given a neatly set up room which was carpeted to commence with the interviews. The walls were yellow and it had a nice warm feeling about it, along with that was the fact that I had some fond memories of that specific classroom; thus I felt comfortable (and at home) in it. As I waited for the girls to be released from their classes, I set four chairs around a table and placed some goodies on the table. When the girls arrived they offered me hugs and warm greetings. We then sat down and I briefly informed them of what the study was about as well as the ethics involved. They seemed very happy to see me and to be a part of this study.   I provided cold drinks and biscuits for the girls, and before the interview began we indulged in those goodies with a good chat as we attempted to catch up on past times.

In the interview itself the girls were a lot more outspoken than I had expected them to be and they participated fully in the interview process. They expressed their opinions boldly and with confidence. In some cases I did feel as if the girls were exaggerating their feelings by acting tough and independent to please me as their ex-teacher. It was as if they were intentionally putting boys, men and relationships down, particularly in situations which might have influenced their lives, to simply impress me as their ex-teacher; however, this was simply my assumption. For me was evidence of the power that I held as their ex-teacher; these girls saw me as an authoritative figure that they had to impress.

Although I was no longer their teacher, this group of girls remained polite, respectful and eager to participate in the interview process. Working with this group of girls was excellent,

and I was impressed with the way that they had constructed their sexual identities with regard to their race, despite the stereotypical nature of our South African history.

3.5.5 Coloured girls in a public school

Arriving at this school was a bit overwhelming at first; I was unfamiliar with the school set-up and the large buildings did not help. I felt intimidated and unsure of how I was going to proceed to get information from girls I had never met before. Millions of questions and strategies ran through my mind as I walked up the never-ending flights of stairs. When I finally reached the top I entered into the classroom of one of the teachers who was to assist me during the interview process. He had a class at the time, but called me in and that added to my intimidation and stress. The learners in his class were all much taller than myself and in fact looked as if they could have been my age. I began to see this as a positive; if the learners assumed I was in the same age bracket as them, this would alter the power dynamics and hopefully they would not see me as a threat.

As I walked into his class, the learners all turned their heads and set their gaze on me. I felt lost and uncomfortable. The girls who were to be interviewed by myself were then called to this specific teacher's class, and we then went into another room (which was not a classroom) where the interview was then held. Once we arrived in this room I began to feel more at ease. The space had a large table, a few couches and some chairs. So we gathered what we could around the table and all took our seats. The five chosen girls were friendly and polite, and again, with the help of some snacks which we enjoyed during the interview, the girls were able to communicate effectively. This sharing of food and drink made the initially tense environment seem calmer. Most of the girls participated fully in the interview process by responding to the interview questions. At times the girls joked, nodded their heads in agreement with the speaker, and even argued when they disagreed. Initially there were moments of silence where I had to prompt the girls for more information, but this changed along the way.

There were also moments when one of the girls would shy away from the questions or simply look in another direction to avoid having to answer it, without anyone realising the

discomfort it brought to them. Through their facial expressions and body language it led me to believe that some of their answers were untrue. It was quite obvious that the girls did hold back on information or rather their responses to certain questions, and that could have been because I was a total stranger who simply walked in to question them about their sex lives. For a teenager in particular that is quite frightening.

3.5.6 My experience as a researcher

As a young coloured woman I found it easy to get onto the level of the participants in this study, but I did have to make a few adjustments to ensure that I received the data that I intended to search for. Firstly, I dressed casually to create a relaxed interview environment. I wanted the girls to see me as someone they would be comfortable around, and not simply as someone in authority. Secondly, I was very careful with my vocabulary and speech so that I was able to relate to these girls (better, on their level), especially with regard to their comments about their experiences and emotions about their sexuality, insecurities and relationships with their male counterparts. Due to my background and experience I managed to understand the slang and the figures of speech that the girls used during the interview, terms such as 'awe', 'hundreds' and 'in the times'. Thus some of the girls felt comfortable enough to share their personal sexual experiences with me openly.

I do believe that being a coloured woman was advantageous for this study and for the information that I intended to explore. Most of the girls did not see me as a threat or a danger in any way, which I gathered from their openness and willingness to share their experiences. Their jokes and comments about the importance of a coloured woman's hair or the cleanliness of a man's shoes are all tales that I also grew up with, so there was an easy connection between the girls and me. I felt as if I related to some of their situations and experiences, and we discussed these in depth, both arguing and agreeing with each other, which I really enjoyed.

In the interview the girls were open, shared their ideas and were keen to listen to each other's opinions. Their open nature allowed me to relax and enjoy my time with them. From my research and analysis I observed that class has an impact on the way that these girls are being

socialised, and despite their similarities as young women it is primarily their experiences that have impacted on the ways in which they construct their sexual identities. Even in the specific focus groups, these girls would disagree with each other on particular questions and situations since each of them had their own experiences and ways of interpreting their world.

3.5.7 Ethical considerations

Before the interview process began the principals of both schools as well as the teachers involved were briefed on the study. They were given the main idea, the title of the study and its intentions. Before the interviews commenced all the participants were clearly informed of the purpose of the study by the researcher. The participants were given letters of consent which they then signed. The letters of consent included their parents' signatures as well. They were informed that the interviews would be recorded using a tape-recorder and that the recordings would only be used for the purposes of this study.

The participants were reassured of confidentiality and anonymity (i.e. that their names would not be used in the study). Bertram (2004) tells us clearly on page 73 that the participants need to be assured of the confidentiality of the information supplied by them and need to know how the information will be made public. The participants were not compelled to answer any questions that they were not comfortable with and were free to withdraw at any point without a reason. Interviews have an ethical dimension since they concern interpersonal interaction and produce information about the human condition (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

3.5.8 Data analysis

The framework through which I viewed the data was the interpretive paradigm. I listened to the audiotapes repeatedly and compared them with the transcripts. The transcripts were then transcribed verbatim. "Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories" (MacMillan & Schumacher, 1993, p. 479). Transcripts were categorically analysed in an effort to answer the research questions.

These are some of the themes which emerged from the study:

- Boys and bodies;

- Boys and cars;

- Clothing as a label of self-worth;

- Inter-racial dating;

- Pleasing the parents;

- Fear of pregnancy rather than HIV; and

- Feminine agency amongst coloured girls

3.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although I do believe that this study is reliable, there are three limitations that I feel could possibly have affected it. Firstly, group interviews may produce 'group think', discouraging individuals who hold a different view from speaking out in front of other group members (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 373). This form of group think was evident in my first interview at the independent school in Glenwood; these girls constantly agreed with each other. I asked open-ended questions and all the girls would have the same answer; they would agree with each other and we would move on to the following question.

