NEGOTIATING SEXUALITY: Informal sexual cultures amongst young people at a township high school in Kwazulu-Natal.

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DECLARATION

I, Sibonsile Zerurcia Zibane, declare that this dissertation is my own original work. I acknowledge the work of other people through references which appear both in text and in the bibliography. I also declare that this dissertation has not been previously submitted for a degree or examination at the University of KwaZulu-Natal or at any other university.

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Sibonsile Zerurcia Zibane

As the candidate's supervisors, we have approved this thesis for submission.

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Professor Deevia Bhana

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Date

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Professor Rob Pattman

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Date

DEDICATION

Inspired by my own 'humble beginnings' and my township background, this thesis is dedicated to the daughters and sons of Africa who against all odds navigate their everyday lives under harsh realities. A Luta Continua!

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This thesis is the end of a long journey that I have not travelled in a vacuum. Through the tunnels and turns of this research, there are numerous people and systems that have encouraged and supported me through the completion of this work.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an ethnography of teenage girls and boys in grade 11 who are located in a township school in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. Against the backdrop of major social and health problems in the country, including gender and sexual violence, high levels of teenage pregnancy and young women's particular vulnerability to HIV, an understanding of the ways in which young people's sexualities are constructed are crucial for addressing sexuality education programmes to intervene against risky sexual behaviour.

The ethnographic study is framed within feminist post-structuralist theory and draw on the tenets of social constructuralist paradigm in exploring the participants' realities. The study is based on two purposively selected grade 11 classes. The data was collected by means of participant observations, focus groups and conversations with teenage learners between the ages of 16 and 18 years old. The first class was a mixed sex group of 12 boys and 20 girls. The second class was a predominantly boys' class of 22 boys and 3 girls.

The study explores the meanings and significance which the teenage girls and boys attach to sexuality in their everyday lives; and the ways they define, position and group themselves as boys and girls in relation to dominant discourses of sexuality. This study argues that, for effective sexuality education programmes, we need to pay close attention to how young people's knowledge about gender and sexuality is produced and reproduced. In a setting where young people are constructed as either sexually innocent or sexually deviant and where teen sexual agency is viewed as dangerous and an impediment to the academic purpose of schooling, grade 11 learners construct sex and sexuality as a positive development that enables active, self-aware, pleasure-seeking agents to negotiate their identities. Young people talked about high school years as 'the' time for sexual fun, sexual identity constructions, sexual exploration and sexual freedom. Notably, young people acknowledged that their sexuality constructions are negotiated in a context (a township) that still bear the brunt of a long history of violence, legacies of apartheid and inequalities, economic exclusion, oppression, the dominance of hegemonic masculinities and passive femininities.

Throughout the thesis, attention is given to the ways in which boys and girls accommodate, resist and mediate dominant sexuality and expectations against surrounding social, political, cultural and economic context of the township. Implications are suggested in the conclusion of the thesis with respect to sexuality education.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	MEANING
African	Throughout this thesis, African is not used to refer to any scientific racial categorisation, but is used as a social construct to classify South Africans of African ancestry.
Apartheid	A system of institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa between 1948 and 1991
Bantu Education	A system of education introduced in 1953 which confined Africans to racially segregated, ethnically organised, poorly resourced, predominantly non-technical and non-scientific schooling.
'*Ben10*'	A term borrowed from a cartoon series to refer to a young man who flirts, dates, or in a material relationship with older women
Coloured	Coloured in South Africa is often construed as meaning of `mixed race.'
curative rape	It is used to violently put masculinised women 'correctly' in their place within culturally normative understandings of gender and sexuality
Cwazimula	It means 'shine brightly' – a term taken from the school's logo ("shine where you are"). This term is used throughout the study as a pseudonym for my research site.
Durban	It is a coastal city in the eastern South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province.
'inkwari'	isiZulu slang for township raves or weekend festivities
'isitabane', 'moffie' and 'ongqingili'	homosexual
isiZulu	Is one of South Africa's 11 official languages. It is the most widely spoken home language in South Africa.
"Kangaroo or people's courts	A community justice practice that formed part of the defiance of apartheid laws and the justice system
'*necklacing'*	It is the practice of placing a car-tyre full of petrol over the victim's torso and setting fire to it. It evolved in South Africa during the political violence of the mid- 80s.
street bashes	Street parties
'*sugar daddies'*	Older man who provide young girls with cash and material luxuries in exchange for sex.
Township-	In South Africa, the term 'township' generally refers to often underdeveloped urban living areas that were built by the apartheid government after 1950, that were reserved for non-White residents (namely Africans, Coloureds and Indians), and were enforced through the Group Areas Act of 1950 and other town planning legislation which determined the strict separation of race groups until 1994 (Permegger and Godehart, 2007).
Ubuntu	An ethical concept of South African origin that is loosely translated to refer to the essential compassion and human kindness. It emphasises the interdependency and the interconnectedness of all living things. It is generally defined through the African idiom: 'I am because we are'.
'*umemulo'*	A ceremony held to acknowledge blossoming of a girl into womanhood.

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Chapter 1
NEGOTIATING TEENAGE SEXUALITY

INTRODUCTION

"A high school in Durban has been embroiled in a sex scandal after a video emerged of a 15-year-old girl having sex with four boys in a classroom, a report said. The video was allegedly taken by one of the boys involved, and came to the attention of police last week, after a teacher saw the video and reported it, the Citizen reported. Fifteen boys have been arrested, with five of them appearing in the Durban Magistrate's court on Wednesday. The other 10, who are below the age of consent, were released into the custody of their parents. According to the paper, the emergence of the video has split members of the school community, with the parents of the boys seemingly upset with the teacher who reported it. The parents claimed that the girl, who is under the legal age of consent, had had sex with the boys willingly, and was known for 'being loose'. Another pupil, however, said incidents similar to this one had been swept under the carpet previously, and was happy that it had now been brought to light." (News24, 08 February 2016).

I begin this thesis with an article about a teenage sex scandal in a township school located in the city of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. The above media extract makes three important claims about teenage sexuality and schooling. First, it brings sex, sexuality and schooling into direct association with each other. Whether adults approve of it or not, it highlights that schools are sexualised sites where girls and boys express and practise heterosexual cultures and desires. Second, it challenges the dominant adult-centred construction of childhood as being a time of innocence. Third, it reproduces and reflects the highly gendered environment in South Africa, through which relations of power often construct women and girls as being subordinate (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

The blame and shaming of the 'loose girl' in the media report functions to reproduce the sexual double standard based on unequal gender relations of power. Women and girls who express their sexuality are vilified, while boys and men are rendered heroic (Summit, Kalmuss, DeAtley and Levack, 2016; Ringrose and Renold, 2012).

The anger of the parents against the teacher who reported the matter to the authorities, suggests the highly gendered nature of sexuality where a girl labelled as 'loose', is scorned, and thus action against the boys is regarded as unjustifiable.

In South Africa, the age of consent is 16, although recent changes to the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act no 5 of 2015, permits sexual activity among consenting young people aged 12 to 15 years old. Beyond the concerns about the legal age of consent, the 15-year-old teenage girl appears from the above report to be an active and willing participant in the sex video. Yet, we do not have the full picture of the 'real' stories of teenage girls and boys. This incident demands attention to gender power dynamics that are embedded in sexual relations. We need a full story of what really matters to teenage boys and girls in South African schools.

Against this backdrop, my study is a school-based ethnography of gender and teenage sexuality, which strive to explore the manner in which African teenage girls and boys from a working-class township high school in Durban, negotiate their sexuality. This study intends to understand the complex means in which teenage girls and boys produce, reproduce, adapt, enact and resist, sexuality constructs as they position themselves as gendered beings.

This study is influenced by the work of the feminist school of ethnographers who have troubled the subjective positioning of the sexuality of young people in different contexts, and its social consequences (see Thorne, 1993; Lunsing, 1995; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Renold, 1999; Allen, 1999; Kehily, 1999; MacNaughton, 2000; Hirst, 2004; Bhana, 2002; Pattman and Chege, 2003; Baxen and Breidlid, 2004; Nyanzi, 2008; Morojele, 2009; Anderson, 2009; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Bhana and Pattman, 2011; Msibi, 2012; Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013; Mayeza, 2015; Bhana, 2016a).

Sexualities at school are hidden, invisible, silenced, taboo and frowned upon, as these are not associations that adults wish for children and young people (Epstein and Johnson, 1998). Schools sustain and reproduce dominant beliefs about gender and sexuality (Haywood, 2008) and frame young people's interest in sexuality as a disruption to the academic agenda (Kehily, 2015; Ashcraft, 2006; Paechter, 1998; Epstein and Johnson, 1998).

Teenage sexuality is also not considered to be appropriate when expressed through sexual pleasures, desires, and *actual* sex (Renold, Ringrose and Egan, 2015; Allen, 2015; Egan, 2013; Allen, 2005; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). "A sexualised child (teen) is seen as a danger to himself/herself and the broader social order and, thus in need of management" (Mathe, 2013:78). This study argues against the discourse that renders issues of sexual desire and sexual pleasure invisible (ibid).

Allen (2007:222) notes that although schools appear "to formally acknowledge and accommodate student sexuality, they are heavily invested in a student ideal that is non-sexual". They continue to assume childhood innocence and construct "young people as being children in need of protection (Allen, 2007:225), rather than perceiving them as being ''knowers who bring with them knowledge about sexuality and their own experiences'' (Francis, 2010:316). In South Africa, like the West, sexual innocence still remains a dominant way in which childhood and young people are conceptualised (Bhana, 2016a). Bhana (2013:56) asserts that "sexuality, whether adults approve or not, is an important resource through which young children account for being and becoming boys and girls in the early years of schooling".

In South Africa, a major concern about teenage sexuality is framed within the danger discourse and concerns about unplanned teenage pregnancy, sexual violence, and young women's disproportionate vulnerability to HIV. These remain major concerns in Life Orientation (LO) programmes at school (Bhana, 2013). They focus on imparting knowledge about sexual risks – emphasising changing individual behaviour while ignoring the social contexts in which young people are located (Bhana, 2016b; Baxen and Breidlid, 2009; Kehily, 2002). Allen (2007:222) warns that, "denying young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively makes it harder for them to access the kind of sexual agency which might make them sexually responsive citizens".

THE FOCUS OF THIS STUDY
Located within the social constructioninst paradigm and using the feminist post-structuralist theory as the theoretical framework, this study problematises the relationship between gender and sexuality within the school context and argues that the gendered experiences of schooling are critical in understanding and engaging with sexual identities of teenage learners (Mathe,

2013). It reiterates Bhana and Pattman's (2008, 2009) argument that insight into how young people aged 15 to 24 learn about and understand gender and sexuality is necessary for successful educational strategies, in a country where HIV gender violence is raging. Schools are viewed as sexualised sites and young people as active agents whose sexual identities shape and are shaped by social relations. This study thus aims to contribute insights on how schools are sites for producing and reproducing gender and sexuality, and how they could also be productive grounds for transformative interventions.

In this study, I examine how young people negotiate, adopt and resist gender and sexuality (see Allen, 2015, 2011; Kehily, 2007, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Mac an Ghaill, 1996). Like Kehily (1999:2), my study emphasises teenage boys' and girls' informal sexual cultures which "can be seen as being a way of 'giving voice' to learners". This study is thus my attempt to achieve an understanding of the meanings and significance that young people from a township context attach to sexuality, in their everyday lives.

It is an expansion of a growing but scarce body of knowledge that respects and includes young people's voices and treats them as active agents negotiating their own social worlds. In the last decade, the South African work of Bhana (2016b, 2015, 2013, 2007, 2002), Mayeza (2016, 2015qqw), Pattman, 2015; Van Wyk (2015), Hlabangani (2014), Prinsloo and Moletsane (2013), Mathe (2013), Anderson (2013, 2009), Morojele (2013, 2009), Msibi (2012), Moletsane (2011), Jewkes and Morrell (2011, 2010), Bhana and Pattman (2011, 2009), Chadwick (2010), Baxen and Breidlid (2007), Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane (2009), Pattman (2005), and Pattman and Chege (2003), stand to address South African children and young people as agentic sexual beings.

Another distinct feature of this study is its focus on the contextuality and diversity of youth sexuality. Often, the sexuality of young people from African townships is rigidly constructed as being risky, hyper-sexed, with girls lacking agency, and homogenously mirroring the socio-structural conditions of the townships (see Luclerc-Madlala, 1997). I view such understandings of African sexualities as being linear and essentialist. Instead, the study adopts Butler's (1990) description of gender and sexuality as being fluid and performative, thus acknowledging young people in the study as diverse and their sexuality as non-static.

This study thus aims to understand sexualities in a comprehensive way that takes heed of young people's agency and vulnerability.

Arnfred (2004: 68) warn that, "African sexuality is not as plain and straightforward affair as some have claimed, and young people from the township are not a homogenous group". "Different social relations, spaces, positioning and power relations involve different rules and taboos associated with sex, gender and sexuality" (ibid). Stressing the importance of understanding the ways in which young people in varied social contexts give meaning to sexuality and gender as key to developing appropriate forms of transformative interventions designed to address sexuality, HIV and AIDS education and gender equality (Bhana, 2011; Ramadhin, 2010; Bhana and Pattman, 2009).

This thesis makes a case for the relevance and importance of deconstructing and co-constructing our knowledge about the ways, the spaces and places where young people in the context of varied population groups, make meaning of their sexual selves. Furthermore, this study highlights the need for holistic transformative intervention programmes and educational curriculum reform – if we are to win the battle against gender violence and HIV in South Africa (Bhana, 2016a).

SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter introduces the focus of this study by drawing our attention to a media extract that highlights the gendered subjective constructions, the contestations and contradictions surrounding the sexuality of teenage boys and girls from a township school. It then outlines the central questions of the thesis, introducing the methodologies, and briefly discussing the social constructionist paradigm and the feminist post-structuralist theory in which understandings of gender and sexuality are based. Given that the theoretical framework permeates the entire thesis, the intention here is not to engage in great detail with the theory – but rather to sketch the landscape in which debate will take place. This chapter concludes by presenting a brief outline of the structure of this thesis.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key research questions that this study answered were aimed at understanding how teenage girls and boys negotiate and make meaning of their sexualities within and around a township school context. The key research questions which underpin this ethnographic study are:

1) How do township teenage boys and girls learn about, constitute, negotiate and perform gender and sexual roles within and around the school context?

2) What are the gendered discourses within and around the school context that influence boys' and girls' constructions of sexuality and identity?

3) In what ways do boys and girls reproduce, adapt, negotiate or reject the sexuality positioning's made available to them within and around the school context?

4) How do teenage boys and girls construct pleasure, desire, and sexual risks within a township context?

5) What are the places of pleasure and/or risk in a township context?

INTRODUCING METHODOLOGIES

This is a qualitative study underpinned by the critical constructionist paradigm. This thesis is a presentation of a year-long school ethnographic study, which considered how and where 16–18 year-old teenage boys and girls make meaning of their sexual selves. An ethnography enabled the researcher to capture and give an intimate descriptive and interpretive account of boys' and girls' sexual cultures, and of discursive spaces in which they construct and make meaning of their sexual selves.

This study adopted a youth-centred approach and participatory research practices. My fieldwork journey was strongly informed by the research values and philosophical framework that emphasise the importance of researchers and programmers – to 'work with and for' young people, 'give a voice' to young people, and to view them as active agents. "One of the central features of the study was its commitment to foregrounding learners' own experiences and using the research process as a vehicle through which learners are enabled to to talk about experiences important to them" (Renold, 2002:417). In this research, "young people are addressed as potential authorities and knowledge producers about their social worlds" (Pattman, 2015).

Two Grade 11 classes from Cwazimula (pseudonym) high school were purposively selected for the study – a mixed sex class (12 boys and 20 girls) and a predominantly boys' class (22 boys and 3 girls). One school was selected in order to get in-depth qualitative input that the ethnographic study requires. The selection of one school also allowed enough time to build up rapport with the same group of learners and that took a lot of time.

Rich and messy data were generated using the focus-group discussions, ongoing observations and loosely structured interviews and combinations of these. Ongoing observations took place in the classrooms, and on school verandas, playgrounds, and beyond the school gates on school trips and social gatherings. The data-generating tools used were empowering in nature. They encouraged boys and girls in my study to set and lead the agendas for discussion, and to reflect upon themselves and their everyday lives. These tools also mediated the power between my research participants and me. Consequently, my own sense of self as being adult, married, middle class, and a woman researcher, was co-constructed (refer to Chapter 3).

Data were captured through extensive field notes and audio recordings, and analysed using discourse analysis. Influenced by social constructionism and the work of Foucault (1986) and Butler (1990), as cited in Connell (2011), my analysis not only established what teenage boys and girls said or did, but also how it was said and done. Moreover, I adopted a position that 'we construct our realities'. Chapter 3 presents a detailed account of my ethnographic journey, within and around a school context.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Principal Theories Upon Which the Research Project Was Constructed

The main theories framing the study are feminist post-structuralist theory and social constructionism - with a special focus on theories of gender, youth, sexuality and identity. Throughout the study, these theories are used to add and advance each other inorder to yield better theoretical and emperical understandings of the sexuality of young people from a township context.

Although there are profound differences between feminist post-structuralist theory and the social constructionist theory, choosing to use a single frame of reference in understanding the sexuality of young people from an African township context was going to be limiting and has a potential of excluding other forms of understandings that are important in highlighting the dynamics involved in sexuality constructions. One of the differences between the feminist post-structuralist theory and the social constructionist theory is how gender and power are conceptualised. Post-structuralist theory view gender and power as integral elements in the processes of construction, whereas most social constructionivists consider power to be external to such processes (Locher and Prugul, 2001). Despite these differences, these theories are utilised in this study because they share a commitment to an ontology of becoming that can serve as a common basis for conversation (ibid). Moreover, they both agree on the multiplicity, fluidity, context-specificity, performativity and the constructive nature of gender and sexuality.

I found both the feminist post-structuralist theory and the social constructionist paradigm to be the most relevant to the study of youth sexuality, as they allow for interrogation of: how we get to know what we know about ourselves and others, our society as a system with interrelated parts that co-exist; and how power influences both our individual and social identities. In specific terms, these theories illuminate and delineate on how gender and sexuality are produced, legitimised, resisted, reproduced and performed in a given society – as a result of historical processes, language and discourses. Furthermore, they offer a lens through which we understand and analyse the "intersectionality of gender and sexuality, with power, race, class and other forms of identities" (Stokes, Aaltonen and Coffey, 2015:273).

At a methodological level I have chosen these theories because: they allow for participatory approaches and tools; and "they invite us to be critical of the idea that our observations of the world uncomplicatedly yield its nature to us, to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world" (Burr, 2004:138). Furthermore, they alert us as researchers to the complexity of research and how it can reproduce power inequalities. In turn, they suggest a way to minimise power and harm towards our research participants, through self-reflectivity and resisting the commodification, simplification, essentialising and victimising of discourses.

Given the extensiveness and different waves of these theories, this section is not all-inclusive. A comprehensive discussion of these frameworks is beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, in this chapter, I discuss in no specific order some of the basic premises and assumptions of the afore-mentioned theoretical frameworks – which I deemed relevant for this study. The focus is on the social constructionism and feminist post-structuralist view of young people (teenagers), sex, sexuality, gender and the schooling. I particularly found the work of theorists like Giddens (1992), Foucault (1986), Burr (1995), Connell (1987), Butler (1990), hooks (1984) and McFadden (1998), to name a few, to have shaped the understandings shared in this thesis.

Social constructionism and feminist post-structuralist theory posit that there can be no objective "truth" about the world or people, but that there are multiple "truths" or versions of reality. These theories "insist that we take a critical stance towards our 'taken for granted' ways of understanding the world, including ourselves" (Burr, 1995:3). "They caution us to be ever suspicious of our assumptions about how the world appears to be" (Burr, 1995:2). "This means that the categories with which we, as human beings, apprehend the world do not necessarily refer to real divisions" (ibid). For instance, they invite us to challenge the taken for granted assumption that human beings are divided into two categories – boys/men and girls/women. They bid us to seriously question the naturalisation and legitimisation of these categories. They further alert us to the social processes, power structures and systems, such as families, schools and the patriarchy used to institutionalise and sustain these categories. It is in the interest of this study to gain insight on the ways in which a township school influence the constructions of sexuality of teenage boys and girls.

Furthermore, "social constructionism holds that the ways in which we commonly understand the world, and the categories and concepts we use, are historically and culturally specific" (Burr, 1995:3). Thus, the development of the sexual self does not take place in isolation, but is context-dependent (Rolls, 2009). In South Africa, for instance, we see how being a man or a woman is not a neutral identity, but depends upon where and when one lives. These constructs are largely shaped by the socio-political, cultural, historical and economic dimensions of our country.

Different cultures and social classes attach different meanings to being a boy or a girl. Feminist post-structuralism expands this understanding by holding that our sexual identities emanate from performances, social practices, positionings, dominance, policing, and institutionalisation practices. It is such perspective that has shaped the understanding of this thesis of gender and sexuality as being fluid, performative and socially constructed (Butler, 1990).

Social constructionism and feminist post-structuralism further emphasise that the meanings we attach to our realities or to our identities, are situated in a particular discourse. They focus on the use of language during discourses, as language is viewed as a place where personal and social identities are invented, conserved and contested. For Foucault (1986), language cannot be understood in isolation, istead its makes meaning within the context of the discourse in which it is used. Different discourses construct social phenomena in different ways, and unveil different possibilities for human action (Burr, 1995). This study, for instance, paid attention to how the emphasis on the physical differences between boys and girls has shaped the status attached to boyhood and girlhood, and the consequences of such discourse. Burr (1995:12) argues that "labelling a discourse as the 'truth' or 'common sense' raises the issue of power relations, since some ways of representing the world appear to have an oppressive or constraining effect on some groups in society", and power relations are what feminist studies seek to uncover and challenge.

- **Conceptualising Young People as Coexisting with their Societal Context**

Understanding how and where young people give meaning to their sexual identities, is critical to this study. The participants in this study are young people aged 16 to 18 years of age, in their teenage stage. Sigelman and Shaffer (1991) characterise the teenage years as a critical period in identity construction. The physical changes related to puberty, the onset of sexual maturity, and the social expectation that young people make career choices, prompt a re-examination of earlier certainties (ibid). This is a time when collective identities, personal identities, and sexual identities are all brought into question (Erikson, 1968). Crockett, Rafaelli and Moilanen (2003) consider that young peoples' responses to these challenges are profoundly influenced by the social and cultural contexts in which they live.

Similarly, Newman and Newman (2016:286), view human development as being "the progressive mutual accommodation between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives. This process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger context in which these settings are embedded". "The self I am, the identity I have, is affected by the politics of gender, race, class, sexuality, disability and the world justice" (Griffiths, 1995:1). Knowledge of context is pivotal in understanding sexuality identity construction (Roos, 2009). For example, Chapter 5 of this thesis highlights how the township recreational spaces such as '*inkwari*' (isiZulu slang for township raves or weekend festivities) become settings where sexuality is articulated and struggled, and provide a distinct feature of sexuality constructs, that are context specific.

Understanding young people's sexual identity therefore means examining constructions of identity, and this, in turn, means examining how society works (Hall and Du Gay, 1996 cited in Matsoso-Makhate and Wangenge-Ouma, 2009). It means paying particular attention to the relations between social agents and the nexus between social agents and institutions that shape and are shaped by the social actors (ibid). "For feminists, an account of the construction of a self needs to show how social circumstances, material circumstances, change and growth all come together to make a self" (Griffiths, 1995:80). "Relationships of culture, history, discourse, technology, biology and the 'environment' are explored without privileging any one of these elements" (Alaimo and Hekman, 2008 cited in Allen, 2015:943). Social constructionism points to the significance of the discursive position as an approach to understanding young people (Parker and Easton, 1998).

- **Feminist Post-Structuralism and the View of Sex**

I found defining the term 'sex' within sexuality research as being a useful exercise, because it means different things to different individuals, and in different spaces. Moreover, the meanings attached to this concept become key in our understanding of how individuals negotiate their gender and sexuality in varied contexts. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013) hold that sex is broadly defined to refer to a combination of anatomical, endocrinal and chromosomal features that make someone male or female. However, several authors have agreed that the interpretations and understandings attached to who is male or female make the concept not purely biological, but ultimately social (Burr, 1995; Butler, 1990).

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For example, a person's dress code, talking style, and sometimes his or her career become a determinant of his/her sex. In a township context, for instance, boys and girls become victims of homophobic attacks because of their dress code. Thus, dressing in a particular manner, is a determinant of being a 'real' girl or not.

Jewkes and Morrell (2011), Leclerc-Madlala (2009), and Selikow, Zulu and Cedras (2002), agree that the concept is also used to refer to a multiple deeds associated with gender and sexuality. In many contexts, for instance, sex is often used to refer to sexual intercourse (Aggleton, Davies and Hart, 2003). In the South African township context, girls, in particular, generally take the term to mean vaginal intercourse with male orgasm – although it is acknowledged that the term also has other meanings (see Leclerc-Madlala, 2009). In studies by Selikow et al (2002) and Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thomson (1990), sex was used to refer to vaginal sex, and anal and oral sex were not regarded as sex. In the same study, "some young women were clear that vaginal intercourse was not particularly pleasurable for them, but, with few exceptions, they assumed that sex was what men wanted" (Holland, et al, 1990:341). It is my view that such meanings attached to sex are dangerous, particularly in the context of HIV and AIDS. When sexual activities such as anal or oral sex are not regarded as sex, these understandings threaten the success of HIV-prevention strategies. They also perpetuate "the dominant gendered constructions of girls and women as lacking in sexual agency and desire, which ultimately serves to (re) produce and entrench girls' lack of decision-making in heterosexual relationships".

Studies by Anderson (2013) and Bhana and Pattman (2011) however, have begun to challenge the male-centred definitions of sex. According to these authors, teenage girls from African and Coloured townships linked sex with love. This linkage does not position them only as passive recipients of boys' power, but was used to either resist the girls' vulnerability to sexual coercion, rape and male power. Girls used love to delay or refuse sex (Anderson, 2013). Against the familiar portrayal of girls as being docile and sexually passive, Anderson emphasised that teenage girls are in fact, not so (ibid). Some girls are able to exercise agency, navigate themselves and assert their sexuality within a coercive sexual environment (Bhana and Pattman, 2011).

In support of this, Mathe (2013) and Jewkes and Morrell (2011) hold that the emerging studies that draw attention to the agency of African girls who assert their sexualities within restraining contexts, show the diverse ways in which they are able to negotiate their contexts.

- **Gender as Socially Constructed and Performative**

There is a vast literature that defines gender. This study rejects gender definitions that are associated with biology and essentialism. Instead, it adopts the definitions that view gender as "not something we are born with, or not something we have" (West and Zimmerman, 1987, cited in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:1), but something we do (Butler, 1990). In Connell (1995), gender is understood as being discursively produced and a particular ordering of social practice linked to other social practices. Furthermore, this study adopts Butler (1990)'s idea that gender is involuntarily performed within the dominant discourses of heteroreality. For Butler, gender does not pre-exist, but it is legitimised, rehearsed, and discursively produced in different times and social contexts. As such, she conceptualised gender as being performative, illusory and permanently problematic (Butler, 1990).

This study thus views gender as the means by which the social institutions such as the family, school, church, health centres or place of work, create, and accomplish the differentiation that constitute the gender order. Connell (1987) describes the gender order as normalising dominant masculinities and the kinds of emphasised femininities that complement such masculinities. Social constructionism and feminism argue that there are biological differences between boys and girls, but constructions of gender emerge against the backdrop of socially shared understandings, that are inextricably intertwined with the contexts within which it is created. "Being a girl or a boy is not a stable state, but an ongoing accomplishment – something that is actively done both by individual so categorised and by those who interact with it in the various communities to which it belongs" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:8).

The meanings that young people attach to gender and sexuality are social constructions, negotiated in a discourse and through social relations. Connell (1996) holds that these social relations are structured in the matrix of power. Thus, analysing gender power was central to this study. It is, however, important to note that this study viewed power as not being static. Power was rather viewed as oppressive, productive and generative.

Connell (2016w)'s assertion that "where there is power, there is resistance" consequently shaped how the agency of the participants' of this study was understood and acknowledged.

- **Femininity and Masculinity**

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013:7) hold that "the making of a 'masculine' man or a 'feminine' woman is a never an ending process that begins before birth – from the moment someone begins to wonder if the pending child will be a boy or a girl. Furthermore, the ritual of announcement at birth that it is in fact, one or the other, instantly transforms an "it" into a "he" or a "she" (Butler 1993) – standardly assigning it to a lifetime as a male or as a female. This attribution is further engraved, naturalised and made permanent through cultural prescriptions that assign roles and norms of femininity and masculinity." The participants in my study were no exclusion from such traditions.

"The dominant ideology of femininity, in most societies, casts women in a subordinate, dependent and passive position - with virginity, chastity, motherhood, moral superiority and obedience as key virtues of the ideal woman. In sharp contrast, the dominant ideology of masculinity characterises men as being independent, dominant and invulnerable aggressors and providers – whose key virtues are strength, virility and courage" (WHO, 2003:11). As such, in a study by Pattman (2005:499), "boys and girls tended to construct themselves in interviews as opposites, with little in common, and sexuality was spoken about in ways which tended to cement gender-polarised identities". Chapter 6 and 7 of this thesis contain illustrations that depict how gender discourse within and around the school context are used to regulate the embodiment of 'particular' subject positions of girls and boys in my study. Throughout this thesis I have contested the naturalisation of gender and asserted the notion of different ways of being.

Judith Butler conceptualised gender as routinely constituted through a hegemonic, heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1993) – where "different status is embodied in the masculinity and the femininity, with the woman's body inscribed with an inferior status" (Bartky, 1990 cited in Hook, 2004:200). Girls are considered more fragile and innocent than boys, and "constructed as vulnerable and susceptible to danger, while their sexuality is controlled and suppressed" (Muhanguzi, 2011:714). In contrast, "male sexual desire and pleasure are prioritised" (ibid).

A study on language, sexuality and HIV and AIDS in a South African township reported that girls' sexuality is characterised by virginity, abstinence, or transactional sex – while boys' sexuality is characterised by multiple sexual partners, unsafe sex, ability to buy sex, having a 'back up girlfriend, should the *regte* (steady girlfriend) misbehave', and aggressive sexuality (Selikow, 2004). Boys with multiple partners were regarded as 'real men', whereas girls with multiple sexual partners were demeaned by belittling labels like '*isifebe*' (slut) (ibid). Connell (1996) termed this expression of the privilege that men collectively have over women, a hegemonic masculinity. This masculinity, however, "represents not a certain type of man or woman, but rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:841). I argue that these ideologies of masculinity and femininity are of great concern in a country where more girls and women are infected with HIV, and where gender violence, rape, coercive sex and gender inequalities do not cease to populate the media.

It is significant to be cognizant, however, that in every context there are multiple forms of masculinity and femininity. Masculinity and femininity are dynamic social constructs that are fluid and ever-changing. There is a growing body of literature, which shows that gender identities are changing – especially in the face of the AIDS pandemic (Hlabangane, 2014; Hunter, 2010; Morrell et al., 2009). Hunter's work in Mandeni township, for instance, shows that masculine ideals that validated having many girlfriends, have begun to shift as the disease has begun to take its toll (Morrell et al., 2009). The study of Hlabangane (2014:5) in Soweto demonstrated how "HIV has engendered a sense that male authority over women cannot go unchallenged". Both Hunter and Hlabangane's work demonstrate that boys having multiple sexual partners and girls being passive and vulnerable, are by no means universal Black African sexual identities (Hlabangane, 2014; Hunter, 2010). New discourses of sexuality and the human rights culture in South Africa, are empowering girls to express their agency.

- **Sexuality as Multi-dimensional and Context Specificity**

Sexuality is highly contested. Giddens (1992:181) views "sexuality as a terrain of fundamental political struggle and also a medium of emancipation". "What is striking is how children and teens inhabit environments that propose two opposing imperatives: 'Be sexy' contrasted with 'No sex', please. You're still kids" (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013). McNair

(2002) cited in Kehily (2012:258), observed that "despite the intimate nature of sexuality, these struggles have taken place in public and are increasingly part of the public domain". Moreover, these are the same struggles that have facilitated and limited the programmers' abilities to positively respond to children's sexuality.

Different ontological positions shape our understanding and definition of human sexuality. Some define sexuality purely from a biological perspective, while others define it from moral or cultural perspectives (Westheimer and Lopater, 2002). However, sexuality is far from simple. According to Giddens, "society follows a structuration process, whereby human actions simultaneously structure and are structured by society" (Kaspersen, 2000 cited in Szabo, 2007:10). Thus, sexuality is not a secluded entity – it molds and is molded by all the surrounding human relations.

Foucault (1976:105) states that, "sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power." This definition challenges the notion that we are born, for instance, with a sexual orientation. Being heterosexual or homosexual is not inborn, but we learn these sexual orientations and they get institutionalised in social relationships such as friends, families, culture or religion. Thus, sexuality is "an interactional accomplishment, an identity continually renegotiated via linguistic exchange and social performance" (Cerulo, 1997:387). Thus, "the Foucauldian conceptualisation of sexuality as discursively constructed provides a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between discourse, power and the subject" (Prinsloo and Maletsane, 2013:5).

Similarly, Rathus, Nevid and Fichner-Rathus (1997:5) cited in Esat (2003:19) define the term 'sexuality' as "the ways in which we experience and express ourselves as sexual beings" – that is, in the awareness of being fe/male, as well as in the capacity one has for erotic experiences and responses.

Giddens (1992:15) furthers this definition, by noting that "sexuality functions a malleable feature of self, a prime connecting point between body, self-identity and social norms". This highlights that while sexuality cannot be dissociated with our biological selves (in many instances represented by one's sex organs), it is also relational (determined by human social relations and gender roles). Sexuality is viewed as not the result of a 'natural' process, but as a socially constructed identity, accentuating that sexuality is better understood and defined in relations to a particular context. Chapter 2 of this thesis explores the micro, mezzo and macro contexts that influence and are influenced by the sexuality of boys and girls, in this study.

Weeks (1986:15) unpacks this notion, by defining "sexuality as a historical construction which brings together a host of different biological and mental possibilities – gender identity, bodily differences, reproductive capacities, needs, desires, and fantasies". Identity theory terms this process 'self-categorisation'. "The particular interrelations and activities which exist at any moment in a specific society create sexual and other categories which, ultimately, determine the broad range of modes of behaviour available to individuals who are born within that society" (Padgug, 2007:23). Allen (2016:618) extends this definition, by viewing "sexuality as emerging through co-constitutive entanglements of and between meaning, practices, material artefacts, humans, and things of all kinds". For example, Esat (2003:21) spoke about how "a 'woman's virginity' is talked of in conjunction with 'family honour', and how parents try to maintain the honour of the family by maintaining their daughters' virginity before marriage, and, consequently, girl's movements are often restricted in comparison to a boy's movements".

These theories further posit that constructions of sexuality "are articulated by language, and their meanings have changed over time and across cultures" (Scott 2000:71). "Thus, it is the articulation of sexual difference that become interesting to study, and how relationships of power may be consolidated by appeals to sexual difference" (Ibid). In KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, for instance, young people's sexuality constructions are mediated and solidified through "a complex historical process of culture and religion – as well as the contemporary resurgence of traditionalism" (Harrison, 2008:1). A typical example is the revival of a traditional practice of '*ukuhlolwa kwezintombi*' (virginity testing) to influence girls' sexual constructions in times of HIV and AIDS.

Furthermore, the history of apartheid, patriarchy, and inequalities in the townships, continue to impact the way in which sexual intimacy is negotiated. Women often have less power than men in situations of sexual intimacy (Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane, 2009), and make young girls, in particular, most vulnerable to sexual risks. These historical influences are further discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis, under the brief historical traditions and perspectives of sexuality.

The important lessons that can be learned from the above discussions, are that as sexuality is a relational, historical construct, we limit our understanding of sexuality when we try to neatly categorise it, describe it in fixed terms, and subscribe to 'appropriate and inappropriate' sexuality constructs. Thus emphasising the fluidity of sexuality and the importance of refraining from homogenising the sexuality of young people. Furthermore, these discussions also point to the impracticality of understanding and defining sexuality outside of identity and gender discourse. At the same time, it supports this study's view that young people's sexuality should be understood within their social relations (sexual cultures) and within a specific context. Studies by Bhana (2015), Hlabangane (2014), Anderson (2013), and Selikow (2004), are some that have shared light on the ways of talking and viewing sexuality in different South African township contexts. These understandings are critical in the fight against gender violence and HIV and AIDS.

- **Sexuality, Gender and Schooling**

According to Giddens, the school as a structure is not something which exists external to learners (Kaspersen, 2000). The school and the educational system has a set of rules and values which are both a means and an outcome of learners' actions (ibid). Giddens labelled this condition as a 'social practice' (ibid). This implies that insight on boy and girl learners' sexuality (social life) can be achieved through understanding social practices. Giddens views human actions as the product of a continuous interaction between an active agent, and his or her structure. Thus, in this study, learners are viewed as active, knowledgeable agents, who are shaped by, and who shape the school and surrounding environment.

In a similar vein, Kehily (2002:57) regards schools "as a site where a nexus of discourses in relation to sexuality are articulated, solidified and struggled over". According to Parker (1996:143), "it is accepted that young people enter schools as sexual and gendered objects –

having already experienced the formal and informal learning networks of the family environment, peer groups, and media". Moreover, this study asserts that a school context is an important arena for the reproduction, contestation or adaptation of their sexual and gender identity.

Gender expression and performance are part of everyone's everyday experience and cannot be separated from the curricular, pedagogical, and policy work that goes on in a public school context (Ingrey, 2013). In a school context, for example, difference in physical statures between boys and girls are often used to determine subject choices. Boys are often channelled to do technical subjects, while girls are believed to be biologically tuned to do subjects like Home Economics. Mathe (2013) adds that the persistence of gendered options at schools continues to designate physical science, computing and technology subjects, as masculine disciplines. This study argues that the gendered curriculum choices in schools become the breeding ground for economic, social and political inequalities between girls and boys, and these inequalities exacerbate the status of women in our country.

Several school ethnographers in South Africa have discussed how discourses of sexually innocent children, heteronormativity, hegemonic masculinities, homophobia, and reputable 'good' girls are dominating and influencing boys' and girls' constructions of sexuality within the school context (Bhana, 2013; Prinsloo and Moletsana, 2013; Anderson, 2013; Mathe, 2013). "These multiple and competing discourses are reproduced, enacted, adapted and contested – as students (and teachers) make their own meanings from them" (Allen, 2007:224).

Furthermore, a thick body of research on gender, sexuality and schooling has uncovered how the heterosexual discourse in schools, discriminates against girls and gay and lesbian identities (Morojele, 2013; Msibi, 2012; Bhana, 2009; Baxen and Breidlid, 2009; Allen, 2007, 2005; Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). "The pervasive presence of heterosexual relations and the simultaneous invisibility of its structure, make heterosexuality normatively powerful in the lives of teachers and learners" (Epstein and Johnson, 1994, cited in Kehily, 2002:57). "Its 'natural' status as a dominant sexual category, gives it a 'taken for granted' quality" (ibid). This leads to homophobia and male dominance (Kehily, 2002) which might hinder the expression of the alternate ways of being.

Thus, lessening the probability of constructing new identities or engaging in nondominant discourses of gender and sexuality. Butler argues that reproductive heterosexuality is a normative ideal which is fictional (Jagger, 2008). "This normative ideal creates a false sense of stability and coherence that works in the interests of reproductive heterosexuality and serves to conceal the continuity which undermines the expressive model of gender identity on which it is based" (Gill, 2008:4).   Schools like many other social institutions are instrumental in creating academic and gender inequality, in privileging some, while oppressing others.

Feminist post-structuralism therefore challenges the assumption that schools have a 'captive' audience – which, when provided with sufficient knowledge, will make informed decisions about their sexual lives. Learners' views and knowledge of their sexual identities are perceived to not derive from a direct perception of reality or from an objective observation of the world, but from constant social processes and interactions between them and their environments and past generations. Sexuality is always being produced, is always changing and internally very diverse – bringing with it a discursive formation, a particular historical combination of discourses or discursive strategies with different histories (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:16). This study thus emphasised the importance of examining the discursive accounts of sexuality, in order to bring to light how constructions of sexuality are produced, reproduced, and contested in a township context. This understanding is very important in informing intervention programmes on young people's sexuality.

ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis comprises eight chapters. In **Chapter 2** the context of KwaMashu township is brought alive. It is thus aimed at opening a window on some historical and current accounts within the township schooling context that can broaden our understanding of gender and sexuality constructions of young people who participated in this study. Within this chapter, I have also shared and located my own experiences of growing up in KwaMashu, and schooling at Cwazimula high school.

The discussion of these historical, socio-political and educational dynamics is based on the view and understanding of sexual identities – particularly gender and sexuality as socially constructed, relational, context-specific and influenced by historical moments.

Furthermore, chapter 2 shares insight on the intersection of such historical accounts with the current educational and socio-political context.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature focusing on the key issues that relate to how young people from a South African township context, construct and negotiate their sexualities within and around the school contexts. Although the focus of this study is on sexuality of teenage learners, the review is not confined to school-going teenagers only, because of the recognition that learners are members of a wider social system, and their identity formations and sexuality constructs result from an intersection of the multidimensional factors. The review thus covers issues of gender and sexuality in the home, within and around the school, and in other subsystems of society like culture, religion, patriarchy and South Africa's legal and political systems.

Chapter 4 analyses the ethnographic journey I travelled within and around a school context, by describing the methodology and methods used in this study. The chapter begins by reflecting on how the ethnographic approach offered opportunities for the exploration of the meanings that young people in a township high school attach to sexuality. The chapter also reflects on the synergy and alignment between the theories framing this study (see Chapter 1) and the research methods adopted – which were youth-centred and participatory in nature. Throughout this chapter I also demonstrate how my own sense of identity was influenced and influences the different realities of the field. The rest of the chapter describes the field of study, the data collection process, and data analysis.

The **findings** of this study are presented in three separate but interconnected chapters. These chapters explore young people's negotiation of sexuality in the broader social context in **Chapter 5**, followed by the mezzo context in **chapter 6**, and, lastly, the micro context in **Chapter 7**. In **Chapter 5**, I explore the ways in which teenage girls and boys express sexuality in relation to social events, parties and gatherings in the context of '*inkwari*'.

Chapter 6 discusses how 'being a girl' and 'being a boy' is made available in social relations, predominantly through dominant discourses concerning 'appropriate' femininities and 'masculinities'. In **Chapter 7**, the focus turns to the various means through which sexuality is negotiated and contested. The chapter delineates the various ways in which boys and girls in

my study speak about and perform their sexuality in ways that accept, adapt and contest, to varying degrees, from dominant constructions of femininities and masculinities. The fluidity of meanings attached to gender and sexuality and the various ways through which sexuality shifts and changes, are highlighted. Attention is also drawn to both the agency and underlying gender inequalities that impact on how participants negotiated their sexuality.

Chapter 8 offers a brief summary of the study, some concluding thoughts on the findings, and their implications for theory, policy, practice and future research.

Chapter 2

THE TOWNSHIP, AFRICAN YOUNG IDENTITIES, AND SCHOOLING

INTRODUCTION

"I drive on the N2 freeway towards the north of Durban. I take Queen Nandi Drive off-ramp, which is 15 km away from the Durban City centre and 6 km away from KwaMashu township where I am heading. On my right hand side, I pass Petroport Nandi Drive, a fairly large petrol station with famous food restaurants such as Steers, KFC, and Mugg and Bean. On my left hand side, I pass the Riverhorse Valley Business Estate, whose main landmarks are Ethekwini Hospital and Heart Centre, and merger companies such as Mr Price regional warehouse, Mecer regional offices, Regional DHL Courier Company, Konica Minolta KZN, and The Builders Express warehouse. These are the new scenes representing the socioeconomic development of the post-apartheid era. The well-constructed Nandi Drive allows for the appreciation of the landscapes and the Avoca Hills residential development that I pass, as it takes me straight to Malandela Rd of KwaMashu township. Malandela Rd is KwaMashu's highway that passes through the township, linking it with the nearby townships. The scenes as I enter Malandela Rd are also striking. The main centres of attraction at Malandela Rd are around the main KwaMashu train, bus and taxi stations. These are the beautiful trees and flowers that decorate the highway; KwaMashu Metro Police Community Centre; and the two shopping centres with a chain of food, fashion, and furniture shops. There are also many small, medium and informal business activities taking place around the stations. These are petrol stations, hair and beauty salons, a centre for traditional medicines, art and craft centre, fruit and vegetable stalls – to name the few. Off Malandela to Cwazimula High School, I pass more small business enterprises, the local post office, KwaMashu sport centre, the local churches, and the extension wing of the KwaMashu Community Health Centre. One of the churches is more of a community centre, with its own private primary school and self-help project initiatives. KwaMashu looks so different post 1994." *(Field notes, 2012).*

IMAGE 1: Scenes around Queen Nandi Drive

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MAGE 2: Scenes of Malandela Rd	**IMAGE 3**: Landscapes decorating Malandela Rd
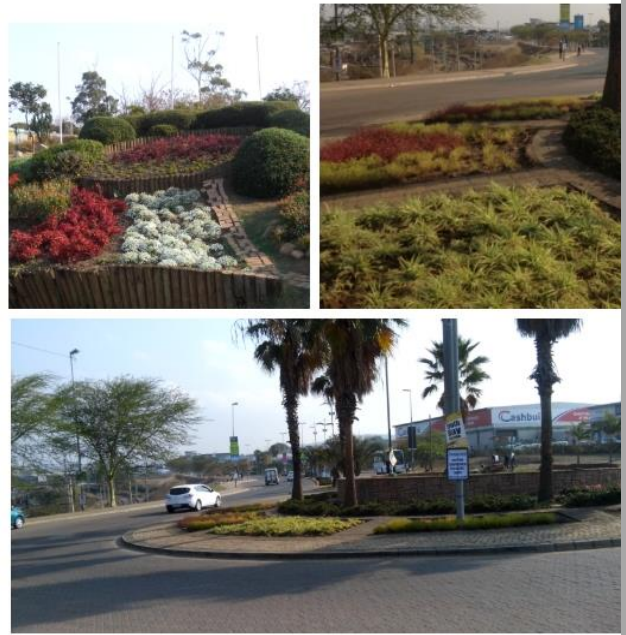
IMAGE 4: Small Businesses and Recreation Facilities around Malandela Rd
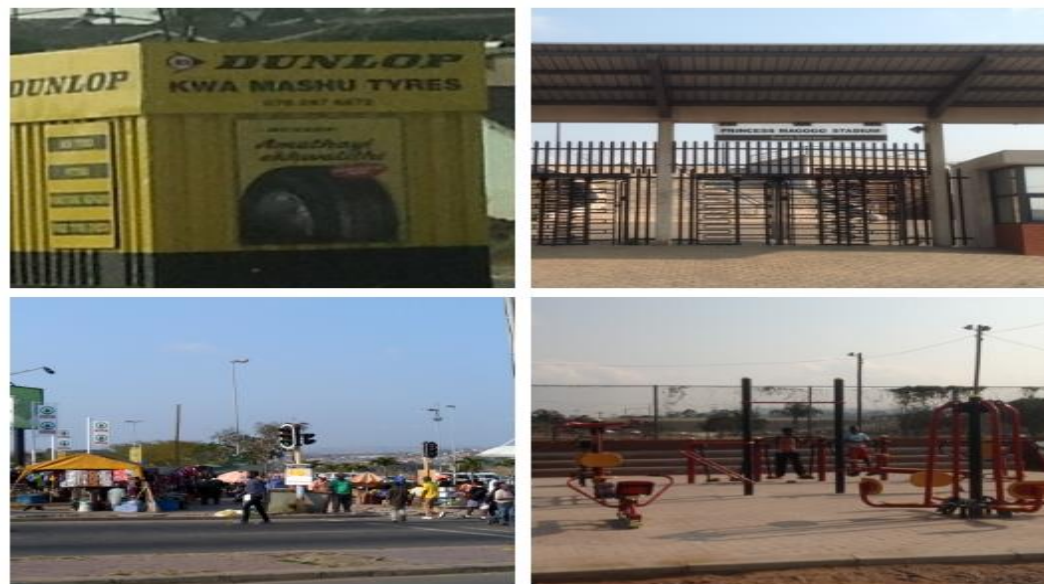
I begin this chapter with a snapshot of the route I travelled to my research site – to conduct fieldwork in the two semesters of 2012. The focus of my fieldwork was to gain an understanding of the significance that young people from a township high school attach to sexuality in their everyday lives. This understanding requires insight into how young people and their social context are interconnected. This social context is KwaMashu township.

A place intimately known as 'Esishwini' (nickname for KwaMashu) or 'Esinqawunqawini' (a place where dust never settles down) – a term that easily fits the dominant stereotypical depictions of townships as absolute harbours of unrest, chaos and suffering. However, without engaging critically with the snapshot presented above, without engaging with the emblematic social actors represented in it, and without examining the socio-economic injustices facing the marginalised people of South Africa, it is easy to make premature assumptions and conclusions about the state of KwaMashu in the post-apartheid era.

Like all South African townships, many strides in socio-political and economic development have been taken to advance KwaMashu, but it and its people still bear the scars of colonialism and apartheid. In articulating the present state of the townships, Cebekhulu (2013:20) stated that "It is true that Nelson Mandela took us to the 'promised land'; Thabo Mbeki took us to economic prosperity, which, however, excluded Black people; and Jacob Zuma has so far promised us a new path to growth, but yet the poor remain trapped in conditions of squalor". Thus, for a more realistic descriptive account of KwaMashu, we need an in-depth analysis of the area.

In this chapter, the context of KwaMashu is brought alive. The main purpose is to open a window on the historical accounts within the KwaMashu schooling context that can broaden our understanding of gender and sexuality constructions of learners from Cwazimula High School. However, the chaotic proliferation of the everyday life of people of KwaMashu makes it impractical to survey the entire history of KwaMashu and present it as a series of linked coherent topics (adapted from Ferguson, 2009). This chapter will thus attempt to present the historical accounts in a theoretically coherent way.

My discussion of these historical dynamics is based on the view and understanding of sexual identities – particularly gender and sexuality as socially constructed, relational, context-specific and influenced by historical moments. Understanding young people's sexual identity, therefore means examining constructions of identity, and this in turn means examining how society works (Hall and Du Gay, 1996, cited in Matsoso-Makhate and Wangenge-Ouma, 2009). "For feminists, an account of the construction of a self needs to show how social and material circumstances (including embodiment), change, and growth, all come together to make a self" (Griffiths, 1995:80).

The main discussions in this chapter begin with a brief history of KwaMashu, where socio-political and structural dynamics of apartheid South Africa and the transition brought by democracy are discussed. This discussion is informed by Giddens' view of society "as a structuration process – whereby human actions simultaneously structure and are structured by society" (Kaspersen, 2000:34). For Giddens, human actions are the product of a continuous interaction between an active agent and his/her structure. He spoke of the school and educational system as reflective of social practices. Thus, "sexuality is not a discrete domain; it shapes and is shaped by all the surrounding socio-structural relations" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:2). This implies that insight on Cwazimula learners' sexuality (social life) can be achieved through understanding the social practices of KwaMashu township, which are embedded in the historical accounts of the township. "Different social contexts involve different rules and taboos associated with sex and sexuality" (Okiria, 2014:128), which are rooted in their socio-political histories (Leclerc-Madlala, 1997).

I then proceed to describe and highlight the most visible schooling, teaching and learning experiences in the township schools during the apartheid era, where my own experiences as a learner at Cwazimula High School from 1984 to 1988, are central. Sexuality constructions and gender relations that permeated apartheid schooling, are discussed. In this part, I illuminate the interconnectedness and intersection of the socio-political and structural dynamics of the apartheid era and schooling as being salient factors in understanding the meanings that young people attach to gender and sexuality in their everyday lives and the ways they define and group themselves as teenage girls and boys in relation to dominant socio-political and sexuality discourses (Mathe, 2013; Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane, 2009). The last part of this chapter presents the information about Cwazimula High School and its people in the post-apartheid era – especially during my fieldwork in 2012.

The discussions throughout this chapter support the argument that "African identity and sexuality are not as plain and straightforward affair – as some have claimed" (Caldwell, Caldwell, and Quiggin, 1989:187). People present themselves differently in multiple contexts. Against racial stereotypes, debasing characterisation and dominant depictions of township teenagers as being ruthless, careless, insensitive, hypersexual – I argue that young township people are by no means a homogenous group (Hunter, 2010).

Their identities are not fixed or exclusive, but are fluid and embedded in the intersection of multidimensional factors. Like Ferguson (2009) who views a person's identity as relative and continually shifting boundaries, I view them as active agents who encounter competing discourses in relation to their lived worlds – which they accommodate, resist or accept (Bhana, 2013, 2002; Mathe, 2013; Anderson, 2009). In a country where masculinities and femininities are being constituted in the unavoidable context of HIV and AIDS, a country that suffers from the highest rape rates in the world, and where teenage pregnancy is normative (HSRC, 2014; Epstein and Morrell, 2012; UNAIDS, 2012; Baxen and Breilid, 2009; Pattman and Chege, 2003), I argue for a full exploration of meanings that young boys and girls attach to their gender and sexuality identities.

The full exploration included the understanding of the influence and esteem that my research participants attached in African values – such as the spiritual nature of human beings, 'ubuntu' (humanity to others) and collective identity. During my fieldwork, these values were identified by my research participants as important in their sexuality and gender construction. Furthermore, understanding the role played by rituals, social virtues and moral standards, such as 'umemulo' (a graduation ceremony in recognition of a girl's good sexual conduct), male circumcision, being 'born again', and learners' tendencies of finding affinity with others – became important during my fieldwork.

BRIEF HISTORY OF KWAMASHU TOWNSHIP

In South Africa, "the term 'township' has no formal definition but is commonly understood to refer to the underdeveloped, usually (but not only) urban, residential areas that during Apartheid were reserved for non-whites (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) who lived near or worked in areas that were designated white only" (Permegger and Godehart, 2007:2). These areas were built and enforced through "the Group Areas Act of 1950 and other town planning legislation which determined the strict separation of race groups until 1994" (ibid). For African residents, townships were areas of exclusion, oppression, control and containment of all aspects of life of the residents (ibid). Hlabangane (2014) asserts that, in spite of the demise of apartheid, townships continue to reflect the brutal history of South Africa.

KwaMashu – formerly a sugar cane plantation – is a township named in honour of Sir Marshall Campbell (1848 to 1917), who was "the sugar cane farmer who owned the land on which KwaMashu stands" (SAHO, 2014:1), and the parliamentarian concerned with Bantu affairs (Manson, 1981). The name means 'Place of Marshall', which was reduced and adapted to KwaMashu by isiZulu speakers, who struggled to pronounce the name 'Marshall'. It is Durban's oldest (1959) township that was created during the apartheid era to accommodate the mass resettlement of the forcibly removed Africans from the mixed race township of Umkhumbane (Cato Manor) (Bhatia, 2008). This resettlement was a process of great turmoil for KwaMashu and the rest of the townships which underwent similar experiences across South Africa. Clearly, from the onset, the identity of KwaMashu township and its people was constituted through the culture of forced segregation, defiance, resistance, acceptance, and adaptation.

KwaMashu is located about 20 km north of Durban City Central. "It is part of the Inanda, Ntuzuma, KwaMashu (INK) Area Based Management and Development area, and represents about 18% of Ethekwini Municipality's population (Everatt and Smith, 2008:6). "With almost half a million residents on 9423 ha, it constitutes one of the largest conglomerations of low-income residential areas in South Africa. The area consists of 15 wards, with a large number of informal settlements, limited basic service infrastructure, inadequate recreational facilities, and a shortage of social facilities" (Department of Provincial and Local Government cited in Everatt and Smith, 2008:6).

IMAGE 5: Map Showing position of KwaMashu in the northeastern Ethekwini Metro
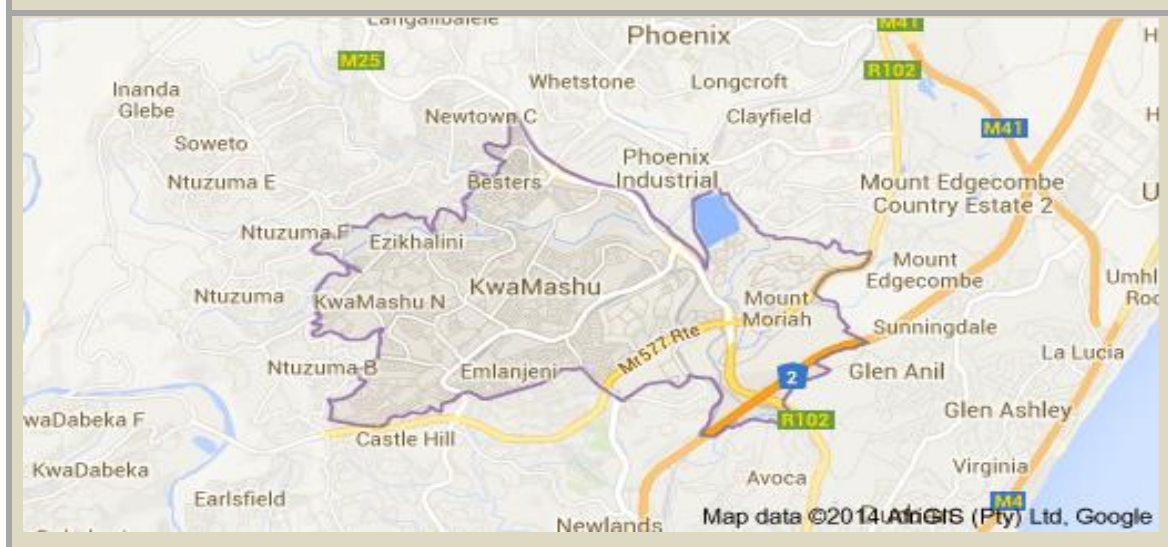
KwaMashu, like all other human settlements, cannot be described within a unified identity. It has a controversial history, and it is my desire that it be represented as such, throughout this chapter. In its multifaceted nature, many identities have emerged and are emerging – depending on the socio-political, cultural and structural resources. Mpama (2007), in his chapter entitled 'Black Solidarity and Black Divisions', spoke of his 'privileged' schooling in challenging the misconceptions that are generally associated with the uniformity of African identities.

According to him, there is a general misconception among his African peers that being African, and particularly having township roots, are fundamentally synonymous with living from hand to mouth, and, if not, that person is seen as not an authentic African. While Mpama views his African identity as being extremely informed by his race and his 'Blackness', he admitted that his schooling in a former whites-only school and his ability to speak English with a 'white' accent, is reflective of a different breed of Africans. It is thus important not to adopt blanket assumptions in understanding young people – even if they are from the same area, school, or of the same age. These youths are not homogenous in class, status, family backgrounds or intellectual abilities. It is only by getting close to them, though, that we can have a broader understanding of their sexuality and identity constructions.

I particularly believe that identity "is constructed differently across time by people of the same social class and differently at the same time by people whose class positions differ" (Roediger, 1991:7). I find the argument that views township identities as not homogenous, relevant in that it begins to move us away from dominant discourses that view people from the townships, particularly young people, as mirrors and victims of their environment without agency. The discussions in this chapter are thus an attempt of a much broader representation of KwaMashu township and its people. It is important to note that this representation is not, in any way, underplaying the harsh realities and socio-structural constraints of growing up in a township. Rather, it acknowledges human development, especially identity constructions, as more like tree branches extending to different directions.

The Artistic KwaMashu

KwaMashu is known for its vibrant urban culture, lively indigenous performance arts scene, strong political and civic alliances and activism, and most recently, for its urban renewal projects – which continue to transform this community (Bhatia, 2008; Department of Social Development (DSD), 2008). Most prevalent in South African townships, KwaMashu residents fight adversity with their music, art, religion and culture. Some of the legendary faces and places of KwaMashu are: the Princess Magogo Soccer Stadium; Ekhaya Multi Art Centre, Uzalo SA television series; the indigenous and Christian churches; the Vibe FM 94.7 community radio station; Smanga Khumalo who "is the first Black jockey to win South Africa's richest horse race" (Lane, 2013:1); Siyabonga Nomvete the famous national and international soccer player; Henry Cele, who played the lead role in the movie *Shaka Zulu*; Leleti Khumalo, who played the lead role in *Sarafina* and *Yesterday* movies; Nomzamo Mbatha and Bheki Khwane of the famous *isiBay*a drama telenovella; comedians like Ndaba Mhlongo and Simphiwe Shembe; Edmund Mhlongo, who is the Director of Ekhaya Multi Art Centre; and musicians like Tu Nokwe, Debora Fraser, Sipho Gumede, Busi Mhlongo, Zakes Bantwini, Mthunzi Namba, and Avante.

Biko (1978:42) states that "nothing dramatizes the eagerness of the African to communicate with each other more than their love for song and rhythm". In song lay the rare ability of Africans to find humour and creativity in impossible conditions (African Cream, 2009). These assertions remind me of how music and rhythm were an important communication tool when I was growing up in KwaMashu. Music and rhythm was everywhere – in the trains and buses to and from school or work, in the games we played as young people, on the sport fields, and in places like schools, churches, mines, hospitals, and prisons. They featured in all our emotional states, experiences, occasions and aspirations. We used music and rhythm to communicate our struggles, joys, heartbreaks, family and political structures, death, achievements, spirituality, sexuality and sexual feelings, assets and losses, messages on marriage and birth rights, and to demonstrate the ancestors or God's inexorable movement toward a humanising function (Asante, 2003; Ahlberg, 1994; Mbiti, 1990).

"Any suffering experienced in the township was made much more real by song and rhythm" (Biko, 1978:42). In KwaMashu and most townships, political songs and 'toyi toyi dance' (the political dance of coordinated foot-stamping rhythms) were used to demonstrate the

communities' anger, hurt, resistance and strategies against the apartheid regime. I recall one of the political songs usually sung during funeral ceremonies of the fallen freedom fighters. The lyrics of this song are: "*Awuzithulele mama, noma sengifile mina, ngobe ngifela lona izwe lakithi i South Africa. Sasuka ekhaya, sangena kwamanyamazwe, lapho kungazi khona ubaba nomama, silandela inkululeko*" (keep quiet mom, even when I die, because I will be dying for our country South Africa. We are leaving home for other countries, where our mothers and fathers do not know, we are going after our freedom). This song communicated the hurt and loss, calmed the bereaved families, and at the same time recruited and reinforced *amaqabane*'s (political comrades) commitment to the armed struggle and inspired them to go into exile for South Africa's freedom. The feeling of togetherness, sameness, and the binding rhythm during singing made the mourners brush off their fears and the burdens of death and grieving; and helped to re-commit to the strategies of overthrowing the apartheid government. It was a common trend during the apartheid era for *amaqabane* to be reported missing (go into exile) after a gathering, such as a funeral.

In KwaMashu, dance and music is not just a historical culture associated with the apartheid regime – it is still central in the lives of the youth of today; "it is a way they learn about our social world, express emotions, and relax" (Agbo-Quaye, 2010 cited in Nikodym, 2013:3). During my fieldwork, I observed with interest the animated passion expressed by the Cwazimula learners, where music is concerned. Notably, in the early 1990s changes that came with the democratic South Africa inevitably affected the culture and practices of the South African music. The dominance of the revolution and the indigenous music have been replaced by contemporary music like the famous township music called *kwaito*. Mhlambi (2004:118) defines *kwaito* "as a term taken from the '*isicamtho*' (township slang) word '*amakwaitos*' (which means gangster)".