Secondly, transcripts inevitably lose data from the original encounter (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 367). There are some words that the tape-recorder was not able to pick up clearly due to sound difficulties; thus they are lost and we have a few missing pieces in the transcripts. Thirdly, the words in transcripts are not necessarily as 'solid' as they were in the social setting of the interview (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 367). At the time of the interview the girls' responses were humorous and had a deep impact; once transcribed into a Word document, they seem to have lost meaning.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The collection of data and data analysis for this study drew on qualitative methodology and the interpretivist paradigm. Semi-structured focus group interviews were used on a purposefully selected sample. Two groups of high school girls from two very different social environments fit the criteria for the interviews. Both groups consisted of coloured girls aged 16 - 17 years; however, one group hailed from a private (independent) school positioned in an elite suburb while the other group came from a public school within a low socio-economic status community. Both interviews were recorded and brought forward a large amount of data, which were transcribed and categorically analysed. My experiences as a coloured researcher were positive, and I do believe that this study was necessary in order to understand the mindsets of young coloured girls.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS:

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RESEARCH ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how coloured girls from two different socio-economic contexts in Durban have constructed their sexual identities. Despite the fact that South Africa is home to approximately 4.4 million coloured people, there remains a lack of research available on young coloured girls and the ways in which they construct their sexual identities. Coloured girls in particular are often spoken about in a stereotypical manner, yet the construction of their femininity has rarely been researched. This lack of research forms the basis of my interest in coloured girls aged 16-17 years and in the construction of their sexual identities. Further investigation into the construction of coloured girls' sexual identities could assist in diminishing some of the negative stereotypes which define South African coloured girls. This study compared the ways in which South African coloured girls from two different socio-economic contexts in Durban have constructed their sexual identities, each within their own social context.

In this chapter the data collected are analysed and presented in the form of themes. There was a total of eight participants from Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, each of them are coloured high school girls aged 16-17 years. Three of the participants were from an independent high school located in Glenwood in Durban central, which is made up of learners from middle- to upper-income households. The other five participants were from a public high school in Wentworth, a predominantly coloured working-class community south of Durban which was designated a 'Coloured' area during the apartheid era, and came to house approximately 40% of the coloured population of Durban (Wiley, Root & Peek, 2002). The Glenwood area is a former white area, which was classified under the apartheid government as such. Glenwood is now multi-cultural; in contrast, the Wentworth community still maintains the effects of apartheid and remains a predominantly coloured community. There has, however, been an increase in the number of African learners from Umlazi (south of Durban) who attend several of the schools in the Wentworth community and commute daily.

The data collected in this study are analysed and represented in the form of themes. Due to the ethical considerations of this study, pseudonyms are used to protect all the participants. The following names will be used for the girls attending the independent school in Glenwood: Michelle, Danny and Tish; and the following names for the girls attending the public school in Wentworth: Ashley, Rose, Rachel, Leah and Tanya. Below are the themes which emerged from the study.

The following five themes emerged from the data collection process:

- Boys, bodies and sexuality;
    - *Hot boy's jol*
    - *Virgin-whore dichotomy*
    - *Preservation of reputation*
- Class: Cash, clothing and cars;
    - *Clothing: Judging according to name brands*
    - *Fashioning femininity*
    - *Cash: Date him ... he has a job*
    - *Boys with cars*
- Gender, race and multi-racial dating;
- Parental influence: Good looks vs. good manners; and
- Striving to challenge the norm.

4.2 PRESENTING THE FINDINGS

The findings are represented according to the five main themes identified above which emerged from the interviews held with the participants in their different socio-economic contexts. After I revisited the recorded audiotapes and transcripts, the five themes listed above featured predominantly in the ways in which the coloured high school girls constructed themselves and others. Under each theme I will provide the contrasting responses from girls from both schools, in order to prove that we are constructed socially because we are social beings.

4.2.1 Boys, bodies and sexuality

4.2.1.1 *Hot boy's jol*

I initially began both interviews by trying to find out what both groups of coloured girls from the two different socio-economic contexts found physically attractive about boys. In the interview with the three coloured girls from the independent school in Glenwood, the girls described what their idea of a 'hot' guy was quite clearly. This was necessary since physical attraction is the first essential step in most relationships.

> Researcher: *Ok, so if a guy had to approach you now, describe your hottest guy. What would be ideal? I'm not talking about personality; we can get to all of that later. I'm talking about looks.*
>
> Michelle: *No too dark, well maybe ... I prefer fair. Light eyes, any colour but not dark. Ok hazel brown eyes ... Yeah and dimples.*
>
> Researcher: *Describe their look, their attitude, their style.*
>
> Michelle: *He's got to have a nice attitude.*
>
> Researcher: *Body?*
>
> Michelle: *Six-pack, he's got to be muscular!*

These middle-class coloured girls based their idea of what 'hot' is, on whether boys are light-skinned, with light-coloured eyes and straight brown hair thus conforming to social acceptability. Despite the fact that they attend a multi-racial school, their idea of good looks still links fair skin with beauty and dark skin with unattractiveness. This frame of mind stems primarily from the apartheid era and the ideology of white supremacy, which decided for us what was handsome or beautiful. In South Africa "beauty has been and continues to be, violently raced or articulated through the medium of skin colour and hair texture" (Motsemme, 2003, p. 14; Pattman & Bhana, 2007, p. 348). Typically Caucasian features were regarded as more attractive, and see this message is still being sent out through the media.

Thus this remains a dominant discourse and we find that these girls are conforming to that which is socially accepted.

Within the coloured population in Durban, and due to a mixture of races, genetics, religions and cultural backgrounds, coloured people have vast differences even within their own racial division. Due to this variety coloureds were classified into different categories, they were: Cape Coloured, Cape Malay and Other Coloured. Under the apartheid government, if you had straight hair you were called a Malay; Indian complexion and features, you were categorised as a 'Cape Coloured'; and if you had '*kroes*' hair (the curly, crinkly hair of indigenous African people) with flat features, you were classified as 'Other Coloured' or simply Coloured (Anderson, 2009, p. 26). Each of the eight coloured girls who were interviewed were diverse in their physical features, demonstrating the heterogeneity of the coloured population. Some were very fair, others tan and others had a dark skin tone; their body structures, hair textures and eye colour were all differed too. However, they all had similar ideas of what was 'hot' and what was not: they all agreed that a fair complexion, light eyes, a straight hair strand and a muscular body were 'hot' physical features which they were attracted to.

Generally girls also tend to prefer muscular boys (these girls' options become very limited if they simply want to choose a boyfriend with a 'hot' body); thus girls find the hegemonic form of masculinity acceptable and attractive. From their talk, I gathered that these girls were attracted to the strength, power and domination of boys. Physical attraction was vital and personality did not seem of importance to this group of private school girls and this demonstrates the ways in which these girls are reproducing gender norms by conforming to that which is socially acceptable. These girls are conforming to the dominant heterosexual and gender identity which is feminine. The findings however, amongst the coloured girls in the public school show contestations with regard to 'hot' bodies since they feared what good-looking boys would do to their hearts. They feared that good-looking boys have more options available to them and are thus more likely to cheat in a relationship.

Researcher: *Describe your idea of a hot guy. Describe this hot guy for me.*

Rose: *Black hair.*

Rachel: *And a body.*

Researcher: *So hair is important?*

Ashley: *I don't go for looks. I go for personality. And it doesn't matter if he got straight hair or* kroes *hair. Or if he got big ears or what.*

Researcher: *Ok, that's nice.*

Rachel: *Those same boys with the black straight hair they the ones that* jol.

While the girls from the public school mentioned that most good-looking boys cheat on their girlfriends, so they would rather avoid dating them, the girls from the private school did not see this as an issue at all. The girls from the private school seemed far more confident in relationships and positive that they could maintain a steady relationship with any boy that they chose.

4.2.1.2 *Virgin/whore dichotomy*

In the interviews I observed that the girls from the public school were by far more experienced within the dating realm than the girls from the private school, who seemed to have been more sheltered by their parents. The girls from Wentworth had experienced sexual encounters, had to make sexual negotiations, and some were sexually active, whereas none of the girls from Glenwood claimed to be sexually active yet. For the Wentworth girls, it was evident that they were initially uncomfortable disclosing this level of information, and I found myself neglecting my interview schedule at times to allow them to simply talk and lead the interview discussion. Similar to research done by Allen (2003), I too found that the talk of these young women drew on conventional discourses of (hetero)sexuality in which women rather than men are positioned as the reluctant recipients of male desires rather than the initiators of sexual activities (p. 220) this could be due to the virgin/whore dichotomy. This is illustrated in the exchange below with girls from Wentworth:

Rose: *Well with my ex ex… he was 19 and I was only 15, and he used to ask me one way. Like we went out for a year and I kept saying no, no, no, and he ended up breaking up with me because I didn't want to have sex with him and he was active before me.*

Researcher: *And in that year… if he was sexually active before you … do you not think he was with somebody else?*

Rose: *He was because there was another girl coming there one way and she was like loose so afterwards I said no you can't cos … and he asked me then we broke up.*

Researcher: *And you were also young then so…*

Rose: *Yeah and he even asked me, can't I support him emotionally and another girl support him sexually. And that's when we broke up.*

Researcher: *Ok. So the guy you dating now is a virgin and he doesn't pressure you?*

Leah: *He must have asked but he didn't pressure her.*

Ashley: *No I won't lie he did ask me.*

Leah: *Ya so then don't lie.*

Ashley: *He was a virgin and I was a virgin and then we both ...*

Researcher: *That's nice. And do you see marriage?*

Ashley: *Yes.*

Researcher: *So what protection do y'all use?*

Ashley: *I'm on the injection.*

Researcher: *Ok. No, but protection ... Or do y'all trust each other?*

Ashley: *No. We went for AIDS tests before.*

Researcher: *Both of y'all?*

Ashley: *Yes.*

Researcher: *But y'all were both virgins?*

Ashley: *Yes.*

Ashley's initial response to the question of protection was "I am on the injection", this shows that she considers and possibly fears pregnancy more than she does HIV infection. Ashley believed that since herself and her partner had both been for HIV/AIDS tests at the early stage of their relationship she was safe from HIV infection and therefore did not need to use a condom for further protection against the disease; she felt that they were in love and had trust on their side. Love and trust are aspects which place many young girls in danger of HIV infection. For some young girls safer sex is not just a question of using protection or avoiding penetration, it is also an issue of trusting the one you love (Holland *et al*., 1990, p. 343, Reddy & Dunne, 2010). Safe sex negotiations are challenging for many young girls as they face them regularly as we see below:

Researcher: *The guy that you are currently with on the low-down Rose, has he ever asked you for sex?*

Rose: *No but it seems like he wants it. 'Cos when we kiss and stuff it seems like he wants it. Like he wants to have sex with me. 'Cos he had sex with girls before me. With three…*

Tanya: *Yoh!*

Leah: *Why yoh?*

Rachel: *That's not many.*

Rose: *And of course he's gonna want it but I told him he must wait until I'm ready.*

Tanya: *Ja.*

Rose: *It's better to be a virgin I think. It's like you holding your pride or something. It's like once it's gone then there's nothing there for you. It's like you know when you*

run a race and then you get a medal at the end. It's like you getting the medal before you running the race so what's the use of running the race.

4.2.1.3 *Preservation of reputation*

Although some of these girls were already sexually active, they all agreed that maintaining one's virginity was beneficial, as shown above. "Young South African girls face significant restrictions around sexuality with an emphasis on promoting modest behaviour, protecting virginity and avoiding sexual relations until involved in a trusting relationship or marriage, as many religious organisations would argue" (Bhana & Pattman, 2009, Lambert & Wood, 2005; Leclerc-Madladla, 2002). Some of the participants from the public school in Wentworth mentioned in the interview that they preferred to date boys who were virgins to avoid the pressure of having to be asked to engage in sexual activities. Despite this they feared that they would get left behind in the dating realm since most boys their age were already sexually active and sex in a relationship was simply the norm.

Below we see a comment made by one of the girls from the independent school in Glenwood with regards to the preservation of reputation:

Michelle: *No, because why I would say no is because if it's gone, it's gone. It's something you can't get back. And also for my reputation and my future as well because I know it will really affect me and it will be on my conscience every day. And it will bother me. It will be like a nightmare. And I always ask my mother questions about it. I'm very open with her. But I know I will wait for marriage. And I asked her when do you think I should break it and she's like once it's gone… it's gone.*

Preserving ones reputation dignity as a young woman; means that you should hold onto your virginity for as long as you can. This was the common belief amongst both groups of girls. This is; however an ideal of womanhood that is chiefly the domain of those women with access to material resources (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010, p. 5).

4.2.2 Class: Clothing, cash and cars

Being coloured in the South African context is strongly associated with being poor and being marginalised (Anderson, 2009a, p. 4). Many coloureds have indicated that they continue to feel marginalised in the post-apartheid dispensation (Hendricks, 2005, p. 1), and the cry of marginalisation from coloureds is more commonly located among urban-based, working-class communities (Hendricks, 2005, p. 2). Moreover, access to employment is difficult in Wentworth, leading to much frustration among males (Anderson, 2009a, p. 4). Often even those who are unemployed position themselves in society according to the clothing which they wear.

4.2.2.1 Clothing: Judging according to name brands

In the interview held at the private school girls it became very clear that name-branded clothing items were not emphasised. These girls could afford to wear expensive name brands but did not, and also expressed in the interview that they did not judge others by what they could afford to wear. They strongly believed that people are not what they wear and they would not have a problem dating someone with financial constraints.

> Researcher: *And what is dress nice? What are we talking about here?*
>
> Tish: *No… I'm talking about name brand clothes with guys, they just need to have style. You know like not too drabby. Any clothes, but it just needs to go with everything. Everything needs to compliment.*
>
> Researcher: *So it doesn't have to be a name brand as long as it looks good and they make it work?*
>
> Tish: *Yes.*

On the other hand, the extract below shows that clothing is a very important aspect of social class and division to the group of girls from the Wentworth community, since one's clothing determines one's economic status. Clothing is a marker of economic status and positioning in

this community; here it is related to class, and what you wear is a marker of your social class in the Wentworth community. A boy's clothing labels will also determine his successful sexual prowess with girls in school. Hence, the more expensive the clothing labels, the greater the number of girlfriends he could gain.