Kwaito music influenced by the political, social and economic transition in South Africa, emerged as "a practical manifestation of the freedom of expression – for which the youth of South Africa had longed" (Mhlambi, 2004:118). The lyrics, vocal sound, dance and rhythm of *kwaito* illustrate the freedom of expression that is generally conceptualised as a communal activity. However, this freedom of expression does not always yield positive effects, and in some instances has been associated with perpetuating gang violence, insubordinating girls, and with rape and crime in the townships.

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Many *kwaito* songs draw much of their traits from American hip-hop – which has been criticised for its overtly sexualised, misogynistic, sexually objectifying lyrics, where female participation is limited to roles that depicts them as sexually available and reinforcing stereotypic gender attitudes.

"A dialogue between a man and a woman, where a man usually does the rhythmic speech – which often forms the central part of the song and has more words that the woman's lyrics" (Mhlambi, 2004:120) – is a very common feature in *kwaito*. "This is a representation of the sexual subtexts present in *kwaito* music, where the woman's role is made subservient by merely reiterating what the man has said" (ibid). *Kwaito* music also tends to describe or present the pictures of the unstable social spaces, such as poor township houses, street parties, *enkwarini* (clubbing in open fields or parks), and night clubs where young people meet in pursuit of social leisure. What is of concern, is *kwaito*'s manifestation and reinforcement of the intersecting dominant racist and sexist discourse perceived to shape sexuality constructs of township girls and boys.

During my fieldwork, I found that examination of some of the videos and the lyrics of some *kwaito* songs played a huge role in understanding *kwaito*'s salient role in influencing the sexual scripts of teenage boys and girls in my study, and, very importantly, in broadening our insight of young people's informal sexual cultures. For instance, DJ Siyanda's popular song *Iwewe* (township slang widely translated to mean a vagina) is one of the songs viewed to position women as sexual objects and to fuel transactional sex, '*gold digger*' mentality or '*triple Cs era*' (a person matters when in possession of cash, a car and a cellphone). The chorus in this song can be loosely translated to be: 'I do not have money, I do not have a tender, I have nothing, but I have my vagina'. My argument here, is that such songs appear to perpetuate the culture of '*sugar daddies*' (older man who provide young girls with cash and material luxuries in exchange for sex) and of '*kudliwa imali, kudliwa umuntu*' (you eat my money, I eat you) among township youth. Consequently, these cultures have provided girls with guidelines for individual self-concepts and behaviour, and a gauge by which they can measure the extent to which they meet sexual commodity expectations (adapted from Ross and Coleman, 2011). For boys, they have resulted in them sexually assaulting and coercing girls to have sex, or in extreme cases, to rape girls during street bashes or '*enkwarini*'.

My discussion of music here should not be viewed as the focus of my argument. My main argument is the importance of understanding how and where young people make meaning of their sexual selves. I believe that an analysis of a social practice such as music and young people's experiences of it – is a profuse source of knowledge of the practices, structures and systems which influence and have influenced their identity and sexuality constructions. It is for this reason that I detailed the lyrics of the political and *kwaito* songs discussed above and have showed how the production of either *amaqabane* or *sugar daddies* is perceived to have emerged from their influences. I insist that without full insight of the systems that institutionalise township identities, any behavioural interventions aimed at eradication of gender inequalities, heterosexism, sexual violence, objectification of girls and women, and homophobia – is unlikely to provide a major breakthrough.

The Resilient KwaMashu

The harsh realities in the townships have always provided opportunities for growth and development for some, and obstacles for others. Hence, KwaMashu is the mother and father to South Africa's prominent political figures whose political profiles were shaped and shape their experiences of growing up in KwaMashu. These figures are: Henry Zondo who went into exile at age 16 and at age 19 was sentenced to hang by the apartheid government for planting a bomb at Manzimtoti; Jeff Radebe who is the Minister of Justice; Nomsa Dube, the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) MEC; and Dumisani Henry Makhaye who was the KZN MEC and former commander and trainer of Umkhonto Wesizwe (the armed wing of the African National Congress) – to name a few.

KwaMashu residences are also notable for "the easiness with which they communicate with each other – which is not forced by authority, but rather is inherent in the make-up of African people" (Biko, 1978:30). During my fieldwork, I experienced the various degrees of friendliness from the learners and teachers from Cwazimula. I observed and experienced intimacy as "a term not exclusive for particular friends – but applying to a whole group of people who find themselves together either through work, school or residential requirements" (ibid). The collective identity commonly expressed by township people through their value of '*ubuntu*', makes no one feel to be an unnecessary intruder into someone's business (Asante, 2003).

Influenced by the African idiom '*it takes a village to raise a child*' and the African value of *'ubuntu'* – growing up in a township, any adult in your neighbourhood was every child's potential parent. This arrangement was not just symbolic. This meant that a neighbour could discipline you on behalf of your parents and could act as your representative in formal settings like the school, in the absence of your parents or legal guardian. Formal pre-primary schools or school after-care facilities were an alien system of child minding. With the lack of recreational facilities, neighbours and their houses were safe spaces for children to grow up and play. From an early age, African children learned to share and experience the terms 'brother' and 'sister' as not exclusive to those who share the same blood. Through games like *masgcozi* (imitation family house) where cooking was one of the main activities, children experienced food items and cooking as social items – not as class or economic items.

Children prepared and ate their meals for the pleasure of being together, and not the taste or quality of the food. According to Biko (1987:42), "Africans regard their living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among each other, but as a deliberate act of God to make them a community of brothers and sisters, jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life".

Township communal experiences and daily living instilled a sense of sameness, group pride, and solidarity. The sameness concerns the historical realities or African cultural system. For instance, many Africans grew up in an extended family setting or had a relative or family friend living with them, at a given point of their life span. Nevertheless, the same idealistic community arrangements have not always acted in the best interest of the community members - especially the children. It is this same community arrangement that the paedophiles and child abusers of the 21st Century have used to inflict harm on children. In 90% of children who are sexually abused in South Africa, the child knows the offender, and neighbours prove to be the most common alleged offenders (Pretorius, Mbokazi, Hlaise and Jacklin, 2012). Games like *masgcozi*, which mirrored the dominant family structures, were one of the gender factories (adapted from Berk, 1985) which institutionalised the ideology, that the 'women's place is in the kitchen'.

The Patronising KwaMashu

"Apartheid is often constructed as a largely political construct, but architecture and planning were critical to implementing apartheid policies" (Findley and Ogbu, 2014). Like Durban's oldest townships – Umlazi, Lamontville, and Chesterville – KwaMashu bears the heavy scars of housing "communities forcibly removed from their rightful homes, designated as an area for Black people" (Raniga and Ngcobo, 2014:579), and of being an area where major economic initiatives were prohibited and movements restricted (Group Areas Act, 1950). The construction of townships as temporal workforce housing, designed as a series of 'matchbox' houses with no privacy and legal ownership, until recently, and with strictly controlled movements of residence, have not only had the negative socio-political effects on township residences, but also serious psychological effects.

For a long time, townships were neglected and dominated by the apartheid government, avoided by white South Africans, and even Africans in various ways tried to wash them off their skins (Maluleka, 1995). For many years, basic features of the township were '*indawo yokuhlala*' (a house) not '*ikhaya*' (a home), dominance, resistance, a deprivation trap, lack of sense of ownership by residencies, and in many instances, a refugee camp for illegal job seekers. Consequently, no sense of ownership, low self-confidence, diseases, squalor, unemployment, crime, prostitution and ignorance feature prominently in the livelihoods of this population (Cebekhulu and Mantzaris, 2007).

KwaMashu is one of the townships hardest hit by the mid-1970s to early 1990s political unrest (Nxumalo, 1993). The fights between political rivals in the community and between the community and agents of apartheid, left the community disintegrated – with high levels of mistrust and a burden of displaced youth who dropped out of school to join the armed wings of their political parties in defence of their communities. While the white men were central to the struggle against apartheid, in KwaMashu the fights between the supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and those of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) were very intense and claimed many lives (Bonnin, 2006). KwaMashu became a place of death and terror, and violence was thought to be one of the few ways township men could assert their masculinity in an increasingly frustrating and disintegrating environment (Campbell, 1992, cited in Leclerc-Madlala, 1997).

With the spread of the AIDS pandemic, new cemeteries were opened in the townships and declared full after a few months (Cebekhulu and Mantzaris, 2007). Although there are no specific statistics of HIV and AIDS infection in KwaMashu, it can be expected to mirror the high infection rate in KwaZulu-Natal as a whole. "In 2012, it is estimated that 12.2% of the South African population (6.4 million persons) were HIV-positive and KwaZulu-Natal continued to lead South Africa in HIV prevalence by 16.9%. While this report stated that rural informal area residents had a significantly higher HIV prevalence than urban formal area residents" (Shisana, Rehle, Simbayi, Zuma, Jooste, Zungu, Labadarios, Onoya, et al. (2014: XXV), EThekwini Metro is still the highest (14.5%) of the eight South African metropolitan municipalities.

Alarmingly, the population with highest risk of HIV exposure (31.6%), is Black African females aged 20-34 years (ibid). Given that this population group does not fall within my research target population was not a relief, since the period of their first HIV incidence was not stated. There is a high possibility that they were infected during their teen stage. Actually, "in the teenage population, the estimated HIV prevalence among females was eight times that of their male counterparts. This suggested that female teenagers aged 15–19 years are more likely than their male counterparts to have sex, not with their peers – but with older sex partners" (Shisani et al, 2014: XXV).

Several factors contributed to the explosive expansion of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in South Africa and among African communities (see Setshedi and de la Monte, 2011). In my view, the most damaging factors fuelling HIVand AIDS are denial, stigma, and the gendered nature of HIV – mostly driven by socio-economic status. In 1998, the KwaMashu community made international headlines for stoning Gugu Dlamini to death after she publicly disclosed her HIV-positive status (Delius and Glaser, 2005; Bhatia, 2008). I argue that, by viewing HIV as a disease for those who are immoral, 'loose' girls, and those abusing drugs – we run a risk of excluding 'good' girls and 'smart' boys in our intervention programmes, and consequently new infections will continue to increase (see HSRC, 2014; UNAIDS, 2012).

In 1999, KwaMashu was earmarked a presidential priority area because of its high unemployment rate, inadequate physical infrastructure, high rates of deprivation, high crime rate, and turbulent political history (Rohrer, 2010; Bhatia, 2008; Rauch, 2002). In terms of

crime, Umlazi is associated with car thieves, Lamontville with shoplifters, Chesterville with housebreaking and shoplifting, and KwaMashu with murderers (Cebekhulu and Mantzaris, 2007). In 2010, the media dubbed KwaMashu with the unfortunate honour of being South Africa's murder capital. Even in 2014 as South Africa was preparing for general elections, the media reported KwaMashu as being a volatile area.

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING IN KWAMASHU

Apartheid Education in KwaMashu

The history of schooling and education in South Africa has always been contentious and one of the tools that institutionalised inequalities. As early as 1890, "the former Superintendent-General of the Cape Colony proclaimed: "the sons and daughters of the colonists and those who hither their lot with them, should have at least an education as their peers in Europe enjoy, with such local identifications as will fit them to maintain their superiority and supremacy in the land" (de Villiers and Ntshoe, 2014:596). This state of educational affairs was dramatically affected by the introduction of the the of "Bantu Education (law 43 of 1953), which became the pillar of the apartheid system" (Byrnes, 1996:56).

The main two "architects of Bantu Education were Dr Eiselen and Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, who adopted many elements of German Nazi philosophy" (Byrnes, 1996:56). The stipulations of the Bantu Education Act were a response to the Eiselen Commission's 1952 recommendations on Native Education, that education provisioning for African communities was not to be of the same quality as that of other racial groups (Horrel, 1984; Hartshome, 1999; Kallaway, 2002; Soudien, 2002, cited in Ngcobo, 2005). Bantu education confined Africans to racially segregated, ethnically organised, poorly resourced, predominantly non-technical and non-scientific schooling. "Schools were to equip a few Africans with the skills deemed necessary, but most importantly – they were expected to limit aspirations" (Samoff, 2008: xii).

Bantu education was so inferior, that the financially abled Africans responded by seeking alternative education – rather than subjecting their dependants to its provisioning (Ngcobo, 2005). Some did this by 'shipping' their dependants to schools in neighbouring independent African states like Swaziland, Botswana and Lesotho, or to Christian missionary boarding

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schools in the country (Horrel, 1984, cited in Ngcobo, 2005). Most Africans, especially those from the township who were already hard hit by apartheid forces; had no choice but to study Bantu Education.

Dr Verwoerd, who was Minister of Native Affairs, believed that Africans should be taught at a very young age that they are inferior to Europeans. He warned that "education of the Blacks would create a class of people who have come to believe that they are superior to their people and that, therefore, their spiritual, economic and political home is with the civilised community (Europeans) of South Africa" (SAIRR, 1986, cited in de Villiers et al., 2014). According to Verwoerd, Africans 'should be educated for their opportunities in life', and there was no place for them 'above the level of certain forms of labour'. "He also felt that it was unnecessary for Africans to learn mathematics, if they in any case, were not going to use it" (*Financial Mail*, 1990:32, cited in de Villiers et al., 2014). Partly because of this policy, very few Africans took mathematics as a subject.

During my high school years (1986-1989) at Cwazimula, for instance, the school had only three streams of subject choices for grade 10 upwards – despite it being called a comprehensive high school. These were Science, Commerce and General Subjects. The subject variations in these streams were, as follows: All students did the three compulsory languages – isiZulu, English and Afrikaans; Science learners did mathematics, physics, and biology; Commerce learners did mathematics, accounting, and business economics; and General subject learners did biology, history, and geography. Of the six grade 12 classes in 1989, we had one science class, two commerce classes, and the rest were general subject classes – and this was a trend in most African schools. Notable was that the science and commerce classes had fewer learner numbers per class (less than 30) than the general stream, which had up to 50 learners per class.

The criteria used to allocate students in the science and commerce streams from grade 10 upwards, were not based on any career guidance or career aspirations, but on excellent academic performance in grade 9. Particularly for the science class, only learners in the top 35 in grade 9 were allowed to do science. Subject choices were not based on interests or future career path, but were a technical exercise based on marks.

Consequently, many high school graduates decided on their post-high school career choices, after receiving their matric results – and I was one of them.

The after-effects of Verwoerd's dream meant that most matriculants (high school graduates) from Cwazimula High School and the other African schools, had fewer learners with science and commercial subjects – and that automatically excluded them from post high school careers that are the port of South African and global economy. In agreement was the report by the Research Institute for Educational Planning (1994), cited in de Villiers et al. (2014:598), which stated that, "partly as a result of Bantu education policy, only 27.4% of Black grade 12 learners took mathematics in 1993, while the corresponding figure for Whites was dramatically higher at 71.2%". Even for those who did mathematics, most passed it at standard grade, which symbolised inferior mathematics that is inadequate for post high school level.

Cwazimula in the mid-1980s

During apartheid, there was a place for the African children in the society and that place was schools. However, the schools' main function was not the academic advancement of the African children, but was to keep them contained. Cwazimula High School was introduced as one of the projects of the KwaZulu government to reduce school shortages in KwaMashu. It began to function in January 1983. From its inception, Cwazimula served different purposes for different audiences. As a new school, with much better infrastructure compared to existing local schools, it was a symbol of new beginnings – which brought hope and pride to community members.

For the apartheid government, Cwazimula was adding to many of their captivity sites where African children were kept away from their residences and businesses and were trained to serve the white minority. For the KwaZulu government, Cwazimula was one of the institutions to strengthen Zulu ethnic identities and to popularise the governing IFP. For the educators, this was a centre for academic excellence.

In the first three years of it opening, a strict academic criterion was used to screen learners wanting to enrol at Cwazimula. Learners with very poor performance in senior primary school were rejected. I still recall the animosity that developed between me and my senior primary school friends, who were rejected from Cwazimula. Being rejected from Cwazimula, to them, became more than an academic issue – it became a class issue. Being a learner at Cwazimula thus became a status symbol. The common public perception of Cwazimula learners, was that of '*bayazitshele*' (they think they are better). Cwazimula learners viewed themselves as being academically and behaviourally better than the rest of '*izibi zelokishi'* (township weeds).

The educators also asserted this perception, by reminding us how privileged we were to be schooled at Cwazimula, and by upholding a very strict code of practice. These privileges and the strict code were reflected in many elements of the school. The school was one of very few that had a concrete fence, and with a lockable gate. As you entered, and in front of each classroom, there were beautiful landscaped flower gardens that were tended by learners. The school had a technical building which symbolised the future plans of having technical subjects, once resourced. Cwazimula was known for a culture of no compromise in terms of adhering to orthodox school practices like wearing our green and white school uniforms, the selection of prefects, sports competitions, the school timetable, compulsory attendance of morning assembly which infused only the Christian religion, corporal punishment, formal teacher-learner greetings, teacher-learner interactions during lessons – and many others.

Power, regulation and discipline were central to schooling culture at Cwazimula. The school was not the space to understand what learners needed, what they were going through, or what their interests were; rather, it was a space of power and control. Even things like sporting activities and choir practices were forced on so many leaners. Once talented learners were discovered during sporting trials or music auditions that were compulsory for every learner, those learners had no choice but to participate in sporting activities. For many learners, playing sport or being in a school choir meant being in school for many hours before or after school, and that compromised their safety – especially since they walked long distances or used public transport to or from school. Apartheid schooling was not developmental – but was punitive.

Control and discipline were not limited to academic activities, sporting activities or school ritual. They were extended to interpersonal relationships between learners. Intimate relationships between girls and boys were a punishable offence. Random Friday assemblies, for instance, were popularly known as days where learners who were in intimate relationships were reported to the teachers, publicly humiliated, and punished. Similarly, in the study by Renold (2002) and Kehily (2003), teachers used symbolic and physical violence "to police the boundaries of gender, sexual and authority relations instituted in the school" (Dunne, 2007:502). In isiZulu, this day was referred to as '*usuku lokukhipha abaqomile*' (a day to expose lovers). Consequently, girls and boys avoided being too friendly towards one another, so they would not be mistaken as lovers.

I argue that the regulatory discourse such as '*usuku lokukhipha abaqomile*', is problematic in how it worked "to ultimately deny young people as sexual subjects, and divested them of the kind of agency necessary to look after their sexual wellbeing" (Allen, 2007:222). This discourse produced a highly gender-segregated school environment, and removed opportunities for girls and boys to understand one another in a non-threatening environment, to co-construct their identities, and to form friendly relationships. Expectedly, within this discourse, there was no support for learners who were trying to make sense of their sexual selves. Learners had to explore their sexuality in deep secrecy and usually with consequences such as unplanned pregnancies and gender-based violence. Allen (2007:222) warns that, "denying young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively, makes it harder for students to access the kind of sexual agency which might make their practise of safer sex more probable". "A young person who views themselves as positively and legitimately sexual, is typically in a much stronger position to act in ways that support their sexual wellbeing – than someone who considers their sexuality as inherently wrong" (ibid).

The culture of regulation and control at Cwazimula not only yielded negative results. Unlike many township schools, there were strict rules on what food and who provided food to learners during school breaks. The school only allowed one government-sponsored vendor to sell food on the school premises. The common lunch meal was flavoured bread rolls, a fruit, and juice – at R0,50c per meal. This meal was presentable, affordable, and big enough for those who wanted to share a meal.

While there was no feeding scheme at school, a poor diet and hunger were an uncommon sight for Cwazimula learners. In its first three years of existence, Cwazimula strived for a differently-cultured township school environment. What remained the same for Cwazimula and the rest of the township schools, were the socio-political context from which Cwazimula was rooted, and the apartheid policies that governed the school.

Teaching and Learning at Cwazimula in the mid-1980s

Apartheid and Bantu Education affected Cwazimula like the rest of the country. Bantu Education and its curriculum were epistemologically and ideologically oppressive to the African child and indigenous South Africans. It forced African children to rote learn and to be passive recipients of the 'truths' presented by the white men's curriculum – through what Freire (1973) called the 'banking' type of education. Empowering learners and developing their capacities to resist any form of interpersonal bias and inequalities was construed as terrorism. While education systems have always been hierarchical, Bantu Education was the worse form of hierarchical and authoritative system.

At Cwazimula, the teachers were the authority figures who were experts in their subjects, and the learners were 'empty vessels' – seen learning only if they do not question or challenge the teachers and their knowledge. Learners who were perceived to be challenging the teachers' authority, and those who did not meet expected academic and behavioural standards, received severe corporal punishment. Learners who tried to resist or who resisted punishment, were suspended or expelled from school. Learners who failed to endure corporal punishment dropped out of school, and became the famous criminals, who, because of their young age, terrorised girls and younger children – their vulnerable targets. The other learners '*took it like men and obedient girls*'. Morrell warned that the purposeful and frequent infliction of pain by those in authority in an institutional setting, promoted violent masculinities (Morrell, 1994, 1997, cited in Morrell, 2001). Bluntly, Morrell (2001) viewed corporal punishment as teaching boys to be tough and uncomplaining, and teaching girls 'their place' – to be submissive and unquestioning.

Bantu Education was not learner-centred or the education of choice or interests. Instead, it was authority and adult-centred. Teachers were expected to enter the classrooms, deliver their prescribed lessons, and then leave. In the classroom, critical questioning and thinking was a crime, and the few teachers who were perceived or observed deviating from the prescribed conservative pedagogical approaches, were arrested or assaulted.

I recall an incidence when the apartheid special branch police arrested our matric English teacher, whom they accused of using the Shakespearean novel *Macbeth* as a tool for political conscientisation of learners. The teacher's crime was said to have led learners to explore and believe in the possibilities of overthrowing even the strongest armies - such as what King Duncan had done in *Macbeth*. To them, the teacher was preparing learners to overthrow the apartheid government. What the apartheid system failed to realise, was that human beings are not mere passive agents that "oppressors and oppressive systems try to turn them into" (Glass, 2001:16). Rather, they are active agents "that exist meaningfully in and with the world of history and culture that humans themselves have produced" (ibid: 17).

As part of the apartheid government's indoctrination, South African history was disfigured, distorted and used as a tool to institutionalise white supremacy. History, as a subject, taught learners that Jan van Riebeek (the first European to land at the Cape) discovered South Africa in 1652, whereas Cape Town, South Africa, had it inhabitants before the arrival of the European settlers. Through the curriculum, we were made to believe that the ANC was a terrorist organisation and that the apartheid regime puppets like leaders of the former "homelands" – Mangosuthu Buthelezi, George Mzivubu Mathanzima, Lucus Mangope and Patrick Mphephu – were the true sons of the soil (Cebekhulu, 2013:16).

It was through the history curriculum that African children were made to believe that Africans had no positive contribution to the development of South Africa, and their only historical contributions were through wars and ethnic fights where they were defeated if fighting against the white men. "The Black man's history in this country was presented as a long succession of defeats" (Biko, 1978:95). "A great nation-builder like Shaka Zulu was painted as a cruel tyrant who frequently attacked smaller tribes for no reason but for some sadistic purpose" (ibid).

It is no wonder that the created violent and cruel masculine images and stories of kings like Shaka Zulu, are still stuck with many Africans. It is not surprising that some Zulu boys and men have a fatalistic belief – that violent masculinity is inherently African and a way of life for the Zulu tribe.

Cwazimula and the Quest for People's Education in the late 1980s

Bantu Education dehumanised the learners by making them the "objects of history and culture and denied them their capacity to be self-defining subjects creating history and culture" (Glass, 2001:16). However, what it failed to realise was Freire (1973)'s argument that the struggle "to be free, human, and to make history and culture from the given situation, is an inherent possibility of the human condition" (Tonsing, 2010:12). For learners, their daily experiences of the apartheid schooling presented concrete problems, along with opportunities for transformation. Education became to be "at the centre of the struggle to end apartheid and transform society" (Weber, 2008: ix), and the discussions in this section dominantly reflect education as a struggle against apartheid.

The "energetic education activism of the mid-1970s to 1990, nurtured intense debates about curriculum, policy and practice" (Weber, 2008: x), which will constitute democratic people's education. "In the 1980s, the anti-apartheid struggle's educational and political goals became clearer, with the demand for 'people's education for people's power" (Mathebula, 2013:638). From the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, schools openly "became staging grounds for the struggle against apartheid" (Weber, 2008: ix), and earners' school and leisure time was exchanged for active political involvement. As the political education and struggle against apartheid intensified, the quest for quality education became pivotal. This also brought a shift in what learners aspired to, and conceived as quality education.

The whites-only schools that many African learners grew up hearing as being different and resourceful compared to theirs – were no longer used as a measure of quality education. In fact, many African learners could not even imagine whites-only schools, because of policies like the 1985 State of Emergency, which intensified the control of movements within and outside townships, and ensured that Africans did not enter whites-only areas – except when they were they were providing the expected labour necessary to maintain the apartheid regime.

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As political conscientisation grew among the township learners, their shared education, fantasy and vision became the one of having schools with values and a philosophy of the then Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO). SOMAFCO was a school established in Tanzania by the ANC in 1978 to accommodate the young ANC exiles who had escaped South Africa after the 1976 Soweto uprising. This was the school described explicitly during political meetings taking place in the township schools. SOMAFCO's values, culture and pedagogical philosophies were rooted in free and critical thinking and 'education with production'.

'Education with production' was "a socialist ideology aimed at combining academic activities with physical work" (Maaba, 2004:295). The implication was that even a person who drops out of school will have manual and mental skills with which to make a living. These education characteristics were diametrically contrasting to the academically paralysing Bantu education.

The SOMAFCO curriculum was a mixture of traditional and political education. "By 1988, the subjects studied at SOMAFCO included English, mathematics, history, history of the struggle (the ANC struggle), development of societies, literature, art, technical drawing, integrated sciences, geography, chemistry, agricultural science, typing, and physics" (Maaba, 2004:292). Efforts were made to make education relevant and to be associated with the everyday lives of the learners. "Geography, for instance, was taught in the field and mountains, as well as in the classroom" (ibid), and geography learners ran their own weather stations. The teachers founded subject-related clubs like 'maths clubs'. Maths clubs "helped to make the subject a joint adventure in the mathematical world – rather than the situation of a desperate individual struggling with an intractable subject" (Maaba, 2004:293). KwaMashu learners yearned for this type of education which could give them both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to access and control the socio-political, economical, and structural forces influencing their everyday lives.

Turbulent Schooling of the late 1980s

Schooling and learners of the late 1980s, especially 1988-1989, "were products of the shattered educational system moulded by the almost anarchic violence" (Maaba, 2004:300).

"Many young people were committed to destroying the school system because of its identification with apartheid" (Byrnes, 1996:1), and all of it oppressive and authoritative elements.

The death of the regional UDF leader, Victoria Mxenge, on 5 August 1985 – murdered outside her home in Umlazi township – heightened the youth protests and violence attacks on government buildings (Sitas, 1986, cited in Bonnin, 2006). The response to her death was almost immediate; the youth took to the streets – making the school and township ungovernable. The schools might have belonged to the government of the time, but the political liberation movements set the agendas.

At Cwazimula, in its first three years (1983-1985) of existence, the school authorities attended to anything that affected the learners. However, from 1986, the student unions under the leadership of the students' representative council (SRC) unofficially became the face of the school leadership. Any grievances regarding schooling or teacher-learner relationships, or learner-learner relationships, were reported to the SRC – who would decide which matters would be reported to the authorities or would be resolved by themselves. The "Kangaroo or People's Courts" widely adopted by KwaMashu residences as a community justice practice formed as part of their defiance of apartheid laws – were also adopted in the school, and became administered by the SRC.

These courts presided over cases committed by learners and teachers alike. Most learners' cases commonly reported were related to suspicions of being a political spy and the sexual harassment of girls. For teachers, it was mostly cases on the use of corporal punishment and having an intimate relationship with learners. The regulation of sexuality and the public shaming of those involved in 'improper' intimate relationships that were previously done by teachers, became the learners' responsibility. Most outcomes of the SRC decisions were asserted through forceful exclusions of the perpetrator, protests, learned violence or school boycotts.

 With all the unconventional processes, procedures and verdicts from the "Kangaroo Courts", the positive outcome from them was that the school became an environment with minimal incidences of sexual exploitation or harassment of girls. The courts instilled a sense of

comradeship among boys and girls, reminding them of the role of comradeship during Hector Peterson's incident of 1976, while teachers who exploited their position of power were put in their rightful places and reminded of their responsibility as adult members of the school.

Apart from representing the voices of students, the SRC organised political activities like a commemoration of political anniversaries, and marches inside and between the schools, or in the community. These were illegal gatherings marked by toyi-toyi dancing, singing of liberation songs, carrying placards with political messages, and wearing t-shirts commemorating burned political figures or organisations. These gatherings and activities were compulsory for every learner. There was no room for individuality or personal preferences. 'You were either with us or against us'. Non-participants were dealt with unkindly.

Some influential slogans of the time were: 'an injury to one is an injury to all', 'freedom first, education later', '*Amandla, Awethu'* (power to the people), and '*uMandela uthe ayihlome ihlasele'* (Mandela is calling for the armed struggle and sabotages). It was such slogans and activities that influenced the youth to be fearless, to see private as political, and to transform things like school uniforms to represent a collective identity, solidarity and unity among KwaMashu learners. By the end of 1987, all KwaMashu learners wore black and white as their school uniform colours and the boycotting of the prescribed school uniform was coupled with the boycotting of many school rules, rituals and practices.

All these activities were illegal, according to the government of the day. Worse, classes were usually suspended or boycotted during these activities – and that angered the school authorities, police forces and opposition parties (in KwaZulu-Natal the IFP and National Party). Their anger was always expressed through the beatings, teargassing, shooting or arresting of the learners. Harassment of students was inside the schools, in their homes and nearby.

The IFP youth from one KwaMashu school, for instance, organised themselves into a violent gang called the *Amasinyora*. This gang was believed to be receiving their guns and cars, and was supported by the IFP's '*amabutho'* (age regiments), *oqonda* (adult community policing forum), the police, and other apartheid agents. They became the most feared gang in the

township – particularly by school-going youths. With their alias, they were bussed to schools, and attacked and killed many learners inside the school premises. The learners were not the passive recipients of such violence. They also responded with the violent actions, except that there were very few who owned guns – but rather used stones and matches as their weapons.

These times also prompted violent killings by the youth, who used the horrendous form of execution termed '*necklacing*' (placing a car-tyre full of petrol over the victim's torso and setting fire to it). As violence intensified, so the youth intensified their protests, as did self-defence units (SDU). On the other hand, the IFP, the special branch of the police, the SADF, and all other apartheid agents intensified their surveillance of student leadership.

The schools were at the forefront of assault by all forms of authority. Student leaders came under attack and their homes were burned. These attacks threw the students' political struggle into crisis.

There was vicious cycle of violence everywhere in KwaMashu, and education took a back seat. Many students went into exile and others were forced to leave school. By the end of the 1980s township schools saw an outflow of learners. Many parents sent many of their children as far from the 'chaos of the struggle', as they could (Peirera, 1998). By 1990, an estimated 71% of African children at school were being educated in the relatively under-resourced and remote schools of the former homelands (ibid) – away from the townships. The struggle for political power and for people's education then continued until the first democratic elections in 1994, when the democratic South African government declared to the world that South Africa belonged to all those who live in it.

Post-Apartheid Schooling at Cwazimula High School – 2012/2013

The defeat of apartheid in 1994 introduced an era of socio-political and educational changes. Discriminatory laws and rules were quickly eliminated. The explicit and implicit bias in subjects like history and instructional materials were energetically radicalised. However, the promises of radical education remained under threat. Despite the unambiguous system provided by the South African Schools Act of 1996, the idea of democratic governance, desegregation, quality education that emphasised equal resource distribution irrespective of race, major curriculum reform, participation, and the greater involvement of learners, school governing bodies, and educators in managing school affairs, are still a contested terrain in

formerly disadvantaged schools. The reforms are characterised by contestation, compromise and resistance.

School Geography

Diagram 1: Cwazimula Site Plan

Security Office	FOOD STALLS	Technical Section	
		Playground	

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌────────┐ ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐        │
│  │Security│ │ FOOD STALLS  │      │ Technical Section│        │
│  │ Office │ └──────────────┘      ├──────────────────┤        │
│  └────────┘                       │    Playground    │        │
│                                                     ┌─────────┐│
│   ┌───┐                                             │3 GRADE  ││
│   │ A │  ┌─────────────────┐ ┌───────┐              │  12     ││
│   │ D │  │ GRADE 7 AND 8   │ │BOYS'  │              │CLASSES  ││
│   │ M │  │   CLASSES       │ │TOILETS│              ├─────────┤│
│   │ I │  └─────────────────┘ └───────┘              │ LIBRARY ││
│   │ N │                                             ├─────────┤│
│   │ B │                                             │         ││
│   │ L │                                             │  LABS   ││
│   │ O │  ┌─────────────────┐ ┌───────┐              │         ││
│   │ C │  │ GRADE 9 AND 10  │ │GIRLS' │              ├─────────┤│
│   │ K │  │   CLASSES       │ │TOILETS│              │3 GRADE  ││
│   └───┘                     └───────┘               │  12     ││
│ ┌───────┐           ┌────────────┐                  │CLASSES  ││
│ │3 GRADE│           │ Phola Park │                  └─────────┘│
│ │  11   │ ┌──────────────────────────────┐                    │
│ │CLASSES│ │    5 GRADE 11 CLASSES        │                    │
│ └───────┘ └──────────────────────────────┘                    │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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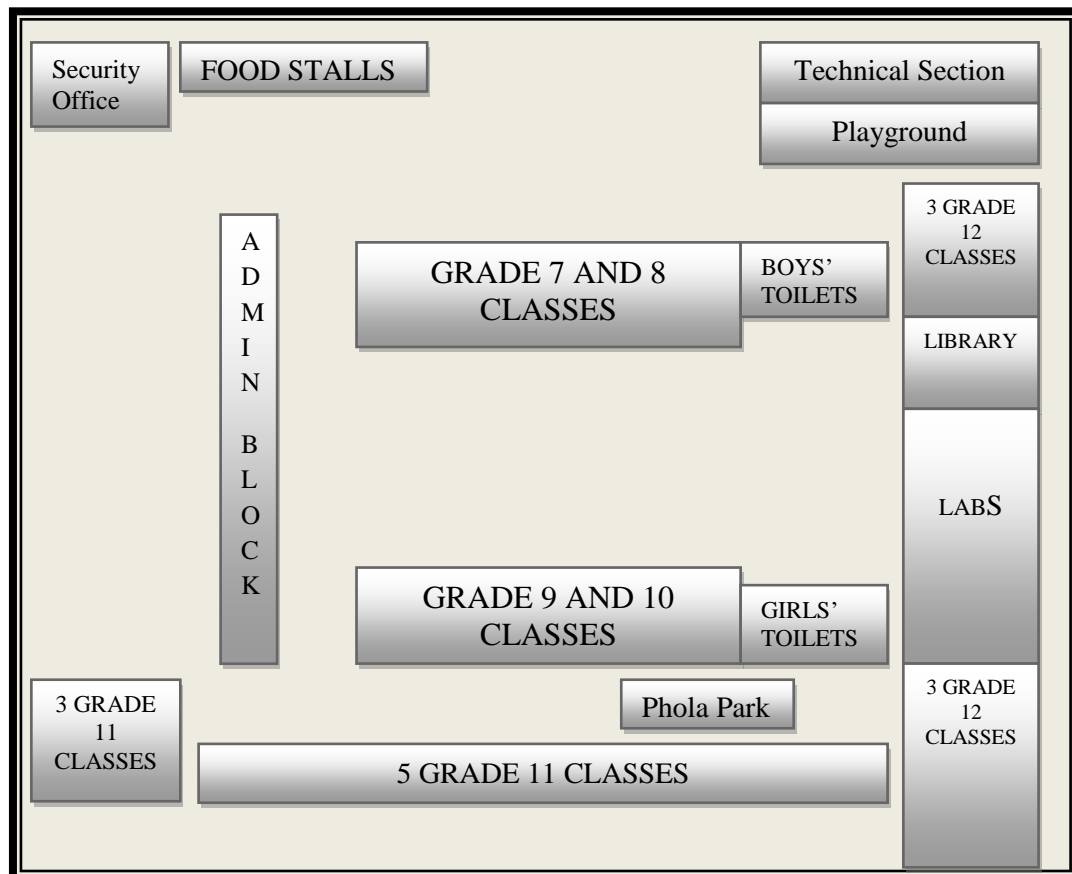
When one enters the gate at Cwazimula, the school looks similar to most township schools: blocks of concrete walls, concrete verandas, and decorated with neglected grass and flower gardens inbetween buildings. However, spending an extended period at Cwazimula and the continual engagement with learners and their school culture, broadens and transformed my understanding of this 'familiar' scene. Many analytical interpretations emerged in explaining who or what is positioned where, in the school site plan.

My study was aimed at gaining understanding of how those 16 years-old and above make meaning of their sexuality in and around the school context. Thus, understanding the spaces or places of pleasure and/or risk in and out of school that shape the meanings that young

people attach to their sexuality constructs, became of particular interest. At Cwazimula, grade 11 and 12 classes are located at the back of the main school blocks that form a triangular shape (see site plan above). Their section is also away from the school's hallway congestion, and activities like morning assembly, visitors to the administration block, teachers' movements to or from the staff room, or movements to or from the school library/laboratories.

The above location raised different interpretations. Informed by the school's strong academic demands for grade 11 and 12 learners, and given that the school's academic ratings depend on these grades' performance, my interpretation of their class location was that some degree of independence, responsibility and accountability are expected from these learners. These classes also offered them a high degree of privacy, and fewer disturbances from the rest of the hallways' congestion. The learners, however, had a slightly different interpretation of the positioning of their section. They called this section of the school the 'Phola' Park (a place to chill/relax). A huge tree and old car tires converted into seats around the tree in front of grade 11G, also helped complement the description of this section as a park. To the learners, less congestion and being out of direct sight of the school's administration block, meant some degree of freedom, quiet, relaxation, and the school's acknowledgement of their need for some privacy. Girls and boys intimately hugging, or holding hands, were common scenes in this section. The school's 'famous' couples were easily identifiable during school breaks, sharing lunches under the tree. Inside the classrooms were also common places for their intimate relationships during school breaks.

School Governance, Post-apartheid Policies and Practices

In post-apartheid South Africa, all schools are expected to be the custodians of legislative documents and programmes – which reinforce quality education, humanity's belief in justice, equality, and a better life for all. These are the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, the School Governance Framework, the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act of 1997, the Education Law Amendment Act 16 of 2006, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000, the Children's Amendment Act 41 of 2007, the Life Orientation program – and many others.

Schools' commitment to the implementation and translation of these documents and policies are always a contested terrain. Jan Nieuwenhuis argued that: "too often it is assumed that organizations, particularly bureaucratic state institutions, achieve technical compliance when it comes to the introduction of new policies and regulations, without really engaging with the underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs of staff that must implement these new policies" (cited in Weber, 2008:19).

At Cwazimula, during my fieldwork, there were visible symbols, good practices, programmes and activities that reflected the school's commitment to the transformative governance order. However, in the midst of the triumphs, the impression should not be left to underestimate the tales of frustration, anger and demoralisation that governors face in and out of school and also of educators in their daily toil on the school ground (Asmal, 2003). What is being recognised in this section are Cwazimula's strides and efforts towards a holistic educational philosophy that emphasises the interconnection between emotional, spiritual, contextual and intellectual dimensions.

As one enters Cwazimula's school gate, there is a billboard with the school motto 'shine where you are'. The billboard further portrays messages that inhibit the carrying of drugs and weapons, violent acts, and any gang activities on the school premises. In a school with a history of school-based violence, messages that explicitly reject violence and gang activities and promote learner pride through the school motto, are an important step towards transformed learner identities. Gandhi (1998) cited in MacNaughton (2000:220) "has shown how cultural identities shift and slide as people experience new languages, experiences and understandings". This billboard indeed symbolised the school's commitment to quality education and a safer school for all.

Informed by the school governance framework, Cwazimula has an internal Management Committee (MC) comprised of the school principal, vice-principal, administrator, representatives of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), and heads of special programmes such as sport, HIV and AIDS and may others. Learners also have their Learner Representative Council (LRC), which has two representatives from each grade. Both the management and LRC account to the School Governing Body (SGB). The SGB comprises

the representatives of parents, teachers, learners and management representatives. See diagram 2 below.

Diagram 2: The Organogram of Cwazimula High School
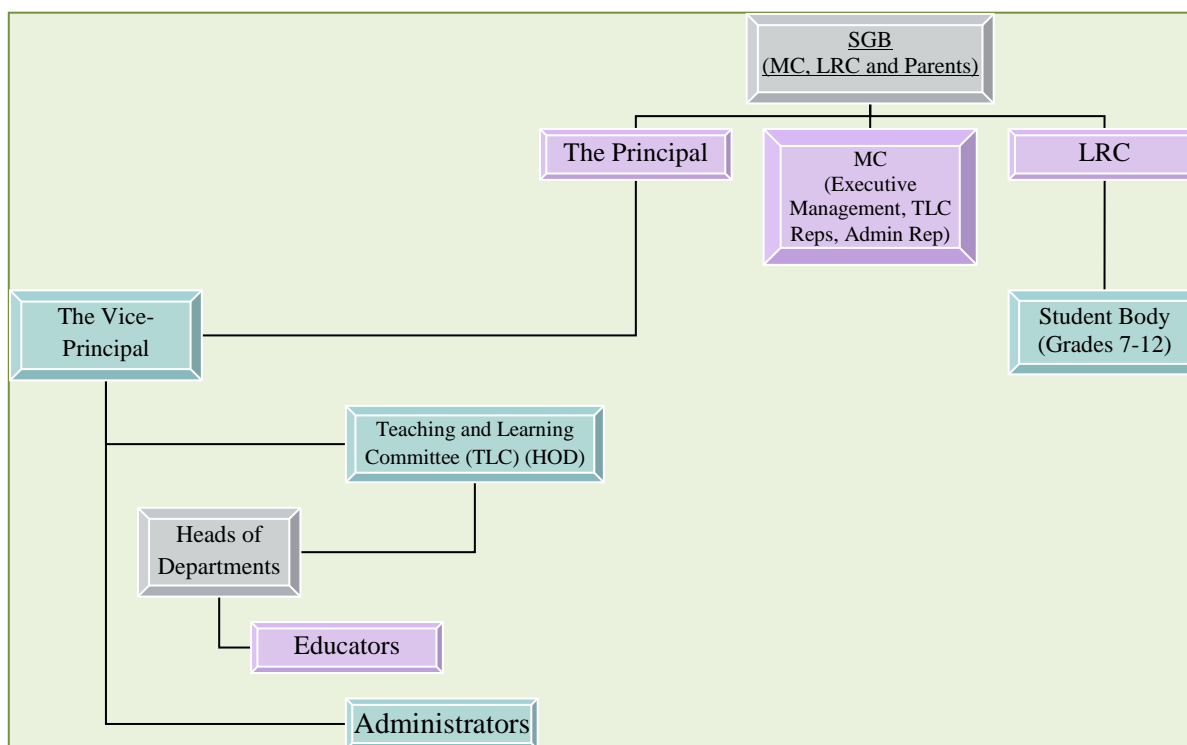
The existence and involvement of the SGB at Cwazimula's school governance, indicates their compliance status and participation in the transformative education system aimed at "facilitating the participation of parents, educators, learners, and non-teaching staff, in the decisions affecting the school" (Weber, 2008:19). At Cwazimula, the school has achieved strides in its administrative affairs. Parents are taking their responsibilities and identities as governors. Educators have witness their colleagues being promoted to management positions and participating in the shared governance environment. Moreover, learners have had their share of responsibilities in relation to school governance. What is left to be desired, is the role of the SGB in achieving their mandate of deepening democracy and enhancing social justice. Weber (2008:20) has "argued that decentralisation of authority has not worked to enhance democratic participation, because SGBs function as implementing agents of pre-determined government policy – rather than an independent change agent". "Moreover, because SGBs act as legitimating fora for setting and collecting school fees, social justice principles are subordinated to neo-liberal concerns with payment and efficiency" (ibid).

During my fieldwork, I was privileged to witness the election process of the LRC, which began during my first week of fieldwork (23 January 2012) and concluded during the morning assembly of 14 February 2012. At the beginning of the process, the school principal openly invited learners to participate in the LRC elections. The required qualities and criteria for nominations were openly presented, and teachers were reminded to allow and support learners to adequately engage with the process. The electoral commissioner (an educator) was appointed, and his main role was the overall coordination and facilitation of the elections and the mentoring of candidates. It was fascinating to see that the LRC formed an integral part of the schooling system, and that it has achieved a legal status at Cwazimula – a status we fought for and which was rejected during the apartheid regime.

The LRC elections adopted and observed the general democratic election processes enjoyed by all South Africans of voting age since 1994. During the preparation period, mentorship, space and time for election campaigns, were provided to learners. Surprisingly, learners were familiar with the election processes, although most had no practical voting experience because of their young age. Their experiences of being part of a community with a vibrant political history, appeared to be influential in terms of how they engaged with the process. Candidates' manifestos and acceptance speeches were impressive. They displayed insight and a good sense of the academic and sociopolitical issues of their time.

The LRC campaigning platform provided learners with a learning space, where critical skills of civic capacity were expanded upon. The platform and process also created opportunities to form dynamic relationships between educators and learners, and among learners. Notably, the 2012 LRC results reflected a positive shift from the past gender bias that favoured boys or men, when it came to leadership positions. There were an equal number of girls and boys elected to the LRC. Impressively, the LRC deputy president and the treasurer were girls. These are important positions of leadership, and are generally occupied by boys or man. For instance, in the five South African democratic elections since 1994, there has been only one woman as a deputy president.

The Post-apartheid Teaching and Learning Culture at Cwazimula
One common focus in the writings on post-apartheid teaching and learning, has been analysing how educational policy and the curriculum are translated into classroom practices.

In South Africa, Motala and Pampallis (2007), cited in Weber (2008:10), argue that "concentrating on education or the problematisation and analysis of implementation – by itself is inadequate". "In educational change, a teacher's role is central and since cultural values are deeply personal and inform pedagogical practice, no reform process can ignore the values of the change agents: the teachers" (ibid:13).

With notable radical post-apartheid education reform, the educational policy has not addressed the cultural and ideological impressions and practices stamped on by the Verwoerdian practices and curriculum, and the political and volatile schooling of the late 1980s. While traces of democratic concepts like empowerment, desegregation, critical thinking, and freedom of choice, were observable within Cwazimula's school gate, they are seldom experienced the moment learners and educators enter the classrooms.

Teachers' eagerness and/or external pressure to restore the culture of learning and teaching, and to improve access, outcomes and throughput (Ngcobo, 2005), seems to compromise the values and principles embedded in the culture of people's education. On the other hand, the family and social breakdown, poor parental support, persistent poverty, crime and violence in the township, and the culture of entitlement mainly inspired by political manifestos since 1994 that promise 'free' education, housing, and jobs continue to be waited for by most KwaMashu residents – and this is negatively impacting the learners' culture of learning at Cwazimula.

In 2012, Cwazimula presented interesting characteristics as a school. All my research participants who were in grade 11 in 2012 were born between 1992 and 1995, when South Africa was looking ahead with great optimism after the ravages of apartheid. This generation is generally referred to as the '*born frees*'. The terrain on which these children grew and continue to grow up, is substantially different from that of their parents and older siblings (Dolby, 1998). They are the generation whose presence and future are neither defined by apartheid – nor completely free of it (ibid). When talking to them, these learners express positive hopes and ambitions about their academic journeys, especially after high school.

The school has a fully functioning computer, a home economics laboratory, and an engineering laboratory. These laboratories have broadened the academic scope and career

aspirations for current learners, compared to what we had during apartheid. The resourced, yet underutilised library was another educational resource that marked post-apartheid changes at Cwazimula. However, the harsh conditions, overcrowding, lack of basic academic resources like school desks and chairs, inferior school buildings, and their school still being exclusively for African learners – were constant reminders of limitations and of the challenges that lie ahead.

IMAGE 6: The inside and outside of a Cwazimula classroom

On the other hand, most teachers and administrators at Cwazimula are victims of apartheid and Bantu Education. These men and women taught and remained in the teaching profession against all odds. Remarkably, almost all heads of departments – including the principal and vice principal – were already working at Cwazimula during my high school years (1984-1988). These teachers are the victims of Bantu Education; they were the implementers of the education curriculum that was prescriptive, teacher-centred, content-heavy, authoritarian, and promoted rote-learning. They were the victims of the school unrest that took place in the 1980s, and now they are envisaged to be change agents – facilitating an innovative curriculum that has undergone several changes.

The challenge arises in how to negotiate the "relationship between new programmes and the subjective realities embedded in people's individual and organisational contexts, and their personal histories" (Bezzina and Camilleri, 2001:162). Who helped the "teachers learn, that what they regarded as human nature was neither inherent nor immutable?" (Weber, 2008: xii). Who debriefed the teachers of the past traumas of the apartheid system? Who assisted the school to unpack and implement the 1980s' "concept of people's education for people's power" (Mathebula, 2013:634) – which implied genuine engagements and full participation of all role-players in alternative or people's schools?

Visible during my fieldwork were the constant contestations, adaptations, resistance, and compromises reached by different elements of the school body – in their pursuit of the post-apartheid teaching and learning agenda. Post-apartheid teaching and learning is thus not yet free from the struggles rooted in the apartheid schooling system. The township schooling and its climate continues to be marked by high levels of ambiguity, and low staff morale and instabilities. This, however, is not an exclusive image of Cwazimula, and it will be very limiting of me to portray Cwazimula in such a linear description. Below, I cite some of the positive highlights that mark post-apartheid schooling at Cwazimula.

What seemed to be working well at Cwazimula, was their understanding and conceptualisation of their culture of teaching and learning as not being confined to academic performance and pedagogical approaches. The school view teaching and learning as being multi-dimensional. They have different programmes and activities that promote the holistic development of school members. The school seemed to have managed to revive and uphold the vigour that it had during its first years after inception, and the political changes that mark the democratic South Africa seems to have brought significant changes to the school curriculum, programmes and activities, and to the identity and sexuality constructions of learners.

Since the year 2000, the school has had an international exchange programme with a school from the United Kingdom; both teachers and learners from Cwazimula are beneficiaries of the programme. Locally, the school invites alumni and social heroes who act as role models and motivate learners on diverse topics during teaching times or morning assembly. The positive impact of this holistic mentorship adopted by the school, was evident throughout the

conversations I had with the learners during my fieldwork. When we talked about their lives, hopes and dreams for the future – they were full of ambitions, could identify opportunities and did not look solely to the remnants of apartheid in defining who they are. However, the scars of apartheid, which are still reflected in their daily realities, were a constant reminder of their socio-political and structural historical trajectories.

While the school still has a strict code of conduct, the social and sporting activities which are part of the school ritual, mediated between an authoritative academic environment and a friendly space for holistic growth and development. The school is known for its good sporting standing and continues to compete favourable with other township or former white schools in the country. It continues to excel in indigenous programmes which form part of the African Renaissance programmes – such as '*ubuhle bendalo*' (natural beauty) modelling, '*izingoma zemishado*' (wedding songs), '*indlamu*' (Zulu dance), and gospel and traditional music competitions.

Everyone in the school, including myself, was looking forward to every Friday morning assembly for the preview of social activities taking place at a given time. These activities also included announcement of school or individual learners' success stories, and academic support activities like debating events and manifesto presentations by learners standing for elections to the Learners Representative Council (LRC). These activities were very entertaining, cultivated excellence, opened up learners' choices towards alternative ways of being within the school context, and instilled learners' sense of belonging. They created a platform to celebrate diversity, leadership, talent, and individual and collective identities. Thus, defining education, was not only in terms of academic excellence, but also in terms of the fullest possible expression of human existence (Freire, 1973).

Ngcobo (2005) identified a school culture that promoted a sense of membership, cohesion, and a sense of wholeness – as potentially enabling for school effectiveness. What is thought to be enabling about these features is that they allow school members to function comfortably with one other, so making it possible for them to concentrate on primary tasks (ibid). Similarly, Darwish (2009:6) asserted that the "basis of our educational system should be one of love, respect, care, humility and cooperation". He further said that, in the "absence of such ideals

which are the basis of democracy described by Dewey and Freire, it is impossible to actively learn" (ibid).

At Cwazimula, I observed that comfort levels were not only between learners who participated in different activities and teachers – but among learners. I observed that teachers were 'somehow' lenient towards learners who were actively participating in school activities, compared to learners who showed no interest in social or sporting activities. I also observed a great level of comfort between girls and boys – especially those who belonged to the same activity groups. During the time I spent with the music group – a group I grew closer to and which I mentored during their music practice – I witnessed many friendly hugs and gestures shared by boys and girls. These were prohibited and formed parts of punishable offences during my high-school years. Even in 2012, these gestures and interactions, although not punishable, were contested by adult members of the school. However, they have become the way of life and culture of 'born frees', who are unafraid to construct their girlhood and boyhood as they see fit, and who are assertive, pushing boundaries and testing new ground. Cwazimula post-1994, indeed offered new insights, knowledge and lessons.

CONCLUSION

Township identities and schooling continue to be marked by historical, socio-political, cultural, economic and structural dimensions of a particular period. These dimensions may be resources that facilitate the growth of individuals or obstacles to development. They have their "own agenda – bringing with it unique demands and opportunities that yield some similarities in development and experiences across many individuals" (Berk, 2007:8) from the township. Hence, KwaMashu and many other African townships have very high unemployment rates, inadequate physical infrastructure, high rates of deprivation, high teenage pregnancy rates, high HIV infections, high crime rates and a turbulent political history (Rohrer, 2010; Bhatia, 2008; Rauch, 2002). However, township identities cannot be viewed as a homogenous group, but "more like tree branches extending in diverse directions. Many potential pathways are possible – depending on the contexts that influence the individual's life course" (Berk, 2007:12). Thus, sexuality studies in the township need a fine comb that covers all elements of the township, both individually and co-extensively.

Chapter 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review – as a background to the study. In keeping with the study objectives, the key issues that relate to how young people from a South African township context construct and negotiate their sexualities within and around the school contexts, are explored. The review recognises the contradictions and contestations surrounding young people's sexuality, by illuminating the fluidity, diversity, context specificity, and sociopolitical nature of sexuality. These discussions are strengthened by weaving through the work that has been initiated – to broaden our understanding of young people's sexuality (Bhana, 2016a; Renold, Ringrose and Egan, 2015; Allen, 2015; Kehily, 2015, Mayeza, 2015; Morojele, 2009; Epstein and Johnson, 1998).

Although the focus of this study is the sexuality of teenage learners, the review is not confined to school-going teenagers, because learners are members of a wider social system, and their identity formations and sexuality constructs are a result of the intersection of multi-dimensional factors. Therefore, a broader approach was adopted, which reflects on the intersection of young people with their biological, socio-cultural, political, economic and historical dimensions. The review thus covers matters of gender and sexuality in the home, within and around the school, and in other subsystems of society – such as culture, religion, patriarchy and South Africa's legal and the political systems.

This review, is thus centred on the areas relevant to the themes that later emerged from the study. The discussions in the chapter begin with the introduction of the constructions of childhood (teenage years). This discussion is carried forward with an exploration of the "contradictions and contestations surrounding childhood, as well as their implications" (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013: i) in the constructions and negotiations of young people's sexuality. Here, the most prevalent views of childhood are explored, and how these views have influenced the regulation and policing of childhood on the one hand, and how they have influenced the growing body of knowledge that views children as active agents negotiating their sexuality on the other hand. Moreover, young people's sexual cultures are contextualised.

Throughout this study, young people are acknowledged as being "active and autonomous participants in society – instead of passive subjects within social structures and processes, and silent objects of concern, who are dependent on adults" (Mhlongo, 2012:15) and social discourse (Kehily, 2015).

The interplay between the gendered positioning of young people in different social spaces and the constructions and representations of femininities and masculinities, is also addressed. In this section, I explore how boys and girls are differently constructed, raised and treated in matters relating to gender and sexuality, and how this differential treatment contributes to the manifestations of sexuality problems like gender violence, girls' vulnerability to HIVand AIDS, unplanned teenage pregnancy, and homophobic attacks within and outside the school contexts.

In accentuating the fluidity and socially-constructed nature of sexuality, the influence of the dominant historical traditions and perspectives in childhood (teen) sexuality are presented, and their social consequences highlighted. The focus is on the South African context, particularly the African South Africans as defined in chapter one. This literature indicates that the dominant gender and sexuality constructs of young South African today, are by no means the representation of the so-called 'African sexualities' – but reflect the history, struggles, or /and the achievements of the African people (see Hunter, 2010).

The chapter also explores the international and national literature on sexuality, gender and schooling – where the focus is on understanding schools as sites for the construction of gender and sexuality (Bhana, 2016a:8). Schools are viewed as sexualised and gendered sites. The literature reveals "how the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce gendered sexual identities, which students negotiate, adopt and resist – as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221).

The last section of the chapter discusses gender violence between and among school-going girls and boys. This section views all violence in schools as a gender problem. The gendered roles and pressures that young boys face in proving they are 'real' men, are highlighted.

Performances associated with hegemonic masculinities have been identified in this section as the main sources of violence within and outside the school. Here the question of power and gender in social relations is also addressed.

CHILDHOOD AS CONSTRUCTED

The conceptualisation of childhood has taken many forms throughout history, across many cultures, and has shifted with different priorities. This section examines the dominant constructions of childhood and problematises the idea that childhood is a universal state and children should be viewed as objects of our studies. In this section, childhood as a life period is located within a definition of a child as proclaimed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (The Convention). "The Convention defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger" (UNICEF, 2014:12).

In adopting the Convention's definition of a child, I am not intending to suggest childhood as a universal state. Rather, I have located childhood within the Convention's definition, because it incorporates the ages of teenage girls and boys in this study. Moreover, it is a definition that our country subscribes to. Notably throughout the thesis, I have tried to consistently view childhood as an idea which is a product of particular times, places and cultures.

Childhood as a Stage of 'Innocence'

Generally, childhood (teen years) is perceived as a time of innocence, a time of transition, or of becoming legitimate adults – and a time that is different from adulthood. The innocent 'cute angel' expression emanates from a romantic and sentimentalised version of childhood, where children are seen as naturally good (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013; Kehily, 2012), and are incomplete versions of adults who lack the ability to make sense of the world (Bhana, 2002). Children are thus assumed to lack knowledge – acquiring an identity that is observed and absorbed (Bhana and Pattman, 2009).

Egan and Hawkes (2008) cited in Braggs and Kehily (2013:26) "point to the historical precedence of assuming the child as being asexual or innocent, and to the endeavour to regulate childhood sexuality for the protection of all children". Notable is the shift from

protection of all children – to gender-specific focused protection in the present. The construction of childhood as being innocent did not exist before the Nineteenth Century where children were viewed as miniature adults, who have recognisable, physical dependency needs only in the early stages of childhood. Children actively participated and contributed in every aspect of the household. They were "viewed as essential to the economy of the household in many places in the world" (Agenda, 2012:1), and in many contexts they were allowed to enter into marriages. While I am not in support of child brides, it is, however, significant to note that marriage of children younger than 18 years of age is still a norm in places like Malawi, Bihar, Bangladesh, Mali, Niger and Mozambique (ICRW, 2015).

Childhood innocence is a construction that was articulated in Rousseau (1762/1979). Jean-Jacques Rousseau viewed the period of childhood as a time of innocence – with happiness being the highest ideal. He believed that children were innately good, close to God, and only became corrupted through experience of the world. As such, a child is believed to have an innate tutor that takes him/her through the natural growth processes that are universal. Rousseau thus argued that "the child should be protected from premature exposure to the corruptions of society (including sex and violence) to have a chance of developing naturally" (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013:6).

A study entitled 'making gender in early schooling' by Bhana (2002), discussed how the innocence discourse was shared among adult members of the school. In Bhana (2016a:27), she further revealed the dominance of discourses "like 'gender does not matter to young children' 'children are children', and 'just kids: still young'." According to Bhana, these discourses consider a young child as being unprotesting and without agency, and extend the invisibility and marginalisation of children (ibid). These are the same discourses that have influenced the condemnation of young people's expressions of sexuality, and have placed limitations on sex education teachers across the world. Kehily (1999:24) spoke about how she was summoned to the school principal's office after "teaching sex education to a year 10 class" of students. The school principal presented her "with an ultimatum to stop teaching sex education or reconsider her position in the school" (ibid).

Several sexuality studies with young people have challenged the construction of children as being innocent (Allen, 2015a; Bhana, 2016a, 2013, 2002; Mayeza, 2015; Mathe, 2013; Allen, 2007; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Thorne, 1993). One of the studies that have markedly contested the notion of childhood innocence, was a UNICEF study conducted in seven African countries (Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, and Botswana). The findings depicted young people (even children as young as six) as active sexual beings, who "claimed or implied they were sexually active in the conventional sense" (Pattman, 2005:498). Among his research participants, "sex was constructed as the source of attraction between boys and girls" (Pattman, 2006:97). He further reported on how girls presented boys as having sexual feelings, and being "potentially 'naughty' in relation to them: 'they may end up doing what they are not supposed to do'" (Pattman and Chege, 2003:87). As the subjects or objects of sexual desire, the girls admitted to being sexual beings. It is, however, important to note that this admission was not an overt or proud one – obviously because of the condemnation of girls expressing their sexuality in such contexts.

Other findings that rejected childhood innocence, were presented by Pattman and Chege (2003). Data from the interviews with six-year olds during their study on young people, gender and sexuality, revealed that the "children were familiar with sex – whether they actually engaged in penetrative sex or simply 'played' at it, they enjoyed talking about it and sex was significant to them" (Pattman and Chege, 2003:155-156). They therefore argued "that it is problematic to ignore the voices of young people in relation to gender and sexuality" (ibid).

Although it is difficult to generalise, at the very least we can attribute the shaming, policing and silencing of children/teen sexualities to the discourse of childhood innocence. This thesis is critical of a discourse that fails to recognise the position of young people, and renders them passive.

Childhood as a Stage of being 'at Risk or as Risky'
Alongside the idea of a child as being innocent and different from the adult, is a construction of the teen years as being risky. Certain theories of human development associate the teen years with identity crises – where teenagers struggle to make meaning of their newly-acquired sexual selves (Berk, 1998). As they negotiate sexuality, which is "characterised by

emotional volatility, teenagers are seen to be particularly susceptible to their bodily urges" (Allen, 2007:225). They are viewed as risk or being at risk, when they fail to mark the boundaries of 'ideal' childhood. According to Duhn (2006) cited in Prinsloo and Moletsane (2013:6), "when children transgress the boundaries through particular behaviours associated with the adult world, childhood 'as a sunny and carefree paradise' becomes overshadowed by the fear of childhood as dark and foreboding territory". The child at risk is also potentially the dangerous child, who might contaminate the purity that should be childhood – and so endanger the ideal child (ibid).

Allen (2007:225) argues that, "this perceived 'turmoil' renders teenagers less capable of making decisions that will support their sexual wellbeing – increasing their vulnerability and thus their 'need' for protective guidance from adults, the school or family". A sexualised child (teen) is seen as a danger to himself/herself and the broader social order, and, thus, is in need of management. This 'protective' discourse assumes that children's sexuality is inherently risk-laden and devoid of agency and passion (Ringrose and Renold, 2015; Bhana, 2013; Hirst, 2004; Pattman and Chege, 2003; Kehily, 2002b; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). "It suggests that teenagers need to learn to protect themselves from their own desires" (Mathe, 2013:78). Jewkes and Morrell (2010), cited in Bhana (2013:58), caution that, "as the silence on younger children's pleasures, powers and sexual curiosities continues, there are heightening concerns and sensitisation in South Africa to address gender inequalities, the scourge of sexual violence and the hyper-endemic context of HIV which disproportionately affects young teenage women."