Researcher: *How should he dress? Are you worried about clothes?*

Rachel: *I don't want a nerd.*

Rose: *Not like a nerd.*

Leah: *I am worried about clothes, if he buys from Mr Price* [low-budget store] *... it's like, hang on. If you don't dress this way you won't fit in with the rest.*

Rachel: *Ja, you of a lower class.*

Rose: *I care. Like, people are looking at me like this ... I feel embarrassed if maybe I'm dressed funny. You feel like you like lower than them.*

Tanya: *So he's thinking he has to dress this way. It's something that is just built in you. It's something that you grow up with.*

For this group of girls the clothing you wear determines your social status. In this predominantly coloured community people are judged according to the name brands that they wear. If you shop at Mr Price, you are considered to be of a lower class. Expensive sneakers, shirts and jeans mean that someone has money and style and, as a result, power. This unfortunately places coloured boys who are from poverty-stricken homes in a very vulnerable position because the coloured working class has been unable to compete for more skilled positions (Hendricks, 2005, p. 2); thus they find themselves leaving school early, becoming taxi conductors or even selling drugs due to the pressures associated with class and status.

In my opinion, dating for the coloured girls from the private school in Glenwood is far simpler. For the girls from Wentworth, choosing a partner is a difficult task. It is more than

simply choosing an attractive boy. The Wentworth girls have to find a good-looking partner who wears expensive clothing and has clean shoes, as shown below.

Researcher: *A lot of the older people will say when it comes to a guy, when we choosing, we should look at whether their shoes are clean or not.*

Tanya: *I look at their shoes and if your shoes are dirty, you are dirty.*

Rachel: *Haai.*

Tanya: *Yes I do.*

Leah: *What if you just going to the mall, what if I don't polish my shoes?*

Researcher: *Maybe if you going on a date that's different than just running to the shop.*

Leah: *But it also shows your home. How things are at home.*

Tanya: *Cleanliness … as my mother says, cleanliness is next to Godliness, so ...*

Rose: *If you not a clean person it will show the person that ...*

4.2.2.2 *Fashioning femininity*

Above we see the pressures that coloured girls from Wentworth are faced with on a daily basis. In addition, the girls from the public school in Wentworth not only battle to find a partner who has expensive clothing and good taste, but they also struggle with their own clothing and confidence issues as well, because if they do not dress well then they too 'do not fit in with the rest'. In the Wentworth community 'dressing up' and wearing expensive name brand clothing is socially acceptable and that which deviates from the norm would result in a person being labeled of a lower class.

Researcher: *Do you as ladies feel confident? Do you not care?*

Ashley: *I care.*

Rose: *No.*

Rachel: *Certain times, certain times.*

Ashley: *I care, like people are looking at me like this. I feel embarrassed if maybe I'm dressed funny.*

Researcher: *Who? What makes you feel embarrassed? Is it the fact that there are other girls that look better?*

Rachel: *Yeah.*

Rose: *Ja.*

Ashley: *Ja.*

Rachel: *You feel like you like lower than them.*

Researcher: *Ja, no that is true. You were saying….*

Ashley: *Most of the days I keep on changing and changing. And even if I'm dressed up I feel like I'm uncomfortable, like someone is gonna say … uhmmmmm, that girl doesn't look nice. And I will ask everybody in my house … am I looking alright? This don't look too bad … They even get irritated.*

Confidence, for this group of girls is related to how well one is dressed. The idea of looking good and 'fitting in with the rest' appears to be more powerful than the idea of buying what one can afford. These girls attached sexual attraction as an aspect of femininity and their everyday experiences of subordination and marginalisation (Pattman & Bhana, 2007, p. 350), hence these girls cover up their insecurities with fashionable garments. Salo, however found the opposite to be true in her study, she discovered that name brand clothing and fashionable dress styles were not necessarily markers of race, or that fashion dress codes did not necessarily signify an individual's moral values or socio-economic class (2003, p. 346).

4.2.2.3 Cash: Date him ... he has a job

Wentworth is a working-class community with a high unemployment rate. The girls from Wentworth who were interviewed expressed a desire to date older, working male partners not merely for stability but rather for what he could buy them, for example airtime and jewellery. This is shown below:

> Ashley: *And some girls are like ooooooh you must tell your boyfriend to buy you this and buy you that, 'cos your boyfriend's working, and girls are like that.*

This is of concern as it proves the underlying manipulative nature of some girls, who would date boys or men for monetary advancement and gain. This is known as the 'sugar daddy' phenomenon and is common in areas with low socio-economic development. For women, and most especially young unmarried women, sexuality is conceptualised as a resource that can be drawn upon for material or economic advantage (Leclerc-Madladla, 2002, p. 31). Gender inequalities give men relational power over young women, particularly in circumstances of poverty and where sex is materially rewarded (Jewkes & Morrell, 2011, p. 1). The opposite response was found to be true in the interview with the girls from Glenwood:

> Researcher: *Would you send him like a please call me so he can call you back .... and then you tell him to please send you airtime ... 'cos I need to talk to him?*
>
> Danny: *No! I would ask my father to buy me airtime.*
>
> Tish: *No, ja…. You find someone else to buy you airtime.*
>
> Michelle: *No!*
>
> Danny: *Ja you ask somebody in the family, I don't like asking.*

Above we see how the girls from Glenwood completely reject the idea of asking and/or taking anything of monetary value from their partners in a relationship. This shows that they are in fact agents of social change in the sense that they want to be independent.

4.2.2.4 Boys with cars

The girls from private school in Glenwood do not think that cars are an essential aspect when choosing a partner. In fact it is disregarded totally. Money and material possessions do not bother these girls at all. Despite the fact that they attend an independent school and live in an affluent community, they are not bothered about the monetary value of things. In addition, despite the fact that I tried to prompt the girls, they remained very confident in their responses.

> Researcher: *Would it be better for y'all's relationship if he had a car? If there were two guys like in your situation, if one had a car and the other one didn't, would that be a reason for you to date him more than the other?*
>
> Danny: *No!*
>
> Michelle: *No!*
>
> Tish: *No!*
>
> Researcher: *Not at all? But he could pick you up?*
>
> Danny: *Nope.*
>
> Michelle: *No!*
>
> Tish: *No, no ... no.*
>
> Researcher: *And like take you to your matric dance one day?*
>
> Danny: *No!*
>
> Michelle: *No!*

Tish: *No!*

Researcher: *No? Not at all? Why? Is it because all of your parents have cars?*

Tish: *Yeah.*

Danny: *Ja.*

Michelle: *Yes, and not only that ... I don't actually look at the wealth of that.*

Danny: *As long as their personality is cool.*

Leclerc-Madladla (2002, p. 33) says a man is expected to show off his wealth as a means of establishing himself socially and economically in the community. In the interview held with the girls from the Wentworth public school, I learnt that in coloured communities cars are generally associated with players or drug dealers (at this age). Boys with cars at this age are far more attractive to most girls, so as a result these five girls preferred to keep away from this kind of boys to prevent heartbreak.