It is the versions of childhood discussed above that have tended "to persist and have solidified into an international body of rights for children, which inform the policies and laws relating to children" in many countries across the world (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013:5). In South Africa, in spite of the reports that the sexual debut of young people is before the age of 15 (HSRC, 2014; WHO, 2012); section 15 and 16 of Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act No 32 of 2007, make it a criminal offence for adolescents aged 12 to 15 to engage in certain consensual sexual activities. Haysom (2013:1) critique how this act "which sought to regulate consensual underage sexual activity, has effectively criminalised normal sexuality and behaviour, and created a social panic – instead of a platform for a legitimated childhood sexuality".

Several scholars who subscribe to the new sociology of childhood, along with the position adopted in this study, are dissatisfied with and are challenging the notions of childhood as being risky or innocent (Bhana, 2016a, 2014, 2013, 2002; Allen, 2015a; Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013; Mathe, 2013; Bhana and Pattman, 2009; Renold, 2005, 1999; Kehily, 2007; MacNaughton, 2000; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Thorne, 1993). These scholars have opened up our understanding of childhood to the "creative ways in which boys and girls maintain, navigate, contest and live sexuality under the very discourse of sexual innocence in/through which gender relations are constituted" (Bhana, 2016a:179). They argue that "children should be studied in their own right, as full social actors with varied lives and experiences – rather than being framed primarily as 'adults in training' or as problems for the adult social order" (James and Prout, 2015: xv). To them the image of an innocent child or/and a child at risk, assumes children as sexually incompetent, and denies children as active agents who are knowledgeable and experienced in the thinking and expression of sexual feelings. This sense of children as being innocent but corruptible promotes a passive and mechanistic construction of the child – at the mercy of the discourse she/he encounters (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013).

Of particular importance to this thesis is the way in which the construction of childhood as being innocent or risky discounts teenage girls and boys as knowledgeable active agents negotiating their own social worlds. The feminist post-structuralist theory adopted throughout this thesis, argues that the sexual innocence, and a child at risk discourse, are an impediment to the development of positive identities. It acknowledges the agency of teenagers in constructing their sexuality by exploring the meanings they give to sexuality in their daily experiences, and the ways they define and group themselves as teenage girls and boys within and outside the dominant discourses of sexuality. Bhana (2016a, 2015) maintains that accepting children's sexuality is the first step in solving teen sex-related issues in South Africa.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SEXUAL CULTURES

To reach to an understanding of what this study means by sexual cultures one must first give a definition of culture. Tayler cited in Baxen & Breidlid (2009) define culture as the the complex whole which includes knowldge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture includes beliefs, traditions, values and language (Bourdieu & Passeron cited in Baxen & Breidlid, 2009: 37).

In this study, 'sexual cultures' are viewed to "include the many ways that sexual knowledge is constructed, how sexual values and norms are struggled over, how sex is depicted, talked about and done" (Attwood and Smith, 2011:227). Thus, an analysis of young people's sexual cultures seeks to elucidate the ways that gender and sexuality meanings, values and experiences are constructed and framed in institutions, media and other forms of communication, artefacts and the practices of everyday life.

In the school context, Kehily (2002:1) view sexual cultures "to constitute informal groups of school students who actively ascribe meanings to events within specific social context". According to her, student sexual cultures refers specifically to the meanings ascribed to issues of sexuality by students themselves within peer groups and in social interaction. It is the "process of making meaning within the immediate realm of local produces individual and collective identities, that is to say, ways of developing a sense of self in relation to others" (Kehily, 2002:1).

This thesis highlights a number of different aspects of young people's sexual cultures. It shares insights on how gender and sexuality constructs of young people in my study are shaped and shape the patterns of personal friendship and relationships; fantasies and expectations about future destinies; talk about popular cultural icons; students' gossip about teachers and about their contemporaries; and in playground play, bullying and talk (adapted from Epstein and Johnson, 1998). According to these authors, for girls especially, sexuality is clearly present in forms of dress whether within or outside the school. The thesis further delineate how young people's sexual cultures are produced or reproduced through the following discourses: desire, sexual risks, sexual innocence, homosexuality, Life Orientation message, talks about sex, respectability, multiple sexual partners, equality, and HIV and AIDS.

BRIEF HISTORICAL TRADITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES IN TEENAGE SEXUALITY

"Sexuality has numerous histories and is produced by society through complex patterns of negotiation and struggle, between those who have the power to define and set boundaries and those who do not" (Weeks, 1986 cited in Esat, 2003:13). Throughout history – understandings and attitudes about sexuality have swung like a pendulum from comfortable

and open, to restrictive and restrained (Westheimer and Lopater, 2002). This emphasises that sexuality is not something singularly possessed or something that 'is' – but is something that we actively create and recreate through interpersonal and cultural processes. Thus, the intention of this section is to outline some symbolic and dominant trends in constructions, understandings and interpretations of sexuality – particularly in the South African historical context. It is, however, not my intention to provide a comprehensive overview of the history of sexuality. Instead, this section acknowledges that some historical accounts of sexuality are unavoidable. They are discussed here, as they form the foundation for our understanding and interpretation of young people's gender and sexuality – as being multiple, intersecting, unnatural, fluid, performative, relational, context-specific, multi-dimensional, socially constructed, and influenced by historical moments.

Sexuality and Pre and Early Colonial South Africa

In pre- and early colonial South African societies, sexuality identities were relatively open and collective, and Zulu girls in particular were neither automatically subordinate to men, nor barred to tyrannical patriarchs (Ndlovu, 2009; Delius and Glaser, 2002). Boys and girls performed interchangeable like heading of the cattle, cooking, fetching water, participation in warfare, and negotiating intimate relationships (Ndlovu, 2009). By citing these gender-equitable tasks, I state here that I am not in any way trying to romanticise sexuality during pre-colonial South Africa, or trying to deny the gender disparities that existed. Instead, my main purpose is to highlight the incidences that reiterate the importance of viewing and understanding gender and sexuality as being social constructs that are fluid and embedded in multiple historical and cultural contexts – rather than fixed and incontestable biological categories.

"African communities recognised the power and centrality of sexuality in human experience and were acutely aware of the strong passions which swayed pubescent hearts and minds" (Delius and Glaser, 2002:31). "Children learned about the mechanics of sex from early on and played sexually-explicit games" (Pitje, 1948 cited in Delius and Glaser, 2005:30). "Teenage boys and girls discussed the properties and rituals of sexuality within their age grades" (ibid). "They could seek advice on sexual matters from uncles, aunts and grandparents" (ibid). Teenage sexual exploration was not 'suffered' in private embarrassment; "instead it was seen as being natural and healthy and was encouraged as long

as it stopped short of full intercourse" (ibid). Notably, the concept of '*ukusoma/ukuhlobonga*' (thigh sex) is a clear acknowledgment that teenagers engaged in sexual practices.

There were and still are many occasions – such as initiation and ritual ceremonies related to marriage and childbirth – where communities collectively and publicly address sexuality through songs and dances (Ahlberg, 1994). Many of the songs of '*umemulo*' (a ceremony held to acknowledge blossoming of a girl into womanhood) for instance, are used to express affection and sexual desires for the opposite sex. Rather than presuming asexuality as being necessarily appropriate among teens – the imperative was more explicitly to avoid pregnancy (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013). In the view of Delius and Glaser (2005:30), "extra-marital pregnancy was severely frowned upon not because sex was in any way *sinful* but because of the familial and custodial complications it created".

Up to date, in countries like Kenya, for instance, the Masai tribe conducts ceremonies for teenagers who have reached puberty. During these ceremonies, teenage boys and girls are given opportunities to explore each other's bodies – as a clear recognition that young people have sexual needs, desires, and fantasies. The only restriction during this exploration is penetrative sex.

Religion and Sexuality

Central to the values and ideologies of religion are human sacredness, disciplined bodies, rejection of worldly pleasures, the divine order of human realities, and normativisation of heterosexual monogamy. Antigay sentiment, for example, "is compounded by a strong Christian ethic that views same-sex sexual encounters as sinful and wrong" (Butler and Astbury, 2005:4). Challenging the dominant gender roles in any way – is almost like challenging the authority of God (Msibi, 2012). "In this context, the reaction against homosexual rights is seen, for many, as upholding religious beliefs, and, therefore, something to be proud of and to be actively encouraged (Butler and Astbury, 2005:4). These ideologies are the main sources of the restrictions, policing and control of human sexuality. In many contexts they are also strongly felt by gay individuals, as they very often perceive themselves as being sinful and unworthy (Msibi, 2012).

"In the African context, the introduction of Islam and Christianity introduced views about sex that were moralistic and controlling" (Bhana, Morrell, Hearn and Moletsane, 2007; Ahlberg, 1994 cited in Mathe, 2013:78) and brought shame to the sexual act (Vilakazi, 1962). "Christianity, as taught by missionaries, tended to promote love as being a private matter between two married adults" (Hunter, 2010:57). They 'silenced' sexuality and stigmatised traditional sexual practices which acknowledge the agency of young people – "but failed to curb the heightened sexual impulses of pubescent youth" (Delius and Glaser, 2002:37).

While the effects of powerful religions in silencing and policing sexuality cannot be underestimated, attributing it all to the missionaries is an over-simplification (Mathe, 2013:). Issues of sexuality are not fixed, and are influenced by multiple factors – which are subject to change over time and place (ibid). Hence, I continue with the discussions below, where I briefly highlight some of the influence of traditional South African mores, Western imperialism, and the apartheid system that fuelled or formed the basis for gender and sexuality constructions in South Africa.

Patriarchy, Culture and Sexuality
The patriarchal system and many of the traditional African cultures have always and still are perpetuating gender apartheid. Patriarchy is one of the social systems that prescribes gender roles that institutionalise the subordination of women, and perpetuates gender inequalities by stripping women of their power to control their sexualities. It is a social system, which is based solely on male domination. From a very young age, the overarching narratives of patriarchy socialise boys and girls differently.

Patriarchy and many African cultures structure masculinities and femininities hierarchically. In many African communities, boys are taught to see themselves as being strong, independent and future family leaders – while girls are taught that they are fragile, dependent and need protection from their brothers and fathers. Consequently, some masculinities attain superiority over others. Morojele (2011:679) speaks of how, "in Basotho communities, more power and social status is accorded to a first-born male child", and in polygamous marriages, "the first-born male child of the first wife. This male child is referred to as "'Mojalefa' (an 'heir') – a concept denoting that the child would inherit all the family property and all responsibilities upon the death of his father" (ibid).

The concept of 'Mojalefa' is not just restricted to Basotho communities. Among Zulu ethnic groups, an 'heir' is called 'Indlalifa', which literally means 'the one who eats the inheritance'. Thus, concepts like these serve to reproduce unequal power relations and dominance amongst siblings – based on their gender and birth order.

Bhana (2009:330) argues that the "early patterns of boys' privilege is particularly significant, given that such privileged positions yield dividends in terms of access to power, highly rewarded occupations, and greater accumulation of social and economic capital". Morejele (2011:679) extended this argument by stating that, "Instituting different expectations on boys based on birth order assumes that masculinity is an inherent quality determined by gender and birth order". "Connell (1995) refers to dominant forms of masculinities as being 'hegemonic' – that which is 'culturally exalted' or 'idealised'" (Morojele, 2013:609).

Within traditional and patriarchal systems, girls and women are viewed and expected to be passive beings whose only active role is to meet the needs and demands of their boyfriends or husbands. Even within this prescribed active role, girlfriends and women cannot demonstrate any knowledge and experience of sex and they have to ensure that all the matters pertaining to sex should be handled by the boyfriend or husband. Girl's ignorance of sex and the disciplining of their bodies is legitimised through cultural practices like virginity testing (Bhana, 2016b). Among the Zulu ethnic groups, girls' virginity is celebrated through an annual ceremony called '*Umhlanga*' (the reed dance). Those who participate must be 'certified' virgins (Vincent, 2006). Presiding over these ceremonies is the Zulu King, currently Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu. For noting here, the arguments I am making are not about whether virginity testing and *umhlanga* are good or harmful to the girls. Here, I highlight the cultural practice that institutionalises the sexual passivity of girls, and also a practice that treats girls differently from boys.

Girls and women who are sexually active, are viewed and treated as objects for sex who should '*hlonipha*' (showing respect) the desires and aspirations of the boyfriend or husband (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011). The study by Jewkes and Morrell (2011), evidently demonstrated how young people continue to negotiate their relationships under the conditions of patriarchy.

These authors maintain that "whilst women appeared to have considerable agency at the point of choosing partners, once the choice was made, their power was greatly circumscribed, and in many respects surrendered" (ibid:5). Girls become passive recipients of their boyfriends' advances and boys take control and make final decisions about when, where, and how, to have sex. This chapter thus argues that such an arrangement greatly constrains girls' and women's aptitude to negotiate safe sexual activities or access sexual knowledge and services, and places them at risk of infections like HIV.

South African history has a repertoire of laws, practices and strategies that have legitimised and institutionalised patriarchy over time. One was the introduction of the Natal Marriage Act of 1869, which allowed only men to enjoy polygamous marriages and declared them as the guardians of their families. "It condemns women to a separate and subordinate sub-existence, and turned men into being the permanent guardians of their female relatives' chastity" (Chesler, 2011). In Leclerc-Madlala (2001)'s view, this unequal power relationship filters down to young girls and boys, who also learn about the actions of their parents in relation to the 'inferiority of women' and 'superiority of men'. As a result, their expressions of sexuality become marked by gender power imbalances (Bhana, 2013).

Another engine of patriarchy was the gendered geography of the migrant labour system, which segregated women and men and entrenched what Hunter (2010) calls 'provider masculinity – which glutted the subordination of women and girls by men and negatively constructed sex between men and women. Elder (2003) argues that the gendered geography of the migrant labour system was a spatialised form of marginalisation for women, which was premised upon sexual assumption about men, women, and their bodies – and left women invisible in the labour market, impoverished, with infections, and also disempowered. Consequently, many women were left to resort to bartering sex for economic gain or survival – so putting their lives in vulnerable positions.

Here, it is argued that patriarchal laws and practices have institutionalised and legitimised gender inequalities that young girls and boys grow up witnessing and later adopting, as a natural order of life. In the same breath, it is also recognised "that patriarchal power is not necessarily unified, coherent and centralised. It should more properly be seen as being

'dispersed constellations of unequal relationships' – which leave spaces for human agency"
(Scott, 1986:47).

Apartheid Laws and Sexuality

The Immorality Act of 1927 is another piece of legislation that fixed and policed sexuality
and gender in South Africa. It criminalised, amongst other things, sexual relations between
white people and people of other races, and specified the legal age to consent to sex. The
main message embedded in the immorality Act, was that white people were a superior race
and should not engage in sexual activities with other, inferior races. This superiority
discourse was later adopted by men of all race groups. The discourse sustained and
maintained the essentialising and naturalising of the superior status of men over women.
Consequently, it firmly entrenched the differential power relationships between men/boys
and women/girls. In the 1940s and 1950s, for instance, the discourse fuelled the rise of youth
gangs (Delius and Glaser, 2002). "The gangs which exaggerated manhood and awarded status
to men for multiple sexual conquests" (Delius and Glaser, 2002:44).

While the 1970s and 1980s was preoccupied with the vibrant political youth culture, the
'comrades', while not a homogenous group, tended to construct women as being sexually
passive. "Women were increasingly marginalised from the struggle and expected to play a
supportive domestic role" (Delius and Glaser, 2002:48). At an "extreme, they felt entitled to
demand sexual services from young women, who, it was felt, had a political duty to reward
the bravery of the young lions" (ibid). In schools, teachers also took advantage of the
collapsed education system and coerced or bribed students to enter sexual relationships with
them. The unbanning of the political parties, the freeing of political prisoners and the peace
"negotiation process of the 1990s, led to the decline of the politicised youth culture" (Delius
and Glaser, 2002). In KwaMashu, as political activism cooled off, gangs like '*Izintandane*'
(orphans), crusante and ferange were revived (Pestana, 2011). They became infamous for
gang rapes and negatively shaped township youth sexuality.

Post-Apartheid South Africa and Sexuality

Beyond the gangs, the transformation agenda that came with the democratic South Africa of 1994, gave way to the constructions of sexuality that are shaped by a culture of rights, a movement towards African renaissance or Africanisation, and a culture of materialism and consumerism.

With the rights' culture on one hand, South Africa is commended for being the first jurisdiction in the world to provide constitutional protection to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people; for declaring sexual orientation as a basic human right (South African Constitution, 1996); and approving the age of sexual consent to 16, regardless of sexual orientation. South Africa is especially commended within Africa, where 38 of 55 African countries continue to criminalise same-sex relationships – with Uganda at the extreme end, having passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2014 which made homosexuality a crime punishable by life in prison (adapted in Bhana, 2014).

The legitimisation of LGBT rights has "provided the impetus for the appearance of a more insistently vocal and visible gay and lesbian presence" in South Africa and some neighbouring countries (Muthuray, 2000:3). However, while rights represent an enormously powerful and important agenda, like Hunter (2010), I follow scholars who argue that we must consider their deeply paradoxical nature. For instance, the rights-based agenda which runs the risk of downplaying the political-economic realities of many South Africans, often does not recognise the multiple inequalities with which gender is entangled – and I do not see them as simply a mechanism that governs bodies (adapted from Hunter, 2010).

In the township contexts, for instance, there are several cases of violence towards young LGBT individuals and they are motivated by sexual orientation-related bias (Butler and Astbury, 2005; Muthuray, 2000). These young people are attacked in their homes, in the streets, and on their way to a bus rank, to school, or to a tuck shop. If these young people were from privileged economic backgrounds where they live in a secured home, have economic means to own a car, or their parents can transport them to or from school – their experiences of LGBT rights could have been different. This discussion is thus pointing to the link between gender vulnerability, political-economic realities, and LGBT rights.

An African renaissance discourse, on the other hand, is set to restore and preserve 'authentic' African identities and traits that were ambushed by colonialisation and the apartheid system. This discourse is often carried out in what seems be an essentialist view of what is natural or what constitutes an 'authentic' African boy or girl. This naturalisation or authenticity is endorsed through gender. As a result, "in Southern Africa, sexuality has become a highly contested site for the negotiation of authenticity – both in terms of the nation and identity" (Muthuray, 2000:2).

Bhana (2015:194) discussed how African young people viewed "being homosexual as good for other cultures, and white people – but not for them as Africans". These young people were invested in discourses that "signify homosexuality as both the domain of perversion and as belonging to the West" (Muthuray, 2000:2). To these young people, '*ubutabane*' (homosexuality) is un-African, and is a white men's disease or an influence of modernity. These constructions fall within the same line of thinking by many African leaders who claim that homosexuality was the Europeans' tool of destroying African culture through the imposition of 'alien practices' (Muthuray, 2000). An extreme assertion was made by president Mugabe of Zimbabwe, "who claimed that not only was homosexuality un-African – but that gays and lesbians were worse than pigs and dogs" (Muthuray, 2000:1).

Bhana (2015:194) argued that "deployment of cultural arguments to regulate gender and sexuality are dangerous – especially in the context of homophobic violence". If culture is regarded as so innate and impervious to change, then the possibility of addressing issues around sexuality and sexual orientation become limited (ibid). "Moreover, the cultural trope works to regulate and reinforce an idealised African identity, reproducing gender stereotypes, and resulting in a 'witch hunt' for those who do not conform to the heterosexual ideal" (Human Rights Watch, 2011, cited in Bhana, 2015:196). Many communities, particularly African communities, can attest to how witch hunting resulted in violence, community disintegration, and the marginalisation of vulnerable groups.

In the past two decades, South African townships have suffered a great deal of violence resulting from a move towards rooting out those who are perceived as un-African or Africans who are not South African. The xenophobic attacks on non-South Africans and 'curative rape' of African lesbians, has dominated the 'witch hunt' movement. According to Bhana

(2015:205), "'curative' rape is used to violently put masculinised women 'correctly' in their place within culturally normative understandings of gender and sexuality". Being a lesbian is seen as un-African and undermines the cultural norms of girlhood. Throughout the thesis, I reject the explicitly exclusionary and essentialist notions of what constitutes an African or definitions of what is African – that do not derive from the experiences of African girls and women, in particular.

Furthermore, a culture of materialism and consumerism has taken centre stage in the sexuality constructions of post-apartheid South Africa. Fuelled by the class economy, media and popular culture in South Africa, girls and boys actively engage or become victims of transactional sex, or what Hunter (2010) calls the 'gift' relationships of post-apartheid South Africa. The trendy identities within the 'gift' relationships are that of a '*Ben10*' and a 'sugar daddy'. A '*Ben10*' is a boy who is in a material relationship with an older woman, and a 'sugar daddy' is an older man in a material sexual relationship with a younger girl or woman. Both young girls and boys enter these relationships to secure 'triple Cs' (Cash, a Car, and a Cell-phone) (Bhana, 2015; Bhana and Pattman, 2011; Hunter, 2010; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004). These relationships are dominated by the exchange of material favours for sex.

In a study by Leclerc-Madlala (2010), girls went as far as attaching portfolios associated with their material gains to the roles that different boyfriends were playing in their lives. These portfolios ranged from the 'Minister of Transport' (a man whose task is to fetch and deliver the girl to any place they would like to go), the 'Minister of Finance' (a man whose task is to provide 'financial support' – for instance, buying clothes and perfumes), the 'Minister of Education' (whose task is to purchase school books), and the 'Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Tourism' (whose task is to take responsibility for vacation times, especially in December and January) (see also Hunter, 2010).

It is important, at this stage, to acknowledge that young girls in 'sugar daddy' relationships are not constructed as merely passive victims - but they actively exercise their agency to access economic security. However, many authors have written on how these constructions continue to perpetuate gender inequalities, sexual domination of girls by boys, gender and sexual violence, and increase sexual infections like HIV (Bhana, 2013; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Masvawure, 2010; Leclerc-Madlala, 2003).

This thesis thus aims to broaden our understanding of the influence of such historical accounts in the sexuality construction of young people from a township context, and the ways in which they negotiate their gender and sexual identities in their everyday lives.

GENDERED CHILDHOOD AND SEXUALITY

It has become apparent from the definitions of sexuality and gender discussed in Chapter 1, that one cannot discuss sexuality without discussing gender. Gender and sexuality co-exist and are intertwined. This section thus discusses the literature that highlights how gender influences young people's sexuality – so as sexuality impacting on gender. Consequently, I find myself increasingly discussing gender and sexuality as being intrinsically connected, coextensive, intersectional, and embedded in each other.

At the heart of this section is an assumption that boys and girls are not born, but are made, and that their gendered identities are fluid and socially constructed. The making of a girl or a boy, and the process of learning to see all others as boys or girls, is an ongoing process that starts during conception and "is partly forged through the language we use to describe ourselves and others" (Foucault, 1979 cited in Pattman, 2006:93). The announcement ritual "at birth that 'it' is, in fact, one or the other, instantly transforms an 'it' into a 'he' or a 'she'" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:7). The 'it' becomes a subject relative to the ideology, and a discourse of gender that standardly assigns 'it' into a lifetime category as either a male or a female (Renold, 1999).

We are surrounded by gender beliefs, teachings and traditions "from the time we are born. They are ever-present in conversation, humour, and conflict – and they are called upon to explain everything from driving styles to food preferences, and these ideas are so commonplace that we take it for granted that they are true, and accept common adage as scientific fact" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:8). This discourse is enforced in social institutions such as families, schools, workplaces, or health systems. "In the beginning, adults will do the child's gender work, treating it as a boy or as a girl – and interpreting its every move as that of a boy or of a girl, and then, over the years, the child will learn to take over its part of the process – doing its own gender work and learning to support the gender work of others" (ibid).

"Being a girl or a boy is not a stable state, but an ongoing accomplishment, and something that is actively done both by the individual so categorised and by those who interact with 'it' in the various communities to which it belongs" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:8). Bhana (2015) and Bhana and Pattman (2011) cited in Bhana (2016a:130) assert that, "in South Africa, gender is compounded by social and cultural scripts which influence and have effects, for the ways in which teenage boys and girls give meaning to sexuality".

Butler (1990) spoke about how sexuality and sex identities are not freely chosen, but are forced and enforced through the interpellation of gender. She introduced the notion of "performativity – an idea that gender is involuntarily performed within the dominant discourses of heterosexuality" (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2015:59). For Butler, gender does not pre-exist behind the performances of gender (ibid). However, she maintained that gender is not imprinted upon the subject, but only comes into being through performance. In this sense, she does not see gender as being acted upon or constructed by something 'out there', but views gender as a form of social construct that is legitimised, rehearsed, and discursively produced in different times and social contexts. Butler's views illustrate Connell (1987), who stated that "young people do not possess an inborn essence of masculinity or femininity which determines how they feel and behave – nor are they the passive dupes of 'socialisation', as they have often been portrayed in studies of 'sex roles'" (Griffin, 2009:192).

Butler notes that the assumptions adopted in this study, that gender and sexuality are social constructs, are not intended to imply that the sexuality of boys and girls in my study are simply moulded by social institutions. Throughout the study, I highlight the role played by the social institutions in the construction of the sexuality of boys and girls, and at the same time the manner in which young people are contesting, adapting, accepting or challenging gender and sexuality against the dominant constructions of sexuality, is acknowledged. Throughout the study I view gender and sexuality as being unstable, fluid and complex human qualities that are discursively constructed in society (Morrell (2007) Thus making it possible for young people to construct and express alternative masculinities and femininities which are influenced by different spaces, times, and socio-political climates. Hence, this

thesis emphasises the importance of understanding the constructions of sexuality within a specific context.

Constructions and Representations of Femininities and Masculinities

The gender order proposes and prescribes, specifically, modes of girlhood and boyhood. These prescriptions are done "in various ways, mediums, practices, patterns and norms of society and culture that lead to the conditioning on the psyche of both girls and boys that results in the shaping and 'becoming' of feminine and masculine gender identities" (Irshad and Banerji, 2012:1). Morojele (2012) studied children in Lesotho, and found how Basotho traditional circumcision, funeral rituals and fairy tales are used to coerce children into displaying femininities and masculinities that signify inequitable gender and sexual relations.

In another context, Bowley (2013) revealed how boys in a private high school, use participation in sport as part of their masculinising process – by drawing on their bodies' sexualised and gender power, and by subordinating femininity they associate with boys who do not play sport or who lack sporting competencies. In Butler (1990)'s view, such acts assert the notion of gender as a performance. performance of gender in terms of masculinity and femininity. Thus emphasizing that, it is through a continuous process of association or socialisation in traditional gendered roles or ideologies, do boys and girls learn to be femininity and masculinity.

Table 1 below highlights some of the dominant ideologies of femininities and masculinities which impact on how young people make meanings of their sexual selves in their daily experiences (see WHO, 2003)

Table 1: Dominant Ideologies of Femininities and Masculinities (WHO, 2003)

Table 1: Dominant Ideologies of Femininities and Masculinities	
Femininity	**Masculinity**
Most of society cast girls: - In a subordinate, dependent and passive position - With virginity - With motherhood - With Moral superiority - And with Obedience as key virtues of the ideal woman.	Boys are characterised as: - Independent - Dominant - Invulnerable aggressors - Providers - And their key virtues are strength, manliness and courage.

Differential treatment and status is attributed to the masculine and feminine that are embodied, co-constructed or sometimes rejected. With different gender socialisation process, boys and girls perform their sexualities differently. The continual differentiation of boys and boys serves to reaffirm the gender order which many people end up accepting as natural. "Apparently, male and female infants cry the same amount, but as the society responds to them differently, boys cry less and less" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:9) – and end up trapped in constructions like 'boys don't cry' or boys viewed as naturally strong. Davies and Banks (1992) holds that a "gender trap" signifies the possible struggles that are experienced by particular boys and girls who reject and resist being positioned by and within dominant discourses of boyhood and girlhood (because of the close association of masculinity to males, and femininity to females).

The sexuality of boys and girls is dominantly constructed within the heterosexual discourse where femininity is equated to passivity and vulnerability, and masculinity is equated to dominance and independence. "From a young age, South African boys and girls (like most of the world's children) are trained into their respective, expected norms of masculinity and femininity" (Francis and Msibi, 2011:164). Boys who fail to conform or who are perceived as effeminate "are therefore seen as weak, while strong girls or lesbian women are perceived as assuming men's role in society" (ibid). This is evident in the names and labels that 'weak' or 'soft' boys receive – such as 'cheese boy' or '*ibhotela*' (butter), and names like '*isinxantu*' (hooligans), and 'isifebe' (slut) for independent and sexually-liberated girls. "In South African township contexts, dairy items like yogurt and cheese are considered delicacies often eaten by women. Men are expected to be rough, tough, and generally not bothered about fine eating" (Francis and Msibi, 2011:165).

These labels are not simply gendered, but work to disparage women and gays/lesbians – suggesting "a strong and pervasive link between sexism and heterosexism" (Blumenfeld, 2000). Thus, sex, gender and sexuality are key sites for the proliferation, contesting, and adopting of femininities, masculinities and compulsory heterosexuality.   Jackson (1996) argues that we all learn to be boys and girls within a society where ideologies of sexuality are constructed.

A study on language, sexuality and HIV and AIDS in a South African township, reported that girls' sexuality is characterised by virginity, abstinence or transactional sex (Selikow, 2004) – while boys' sexuality is characterised by sexual preference, multiple sexual partners, not using condoms, and transactional sex (ibid). Boys with multiple partners were regarded as sexually "real men", whereas girls with multiple sexual partners were demeaned with belittling labels (ibid).

For boys, "it is through the display of heterosexual desire, such as indicating sexual interest in females by recounting heterosexualised stories (Kehily and Nayak 1997) or by ''collecting'' girlfriends (Renold 2007) that an appropriate masculinity is consolidated" (Allen, 2013:349). For girls, femininity is consolidated through 'what you do to keep your boyfriend happy', or, more negatively, 'what you do to keep him' (Anderson, 2013; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Bhana, Morrell, Hearn and Moletsane, 2007). "Several studies have revealed that ''becoming and being [hetero]sexually active was perceived as a marker of social inclusion and belonging, and an important way of establishing one's popularity and credibility with peers'' (Richardson, 2010:743, cited in Allen, 2013:351). These gendered notions of sexuality are of great concern in a country where more women are infected with HIV than men (UNAIDS, 2010).

In many societies, girls are positioned and tend to see themselves fragile and as passive recepients of boys' sexual desires – "while their sexuality is controlled and suppressed" (Muhanguzi, 2011:714). "Virginity, chastity, motherhood, moral superiority, and obedience, are often seen as key virtues of the ideal girl" (WHO, 2003:11). In a study by Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thomson (1990:340), found "wide variations in knowledge and experience of sexual matters among the young women in their sample, but, with a few exceptions, they lack a positive sense of their own sexual identity". These authors argue that "when heterosexual sex is defined in terms of male objectives, the capacity of girls for making their own desires known, or even recognising what these might be, become impeded" (ibid).

"The dominance of heterosexual identity and discursive practices that support an active male and passive female sexuality, are deeply embedded within social and political participation, and perceived as normative" (Allen, 2003:218). While these discourses might appear old-

fashioned in light of South Africa's rights-based era with its gender-equity agenda, several research studies post 1994 continue to report on the dominance of conservative sexual mores located within the heterosexual and patriarchal discourse (Bhana and Anderson, 2013; Msibi, 2012; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Bhana and Pattman, 2009; Baxen and Breidlid, 2009; Hunter, 2005; Pattman and Chege, 2003). These studies showed that femininities in South Africa are often based on compliance with hegemonic masculinities, and adaptation to dominance rather than contestation, and view their responsibility being to fulfil their partners' sexual desires (Bhana and Anderson, 2013a; Bhana and Anderson, 2013b). On the other hand, masculinity ideals condition men to become involved in behaviour that promotes assertive, domineering men, whose responsibilities are to lead and dominate in sexual relationships.

Mathe (2013:79) warns that, "a discourse places young men in the impossible position of needing to take on the role of sexual hero and conqueror – while young women remain vulnerable to male advances and to damaged reputations". Powell (2005:3) refers to this discourse as the "sexual double standard". "It values men's sexuality according to the number of women they have intercourse with, while women's sexuality is rated in opposite terms – through their ability to say no and to remain 'good' girls" (ibid: 64). "In protecting this reputation, women tread a fine line between being judged a 'slut' or 'slag', versus being deemed sexually cold or 'frigid'" (Mathe, 2013:79).

For girls, the notion of reputation and respectability is rooted in patriarchy, and serves as a regulatory technique that inhibits certain behaviours and the free expression of sexual desire (ibid). Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thomson (1990:340), found that the "positive identities available to young heterosexual women tend to be linked to their social relationships with men as girlfriends, wives, or objects of love". This thesis argues against the discourse that renders issues of sexual desire and sexual pleasure, invisible. In contemporary South Africa, a country where masculinities and femininities are being constituted in the unavoidable context of HIV and AIDS, which suffers from the highest rape rates in the world, and where teenage pregnancy is normative – a protective discourse is argued to be illusory and dangerous (Bhana, 2015; Bhana and Anderson, 2013b; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna and Shai, 2010; Hunter, 2010; UNAIDS, 2010). Allen (2007:222) warns that, "denying

young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively makes it harder for them to access the kind of sexual agency which might make them sexually responsible citizens."

This chapter argues that when young girls are positioned as fragile, ignorant and passive within heterosexual relationships – they become vulnerable to HIV infection. The vulnerability is caused by their lack of power to determine who to have sex with or when, and also how to have sex (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Baxen, 2010; Bhana et al., 2007). A study conducted in 23 developing countries found that when young women are expected to be naïve, they find it difficult to be proactive in negotiating safer sex, and a lack of knowledge or incomplete knowledge of sexual matters "hinders women's ability to be informed about sexual risk reduction, and also fosters the development of fears and myths about condom use" (WHO, 2003:12). Allen (2007:222) asserts that "a young person who views himself as positively and legitimately sexual, is typically in a much stronger position to act in ways that support their sexual wellbeing, than someone who considers their sexuality to be inherently 'wrong'".

Defining a boy within what Hunter (2010) calls '*isoka*' masculinity (a hyper-sexualised man with multiple sexual partners), or assuming him to be knowledgeable and experienced about sex, may also contribute to the increased risk of HIV. WHO (2010) states that these assumptions put young men at risk of infection because they engage in sex with multiple partners (a high risk behaviour) and "it prevents them from seeking information or admitting their lack of knowledge about sex or protection" (WHO, 2003:12). Many studies have reported that young boys view sex with a condom as being not pleasurable or undesirable – sex with a condom is like eating a wrapped sweet (Hlabangani, 2014; HRSC, 2012; WHO, 2010; Reddy and Dunne, 2007). These negative feelings about condom usage are likely to result from incorrect usage or fear/lack of information on correct usage.

The feminist post-construtionist theory adopted throughout this thesis, argues that heterosexism is an impediment to the development of positive sexual identities. It acknowledges the agency of young people in constructing their sexuality by exploring the meanings which they attach to sexuality as teenage girls and boys influencing and influenced by the dominant discourses of sexuality. Despite the disappointing sexual identities depicted

here, a growing body of literature shows that gender identities are changing – especially in the face of the AIDS pandemic (Hlabangani, 2014; Jewkes and Morrell, 2010; Hunter, 2010).

Alternative Sexualities

Hunter's work in Mandeni township, shows that masculine ideals that validated having many girlfriends have begun to shift as HIV and AIDS has begun to take its toll (Morrell et al., 2009). He demonstrated that boys having multiple sexual partners and girls being passive, are by no means common Black or township sexual identities (Hunter, 2010). The work of Hlabangane (2014) with young people from Soweto also demonstrated how the face of HIV has challenged the power of men. The participants in her study spoke of the "notion that men can force themselves on women because 'she drank my money' as an outdated one" (Wojcicki, 2002 cited in Hlabangane, 2014: 5). "This is in view of the possibility that the woman being forced to have sex may be infected with HIV. In other words, men have to consider possible HIV infection, if they want to force themselves on women. So, while the young women felt vulnerable to sexual assault by men, they recognised and highlighted the danger that such acts may pose to the men" (Hlabangane, 2014:5).

SEXUALITY AND SCHOOLING

Linking the "terms 'schooling' and 'sexuality', is the stuff of which scandal can be, and often is, made" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:1). However, almost every person who has been to school will "have memories of sexuality playing a big part in their schooling experience" (ibid). "Despite appeals to preserve schools from the visible presence of sexuality, they are in fact sexualised sites" (Bhana, Morrell, Shefer and Ngabaza, 2010:873). Ingrey (2013), and Mac an Ghaill (1996) maintain that schools are key sites for the making of gender and gender expression, and that gender performance is part of everyone's everyday experience and cannot be separated from the curricular, pedagogical, and policy work that goes on in public schools. Similarly, Connell (2008) specifically points us to a need to think carefully about what schools as sites for the making of gender.

Gender is complexely organised at every level of the schooling experience (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) and the school is deemed a heteronormative space. Warner explains "heteronormativity as organising all patterns of thought, awareness, and belief around the presumption of a universal heterosexual desire, behaviour, and identity" (Warner 1993: xxi-

xxv). The reality is that by the time children go to school, they carry with them gendered messages which remind them about appropriate modes of behaviour, sexual normality, sexual power, and appropriate sexual expressions (Villanueva, 1997).

They are aware of how and when it is safe to be close to people of different sex or when intimacy must be avoided – and that their bodies are a source of pleasure or of shame (ibid). Through the educational system, the school has become both a symbol of continuity and of support of contextual scripts, and a source of independence and change for learners. "Through participation in school routines, learners learn to conform or resist the official culture of the school" (Fraser, 2004:133). The school, as a social context, then plays a critical role in reinforcing gender structures and roles through the educational system.

Doing Gender in School

From the very first day of school, learners are requested to fill out enrolment forms where they indicate their sex categories. Filling out forms may socialise people into regarding themselves as belonging to one category or another (Lunsing, 1995) – and it is the only feature each person has that is expected to remain unaltered throughout his or her life (Paechter, 2006; Moore, 1994). By ticking the box of 'female' or 'male' on the enrolment form, learners enter a sex-gender system. As part of the school's gender policing strategies, learners are reminded of their gendered bodies with injunctions – particularly to girls – about appropriate modes of behaviour, from dress to ways of sitting and talking (Paechter, 2012, 2006; Lunsing, 1995).

School "spaces and places are ideological landscapes whose representations are entangled with gender relations" (McConoughy, 2006:329), complex hierarchies of advantage and disadvantage, and boundaries through which feminine and masculine identities are constructed and reinforced (Francis, 2010). In "many African schools, girls were predominantly responsible for cleaning, and boys for digging the school grounds" (Dunne, Humphrey and Leach, 2006:78). "These activities are key symbols of gender identification and differentiation – which are constantly practised within schools" (ibid).

Here the school becomes "an arena where a nexus of discourses in relation to gender and sexuality are articulated, embraced, modified, rehearsed, and/or struggled over" (adapted from Kehily, 2005:40). So, "boys in African schools may routinely insist on playing sport

during breaks, and refuse to carry out sweeping or washing duties – which they see as the girls' preserve as it is symbolic of domestic femininity" (Dunne et al., 2006:78). "Such forms of gender-specific routine behaviour – which vary in different contexts – contribute to the production and regulation of forms of femininity and masculinity and sexual identity" (Mac an Ghaill, 1994 cited in Dunne et al:78).

In a school environment, masculinities and femininities are threaded through what Connell (2008) terms the 'gender regimes' of the school. Several school-based research items on gender and sexuality have "disclosed how the daily routines and rituals of schooling" (Allen, 2007:221), including the school's gaming cultures, produce gendered "sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt and resist – as they carve out a sense of a sexual self" (see Bhana, 2016; Mayeza, 2015; Prinsloo and Moletsana, 2013; Bhana, 2013; Morejele, 2013; Bowley, 2013; Bhana, 2009; Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane, 2009; Bhana and Patman, 2009; Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Mac an Ghaill, 1996). Bowley (2013), Hamlall and Morrell (2012), Morojele (2011), Bhana and Pattman (2010) found that assembly rituals, sport activities, subject choices, and the division of labour, were the main gender vortices identified in schools.

Mayeza (2015) and Bhana (2002) showed how children deploy heterosexual discourses in their play and forms of abuse. Many other researchers have reported on boys' tendency to "engage in more rough and tumble play" (Bokony and Patric, 2016:1), and how success in those games is constructed as success at being masculine (Bhana, 2015; Ringrose and Renold, 2010; Renold, 2005; Martino, 1999; Jordan, 1995, Thorne, 1993). The boys' bodies are viewed as 'pain free' zones, and their violent performances are regarded as a compulsory component of 'doing boy', and asserting one's manhood (Renold, 2004). This section thus argues that the gendered experiences of schooling are critical in understanding and engaging with the evolving sexual identities of teenage learners.

Discourses on Gender and Sexuality in Schools
Epstein and Johnson (1998) note that in schools, sexuality is everywhere and nowhere. Through this claim, their intention was "to reveal the ways in which sexuality is pervasive in the everyday exchanges of peer culture and staffroom talk, yet simultaneously denied and highly regulated in these schooling contexts" (Allen, 2013:348). Similarly, Bhana (2012:310)

asserts that "schools are sexualised institutions despite the denial, through which heterosexual domination becomes an organising principle". "Sexuality enters the power relations of schooling, but it is also present in patterns of personal friendship and relationships, fantasies and expectations about future destinies, talk about popular cultural icons, teachers gossiping to teachers about teachers and about students, students' gossip about teachers and about their contemporaries, and also in playground play, bullying and talk" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:5).

"Sexuality is both produced and silenced in schools" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:86). "Although schools appear to formally acknowledge and accommodate student sexuality, they are heavily invested in a student ideal that is non-sexual" (Allen, 2007:222; Bhana, 2002). Schools continue to assume childhood innocence and to send contradictory messages about youth sexuality. Pattman and Chege (2003:110) found that in schools, sexuality or HIV/AIDS education "is commonly taught as a series of moral injunctions against premarital sex, and silences youth on deeper discussions of these topics".

In many sex education programmes in schools, the 'discourse of desire' is missing. The reasons for omitting the discourse of desire are that it cannot be reconciled with the heavy rhetoric of delaying sex that characterises most sex and relationship education – nor with the tendency to promote an extension of childhood innocence/ignorance beyond puberty (Epstein, O'Flynn and Telford, 2003; Butler, 1999). Baxen and Breidlid (2009) discuss how South African schools' sex education programmes talk about safe sex, but at the same time condoms are prohibited in high schools. Butler (1999:) claims that "this approach to sexuality is dangerous, as the analytical purchase of sexuality and power becomes opaque". Pattman and Chege (2003) proposed sexuality pedagogies which emulate the open, non-judgmental practices.

Heteronormativity in Schools

The dominant gender discourse in the school context denies learners the possibility of alternative ways of being, and explicitly creates no room for expression of difference. In the Relationship Culture Project of Epstein, O'Flynn and Telford (2003), groups of friends deployed discourses of heterosexuality to make and solidify or break friendships. "Sexualities that fall outside the charmed circle of good, normal, natural, blessed sexuality, were silenced"

(ibid:3). To most learners, "the hegemonic conceptions of gender are understood as an ideological structure that divides people into heterosexual identities which are concomitant with their gender" (Lazar, 2005:7).

The dominant discourse primarily involves a discussion about a heterosexually imagined future (Epstein et al, 2003). Allen (2007) revealed that teaching about homosexuality was absent in the sex-education curriculum. While her research participants expressed interest in learning about homosexuality, the 'us' and 'them' distinction was very apparent in their comments – 'us' being heterosexuality and 'them' being homosexuality (ibid). Psychological studies in schools and youth settings have also shown that misogynistic and homophobic discourses side-line girls and homosexual boys (Wells and Polders, 2006, cited by Morrell et al., 2009).

"Educational researchers have found that schools are marked by a cultural landscape in which heterosexuality acts as the norm within schools and the focal point around which other sexual behaviours are located'' (Nayak and Kehily, 1996:224). Heterosexuality is naturalised, a gender stereotype that positions girls as commodities in a heterosexual market is reinforced, and any girl who does not adhere to gender norms is marginalised and rendered deviant (Morojele, 2009; Kehily, 2002) Feminist scholars have challenged the normalisation or naturalisation of gender (Bhana, 2002; Allen, 1999; Kehily, 1999; Renold, 1999; Lunsing, 1995; Butler, 1990), and have argued for the recognition of the multiplicity of masculinity and femininity and of experiences of gender.

Msibi (2012) studied learners from South African township schools, and he reported on how certain elements of identity become compulsory in schools, and how 'deviance' is heavily punished. Within the school environment, homosexuality as the right to sexual choice is denied (McIntyre, 1992). Msibi revealed that language was a powerful tool in which homophobia and heterosexism were entrenched (Msibi, 2012). "Words like 'isitabane', 'moffie' and 'ongqingili', which are all derogatory isiZulu and Afrikaans words with a meaning similar to 'faggot' – were being used to marginalise and diminish gay learners or male learners who 'appeared' to be less masculine" (Msibi, 2012:516).

The findings of a similar study by Wells and Polders (2005) reported that "most of the victimization in school was perpetrated by other pupils (65%); followed by educators (22%), school principals (9%) and other staff" (Francis and Msibi, 2011:161). Msibi (2012), however, cautions against depicting gay learners as being passive, powerless and with no hope. His study revealed that in spite of all the struggles that gay learners experience in schools, the learners expressed great pride in themselves and their abilities, and the pride largely had to do with self-acceptance (ibid). "Gay and lesbian learners are sometimes able to resist and also find ways of navigating within the repressive schooling environment – by subverting the negativity and using it positively" (Mac an Ghaill, 1994, cited in Mathe, 2013: 85).

SEXUALITY, GENDER AND SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE

'All Violence in Schools is a Gender Problem'

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2003:5) defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood or resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation". In addition, Connell (2008) emphasises that any definition of violence in the school context should carefully factor in what schools are like, as settings for the making of masculinities and femininities. Therefore, comprehensive as the WHO definition is, it is impossible to simply apply it to the school context, because of the difficulty in discretely identifying violence in South African schools (Bhana, 2013).

Understanding and addressing violence in schools requires co-extensive understanding and interventions that take into account the complexities of growing up in the South African socio-structural and historical context (ibid). Consequently, in this chapter, I adopt a broad definition where violence is viewed as a slippery concept – that is nonlinear, productive, destructive and reproductive (Hamlall, 2010; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004).

All violence in schools is a gender problem (Connell, 2000). A shared view on violent acts and tendencies among South African learners is that they are rooted in the gendered performances and constructs that define 'a real man' – in and outside school. This

understanding is drawn particularly from the literature which discloses school-based violence as being visibly gendered (see Bhana, 2013; Sundaram, 2013; Hamlall and Morrell, 2012; Dunne, Humphreys and Leach, 2006; Prinsloo, 2006; Leach, 2006, 2003; Connell, 2000; Morrell, 1998). "As microcosms of a wider society, schools are spaces where entrenched gender roles and power dynamics are played out" (Reilly, 2014:1). This chapter thus rejects explicit understandings of school-based violence that are often reported in gender-neutral terms.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005) views gender violence (GV) as a structural problem that is deeply embedded in unequal power relationships between men and women, and that it functions as a mechanism for enforcing and sustaining gender inequality. Such violence is perpetuated by harmful social and cultural expectations about gender roles typically associated with being a woman, a man, a girl or a boy (ibid). Reilly (2014) extends this definition by defining school-related gender violence (SRGV) as being any violence that occurs in school, or on the way to school – on the basis of a person's sex. Here we emphasise the centrality of the space in and around the school to learners' lives and the meanings, values, identities, subjectivities, and power dynamics associated with such space (adapted from Morojele, 2013).

School-Based Violence and the Making of Gender

Morrell (1998) established a clear connection between the aldult men of the school, boy learners and school based violence, and has established the platform for the analysis of school violence as being the male dominance. One of the normalised violent practices which – despite legal prohibition – continues to be used in South African schools, and particularly Black schools, is corporal punishment (Morrell, 2001). In this regard, Morrell argues that the purposeful and frequent infliction of pain by those in authority in an institutional setting, promotes violent masculinities (Morrell 1994, 1997, cited in Morrell, 2001).

Bluntly stated, Morrell viewed corporal punishment as teaching boys to be tough and uncomplaining, and teaching girls 'their place' – to be submissive and unquestioning (Morrell, 2001). "Conversely, the harsh beating of male students by male teachers has been explained both as being performance of domination by an adult male in authority over a juvenile male, and as a juvenile male's initiation into adulthood – i.e. to 'toughen up' male

students" (Dunne, et al, 2006:83). These authors found that the beating of girls in and outside the school "was rationalised by a few of the girls and women interviewed as being part of their socialisation into becoming respectful and obedient wives and mothers" (ibid).

In many cases, corporal punishment is administered by a male teacher – thus asserting and reinforcing the gender hierarchy in the school.

Sundaram (2013:890) states that "Teenagers' attitudes towards violence have been linked to expectations for 'normal' gender behavior". Here, boys' bodies are viewed as 'pain free' zones, and any of their violent behaviours are regarded as being a compulsory component of 'doing boy' and asserting one's manhood (Renold, 2004). "Boys who do not measure up to what is considered to be appropriate '*manly'* behaviour, are positioned as the 'other', and are situated outside the normative frames of reference for attributing desirable masculinity by certain boys – who acquire a particular status attributed to the bodily enactment and assertion of heterosexuality" (Martino, 1999:245).

For boys, the real expression of masculinity is invested with power (Butler, 1990). Within the adoption of 'manly' behaviour, "boys are incited to adopt certain practices of masculinity, and to display themselves as particular kinds of boys" (Martino, 1999:240). This leads the 'good boys' to adopt the warrior narratives, and to demonstrate frigidity and '*isoka*' masculinity as being a definition of masculinity (Hunter, 2010; Jordan, 1995). In rationalising these acts, Khau (2007:59-60) maintains that, "when men are threatened with the loss of their culturally-constructed maleness, they express their fear through violence". Those who fail to achieve this gender ideal become victims of violence. It is, however, important to note that this is not an straightfoward process, but rather involves challending and resisting.

Morrell (2012), Ouzgane and Morrell (2005), and Connell (2000), warn that "notions of masculinity that emphasise sexual domination over women as being a defining characteristic of manhood, contribute to homophobia and the stigmatisation of men who have sex with men. The stigma and fear that result, compel men who have sex with men to keep their sexual behaviour secret and to deny their sexual risk – thereby increasing their own risk, as well as the risk of their partners, whether female or male" (Sharma, 2006:181).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

One of the commonest forms of violence against school-going girls and young women is that performed by their boyfriends, their former boyfriends, or by their boyfriends with their friends. "Although women can be violent in relationships with men, and violence is also found in same-sex partnerships, the overwhelming health burden of partner violence is borne by women at the hands of men" (WHO, 2003:89). "Feminist theory has used women's experiences to show the very general exercise of power, aggression and violence, which structures social relationships. Male control over female sexuality is then taken to be a crucial mechanism for the reproduction of sexual hierarchy, and male violence against women is an important instrument in maintaining that control" (Holland, 1990:15).

Anderson (2013) found that school girls reported a range of pressures, assaults and rape by their partners or by a group of boys that take place inside or outside the school (Anderson, 2013). Jewkes (2012:28), states that the "prevalence of IPV, and particularly multiple perpetrator rape (coerced sex where two or more men sexually penetrate), is unusually high in South Africa". Research shows that punishment for infidelity or disrespect is the motivation in about one third of cases, and in a little less than one in five cases the victim is found inebriated (ibid). "While women have some power to identify and resist these pressures, some do not necessarily want to resist – when love, romance and the fear of losing a boyfriend are critical issues" (Elwood, 1998:185).

Several studies have reported how young girls and boys thought that violence against women was acceptable in some circumstances, including 'nagging' and infidelity (Bhana and Pattman, 2011; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Hunter, 2010). Associated with the assumed men's role to protect women, these girls and boys believe that boys and men have inherent power to punish and control misbehaving girls and women – be they fathers, brothers or boyfriends. I argue that oppressive practices such as partriarchy and hegemonic masculinity play   a role in perpetuating violence against women ans girls. Anderson (2013), in a study on coloured girls from an underprivileged community yielded similar result to a study conducted by Holland, et al (1990). They found that "only a handful of girls managed to develop relationships in which their needs could be asserted and given importance – including their need to sometimes refuse intercourse" (Holland, et al, 1990:342).

Here I am not intending to perpetuate gendered sterotypes about girls' and boys' sexual constructs. What I am highliting is that intimate partner relations are negotiated within context that are dominated by gender inequality and male dominance. Moreover, these oppressive systems are viewed as being normal, and turns sexual encounters into potential power struggles (Cannon, Lauve-Moon and Buttell, 2015; Bhana and Anderson, 2013).

SUMMARY

The chapter reviewed the literature on debates and perspectives on childhood (young people), gender, sexuality and schooling. Given the vast scope of such research, the focus of my discussion was on the conceptualisation, dominant constructions, coexistence and intersection of such elements. Firstly, the literature reviewed shared insight into how childhood is conceptualised, dominantly understood, and constructed. The literature highlighted that different constructions of childhood occur and that we cannot universalise, essentialise nor naturalise such constructions.

The second part of the literature review discussed the dominant perspectives that have shaped our understanding of the sexuality of teenagers. This part explored the historical, religious, socio-political and structural systems that have shaped the ways in which the sexuality, particularly of African teenage boys and girls, is constructed. The focus of the discussion was on outlining some symbolic and dominant trends in the constructions, understandings and interpretations of sexuality – particularly within the South African historical context. This discussion reiterated Weeks' (1986) assertion that sexuality has numerous histories and is produced by society through complex patterns of negotiation and struggle, between those who have the power to define and set boundaries and those who do not.

The third part of the literature review discussed the gendered notions of childhood sexuality. This discussion challenged the ideologies and discourses that view gender and sexuality as being natural or something that we are born with. Instead, the discussions asserted Butler (1990)'s view of gender and sexuality as being performative, fluid and relational. Thus, constructions and experiences of boyhood and girlhood are socially constructed, and involuntarily performed or negotiated within a given society. These performances are bilaterally performed, and some are contested or adapted.

The last part of the chapter discussed how certain types of sexualities and gender are institutionalised, legitimised and policed within the school contexts. A discourse of sexual desire and sexual pleasure was also said to be absent in schools. Instead, the literature highlighted how the daily routines and rituals of schooling are used to produce and reproduce sexual identities that boys and girls contest, adapt or accept. Discussions, in this part, also shared insight on how heterosexuality is 'promoted and naturalised' within the school contexts. Consequently, heteronormativity is viewed as promoting inequalities in schools. This chapter argues that any discourse that legitimises one sexual orientation over the other, and 'othering' alternative sexual orientations, is the root cause of gender violence within and around the school context.

In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological framework of the study.

Chapter 4
CONDUCTING RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

Despite South Africa being referred to as a rainbow nation, townships continue to resemble the symbols of apartheid, inequalities, extreme socio-economic disparities, and a high degree of gender-based violence. Young people from the township context are heavily burdened by HIV and AIDS, youth gang rapes and coerced group sex, extreme violence, and unplanned teenage pregnancies (Hunter, 2010; Mathe, 2007; Prinsloo, 2007). Yet, to date, their behaviours are often squashed into essentialist, implied, stereotypic or racialised explanations like 'they lack a moral code of conduct or their behavior exhibits their culture and tradition' (Swartz and Scott, 2014). Furthermore, often the social institutions entrusted with the responsibilities of addressing such problems are ill-informed about young people's sexual experiences, interests and needs. They have a tendency of assuming the child as being asexual or innocent (Egan and Hawkes, 2012, Epstein, O'Flynn and Telford, 2003). When these social institutions intervene, they use their disciplinary practices, such as sport or career choices, to shape and discipline young people into gendered bodies (adapted from Connell, 2007).

In schools, for instance, the restricted attempts available are ostracized to marginalised programmes such as Life Orientation programmes. These programmes, "however, have been widely criticised as being irrelevant to teens' experiences, interests and needs" (Kramer-Leach, 2010:6). They construct young people as being children in need of protection – "rather than perceiving them as 'knowers' who bring with them knowledge about sexuality and their own experiences" (Francis, 2010:315). They sustain and reproduce dominant beliefs about gender and sexuality (Haywood, 2008), follow categorical thinking, and frame young people's interest in sex and sexuality as a disruption to schooling (Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998).

Ramadhin (2010) and Bhana and Pattman (2009), argue that understanding the ways in which young people in varied social contexts give meaning to sexuality and gender, are key to developing appropriate forms of educational interventions designed to address sexuality, HIV and AIDS, and gender equality. Ashcraft (2006:2145) adds that, "schooling will grow

increasingly irrelevant and ineffective if teen sexuality and popular culture are not understood and addressed". I argue that efforts aimed at developing transformative interventions to address gender and sexuality problems in varied social contexts, should be informed by research which considers how and where boys and girls make meaning of their sexual selves. The argument of my study is that understanding teenage sexualities requires attention to sexual agency, and such agency is embedded within social and cultural contexts illuminating the assertions of sexualities and the limitations. Consequently, the cultural circumstances have a great deal to offer – not only in understanding sexuality, but also in addressing the risks of exposure to sexual violence and HIV in young girls.

This chapter analyses the ethnographic journey I travelled to explore and understand how African teenagers from a township high school give meaning to sexuality in their everyday school lives, and what significance it holds for relations of gender power. The chapter begins by reflecting on how the ethnographic approach offered opportunities for the exploration of how grade 11 learners in a township high school make meaning of their sexuality. The chapter further reflects on parallel processes of constant identity co-constructions between me as a researcher, and the researched. Although the study was not about me, my subjective self was central to my experiences of fieldwork and the nature of data I collected. Throughout this chapter, I demonstrate how my own sense of identity was co-constructed to respond to different realities of the field. Using the self, I also show the interplay of power and gender relations. The remainder of the chapter describes the field of study, the data-collection process, and data analysis.

LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING GENDER AND SEXUALITY

In exploring township youth sexuality, this study drew upon the literature which discloses "how the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt and resist, as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (see Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Bhana, 2009, 2002; Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane, 2009; Bhana and Pattman, 2009; Allen, 2007:221, 2005; Renold, 2005; Kehily, 2002a; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Thorne, 1993). Informed by the feminist post-structuralist theory and the social constructionist perspective, the research methods adopted were youth-centred and participatory.

Pattman and Kehily (2004) cited in Allen (2009:550) stress the importance of a "youth centred methodology that values young people's perspectives and attempts to centre them in understanding social phenomena". Like the study by Renold (2002: 417), "one of the central features of the study was its commitment to foregrounding learners' own experiences, and using the research process as a vehicle through which learners are enabled to communicate experiences which are important to them".

Leach (2006) raises important questions about appropriate methodologies and ethical issues in relation to research with children and youth – particularly on sensitive issues like sexuality. He makes a strong case for the use of participatory research methods in such studies (ibid). Data were collected and produced using observations, focus-group discussions, and unstructured conversations. These data-collection tools focused on creating an environment that 'gave a voice' to individuals under study and allowed for examination of "how the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt, challenge and resist – as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221). As such, the approach exposed the social relations of schooling by recognising that the sense of self is developed in interpersonal relationships and to our social environment. Furthermore, integrating focus groups with participant observation, enabled me to fully explore how learners' sexuality identities are performed from multiple views and extents, and provided ways of troubling and simultaneously making sense of the kinds of gendered sexuality identities and relations of high school girls and boys (Renold, 2005).

Throughout my fieldwork, every effort was made to respect and treat the teenage learners as being knowledgeable, active agents, who are negotiating their own social worlds. This approach was not in any way intended to undermine or alienate the authority figures responsible for the learners. In fact, the journey described in this chapter, attempts to make visible the interplay of the units of my ethnography. These units are: the self, learners, teachers, the school, parents, and the social environment. I, however, do not attempt to recreate the reality effect of field relations produced by these units (Kehily, 2007, 2002), nor do I discuss these units as discreet entities. Rather, I have presented instances in the data that provide an annotation on the intersection of these units in an integrated, intertwined and holistic manner.

This presentation of the social reality of my fieldwork is influenced by social constructionism and poststructuralists – which view ethnographic research as being multi-dimensional, relational, and embedded in multiple contexts. These dimensions are interdependent and may be resources that facilitate the positive field or obstacles to fieldwork.

To further explain this view, I describe my fieldwork journey using the metaphor of a spider web (Akbar, 1976, cited in Graham, 1999 and Griffiths, 1995). The web comprises threads intricately attached to make the whole, and these threads come in different lengths and sizes. Some are long, some are short, some are very strong, and some are nearly invisible. However, one cannot touch one element without making the whole vibrate. The maintenance of harmonious relations among these elements supports the development of positive ethnographic competence. Problems arise when we, as researchers, alienate and disconnect these elements from their independent relations. For instance, my study is about learners – but establishing and maintaining an ethical relationship with the teachers was critical for positive fieldwork. Furthermore, throughout my fieldwork, I was sensitive to the ongoing relationship that existed between the learners and all other units of the school – and I endeavoured not to disturb it (Davies, 1999). "Fieldwork thus helps to shape, challenge, reproduce, maintain, reconstruct and represent ourselves and the selves of others" (Coffey, 1999:8).

PREPARATION FOR THE FIELD

In research, preparation entails reading, choosing an approach, and identifying potential obstacles (Jorgensen, 1989, cited in Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Rubin and Babbie (2013:493) advise that in preparation, a researcher should "begin with a search of the relevant literature" – discovering what others have said about the subject, and discuss the targeted population group with one or more informants. My fieldwork journey began from the premise that fieldwork is subjective and personal. Prior to my fieldwork, I gave much thought to the importance of my subjective identity as an ethnographic researcher. This thinking resulted from research experiences shared by the feminist researchers who presented during the UKZN/SANTRUST Pre-Doctoral PhD Proposal Development Programme (SANTRUST), that I was part of in 2010/2011. SANTRUST was a staff-development initiative of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) research office, that was primarily aimed at ensuring the development of proposals for doctoral studies. It was a residential and open learning

research-methodology programme for pre-doctoral candidates, and comprised six week-long modules over a period of a year. Candidates were UKZN permanent staff members from different fields. Modules were facilitated by local, international, qualitative, quantitative, critical, and positivist researchers, who were experts in their respective fields. This meant that the programme not only comprised the six modules – but had facilitators and candidates with epistemological, ontological, and methodological variations. Each module thus came with its own agenda, opportunities, gains, frustrations, and challenges. These were collectively and/or individually experienced.

Even though all SANTRUST candidates collectively received each module's agenda, which was informed by the unit description, specific learning objectives and topics to be covered during the module – the usefulness, relevance or unworthiness of the agenda, was experienced and received differently. Individually or collectively, I was open to the opportunities presented by the topics discussed; I got frustrated during the sessions facilitated by researchers with a different view on the nature of reality or knowledge; I gained from theoretical discussions and debates; I experienced challenges in articulating my research design to audience members, who were obsessed with the importance of eliminating "investigator effects"; and I gained from compassionate and fascinating fieldwork experiences shared by qualitative researchers, especially feminist researchers. All these experiences reminded me that doing or learning research was subjective and personal. Most importantly, however, my frustrations, challenges, or gains brought more insights to my research study, helped me crystallise my research methodology, and introduced me to the process of reflexivity.

Reflexivity was one of the cutting-edge themes commonly shared by educational and feminist researchers during SANTRUST. What was central to their presentations was the recognition that fieldwork is personal, emotional, and identity work (Burman, Batchelor and Brown, 2001). These researchers spoke at length about self-management as being one of the important ethnographic research tools in the field. Early in my research journey I was extremely conscientised that fieldwork is dependent on the interpersonal dimensions – and thus managing and producing an acceptable researcher was critical during access negotiations and during my fieldwork. Coffey (1999) reminds us that we locate our physical being alongside those of others, as we negotiate the spatial context of the field. "Performance,

speech and the use of props, are aspects of the production of a fieldwork body which is acceptable and plausible" (Coffey, 1999:65).