Researcher: *But if you're with a guy, you are now dating him, you are happy with him, and he has a car, does the fact that he has a car make him more attractive?*

Rose: *No. As long as he can borrow someone's car to take me out once in a while.*

Researcher: *You can't avoid him because you like him. You can't say to him I don't wanna date you because you have a car ...*

Ashley: *But it's not important, we can take the bus or something.*

Researcher: *Yeah but it is a bonus. It is a good thing.*

Rachel: *Yeah ... if you need to go here or there you need to know that they got the car to take you.*

Rose: *But sometimes it's also not nice to have a boyfriend with a car, when you consider him being all over. That's the only part that's not nice.*

Researcher: *If you don't trust him .... You can tell him to leave the car by your house and walk home ...*

Ashley: *But you can't just say I trust you, it doesn't just come overnight.*

Rose: *You say I trust you but you don't mean it.*

Rachel: *So you trust him then you see his car parked by another girl's house. Then you know... Ja!*

Both groups of girls felt that dating a guy with a car was not essential; however, the reasoning differed. The girls from the private school just didn't seem to need a guy with a car as transportation was never an issue for them. The idea was totally disregarded in that interview. However, in the interview with the girls from the public school, they too did not want to date a guy with a car but for a different reason: dating a guy with a car meant one of two things, either you would have to be sexually active with him in that car or, if not, then someone else would be. Here are some negative connotations which these girls experienced for dating guys with cars, as mentioned in the interview:

Leah: *If my boyfriend has to pick me with the car people are like....*

Researcher: *They'll assume.*

Leah: *And start stories.*

Rachel: *I'm* min *about people.*

Researcher: *Ja, you are* min *about them but sometimes it's not nice.*

Rose: *And people will say... he had someone else there?*

Leah: *Ja they just say things just so you can leave him.*

The five participants from the working-class community, Wentworth, found that dating a boy or man with a car would be an advantage to them as providing a form of transportation.

However, dating someone who is financially more stable than themselves means being in a relationship where they might be dominated. These boys or men with cars have a source of power which is their cars in this situation, which they can use to draw attention from girls. We also see from this text above how coloured girls compete with each other for these boys and/or men with vehicles, and that they go as far as making up stories and spreading untrue rumours. Girls in this community challenge the gender norms as they strive for material possessions and a comfortable lifestyle; this leads to the sugar daddy phenomenon as discussed by Leclerc-Madladla (2002). The propensity for girls to strike up relationships with older men is a way of accessing 'car, cash and cell' (Leclerc-Madladla, 2002). Those involved in these relationships can be manipulated into having unsafe sex with their sugar daddies, who themselves have been found to be promiscuous. This is an ideal of womanhood that is chiefly the domain of those women with access to material resources (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010, p. 5). However, this places young girls in great danger of sexual risk.

4.2.3 Gender, race and multiracial dating

The post-apartheid era has generated opportunities for cross-racial mixing and socialising among young people which was inconceivable under apartheid (Bhana & Pattman, 2010, p. 373). However, despite the slight change, "living, working and recreational spaces in South Africa are still highly racialized" (Bhana & Pattman, 2010, p. 372). Even today, 17 years after democracy in South Africa, there are still many misunderstandings among racial groups due to the fact that there hasn't been much interaction. There is still idealisation of whites because they are sexually liberated and 'free'.

The girls from Glenwood are exposed to and integrate with other young people in a school with learners from different racial divisions. They have grown up together, played together and even dated each other. Most importantly, they have learned from each other. In comparison, the girls from Wentworth live, shop, worship, play and school in this coloured community. Their knowledge of other racial groups is limited to what they have heard. Thus, it is easier to date within their racial division.

The girls from the private school revealed that they found coloured boys hot (attractive), but that their behaviour and mannerisms made them unattractive. "We focus on the intertwining

of love and materiality, and argue that social and economic relations influence meanings of love, and have effects for the ways in which young people imagine and strategise around relationships. Ideologies of love, jostle with the surrounding social and material structures, and are complexly related to power and resources in ways that both challenge and reproduce gender inequalities" (Bhana & Pattman, 2011). Each of the eight girls are struggling to find suitable partners among the dominant hegemonic masculinities which exist for coloured boys of their age level. All of these coloured girls expressed that they would choose African, white or Indian male partners, because they treat their girlfriends and wives better than coloured men do. For the girls in Wentworth, this 'better treatment' is equated with what their partners would buy them. There is a desire to date Indian boys for 'financial' reasons and white boys because they buy their women nice 'things', as seen in the text below from the Wentworth interview.

Researcher: *If you had to date from another racial group what would it be?*

Ashley: *Black.*

Rose: *White.*

Rachel: *Black.*

Lauren: *White.*

Tanya: *White.*

Researcher: *Ok, explain.*

Ashley: *Um, I wouldn't see myself with a white or Indian person.*

Researcher: *But a lot of coloured girls do go out with Indian men. Why?*

Rose: *Financial.*

Researcher: *Financial reasons only? Not love?*

Rachel: *Could be. Maybe they attracted. Some people have it in their blood so they like attracted to that.*

Rachel: *And Indians treat their women nice.*

Rose: *I think a white guy will treat you nice. They buy them things and open the car for you.*

Rachel: *African men worship coloured women.*

Leah: *They think you God.*

Rose: *When you walk past they stare.*

Ashley: *They make you feel uncomfortable.*

Rachel: *They put you on the highest pedestal.*

The girls from Wentworth felt that if they had an option, they would date a boy from another racial group beside their own coloured group. They wanted to date from other racial groups as they felt that these boys would treat them better. They felt Indian men would give them money and spoil them, they felt white men would do the romantic things such as open and close doors for them, and they felt that black boys would adore them and place them on a pedestal, as opposed to coloured men who would mistreat them. However, they feared choosing a boy from another racial group and taking him home as they would be subjected to harsh criticism from their families. So as a result they preferred to stick to the societal norm and date within their own racial group.

The coloured girls from Glenwood, however, all rejected the notion of having to date coloured boys for different reasons. These girls felt that coloured boys have a serious need to be 'coloured' and proving their 'colouredness' was often exaggerated and annoying. They all agreed the coloured boys were the most sexually appealing, but they would not take them home to meet their parents as they also feared harsh criticism.

Researcher: *Why wouldn't you go with coloured if you had a choice? Why wouldn't you date a coloured guy first?*

Tish: *I think it would depend on what kind of coloured boy he is because most of the coloured boys that I know they are just like rough. When you approach them and they got that… hey* stekkie *… oooooh all of that stuff I can't handle!*

Researcher: *But, not all are like that?*

Danny: *But some are like they coloured but they want you to know I'm coloured. It's like they force that coloured-ness out of them.*

4.2.4 Parental influences: good looks vs. good manners

Being socially accepted is an important aspect of each of these eight girls' lives. Both groups of girls stressed their need to take a boy home that their families would approve of. The group from Wentworth mentioned their need for approval from the community, their families, and their parents in particular. What their mothers would think regarding the boys that they took home with regards to his hair, his looks, his clothing, was very important to them. In contrast, this was not an issue for the group from Glenwood, for whom good manners was vital.

Hair and clothing play a vital role in shaping the identity of a coloured boy in a coloured community. For the participants from the Wentworth public school there was a constant need to fit in with what was expected from their community or face ridicule. This need to fit in shapes the identity of coloured girls from a predominantly coloured community, and it is shaped by their very own community. Parents' opinions are highly regarded by these girls:

Leah: *But you want your mother to approve of him.*

Leah: *Even my mother said she wants a fair boy with nice hair.*

Rose: *Your people will say you mustn't come with grandchildren with stocking plaits.*

Above we see the idealisation among coloured people of the white (Caucasian) population. We also see the pressure that young girls from Wentworth are placed under. From a young

age they are taught that dark skin and crinkly hair is not anything to be proud of. This shapes their identities - even 17 years after the apartheid era. And they are taught this from their very own parents.

4.2.5 Striving to challenge the gender norm

"While the dominant ideal of femininity is fundamentally subordinate, women do not all experience controlling behaviour by their male partners to the same extent" (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010, p. 6). Men control the decision-making in the relationship primarily when they are the financial providers, backed up by the fact that they are physically stronger, but mostly because they have the support from society which expects them to control their wives and households. This places women in general in vulnerable positions, but it places women from poor economic backgrounds at great risk - and this begins from very early stages of their lives.

Newer discourses are emerging whereby girls are resisting the gender order. They do not depend solely on male counterparts to do things for them since they desire to do things for themselves. Inequality and oppression in the gender order have repeatedly led to demands for reform (Connell, 2002, p. 6); this has been seen in the predominantly coloured community of Wentworth. Most women who rely on men financially have less power than independent women do; hence young girls have become agents of change. Research conducted in the predominantly coloured working-class context of Wentworth shows that coloured girls were not always the victims (Anderson, 2010). One of the participants from Glenwood had this to say:

> Michelle: *No not really because even if I had a boyfriend out of school I would want to be independent, I wouldn't want things from him. And if he's gonna be all over me all the time, I'm not an insecure person so I don't want people to think I'm insecure that I'm gonna lose him. It's like we have to trust each other.*

All the girls, in both contexts, claimed that they do not like to take money from their partners as it made them dependant on their partners, and they have their own desire to be independent and successful. Two of the girls from Wentworth had this to say:

Rachel: *But then we went, we went to Milky Lane, he paid and he paid the bus fare. Then he paid for the Milky Lane and for the movie. Then he wanted to eat and I said NO because I was feeling bad. I won't lie, I was hungry too, I was feeling bad so I said I'm not.*

Ashley: *When me and my boyfriend first started going out, right, so it was Christmas Eve. My mother weren't cooking so that time Wrap It Up just opened and so my mother gave us all R50 to buy something to eat so I went with my boyfriend. So I was just buying whatever. So I asked him does he want to buy something, he said no. So now when it's time to pay he insists that he wants to pay like…. I felt so bad. I felt so shy I didn't want to eat in front of him.*

These two girls from a working-class community have both shown agency through their feelings of guilt. They did not simply want to accept and take from their partners without making a contribution as well. This shows that class plays a vital role, but does not entirely shape one's identity.

Gender research focused on adolescents is particularly important, since adolescence is often a time when boys gain autonomy, mobility, opportunity and power, including in the realm of sexuality, while girls are denied or give up these same attributes (Harrison, Xaba, & Kunene, 2001, p. 64). However, in my study I found a shift in the research, whereby girls are resisting their cultural norms. In this modern era there are changing power dynamics, in that girls are not simply victims of the gender order any longer.

Michelle: *ok I don't know how many I dated. Most of the time it started on* Mxit *and it was just a phone thing and then I got to see things and I will be honest I kissed seventeen boys.*

Researcher: *So Michelle you kissed 17 boys and you are 17, so you should have like a crown kissing party…*

Michelle: *No but compared to other girls it's not bad. Like in my other school they would see how many boys they can kiss like in a month. They would make like a record 14 in this month and then like the next month another 14... that's how they use to do it.*

Above we see how young girls are challenging the gender order in society. We also see how girls are attempting to take control of sexual decision making, by changing the pre-existing power dynamics as we see that girls are no longer the victims in this context. This is the current situation which seems to be increasing rapidly amongst young South African girls.

4.3 CONCLUSION

Anderson (2009, p 33) informs us that there are coloureds who conform to and reify some of the pejorative stereotypical notions and views of them as immoral, unworthy and drunks. There are also those who strive to improve their lives and are determined to be successful, provide for their futures and struggle to rid themselves of the stigma associated with all coloureds.

Both groups of coloured girls were determined to complete school and obtain their own money and cars one day. Where the group from the private school is looking for good-looking, educated, well-mannered boys, the way that they dressed was not of importance to them. In contrast, the group of girls from the public school is looking for boys with soft, sweet personalities who can romance them but who also dress in expensive clothing thus reproducing the stigma associated with clothing within coloured communities.

The girls from the private school are far more open to cross-racial dating, whereas those from the public school weren't as open as they feared that they would be letting their parents down. Although they felt that boys of other racial groups would treat them better by idolising them and spending money on them, societal pressures would not allow them to openly do so.

The results of this study have brought forth the fact that the eight participants in this study conformed to the socially acceptable gender identity which is femininity and the dominant

discourse which is heterosexual identity. All the girls shared a common notion of working hard at school to one day become self-sufficient and successful, without the assistance of a male romantic partner. Despite family and religious influences as well as the pressures of being categorised negatively in the community, all eight participants portrayed themselves as active agents of gender change.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the ways in which race, class and gender intersect in the lives of two groups of coloured girls and the meanings they attach to their sexual identities. This study demonstrates the ways in which Durban coloured girls aged 16-17 years construct their sexual identities with class as a major contributing factor in this construction. This study focused on coloured girls from two different socio-economic backgrounds as the construction of their sexual identities was investigated. Participants were Grade 10 and 11 students aged 16-17 years, and were drawn from two different research sites at which interviews were held. The first research site was an independent school in the affluent Glenwood community in Durban central and the second a public school in Wentworth, a working-class community south of Durban. Below is an outline of the chapters in this dissertation:

In Chapter 1, the study was introduced and the rationale for the study, the two research sites and participants were introduced here. Each of the three research questions were presented.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review and theoretical perspectives, presenting both local and international scholarship and theory in the field of coloured identity and social constructionism.

Chapter 3 presented the methodology of the study and discussed the research site, participants and limitations, with a detailed discussion of the method used to collect data including sampling strategy, data analysis, ethical considerations, and the limitations of the study.

In Chapter 4, the data were presented, together with an analysis of the data and discussion of the findings. Using the social constructionism lens of analysis, it is evident that gender, race, class and sexuality are all essential aspects which contribute towards how these young coloured women are socialised.

Chapter 5 provides the conclusion, where the findings of this study are summarised and limitations are discussed.

5.2 FINDINGS

The need to find an attractive boyfriend often defines the lives of most teenage girls. However, the group of coloured girls from the public school in Wentworth contested the issue of dating attractive boys with 'hot' bodies since they feared what good-looking boys would do to their hearts. They feared that good-looking boys have more options available to them, and thus would be more likely to cheat in the relationship. While the girls from the public school mentioned that most good-looking boys cheat on their girlfriends, the girls from the private school did not see this as an issue at all. Girls from the private school expressed in their interview that physical features such as hair, dimples, eyes and muscles are all contributing factors which influence their choices in boyfriends.