RETURNING TO MY FORMER SCHOOL

According to Rubin and Babbie (2013:152), "a researcher should take care that her/his initial discussions do not compromise or limit later aspects of their research". My 'impression-management' (Silverman, 2013) thus began before the actual fieldwork. I recall debating how I should look during my initial contact with the school, which was to take place in November 2011. This contact was a follow-up meeting to the letter and telephone calls made to the school's management, requesting permission to conduct my study. What was complicating my position, however, was that this was no 'ordinary' research site: it was my former high school, which was selected for several reasons. One of the reasons driven by the 'charity begins at home' idiom, was related to my current position as a lecturer in the School of Applied Human Sciences (social work discipline) at UKZN. I had identified this school as a site for my future community outreach project, which was one of my professional aspirations. I thus viewed using this school as a site for my research project, as the beginning of a long-term professional relationship with it.

During this initial contact (November 2011), I was going to meet my teachers who I had left behind 23 years ago (1988) when I completed my matric (grade 12). The self was problematised and a process of deconstruction began. Being aware of the dominant ideologies of success in a school environment and in an African context, I knew that my first contact was to make a strong statement and to avoid giving an impression that could have been an obstacle to access (Silverman, 2013). While I did not want to present myself as a powerful and superior being to my former teachers, given my status as a lecturer, I also did not want to present an inferior image that did not mirror the intellectual and social competences I possess.

In African contexts, success is not defined in terms of material possessions, but rather in terms of sustained competence exhibited by one's ability to interact and contribute to one's environment in the face of adversity (Pellabon, 2011; Asante, 2003; Graham, 1999; Mbiti, 1970). I needed to present a personal front which mirrored resilience, academic and emotional intelligence, and my intention to invest in the lives of the learners. I figured out

that the opportunity presented by my first contact with the school, was threefold. First, I was coming to request their permission to conduct my study. Second, this contact was an establishment of a long-term professional relationship with the school. Third, this was the beginning of my efforts to contribute toward the psychosocial wellbeing of learners, in return for the school's contribution towards my growth and development.

Educational researchers have commented on how schooling relations are hierarchical and power laden (Baxen and Breidlid, 2009; Renold, 2005; Allen, 2005; Bhana, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Thorne, 1993). I knew that coming back to my former school in a researcher position, would challenge the power relations that existed. To present what Coffey (1999) terms a 'talking disciplined body', I decided on a business casual look. Babbie (2013) states that your appearance as a researcher may result in a warm welcome or in you being totally ostracised – or worse. I am also aware that I have a sense of presence and a loud voice. Since speech visualises the body, I knew that I had to work hard to tone my vocals down. I needed a soft voice to communicate that 'I am here to learn and listen'.

Portraying an open, non- intimidating, accessible, yet sophisticated self, was important. With this presentation, I did not assume my teachers' automatic interpretation of the messages I was communicating – but the process of self-management became central to how I understood and made sense of identity constructions. The process was also an affirmation that identity and reality are negotiated in everyday life, and are shaped by complex social processes. Jeremiah (2013:16) thus emphasises that "the purpose of research is to mediate between different constructions of reality, and doing research means increasing understanding of these varying constructions – among which is the researcher's own constructions".

The day of the meeting arrived. When I approached the school gate, the security guard was sitting in his small office that is part of the gate architecture. I parked right in front of the gate hoping to draw his attention – but I was unsuccessful. I got out of the car and waved to gain his attention. He slowly moved out of his office, stood just outside his door, and in an unfriendly manner, waited for me to speak. His silence made me feel so uneasy and unwelcomed, and also made me wonder since when school visitors, particularly a woman, is looked with such suspicion.

Before I found words to greet and before I introduced myself, I temporarily paused and looked around the school gate. There were many movements around it. There were cars, including taxis, stopping in front of the school gate – dropping people off who were going to the new clinic situated directly opposite the school. Inside the school gate, there is a big notice board stating 'no guns', 'no alcohol and drugs' inside the school premises, and that permission to enter the school is reserved. These statements made me realise that much had changed since I left the school, and my first contact was the first of many lessons I was to learn about the current social dynamics of my research site.

Since I was not a parent of any child in the school, access was granted after responding to numerous questions, producing official identification, and signing the visitors' register. Entering my former school wearing a researcher cap and being older felt strange and troubling. While the school buildings did not look much different from a distance, I tried to locate myself in the environment, but struggled to do so. I parked my car in the open space used as a parking lot. I stayed in my car for a few minutes – trying to catch my breath and get my confidence back, and also temporally resisting letting go off a familiar space (my car). I observed a high number of cars parked there which, which was not the case during my apartheid days of high school. I didn't recall seeing more than three cars in the school yard during my school years. This brought up several questions: do these cars represent a changed socio-economic condition in post-apartheid South Africa; who are the teachers; what are their profiles; who are the car owners; are they men or women; and how will they receive me? These thoughts left many questions to be explored during my fieldwork.

On my way to the office of the school principal, I took a closer look at the school buildings and yards. I was hoping to see a familiar picture or to meet a familiar face. I did not anticipate the sense of strangeness that I was experiencing, and there were few movements within the school premises. Later I learned that it was examination time, and movements of learners in the school yard and noise were highly restricted. The school which during my high school years was considered the prime school (physically, academically, socially) in KwaMashu, was now looking so inferior and lacked appeal. Somehow, coming back to the school now, wearing the lenses of a middle-income PhD student with social and economic capital, questioned and troubled the authenticity of the mental pictures of this school that I had carried with me for more than 23 years. Again, the notions of multiple truths and context

specificity in understanding human experiences and development, were asserted. It became clear that the path between familiarity and strangeness is far from straightforward (Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont, 2003).

I tried to examine the source of these conflicting pictures of my former school. Were they a result of my current 'lenses', or did they exist before, but being a school girl who grow up under apartheid – I did not know any better? Was it true that education in South Africa "has not been the dynamo at the centre of social transformation" (Weber, 2008: ix)? These questions were unsettling and offered an opportunity for co-constructing the self, in relation to my target study population. They brought forth memories of my activism as a young girl, and how the confines of apartheid limited my so-called 'social and political agency'; how, for instance, our leisure time as youth was exchanged for active political involvement (Cebukhulu, 2013) and how the academic and political agenda in our schools was not set by our needs as the oppressed – but by the oppressor (Mandela, 1995). These memories reminded me why I will never judge my research participants, because one day I was in fact them, and this was why I needed to focus on them, give them a platform where they could set the agenda for discussing matters concerning their lives, and where I could look them in the eyes and take them seriously – because their voice mattered the way mine mattered, but it never got the attention, respect, dignity and honour. My commitment to learner-centredness was again revived.

MEETING MR PRINCIPAL

The school administration building was easily accessible. The school administrator escorted me to the principal's office. As a learner, I never set foot inside the principal's office. During my high-school years, the principal's office was a place where extreme cases were dealt with. The principal though, was one of my past teachers. Upon entering his office, he welcomed me with a big smile and a warm handshake that eased my anxieties – which were building up since my school-gate incident. Before I could introduce myself, the principal identified me by my maiden name. As a learner, the use of maiden names was one of the symbolic boundaries shaping gender, sexuality and power relations in school. As odd as it was to be called by my maiden name by someone whom I viewed as a colleague, meeting a familiar and a friendly face was such a relief. Glimps images of myself as a learner, started to occupy my thoughts.

The encounter with the principal was instrumental in the process of locating who I was in this context. Moreover, it was a reminder that identities are not stable biologically states, but emerge relationally through cultural, symbolical and institutional practices (Ferguson, 2009; Heasley and Crane, 2003; Weeks, 1985). "Identity is a process, a continual play of existential choices over a field of unfolding possibility" (Dyson, 2004:468).

My conversation with the principal ranged from my post high-school years, my PhD supervisor's research engagement with the school in the past, my research, my personal profile, and to my academic profile. Indeed, the principal seemed pleased with the performance I put in terms of presenting the self. Against Wittig's argument on the importance of women in assuming the position of authoritative speaking subject (in Butler, 1999:147), my performance weaved my sexuality into the web of the social belongings that seemed to be embraced within the context of schooling (Weeks, Holland and Waites, 2003). This conformity was influenced by my understanding that access is a continuous process of building relationships in the setting, and taking care not to disturb the "delicate interaction rituals" (Rossman and Rallis, 2012).

My profile, in fact, fitted the dominant gender and sexuality constructs that have a positive reputation and are respected in a school context and the wider African context (Phiri, Haddad and Masenya, 2003; Davies, 1999). Our conversation delineated my identity as a social worker, a lecturer, a postgraduate student, a mother of two sons from a heterosexual relationship, and being married for more than a decade. The process of assuming this position was not simply a cognitive choice, but rather a complex process of becoming that involved being subjected to and being a subject of heterosexual discourse (Allen, 2005). In Butler's words, I only "took up the tools where they lay, where the 'very taking up' is enabled by the tools lying there" (1990:145).

Coffey (1999) wrote on how the sexual status of the researcher has been the subject of scrutiny, and on how it is used to examine and critique the rhetoric of hegemonic masculinity or femininity in some society (ibid). According to the principal, my presence in the school was going to present the learners with a role model, and would be particularly beneficial to the girl learners, who had "no clue" of how a girl should behave. While being perceived as a role model was attractive, presenting a profile that is viewed as a tool to "regulate sexuality

within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality" (Butler, 1999:173), was unsettling. This perception was contrary to how I give meaning to my sexual self. The fact that I am a woman, a mother, and in the women's dominant profession (social work), accommodated and conformed with the dominant ideologies of femininity, and at the same time these traits were just illusive symbols of my exterior. Indeed, gender and sexuality are not fixed, but change over time and place (Kehily, 2002; Butler, 1999).

The principal officially granted me permission to conduct the research in the school. The date to begin my fieldwork was confirmed: the third week of the first term after the school opening in 2012. The need to follow up on the permission application I made to the Provincial Department of Education (DoE), was also stressed. The official permission from the DoE, and parents' and learners' letters of consent were among the documents that the principal expected on my first day of fieldwork.

I left the principal's office satisfied with the outcome of our meeting – but my identity and sexuality constructs were again unsettled. The question of how I ended up with these traits was disturbing. Here I was carrying out my research plan, but this plan was turning my researcher role upside down. I later found consolation in Butler's assertion that "the critical task for feminism is not to establish a point of view outside of constructed identities. Rather, it is to locate strategies of subversive repetition enabled by those constructions, to affirm the local possibilities of intervention through participating in precisely those practices of repetition that constitute identity, and, therefore presenting the imminent possibility of contesting them" (Butler, 1999:187-188). A renewed commitment on the deconstruction and co-construction of gender, identity, and sexuality, was gained.

FIELDWORK BEGAN

Upon receipt of the ethical clearance number from the University Research Ethics' Committee and getting permission to conduct the study from the Provincial Department of Education, fieldwork began in the third week of the first semester of the 2012 academic year. The process of self-management continued to be central for my fieldwork. The presentation of the 'talking body' and a 'disciplined body' were important activities in negotiating my everyday realities. Generally, when I go to work, I dress formally and wear high heels. For my fieldwork, however, fancy clothes and high heels were a 'no go zone'.

I did not want to attract unnecessary fashion rivalries that Smit (2001) spoke about in her research on school teachers. I was also trying to avoid Swartz' experience of being perceived by learners as a wealthy and powerful person – someone who could withhold or dispense favours (Swartz, 2011). Furthermore, and, most importantly, I wanted to present an accessible, humble self to both the learners and the teachers. So, I decided on a very casual, but school-culture sensitive dress code. Dressing up thus became an important element of my everyday fieldwork self-negotiation process.

On the first day of fieldwork, the school environment was not as unfamiliar as during my contact in 2011. I came during the morning rush, when learners and teachers alike were rushing through the entrance gate to meet the school-bell's deadline of 7h45 am. The distinguishing factor between learners and the teachers – other than their age differences – was the dress code. The teachers were in their private clothes and learners were in their school uniform. Noticeable was that the school has gone back to the original school uniform colours, which are green and white. These are colours that are believed, by many Africans, to be healing colours – with green representing nature and white representing innocence and purity.

Educational researchers have written on the politics of uniforms in schools (Baxen and Breidlid, 2004; Bhana, 2002; Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). They have written on how uniforms are used as a regulatory and policing instrument in schools, and how learners have contested, challenged, or accommodated these regulations. Seeing learners in a green and white uniform, brought back memories of the culture of resistance and defiance that prevailed during my high-school years (the mid to late 1980s), despite the school's strict code of conduct that was expected. These colours were defied during my last three years of high school, when all KwaMashu learners – as part of a political struggle – adopted the colours black and white for school uniforms, as a symbol of solidarity, collective identity, and 'equal education for all'. I recall how the radical behaviours of learners, instead of teaching plans, determined the academic agenda in the school. These thoughts came flooding back to my mind as I watched some teachers arranging learners in preparation for the school morning assembly. Learners were arranged in straight lines: girls in front rows and boys in back rows.

In the assembly, I joined the teachers' row, which was at the back of all the learners. Learners not dressed according to acceptable standards were identified and put aside – to be attended to after the assembly. Improper dress code was: learners whose school shirts were not tucked inside the skirts for girls or inside the trousers for boys; learners wearing items of clothes that were not part of the official school uniform or school colours; wearing inappropriate skirt lengths; and girls with inappropriate hairstyles or hairclips. This identification of 'culprits' was not a smooth process, despite the school's commitment to 'cultivate discipline and maintain control'. It was passively contended by some learners and passively accepted by others. As for Kehily (2002), the assembly experience not only controlled the learners but also controlled and regulated me. The thoughts of self-management and relationship-management occupied my mind again. The thoughts were so overwhelming, that paying attention to all activities that took place in the assembly that day, was a challenge. I couldn't wait to go to the principal's office after assembly. It was as if everyone was looking at me and could see my strangeness, and also the multitude of thoughts that occupied my mind.

After assembly, I went straight to the principal's office. Instead of being offered a seat like during our previous meeting, however, the principal offered to take me to a 'woman' teacher who was going to look after my welfare throughout my fieldwork. I could not even get a chance to submit the documentation that we spoke about during our first contact. He said that from now on, I was to discuss everything with 'Mrs teacher'. The principal then escorted me to Mrs teacher's office. The principal did not say much on our way, and neither did I. I was struck by unexplainable movements of several learners on the school verandas, even though the first academic period had started. These were strange scenes for me, compared with my former school years. The only times when there were such uncoordinated movements, was when there was a clear agenda of political resistance. Even the principal seemed embarrassed by these scenes. He kept on commanding learners, and asking them to go back to their respective classes. His commands were sometimes met with compliance or sometimes totally ignored. I was tempted to ask the principal what was happening, but decided not to embarrass him further – upholding the ethical principle of emotional sensitivity and a non-judgmental attitude (Rossman and Rallis, 2012).

MEETING MRS TEACHER

The school principal introduced me to 'Mrs teacher', whom I call a mentor – using the language of Gray (2009). My mentor was a teacher who was in charge of HIV and AIDS and psychosocial programmes at the school. The principal told me that he had spoken to her about my research and she was happy to help me. When the principal introduced me to her, he said "Meet Mrs teacher, she knows everything about the school, and, moreover, she is an expert in your field of study". My mentor responded with a confident smile and a handshake which assured me that the principal was indeed placing me in good hands. Her direct response was: "We welcome you to our school. We hope we are going to be of assistance to you. We will do everything in our power to help you produce this research – only if we work hand-in-hand. Please feel free to come to me at any time". The principal left me in my mentor's office immediately after the short introductions.

Listening to my mentor refer to herself as 'we', made me recognise the Afrocentric and participatory worldview that was prevailing in this context – which was critical for my research methodology. The Afrocentric values embedded in my mentor's statements, were the value of collective identity and of interpersonal relationships (Graham, 1999). Both these values stress that the individual cannot be understood separately from other people, and "that a person is successful when he/she contributes to the success of others and engages in collective identification with problem solving" (Graham, 1999:116). At this moment, the isiZulu idiom "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" – became apparent. As a feminist researcher, the identity politics and participatory worldview were of particular interest here, and formed an integral part of my study. Griffiths (1995) states that self-identity and questions of the self have been central to the women's movements.

My study draws on emancipatory principles which accentuate the "democratisation of the creation of academic knowledge through the use of multiple perspectives – and the view that the researched have a moral right to own and control knowledge produced about them" (Baker et al, 2004 cited in Swartz, 2009:48). While my mentor was not the subject of my research, her views – as an intrinsic element of the spider web described in this chapter's introduction – were important. I noted with caution the multiple meanings embedded in her earlier statements, especially when she said "We will do everything in our power to help you

produce this research – only if we work hand-in-hand". This statement exposed the power inherent in my mentor's position within the school context.

My mentor was a gatekeeper who could support or quash my research project (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Assistance or help was highly dependent on the inter-relationships with those in positions of power, and on my ability to cooperate with the school systems. While I was committed to non-conformism and learner-centred work, I respected the view that "it is politically naïve to ignore the influence of the politics and values of the broader social institutions within which researchers are located – in every aspect of their research" (Davies, 2008:70). Inevitably, engaging with the power struggles was my everyday fieldwork reality.

This day was spent in the company of my mentor. I presented the documentation required by the school. I also gave her the copy of my research proposal. The intention was for her to gain greater insight into my study, since she was so eager to help. More importantly, however, I was trying to eliminate the assumption she might have about my study – especially as the principal referred to her as an expert in my field. We discussed my fieldwork programme – mainly participant observations and unstructured conversations during semester one, and focus-group interviews and unstructured conversations during semester two. I also got an opportunity to ask questions aimed at broadening my insight into the school structures, policies, practices, and important procedures. Indeed, as per the principal's promise, the mentor was well vested in the school.

Part of my conversations with my mentor, was a detailed discussion of my ethnographic plan. According to Fetterman (1998), ethnography requires 6 months to 2 years or more in the field. Allen (2005:20), however, warns that "finding adequate periods of time in schools to engage with students in research, is difficult". To overcome such challenges, I told my mentor that my plan was to spend a year in the school collecting data from one (1) grade 11 class of learners, aged 16 years and above. This was to allow the establishment of relationships with the same group of learners over an extended period of time. According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2002), the development of a comprehensive and holistic view of a particular group can take time. Only by immersing to the world of the participants and becoming one of them, can qualitative researchers view the world as a participant in that setting (Bryman, 2000, cited in de Vos et al., 2002). Moreover, working

with one class was part of facilitating my ethical compliance – only learners with signed informed consent forms were to participate in the project.

My mentor allocated the A class as my dedicated classroom. Brief profiles of grade 11A learners were presented by my mentor, with a sense of pride. They were mainly learners aged 16 years of age and above, who were well-mannered and had high academic standing. This was not the profile I envisaged for my research participants. I was hoping for a class with learners that represented the general profiles in the school. While I was mentally debating how these characteristics would enrich my study, my mentor came up with an alternative plan. My facial expression must have portrayed a sense of dissatisfaction and uncertainty about the choice of the A class. My mentor immediately suggested that I spend my first month observing all grade 11 learners. According to her, it was through observing all grade 11 learners that I was going to gain insight into the diversity of all grade 11 classes. This suggestion was unsettling. But, since I was committed to contributing to a theory which is not blind to difference, I did not reject this suggestion out of hand. Instead, I openly discussed my concerns with my mentor – which were methodological in nature. In this way, I displayed my commitment to the educational research principles of collaboration and consultation (Griffiths, 1999).

My plan was to spend an extended time with a dedicated group of learners. I viewed the suggested extension to all grade 11 learners as a threat to the ethnographic processes which require long-term, sustained relationships and engagements (Fetterman, 1998). However, the conversation with my mentor on the choice between one class and all grade 11 classes as my study sample, marked the opportunity to test my democratic principles. At this point, I recalled Coffey (1999)'s assertion that ethnographers engage in a continuous and a delicate process of negotiation and renegotiation. In weighing the risks of being experienced as uncooperative and individualistic in my early fieldwork days against sticking to my research plan - I opted to be open to the viewpoints of my mentor. I agreed to spend a month with all grade 11 learners. However, instead of viewing that first month as part of my dedicated observations, I viewed it as part of my process of establishing relationships and negotiating my entry to the school. At that moment, it became evident that establishing field relations is not an even or straightforward process; certain limits and boundaries exist – at least initially (Swartz, 2011; Allen, 2009).

During the morning of the next day, I started to plan the day's activities in my mentor's office – especially for the grand tour and formal introductions around the school. Although I already had formal consent from the DoE and the principal, I did not regard it as a pledge of being accepted by the learners and school occupants. Rather, I viewed it as an important point of entry. So, the grand tour and formal introductions to all units of the school were important activities for my ongoing process of negotiating acceptance. They were going to introduce me to the world of learners and provide a shared experience (albeit small), that was going to shape future observations and conversations (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). These continuous negotiations were reliant on the ethics of '*ubuntu*' (humanness) and human rights.

The first part of my meeting with my mentor was the review of my research plan discussed the day before. My mentor told me that she discussed my research plan with the principal and they both decided to attach me to one of the grade 11 LO teachers who I was to shadow during all her teaching periods. According to her, being attached to this teacher was going to assist me, especially during my orientation month, and at the same time integrate me with the social relations within the school. My mentor further said that since shadowing was commonly used with student teachers in the school, my observations were not going to be experienced as a disruption of academic endeavours. This decision came as a big blow to me. A decision about my research was made without my input. Schools were indeed hierarchical structures – that are power laden.

Undoubtedly, I was holding my research plan, but my mentor and who knows else, was in charge of it. I really needed to positively navigate around this power. When I thought that I had climbed a great hill the day before, I realised that the research sites had many more hills to climb. While I was aware that the researcher must adapt to the schedules and routines of the site and its participants (Rossman and Rallis, 2012), my outright feeling was that "I did not want to be attached to any particular teacher. Obviously, my status as an adult in an institution that had sharp generational divisions, posed complicated obstacles in terms of gaining access to learners' private worlds (Thorne, 1993). I just wanted to develop uncontaminated relationships with the learners. Many studies conducted in schools have reported on the nature of the relationship between learners and teachers (Bhana and Pattman, 2009; Prinsloo, 2007; Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). Their relationships have

been reported as being power laden, not based on trust, and adult-centred. I thus did not want to be associated with adults in the school or develop obvious loyalties to any teacher.

The process of conducting social research was messy and ambiguous. This recognition did not mean that I was willing to merely accept decisions made by my mentor or the school principal about my study – rather it meant I was open to a critical process of re-evaluating my research plans in light of the decision at hand. The process of re-evaluating my research plan required that I revisit some of the values and principles that underpinned my research methodology. These were participation, agency, reflexivity about my own position and interests, collaboration and consultation with the immediate research community, knowledge and learning, openness, and that utopia does not exist in research (Griffiths, 1998). Interacting with these values and principles brought insight which influenced a decision to embrace the present realities of my fieldwork. It became clear to me that no matter how I could hope for exclusive, uncontaminated relationships – it was impossible in social research.

According to Coffey (1999:22), "the primary task of the field worker is to analyse and understand a peopled field". In turn, I began to see that being attached to the LO teacher, offered opportunities for enriching my research. In fact, Kehily (2002) warns researchers against exclusive identification. According to her, cultural ethnographies of schooling have sometimes left the thoughtful teacher standing on the wrong side, in a partly imaginary 'battleground' which the researcher has produced (ibid). The LO teacher became one of the school's important elements, that I was looking forward to be introduced to. I refer to her here as 'my sponsor'.

MEETING THE TEACHERS AND LEARNERS
On this particular day, I attended assembly with my mentor – where the main initial study introductions took place. Being in her company provided a sense of 'some' security and comfort. Although I could still feel or see that people were looking at me strangely, at least I was not feeling lonely during my first assembly. I was standing next to someone who knew why I was there and who had begun to participate in shaping my research plans.

The formal introduction was done by the school principal, when all assembly formalities were finished. His introduction was very brief. He told the audience I was going to do research with grade 11 and asked everyone to take good care of me. He then asked that I come to the podium to formally introduce myself and also the study. His invitation to address the learners really took me by surprise. While, during my high-school years an opportunity to address assembly was always welcomed with excitement by learners, and was also seen as a status symbol, this opportunity brought different feelings. I was no longer a young teenager 'dying' to be heard: I was now an adult who had come to listen and wanted dialogue with others.

Walking from where I was standing to the podium, filled me with a sense of strangeness. When I reached the podium, I froze for a moment – had no idea where to start and how to start. Looking at how the learners were eagerly awaiting to hear what I had to say, made me realise how those who stand at the podium (who are predominately adults) are seen as being powerful, or how they perceive themselves as being powerful, and how they have manipulated their perceived powers to dominate learners. To me, this perceived power was unsettling and I decided not to act on it. In fact, when I got my strength to talk; all I did was to greet everyone, and told them I was a former learner at the school - which made me an 'old girl' of the school. Instead of talking about my research, I remember admitting to them that I was still trying to locate myself as an 'old girl', and that the process was invoking feelings of incongruity. I told them how unfamiliar it felt to stand in my former teachers' territory (podium) and be expected to address learners as an adult. I promised to visit them in their classrooms, where I could talk about my research in a relaxed environment, and where they could ask questions. I also asked learners to read the notices I posted in different parts of the school – which briefly introduced me and my research to the student body.

I experienced the assembly environment as being too vertical and authoritative. It did not allow opportunities for true access negotiation, learner participation and dialogue. That was against my research and social-work ethical principles of informed consent, voluntary participation and learner-centeredness. If I continued addressing them from that podium, I was going to undermine the "feminist arguments that link research ethics to power, and prioritises the assessment of researchers' social positions and subjectivities – so that distortion, silencing and misrepresentation are less likely to occur" (Swartz, 2011:48). I was

also going to undermine my position as a critical social constructionist researcher who draws on emancipatory theories which emphasis empowerment, multiple ways of knowing, and the view that learners have a right to decide to share, or not to share, any aspect of their lives.

In negotiating entry and wanting acceptance, I didn't want to impose myself and my study on the learners. I wanted acceptance and entry to be based on established rapport, cohesion (Egan, 1985), and their sense of self-worth. Swartz (2011) warns against shallow engagements with research participants. According to Freire (2005:76), "one cannot impose oneself, nor even merely co-exist with one's learners". "Solidarity requires true communication" (Freire, 2005:58), and this is what Swartz (2011) terms the 'going deep' part of emancipatory research ethics.

After assembly, formal introductions continued. My first stop was the teachers' staffroom, where I went accompanied by the principal and my mentor. The principal introduced me again to the teachers. This time around, the introduction was comprehensive. He told the teachers about my link to the school, the research topic, and briefly described the research plan. He then pleaded with all of them to give me their full support and assistance, when needed. The detailed introduction brought such relief to me. I was not expected to say much after the principal had spoken. I responded by thanking the principal for giving me permission to conduct my study at the school, and pledged my commitment to uphold its ethos. The principal responded with a big smile, by saying, "You are our product, our child, and you are our pride. There was no way that we were going to give other schools a chance to claim your success".

The principal's response was very comforting and I felt that it positively contributed to the process of being accepted in the staffroom. After these words, other teachers responded with big smiles or friendly faces. My former teachers who were present also started to positively express pride by saying that what I am now, was because of their contributions. I experienced my initial contact with the teachers as being welcoming and that made me look forward to my stay at the school. The positive experience eliminated the fear of being an outcast or being rejected – which is a common concern in the initial stages of fieldwork (Rossman and Rallis, 2012; Hatch, 2002; Coffey, 1999).

After the general introduction, my mentor introduced me to my sponsor – a woman teacher who was sitting in the first chair after one entered the staffroom from the first entrance. The staffroom has two entrances. I later observed that the first entrance was used mostly by women, and the second entrance mostly by men. Inside the staffroom, there are invisible walls which separated the staffroom hall into two gendered sections – and challenging and ignoring these gendered spaces became one of my everyday struggles during my fieldwork. These sections are clearly acts of gender performances. Here, both female and male teachers obligatorily and obediently positioned themselves in sustaining, historically delimited, gendered spaces (Butler, 1999). According to Lazar (2005:7), "based upon sexual differences, the gender structure imposes a social dichotomy of human traits on women and men – the substance of which varies according to time and place". Grant (1993:185) puts it this way, "it is true that the structure of gender acts through, and is inscribed on, sexed bodies – but the whole idea of two sexes only has meaning because those meanings are required by the gender structure in the first place".

My mentor did not say much to my sponsor – except reminding her of what the principal said when he was introducing me and that they have identified her as the best sponsor for me. She also told her that I should accompany her to all her LO lessons. My sponsor didn't say a word. She responded with a passive smile and went to fetch a chair for me. After my mentor left, I was so surprised to learn that the short conversation that my mentor had with my sponsor, in my presence, was the only conversation they had had about my research.

I later learnt that my sponsor was a new contract staff member, who was standing in for a teacher – who was on extended sick leave. I then understood the source of her passivity – which could be the fear of losing her employment contract, if she objected to being my sponsor. I felt imposed to my sponsor. This was an additional incident in my first week of fieldwork, where I experienced the school's direct culture of domination and repression. During the early stages of our researcher-sponsor relationship, we did not talk about this incident or any other incidents of power and domination which were happening in the school. I was still treading with caution and trying hard not to be involved in any micro-politics that might exist. Regardless of my efforts, I continued to experience the school as gendered, hierarchical, and power laden.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS

According to Silverman (2001:45), we cannot study the social world without being part of it. It is through participant observation that ethnographic descriptions are possible (Spradley, 1980, cited in Barker, 2006). However, "observation is a complex research method, because it often requires the researcher to play several roles and to use a number of techniques, including her/his five senses – to collect data" (Baker, 2006:172). These roles have been defined as "the characteristic posture(s) researchers assume in their relationship" with the people they are studying (ibid). To the contrary, "the mainstream research has been characterised by a supposedly neutral and objective inquiry, which feminist scholars have challenged" (Lazar, 2005:2).

The images of the fieldworker as a naïve stranger, are contested in this study. Early enough in my research journey I knew that whether or not learners had knowledge of my research, they were often more concerned with what kind of person I was – than the research itself (Silverman, 2001). I knew that the question of who or what I am, was both political and personal, and my biography was a central feature (characteristic) of my fieldwork. I was aware that the process of immersing myself in the learners' world was going to be facilitated by how I constructed my identity, and how I was constructed around the school. As Coffey (1999:5) put it, "the researcher identity is to be managed, amended and constructed in order to facilitate the research process".

"Doing feminist research requires researchers to take a theoretical position that considers power relations between researcher and participants" (Allen, 2009:552). Constructing an 'acceptable, relational, non-threatening' identity, continued to be central to my fieldwork. "Identity has been a major arena in which oppressive relationships have been elaborated" (Dominelli, 2002:37). To unsettle the presumed hierarchy of research power relations, I adopted an 'old girl' identity, which the school principal and I have used during general introductions to learners and the teachers. I did not want to use any of my work titles or academic titles as my identity, because they follow the dominant social order of being an 'expert' and it was going to create a sense of difference between the learners, the teachers and me. While there is nothing wrong with being different, the unfortunate part is that difference is traditionally central to power relations of inequality, and underpins the dynamics of oppression and exclusion (Gupta and Furguson, 1997).

Hall (2000), cited in Gray (2009: 242), states that "the best the ethnographer can achieve is to negotiate a position in which one is in some way 'at home' and considered as 'one of us', without becoming completely immersed". The following reasons were influential in my choice of an 'old girl' identity: a) this identity linked and alienated me from the school, so maintaining my 'insider outsider' status. b) I was clearly not a learner and also not a teacher, but my identity as a former learner in this school was relating me to both of them and limiting our differences.