Clothing is a very important aspect of social class and division to the group of girls from the public school in the Wentworth community. For them, one's clothing determines one's economic status, which is linked to many other variables, for example confidence and power. In the predominantly poor coloured community of Wentworth, clothing remains as a marker of the position one has in the community, since it is related to class - and what you wear is a marker of your social class in the community. Girls from the public school in Wentworth not only battle to find a partner who has expensive clothing and good taste, but they also struggle with their own style of clothing and confidence issues too, because if they do not dress well then they 'do not fit in with the rest'. These girls are taught from very young ages to have inferiority complexes about themselves, which could be made better with expensive clothes: the more expensive your clothing is, the more powerful your position is in the community. This is a harsh and unfair judgement of people as it marginalises the poor in the community further.

Not all coloured people judge according to name-branded clothing, although it is common in a predominantly coloured community, since many coloured people strive to distance themselves from the poverty line which is strongly linked to the African working class. However, it is coloured people themselves who continue to make this divide. Race and class inequalities are the product of apartheid, and persistent forms of social and economic inequalities see the African majority on the margins of economic development despite a growing African middle class. In this study, clothing for poorer coloured girls was seen as a

key marker of fashion and class and sexuality that distanced them from the realities of their social positions. Hence, what you see is not a true reflection of their household situation.

For some of the coloured girls from the Wentworth group who participated in this study, dating a guy with a job is a major perk. Girls from township communities aspire to having 'nice things' in order to boost their self-esteem, these objects including cell phones, cash and cars. Due to their poor socio-economic backgrounds they search for boys and men who can provide these luxuries for them. They date men who are older, working men, and this is known as the sugar daddy phenomenon. The sugar-daddy phenomenon has a series of health implications of that place these girls at high risk, to name a few: HIV infection, constant physical abuse and teenage pregnancy.

Although cars are not essential in teenage relationships, many of the girls in this study did want a boyfriend who would spontaneously buy them airtime and flowers and make telephone calls to them continuously. These products cost money. Boys with cars at this age are far more attractive to most girls, so the girls from Wentworth mentioned that they preferred to keep away from those boys with cars to prevent their own heartbreak, as well as to preserve their own pride.

Post-apartheid there is still a great idealisation of white people in terms of looks, ways of life and sexual appetite, and this was found particularly among the girls from Wentworth. All of the participants from the Glenwood independent school had attended school with children of all races, and were open to dating across the racial border. However, the participants from the Wentworth public school were not as open. They felt restricted in that dating across the racial border would subject them to ridicule in the school, their families and the greater community. Hence, from this it is clear that coloured people themselves make and remake the stereotypes restricting their own ways of life on a daily basis.

Overall I found that coloured girls are challenging the cultural norms since they do not simply want to date a boy that can provide for them. They want to be self-sufficient. They want to have their own money and cars one day. They feel guilty for having boyfriends who spend money on them and shy away from these experiences.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

Firstly, this study confirms that many South African coloured people make and remake negative stereotypes about themselves, which are rooted in the apartheid era, on a daily basis. This making and remaking continues to negatively shape the ways in which young coloured girls from these predominantly coloured communities construct their sexual identities. Slowly, more coloured people are striving towards changing the stereotypes that exist about themselves. Despite the fact that Durban coloureds have their own culture, it is being re-shaped by the changing political conditions in South Africa. Coloured parents who reside in predominantly coloured communities should encourage their children to mix with people of other racial groups and support them as they transform with the rest of the country.

Secondly, this study also confirms that class plays a vital role in the ways in which these young coloured girls construct their sexual identities. Their socio-economic backgrounds have an impact on the ways that they shape their identities, and it is essential for teachers to be aware of the different home lives and community influences which affect young people as individuals.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

During my first two interviews, my lack of research experience led me to speak more than I should have - and more than the participants. At times I found myself answering the questions I posed to the participants, to get the results I wanted. Insufficient data were produced from these interviews and I then had to reschedule further interviews to obtain results.

As the researcher, I walked into the interviews with preconceived assumptions about the participants in this study and their backgrounds. I walked into the interviews assuming that the girls from Glenwood were innocent and inexperienced and that the girls from Wentworth would be the opposite - and I was wrong.

Group interviews create the 'group think' situation. Holding both individual interviews as well as group interviews would have been a good idea to achieve a deeper understanding of

the discourses surrounding these girls and construction of their sexual identities. Despite the fact that group interviews do encourage discussion, my greatest fear is that some of the participants would not and did not share valuable personal information in front of their peers.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The lack of research which exists to draw from on coloured girls from Durban and the construction of their sexual identities made this research project interesting, challenging and exciting. Each of the young participants used in this study were agents of change in their own way. Having used girls from two different socio-economic backgrounds was beneficial for this study, since each participant brought into the study a dimension of interest and diversity, and allowed me to broaden my horizons in this study.

I discovered that class does influence the ways in which young coloured girls construct their sexual identities and that a community in itself has a major influence on all young people. A community has the power to develop or stifle young people's mobility in the country.

Despite the fact that all of the participants from Wentworth have a desire to create a positive change in their own lives, the pressures from their community could deter them. The girls from Glenwood are given a better chance to be open-minded and a bit more progressive, in keeping with the development of the country. Thus class plays a vital role in the progression of young coloured girls in South Africa.

APPENDIX 1:

Glossary of terms

'Cos - Because

Drabby - Untidy

Haai – No/disagree - a negative response

Hang-on – wait a minute

Ja – Yes in Afrikaans

Jol – Cheat on you

Kroes hair – Curly, crinkly strand of hair

Loose - Promiscuous

Low-down – In secret/ hush-hush

Min – Not worried/Uninterested

Mxit – A cheap social networking application primarily used on cell phones

One way – All the time

Stekkie - A girl

Wanna – Want to

Y'all – You all

Yeah – Yes/ in agreement

Yoh – Oh my gosh

Your people – Your family
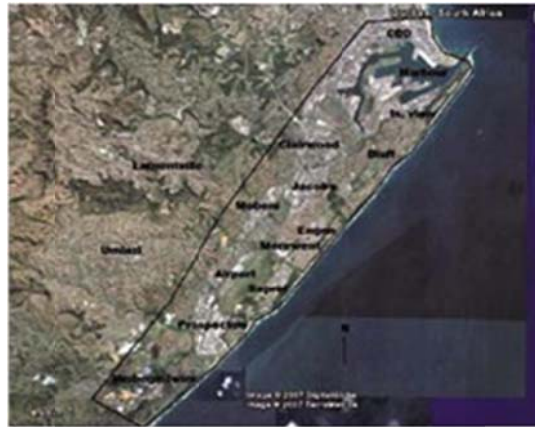
PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES OF WENTWORTH

Figure 4: Durban South Basin. Source: Environment and Tourism (2007).

Figure 5: View of southern portion of Engen refinery from residential area of Austerville, with suburb of Merewent in background and on the right. Source: Environment and Tourism (2007).

Figure 6: View of South Durban from Wentworth, showing from left Engen refinery, in the centre Sapref refinery and to the right Mondi. Source: Environment and Tourism (2007).
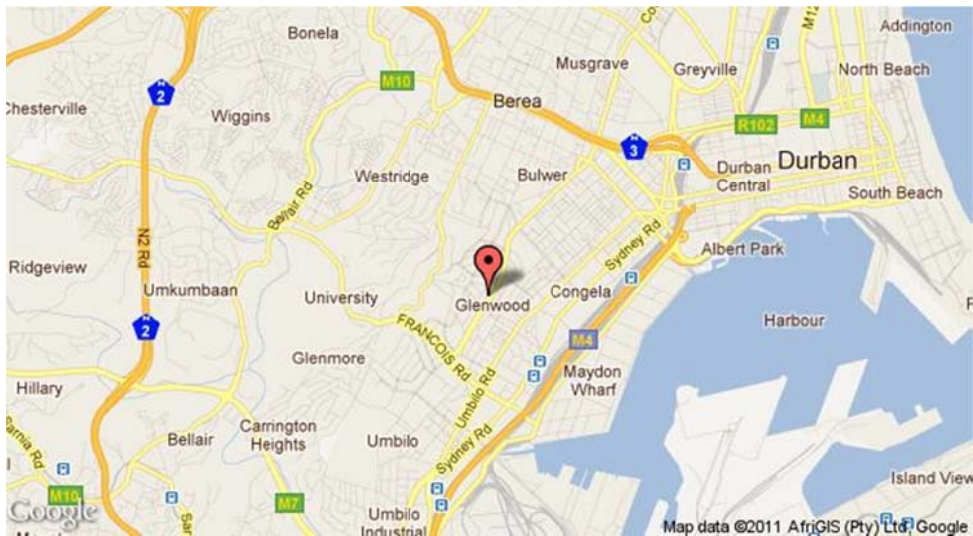
APPENDIX 3

PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES OF GLENWOOD

Figure 7: Map of Durban central showing Glenwood. Source: Google Maps, 2011.

Figure 8: Photograph showing the outside of a block of flats in Glenwood. Source: Google Images, 2011.

Figure 9: Photograph showing a house for sale in the Glenwood suburb. Source: Google Images, 2011.

Interview Schedule

The construction of sexual and gendered identities amongst coloured school girls

On Boys:

1. Do you have many boys as friends? Where do you meet these boys? School/church/community?

2. What kinds of boys do you find attractive? Dimples? Light eyes? Describe their look/ attitude/style.

3. Do they need to have expensive clothes? A car? Money? A fancy cell phone? What turns you on about him? Do you find a guy that drives attractive? Have you ever dated a guy out of school with his own car?

4. Would you date boys of other races or only other coloured boys?

5. If you had to choose to date a guy from another racial group, which racial group would it be from?

6. Do you have a boyfriend?

7. What school does he go to and which racial group does he belong to?

8. What age should THE IDEAL BOYFRIEND BE? Older or younger than you and why?

9. How do you feel you ideal boyfriend must treat you? Should he buy you lunch at school? If he's not in your school: should he send you airtime daily? What would make you happy?

10. Do you think your boyfriend is sexually active or that he has had sex before?

11. Would you prefer to date a guy who has had sex before or would you prefer to date a virgin, why?

12. Have you ever kissed your boyfriend?

13. Has a guy, your boyfriend, ever asked you to have sex with him before?

14. How did you respond? Were you interested?

15. Have you ever had sex before? With your boyfriend? Or with anyone else?

16. Are you thinking about becoming sexually active any time soon?

17. If you had to have sex now would you use protection?

18. What type of protection would you use/ have you used?

Sex and sexuality:

19. What are some people's views of coloured girls and sex?

20. Are coloured girls sexually aggressive? Do you agree? Explain.

21. What do people say about these girls?

22. What do you think about these stereotypes and comments?

23. Do you think that all coloured girls are the same?

24. What are your personal views about coloured girls?

25. Are you aware of some of the sexually transmitted diseases that come along from sleeping around?

26. Do you think oral and anal sex are different and are safer forms of sex? I.e. do you think you could still get an STD from these two forms of sex?

27. What are some of the STDs you could contract through intercourse, anal sex or oral sex?

28. Do you think many coloured girls are either pregnant or have an STD?

29. How do we change these negative stereotypes into positive ones?

Letter of Consent 1

You have been selected to participate in a Masters Research Project which focuses on South African Youth, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS. In this project you are required to participate in a focus group interview. The interview will be conducted on Thursday, the 23rd of September, from 9:00 -10:00am. This interview will take place at *****. A tape-recorder will be used in the interview for a more effective study. Participation in this study is voluntary and as the participant you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason without having to give an explanation. The study ensures total confidentiality (no real names will be used in this study). If you have any queries or concerns about this project please contact me, the researcher, Miss Firmin *****.

Thank you for your assistance

Miss Firmin

…………………………………………

I ………………………………………… (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   **DATE**

……………………………………

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

………………………………….

NOTE

Potential subjects should be given time to read, understand and question the information given before giving consent. This should include time out of the presence of the investigator and time to consult friends and/or family.

APPENDIX 6:

Letter of Consent 2

You have been selected to participate in a **Masters Research Project which focuses on South African Youth, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS**. In this project you are required to participate in a one-hour focus group interview. Participation in this study is voluntary and as the participant **you** are free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason without having to give an explanation. The study ensures total confidentiality (no real names will be used in this study) and data collected will only be used for the purpose of this study.

The interview will be conducted on:

Date:………………………………   Time:…………………………………………

This interview will take place at *****. A tape-recorder will be used in the interview for a more effective study. If you have any queries or concerns about this project please contact me, the researcher directly on *****.

Thank you for your assistance.

Miss Firmin

…………………………………………

I ………………………………………… (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   **DATE**

………………………………………

I ……………………………………………, parent/ guardian of

………………………….…… hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this

document and the nature of the research project, and I give consent for my child to participate

in the research project.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT   **DATE**

………………………………………….

NOTE

**Potential subjects should be given time to read, understand and question the
information given before giving consent. This should include time out of the presence of
the investigator and time to consult friends and/or family.**

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University of KwaZulu-Natal
Research Office, Govan Mbeki Centre
Westville Campus
Private Bag x54001
DURBAN
4000
Tel No: +27 31 260 3587
Fax No: +27 31 260 4609
sshrec@ukzn.ac.za

10 SEPTEMBER 2010

Ms. F Cleo (202518168)
Education Studies

Dear Ms. Cleo

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0088/08B
PROJECT TITLE: The construction of sexual and gendered identities amongst Coloured school girls

NEED FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL WAIVED
I wish to inform you that the need for ethical review has been waived because this protocol forms part of a broader research protocol which has already received ethical clearance (HSS/0088/08).

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.
PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Founding Campuses: ▬ Edgewood   Howard College   Medical School   Pietermaritzburg   Westville

APPENDIX 8

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