According to Dominelli (2002:37), "differences become politicised by being used to differentiate between people on the basis of a superior-inferior polarity, creating borderlands which can be policed by those on both sides of the binary divide that is established between them". c) While I shared similar cultural and racial characteristics with the learners, I viewed our age gap as a threat in terms of establishing an open relationship with them. I viewed the term 'girl' within the 'old girl' identity as youthful, and thus symbolically minimising the perceived age gap. Griffiths (1995) reminds us that language has a considerable power to determine what we see and do. The casual dress code also facilitated this youthful look. d) The biographical feature of being an 'old girl', historically located my heritage and teenage experiences within the school and most significantly within the community context of KwaMashu. Unquestionably, learners and I are diverse in many ways, but there is some sense of identification between us that is brought by our township heritage. We respond to the same rhythms of the universe, we answer to the same cultural symbols and systems (Asante, 2004), we are no stranger to pain, and we are victims of inequalities and racist oppression. All considered, I perceived the 'old girl' identity as providing me with a unique sense of self, that offered me opportunities to establish self-defined relationships, and at the same time provided me with a sense of belonging.

According to Gray (2009:399), "the central intent of participant observation, is to generate data through observing and listening to people in their natural setting, and to discover their social meanings and the interpretations of their own activities". In exploring township youth sexuality, I observed learners in different school sites and contexts. I kept a journal of my everyday encounters at the school, which I expanded into field notes in the evenings – keeping the writing as close as possible to 'in the moment' (Peireira, 1998). Like Thorne

(1993), when I was at the margins of a scene, I took notes on the spot. When I was more fully involved, and sitting and talking to learners, I held observations in my memory and recorded them later.

The natural settings in which observations took place included, but were not limited to, school assembly, classrooms, school corridors, singing practices, playgrounds, and staff rooms. A checklist guided my observations. Some of the things I observed were interpersonal relationships, games, name calling, groups and sub-groups, sexuality discourses around the school, school culture, dress codes, teacher-learner interactions, curriculum messages, division of labour, and school chores.

As it was impossible to explore the natural world of my research participants in spaces that they exclusively occupied; respecting the privacy of non-participants was paramount. When observing my research participants in relation to others, I received the 'implied consent' through the following: I used every opportunity and platform to introduce my study, its purpose and myself. The introductions emphasized that participation was voluntary. Furthermore, I ensured that the notices about my study (see discussion on page 111 above) were visible to none participants at all times. This facilitated and ensured that the non-participants' right to choose to be observed or to refuse to be observed was respected. Moreover, I did not collect personal information of non-participating learners. If indirectly collected, I ensured that the information remain non-identifiable.

My relationship with learners was not spontaneous. I was aware that being a humble 'old girl' was not a guarantee of acceptance or accommodation as an insider. I knew that my social class, sex, marital or educational status – among other things – could prevent me from gaining reliance and believability that was going to facilitate access to learners' private worlds. I thus navigated "a research relationship that enhanced my insider status, in a way that allowed the learners to accept me – despite factors that made me an outsider" (Innes, 2009:444). During the initial contacts with the learners, I took enough time to explain my personal and professional background, my connection with the research site, and the research objectives. However, since my initial fieldwork plan of observing a dedicated class was modified to include a first month of visits to all grade eleven classes, establishing strong consistent relationships was not easy.

The school had eight grade eleven classes, where I had to ensure that I visited them equally per week. While the visits did not form part of my main observations, I viewed them as being very important in establishing a trusting relationship with the learners and the school. Learners alike perceived the visits positively and to them my visits meant that each class was special and was getting attention. Consequently, I ensured that no particular class felt neglected during the month of my visit.

My sponsor was very instrumental in ensuring that equally distributed visits took place. We drew a roaster which was linked to her teaching timetable. Where some classes were identified as being left out, she negotiated with other teachers to allow us to visit during their reading periods. The aim of the reading periods is to cultivate the culture of reading and learning in learners. Teachers are expected to introduce and engage learners with reading and learning activities during these periods. More importantly, these sessions should be supervised at all times. However, these periods were generally not used for their intended purpose – and were mainly used by learners to complete outstanding notes. If unmonitored, these were generally very noisy sessions. As a result, when my sponsor and I asked to use the reading periods, teachers were more than willing to let us use them. In fact, some teachers ended up approaching me – asking if I needed to use their reading periods, and I gratefully accepted these offers. These acceptances strengthened my relationship with the teachers who acknowledged and appreciated my participation in the school's academic agenda. While the facilitation of any academic agenda did not form part of my research agenda, supervising the reading periods began the process of fulfilling the ethical requirement of what Swartz (2011) termed 'giving back'.

All the visits made during the first month of contact were very beneficial and influential in respect of my final sample selection. My daily attendance of assembly, my sponsor's LO lessons, and the reading sessions I supervised, allowed me to spend enough time with the grade 11 learners and to familiarise myself with the school environment in a non-threatening manner. Interestingly, my sponsor was more comfortable in spending time visiting classes with me than staying in the staffroom. Her contract employment status seemed to give her an outsider status and made her to identify more with me, than with the permanent teachers. In fact, I suspected that she tried hard to isolate us from the other teachers. This also helped me not to over identify with my former teachers and other teachers who were slowly initiating

conversations or friendships, by seeking academic counselling or information on postgraduate studies. I was still determined to keep my relationship with the teachers strictly professional.

The reading-period sessions grew from being mere reading supervision, to engagements where we exchanged academic questions and discussions. I, however, noticed that when my sponsor was not around – learners' questions were not limited to the academic agenda. They got opportunities to quench their curiosity about my presence at the school. They asked me personal questions about my profession, family, education, research and my experiences of high school – which I attended with 'some' degree of openness. I shared information about myself and asked for information about learners with caution, since these engagements were not yet bound by confidentiality. However, since these engagements allowed for both vertical and horizontal communication, they allowed for the development of insight into the diversity and profile of each class, and the learners were beginning to know me better as an 'old girl' with her own distinct personality.

One of the key personality traits that learners positively experienced about me was that I like to smile or laugh – which learners said was a rare feature in the school environment. Learners noticed that even when they were asking provocative questions, I did not intimidate them, which was a dominant form of response from most adults in the school. Instead, I smiled and openly told them if I was uncomfortable about responding. Learners told me that teachers limit their friendliness around learners, because some have experience or assume that learners will take advantage of their good hearts. A straight or unfriendly face was used as one of the regulatory mechanisms for teacher-learner relationships in the school, and researchers have been implicated in fostering relationships of dominance that are consistent with supporting the status quo (Dominelli, 2002).

There were many occasions when my sponsor generally assumed our alignment as colleagues was betrayed, when she saw me not copying her structure of authority during my engagements with learners. I maintained my own style, because I was primarily interested in the ways learners construct their worlds, with and apart from adults (Thorne, 1993). It was comforting that the learners experienced my communication gestures as being non-

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threatening, and my efforts of destabilising my powers as an adult and a researcher were noticeable.

Towards the end of the first month, I had a meeting with my mentor and sponsor in terms of deciding about my final sample. I thanked my mentor for suggesting the general visits to all grade 11 learners. They offered me a better view of my sample and an opportunity to develop friendships – not only with the selected sample, but also with a larger school constituency. The visits also gave me a pilot experience, which was not part of the initial plan but became a beneficial process. Moreover, the visits offered me an opportunity to exercise one of the habits of highly effective people – which is 'seeking first to understand then to be understood' (Covey, 1989).

My final sample ended up being two purposively selected grade 11 classes. The first class was the 'A' class: a mixed sex group of 12 boys and 20 girls. This was the class initially assigned to me by my mentor. The second class was a predominantly boys' class of 22 boys and 3 girls, which was distinctive among all grade 11 classes. While the school did not have single-sex classes, the class with only three girls was the closest I could get to one. I call the mixed sex class '*Iziqondane*' – township slang for 'people who are focused'. I call the predominantly boys' class '*Izikhokho*' – township slang for 'survivors'. The history behind these names will unfold throughout my research report.

My mentor was happy that I decided to maintain *Iziqondane* as my sample, but was highly displeased by my choice of *Izikhokho*. While sex composition was one of the differences between *Iziqondane* and *Izikhokho*, academic performance, subject choices, and conduct were some of the features that also separated these classes from each other. *Iziqondane* had a positive profile, which I described earlier in this chapter and I observed during my class visits. On the other hand, I was told that teachers in the school had many expressions for describing *Izikhokho*, while I experienced them as interestingly vibrant during my visits. They were described as disobedient, chaotic, their subject choices were seen as an escape from 'real' academic subjects – and their class was referred to as Forth Napier, which is a well-known provincial health institution that caters only for mentally challenged patients. I was also told that most teachers were not comfortable with teaching *Izikhokho*. These descriptions were very disturbing, and did not sit well with me.

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As a social worker, any discourse that oppresses, segregates or marginalises against any group of people; instantly ignites my professional responsibility of enhancing people's wellbeing. Working with the marginalised groups has always given me professional meaning throughout my career. The question in my mind was how can a class of learners doing technical subjects, the very subjects that qualify the school as a 'comprehensive' high school, be constructed this way? These learners might be crying out for help – and with limited avenues in the school, they might be communicating their cries inappropriately. "Mac an Ghaill (1994)'s study, in particular, illustrates the ways in which diverse sexualities can be spoken through the various masculinities young men come to inhibit" (cited in Kehily, 1999:20-21).

The profile of *Izikhokho* was a reminder of how we, as the youth of KwaMashu, resorted to violence to communicate our anger and resentment towards the apartheid government, and how our actions ended up hurting those who were close to us, more than our enemy. This comparison is not intended to assume *Izikhokho*'s innocence, nor our innocence, but researchers have written about how school's systems and some teachers' disciplinary interventions, aggravate the already bad situations of learners (Anderson, 2009; Kehily, 2002). It was possible that the "school culture was actively producing social relations that are contextually specific and productive of social identities" (Kehily, 2002:51). Through participation in school routines, pupils learn to conform or resist the official culture of the school (Pattman and Bhana, 2010; Kehily, 2005; Renold, 2004; Epstein and Johnson, 1999; Epstein, 1997). It became clear to me that I wanted to make a difference in the lives of *Izikhokho*, and I viewed spending time with them as being an opportunity to use my research as an intervention. My intentions of retaining *Izikhokho* as my sample received support from my mentor and sponsor.

Once the sample was finalised, there were no more planned visits to other grade 11 classes. However, occasional visits took place, since invitations to supervise reading periods in all grade 11 classes continued. The invitations were from both the teachers and the learners. These occasional visits provided an opportunity to assure learners that being part of my research sample was not an indication of favouritism – but an attempt to meet the research's ethical requirements of informed consent and confidentiality, and also to allow a more natural relationship to develop over time with a dedicated group of learners (Gray, 2009).

Learners who did not form part of my sample began to understand and appreciate that reading periods or any other free time was available for us to use, whenever they wanted us to discuss anything. We informally met during assembly, between periods, on the school verandas, during lunch breaks, and at sporting activities and music practices. Most of our informal encounters ended up with "*Miss, ungasikhohlwa nathi embusweni wakho*" (meaning "Miss, don't forget us in your kingdom"). Referring to my visits using the metaphor of a 'kingdom', implied that my engagements with them were desirable and made me assume that the "underground" messages and stories had pegged me and my research as "OK" (Rossman and Rallis, 2012).

Enough time was spent on contracting with *Izikhokho* and *Iziqondane*. Like Swartz (2011:50), "I made a concerted effort to fulfil the basic ethical requirements of informed consent, confidentiality, and protection". "I asked learners for their and their parents' consent as 'a gradual and emerging process', and only after discussion" (Bray and Gooskens, 2006:47 cited in Swartz, 2011:50). Silverman (2013:162) asserts that, "informed consent entails giving as much information as possible about the research, so that prospective participants can make an informed decision about their involvement. The primary objective was to conduct research openly and without deception". I also informed learners about my professional, ethical and legal obligation to report child abuse and sexual crimes against children. As the study required a high degree of openness, sharing of personal information and experiences, repeatedly I asked the learners to honour an agreement of privacy and confidentiality. Moreover, I briefed them about confidentiality risks and limits, well in advance. Learners were also assured that their real names and the school's name would not be used in any of the research reports.

I subscribed to the view that the researcher/researched relationship is a key to the research process, and is about 'being there' (Gray, 2009). I attended the school assembly; on alternate days I sat at the back of my two classes; I supervised their reading periods; and also attended any other schooling activities they were engaged in. I tried to be reserved during these early observation sessions compared to my informal visits in my first month of fieldwork with them. My challenge was that I had mixed feelings about total familiarity and immersion in the research field – especially in the early days of my observations.

My obsession with 'original' knowledge production, which is one of the requirements of a PhD study, made me try hard to cultivate a sense of strangeness and self-alienation towards '*Iziqondane*' and '*Izikhokho*'. This meant a character transformation.

I am sociable, warm, and for unexplained reasons, people find it easy to talk to me about their problems. As a social worker, these qualities have always been my strengths, but, as a researcher, I was worried that these qualities would cloud my fieldwork process before the 'original' knowledge was produced. The efforts of cultivating a sense of strangeness were rather too late, since friendly relationships were already established in the first month of fieldwork, and were rewarding. I summarily abandoned my desire of being a stranger towards my research participants and continued with my commitment of developing and sustaining a reciprocal relationship with them.

Like Anderson (2009) and Coffey (1999), as I devoted more time in the field, I found it impossible to divorce my fieldwork 'self' from my other 'selves'. In the staff room, I warmed towards the initiated friendships of other teachers, and participated in professional discussions and participated in the rituals of friendship, care and support observed by teaching staff. These included financial contributions towards staff parties, towards gifts for different purposes, and towards any bereaved staff member. My engagements were not limited to financial contributions – I also participated in these events. I visited the sick teachers in hospitals and the bereaved families in their homes. I became involved in appropriate ways (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). These engagements facilitated a more relaxed atmosphere between the teachers and myself, which allowed the teachers to interact more naturally around me.

While I was honoured by the high degree of comfort between the teachers and I and the natural setting it provided, my staffroom observations were becoming challenging and unsettling. I started to witness incidences of public humiliation of learners, and listened to open conversations about compulsory heterosexuality – things that never happened when we shared a strictly 'professional' and distant relationship. Although I knew that teachers were not the focus of my study, ignoring these incidences was distressing. I was tempted to interfere on several occasions, but stopped by my sponsor who was my confidante at the school, and who continuously reminded me not to forget why I was at the school.

Her typical reaction was to sing quietly the gospel song "*indlela idlulala*" – implying that the road to the learners passes through the teachers. Her reaction was humorous and calming, and I obeyed. Such incidences were a reminder that, "with the momentum of fieldwork, and our desire to be part of the field, the self can be lost, found, altered and recast" (Coffey, 1999:35). When I recognised that I was in danger of losing or compromising my human rights' activism, I decided to limit my stay in the staff room, especially during lunch breaks where these 'improper' incidences took place.

As the research progressed, I spent most of my time with the learners inside and outside the classrooms. I joined in or was invited to their small groups during lunch breaks. When I joined their groups, they no longer waited for me to initiate conversations as in my early fieldwork phase – but we used the time to chat about life. These conversations were by no means power or value free. I participated in these conversations either as a subject of discussion or interactional (Cohen, Manion and Morrion, 2011). There were times when I had the power as an adult privileged member of the group, and there were times when the learners seized the power, especially when they asked me questions like "are you happily married or do you still love your husband?" Responding to such questions was challenging, because these are affective concepts with no logical explanations and are influenced by a variety of conditions. The very complexity and social constructions of love or a happy marriage was unsettling. "When things like love come into question, their reality is also put into crisis. Like gender, it becomes unclear how to distinguish the real from the unreal and the good from the bad" (Butler, 1999: xxii-xxiii). Struggling to answer such questions brought insight into questions I was to avoid or to ask differently – in my quest to understand learners' constructions of their gender and sexuality.

Rossman and Rallis (2012) speak about the importance of reciprocity during fieldwork. They define this reciprocity as recognition of the need for mutual benefit in human interactions. Throughout my fieldwork, I tried to treat learners as equal partners. I tried to be as accessible and open as possible. We accompanied each other to the girls' bathroom – which is one of the normative girls' tendencies in the school. We walked together in school corridors. These walks also provided spaces for girls or boys who wanted to talk to me in private. We sat together during school sporting events. I helped them with homework after school. I gave others lifts on my way home.

I ensured that I distributed my time fairly between '*Izikhokho*' and '*Iziqondana*'. In the initial phase of my fieldwork, I avoided being seen spending more time with particular individuals or with girls' only groups or boys' only groups, but I failed to maintain this balance as relationships started to develop naturally with certain learners. According to Hunter (2010:185), "ethnography itself is an emotional exercise; the fostering of friendships is inseparable from the work of collecting data". I was reminded that research can never be a tool from which I disassociate myself. The learners that I formed close and open relationships with are the ones I purposively recruited for my focus-group interviews that took place in the second semester.

As I immersed in the field and engagements deepened, I suspected that competition for my attention was growing among the learners. Being seen with me or being able to re-educate or re-introduce me to the township language, youth sexual cultures, or lifestyle, became a status symbol. These conversations offered learners safe spaces to talk about things, which they said they would not 'normally' talk about in the presence of adults. African parents, in particular, have been reported as failing to talk about sex and sexuality with their children (Chege, 2006). This does not mean that I let them talk in any way or that I accepted anything they were saying around issues of sexuality and gender. As a social worker informed by my critical research paradigm, I was ethically obligated to attend to any harmful discourse. While I remained committed to a non-judgmental attitude, I became known for critical and problem-posing questioning – which I used to promote consciousness-raising dialogues. Through dialogue, learners developed "their power to critically perceive the way they existed in the world, with which, and in which, they find themselves; they also came to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, and in transformation" (Freire, 2005:12). I as the researcher, and the learners as the researched, ceased to exist and we became jointly responsible for a process in which all grew (ibid).

The boys' groups started to compete with the girls' groups for my attention. Boys also competed among each other for my attention. Like the experiences of Anderson (2009) and Bhana (2002), some boys expressed their attention-seeking behaviour in sexualised ways that objectified me. These boys competed to get my attention as my '*Ben10s*' (the township term for a 'toy boy').

In townships or in under-privileged communities where economic opportunities are limited, young people view transactional relationships as a passport to a better life and a mode of access to consumer goods like the 'triple c' (cellphones, cars and clothes). While girls' relationships with sugar daddies (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Hunter, 2010; Selikow, Zulu and Cedra, 2002) have been the focus of such discourse, the *Ben10* relationships are following such popularity in townships.

Hunter (2002:101) argued that, "sexualities are unstable and are produced through men and women's practical engagement with shifting economic, cultural and spatial conditions and relations". The boys' sexually suggestive attention not only challenged the dominant ideologies around young girls and transactional relationships, but my marital status – which was earlier assumed to provide a natural boundary between me and the boy learners – was also redefined. This was a reminder that classifications like marriage are indeed not a result of objective properties that the human brain registers, but are associated with the group's complex mythological worldview anchored in a belief in the legitimacy of the social order.

The research field turned my world upside down. While I was observing the learners, they observed and scrutinised my body, mood, speech, and appearance. "As fashion is an important part of everyday life in the township" (Hunter, 2002:114), the girls took a special interest in my appearance. While my fieldwork dress code was deliberately casual and not fancy, they commented on things like the length of or colour of my clothes. They were displeased when I showed little interest in dress styles and fashion. They offered to braid or style my hair, but I told them I was happy with short, natural hair. I had cut my hair before the fieldwork began, as part of my impression-management strategies. The learners appeared troubled by my fragmented world. My social class, level of education, high self-esteem, and portrayed lack of interest in fancy fashion, clashed with the picture they created for or expected of me. What they did not know was that the presented body was a result of a well thought-through performance. With the presented body, I was avoiding attracting fashion rivalries from teachers. At the same time, I was modelling what I regarded as my radical agenda aimed at self-acceptance, which does not emphasize external appearance.

In Dominelli (2002)'s view, focusing on body images does not enable us to identify the basis of our commonalities. Similarly, the feminist literature highlights how body images negatively influence girls' sexuality constructions (in Jagar and Bordo, 1992). The objectification of the body in hegemonic discourses results in some body shapes, conditions (fashion), sizes and colours being more valued than others (Dominelli, 2002). Maxwell and Aggleton (2012:4) "argued that a crucial step to being agentic within sexual and intimate relationships is for young women to feel connected to their bodies".

In the girls' continuous search for any representation of fashion in my life, they discovered my habit of wearing attractive watches. While I dressed down, I forgot to discontinue my habit of wearing matching watches. Girls excitedly confronted me with the habit and told me that they suspected long time ago that the casual modest look was just an act. When I asked them why they were so determined to locate me within dominant fashion trends, they said identifying role models who can present a balanced picture of success, was important to them. They said that the township has successful people, but that most of their success was not through educational endeavours – but through deviant paths. They said that while I possessed most of the qualities they were proud of, my lack of interest in fashion represented a missing element in their definition of success. In their world, political freedom, success and education are meaningless if they do not yield economic freedom or material benefits. Similarly, Steve Biko wrote that the Black Consciousness Movement made him realize that his education was worthless, if he could not use it to extricate his community from the vice of poverty, violence, disease and ignorance (van Wyk, 2007:60). The learners said that their everyday lives are surrounded with poverty and suffering, and that the only hope for their brighter future derives from the images we (accomplished adults) present. Kuyek (1990), cited in Dominelli (2002:34), "suggests that creating a culture of hope is an important dimension of individual and collective empowerment, as it endorses the belief that conditions can change and that the quality of life can be improved". I realised that while the battle of the mind, the psychological freedom and mental freedom, needed to be won by these learners – they will only be truly emancipated once battles against economic freedom, poverty, poor health, inferior education, and crime, are won.

This conversation was very insightful and a reminder of the theories and literature underpinning my research, which views young people as being knowledgeable, active agents who are shaping and are being shaped by their context, and that we adults should refrain from any form of protective discourse. While I thought I was protecting them from what I perceived as their worst enemy (fashion), I was losing opportunities to explore and understand the meanings they attach to fashion, and the impact those meanings have on their sexuality identity constructions. The learners themselves might have perceived me as being my worst enemy, a failure, and someone with internalised oppression. Epstein and Johnson (1998:114) remind us that "sexuality is not a discrete domain; it shapes and is shaped by all the surrounding social relations". "The self I am, the identity I have, and the wants I act upon are affected by the politics of gender, race, class and sexuality" (Griffiths, 1995:1). Thus, knowledge of context is pivotal in understanding sexuality identity construction (Roos, 2009).

My conversation with the girls on their lookout for fashion symbols was very educational. I got to understand how they were constructing their current and future selves in relation to the past and present South Africa. In a context that was previously disadvantaged, where material needs are still the order of the day, striving for economic freedom is very meaningful and fits the contemporary political agendas. Burr (1995:3) asserts that "the ways in which we commonly understand the world and the categories and concepts we use, are historically and culturally specific". Our ignorance comes when we lose sight of ourselves and assume an individualistic posture (Asante, 2003). Evidently, I realised that I and many other South Africans who grew up in previously disadvantaged communities, are no different to these learners' construction of what freedom means in post-apartheid South Africa. The only difference was the lenses we actually use. Cebekhulu (2013:17) wrote that "I still remember the euphoria associated with the day the ANC came into power as if it was yesterday. Many of us thought the day would mark the conquest and the end of socio-economic injustices perpetuated by the apartheid system." Similarly, amongst the first things I noticed during my first contact with the school in 2011, was the increased number of cars parked in the school yard. To me, these cars were a symbol of economic transformation compared to apartheid times. While I used cars, among other things, as a measurement of success and freedom, learners used fashion – something that was close to them.

The process of self-negotiation and of discoveries about me, learners and the field continued throughout my observation period until temporally terminated by the mid-year school holidays. My ethnographic enterprise was not a matter of what I did or said, but how the two sides of an encounter arrived at a delicate workable definition of our engagements (Davies, 1999). The participants and I were engaged in co-constructing a world (Swartz, 2009) and I needed to self-reflect on my engagements throughout. I concluded that research is indeed never a passive process.

FOCUS GROUPS

With the school opening in semester two, I spent the first month re-establishing and revitalising the relationships formed in the first semester. This first month was also intended to give me an opportunity to renegotiate my research purpose and to identify new focus-group participants, should some of the participants confirmed in the first semester decide to withdraw from the research. All the initial plans for the focus-group interviews, such as recruitment and selection of participants and signing of consent forms by participants and their parents, were made before the school closure for the mid-year holidays. The criteria for participation in the focus-group interviews were set as follows: participation was voluntary, only learners with signed parental consent participated, learners who volunteered to participate had to fill in their names on the lists provided, each list had eight spaces in order to limit excess participants, and participation was on a first-come first-serve basis. To encourage learner-ownership of the process, the participation lists were administered by the class representatives. Surprisingly, none of the confirmed participants withdrew. Instead, I was getting constant requests from learners who wanted to form part of the focus groups.

"Researching sexuality is challenging, because it asks questions about an experience which is socially constituted as 'private', 'embarrassing', 'dangerous' and subsequently 'problematic'" (Allen, 2009:549). Coming together in groups is a major way of redefining private issues as public, forming alliances around discrete matters, and reversing fragmented experiences (Raniga and Mathe, 2011; Dominelli, 2002). To uncover factors that influence the observed learners' opinions, feelings, desires, interests, behaviours, fears and motivations on gender and sexuality issues, three (3) focus-group discussions of eight participants each were conducted.

These focus-group discussions were not intended to tell the 'truth' about the sexuality of learners, but rather were aimed at exploring how sexuality of young people is produced and reproduced through their understandings and experiences. My main intention was to try to understand young people from their point of view, and to address them as active agents who construct their social realities. This approach thus required the creation of a conducive and empathetic environment that promoted free expressions.

The three focus groups comprised three segments of learners. These were a girls-only group, a boys-only group, and a mixed group. Segmenting the groups was one of the ways I used to create comfortable platforms for open discussions. According to Hollander (2004), segmentation in sexuality research facilitates discussion by making the participants more similar to each other. In this study, organising participants by same sex, common curriculum stream or common social interests achieved the homogeneity of each focus group. By attempting to create a more homogeneous profile of participants within each focus group, the aim was to increase the group comfort level when discussing sensitive topics (Silverman, 2013; Toseland and Rivas, 2009). While these segments were to facilitate comfortable discussions, they did not serve as a guarantee for learners' disclosure of thoughts and experiences. For instance, I was aware of the gender constraints and expectations that were possible during discussions. Hollander (2004) discussed how the men-only group can be an uncomfortable and frightening platform for rape victims to openly discuss their own victimisation – because of the gendered nature of rape.

Throughout my ethnography, I was aware that gender is performative and that there are no unitary gender identities (Butler, 1999). There is no essence of masculinity or femininity, but we construct or perform ourselves in relations to others (ibid). So, at the beginning of each focus-group interview, I reminded learners that the segments they were in were not to assume their homogeneity as a group, and that each of their views was important, and that my research process was committed to giving voice to each one of them. I was also careful that through my questioning and my being, I did not replicate dominant gender or class discourses. I tried to treat young people as expert in their lives. For example, while I was dying to know about the kinds of sexual relationship they have, I did not ask them direct questions at first.

I started the interviews with questions which broadly explored their likes and dislikes, and how they spend their time in and outside school. The learners themselves spontaneously introduced the subjects of girlfriends and boyfriends; I thus picked up from the issue they actually raised.

According to Becker (2005) and Davies (1999), a focus group is an interactional creative space where the facilitators or social researchers must attempt to 'see the world first through the eyes of the participants'. This can be accomplished through a dialogue rooted in a warm, positive group climate (ibid). To empower participants to contribute meaningfully during our discussions, "to disrupt the conventional hierarchy of research power relations" (Allen, 2009:552), and to stimulate active participation and openness during group conversations, I employed a variety of strategies. One was the preparatory meetings we had, where we discussed the process, procedure and themes to be discussed during the focus groups. These meetings enabled the participants to engage in our discussions fully informed, and, more importantly, from a position of power.

Anti-oppressive practice requires that we untangle the source of our powers and engage in egalitarian strategies that pay attention to the processes in, and through which, we intervene in people's lives (Dominelli, 2002). As icebreakers, we also began every session with a song chosen and led by a learner(s). The use of music as a stimulant was very relevant for this audience, since KwaMashu youth are known for their vibrant drama, art and music culture (Bhatia, 2008). Biko (1978:42) writes that "nothing dramatises the eagerness of the African to communicate with each other more than their love for song and rhythm". In song lay the rare ability of Africans to find humour and creativity in impossible conditions (African Cream, 2009). Through singing, learners got a chance to show off their talents and favourite songs, and, at the same time, rapport, cohesion and a relaxed atmosphere developed. Taking a lead in beginning the sessions was very empowering and therapeutic. "The feeling of togetherness, sameness, and the binding rhythm during singing made everybody brush off their burdens and share pleasures" (Biko, 1978:42).

The singing was then followed by interactive group discussions of approximately 2 hours each, which were tape recorded. Although I had planned the interview schedule, the lively discussions that we had were learner-centred and learner-directed. The interview schedules

became a useful planning tool, but learners actively engaged with topics about their lives in their own ways. The excitement that was building up during discussions reduced my role from facilitating the groups – to interjecting the learners when I needed them to clarify certain township or cultural terms that I did not understand. This does not imply that I was not guarding against dynamics which excluded or rendered some participants passive during discussions. Davies (1999:79) reminds us that "ethnographers must interrogate and explore not just the information being obtained, but also the social dynamics that lead to certain individuals becoming central to their study and others not". I constantly encouraged equal participation and gave voice to girls and boys to speak about social life from their perspective. The shy members in the groups were encouraged to voice their opinions and I tactfully discouraged the loud participants from dominating discussions. Throughout group discussions, I remained committed to the feminist, anti-oppressive cause.

The focus groups not only afforded learners with a platform to openly discuss issues of gender and sexuality, but also, personal isolations were overcome when private troubles were redefined as public ones. They provided an environment in which self-empowerment could flourish. The focus groups were also an exciting learning experience for me. They allowed me access to the language and vocabulary which learners commonly use in their private circles. Learners were meaning makers, who were shaping the research agenda in direct ways (Kehily, 2002). They were so fascinated by my displayed ignorance of certain terms and social activities they participate in, and enjoyed updating me about them. While they displayed insight into the socio-structural constraints impacting on their girlhood and boyhood, they excitedly boasted about the non-repressive lives they are living, compared to my socially and politically oppressive times. Coupled with the excitement were moments where learners validated, challenged, accepted and thought through the meanings they attach to their lives as young people from the township. These were not only expressed through words, but were communicated through emotional tones, body language, level of engagement, and communication flow. Throughout our discussions, learners displayed and expressed both agency and the limits of their agency, in terms of constructing their worlds (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

At the end of each focus-group discussion, I offered learners opportunities for after-care or debriefing conversations. The purpose was to discuss sensitive issues which emanated from the focus-group discussions. These conversations were conducted in person through email contacts or WhatsApp (a social network) contacts. Learners were more comfortable with WhatsApp contacts compared to physical contacts. It offered them opportunities to clarify issues or ask questions, or to disclose personal information they were not comfortable to disclose during physical contacts.

RESEARCH AS AN INTERVENTION

The practice of ethnography relies upon the exchange of lives, selves and voices (Coffey, 1999). "Attention to reciprocity is a characteristic of such qualitative interactions" (Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton, 2001:332) and of feminist research, in particular (De Vault, 1990). "While many authors like Tuhiwai Smith (1999) suggest that research ought to give something back to research participants, others like Jeffrey (2006) disagree" (cited in Swartz, 2011:48). Instead, he views giving tangible rewards to participants, such as material payments, as being patronising (ibid). In her opinion, "participants are entitled to be treated as people who can give their opinions or explain their lives to other people, without requiring always to be given something tangible as a reward" (Swartz, 2011:62). On the other hand, Rossman and Rallis (2012:158) define the norms of reciprocity as being embedded in the view that research is a two-way street where the researcher obtains data, "while the participants find something that makes their cooperation worthwhile – whether that is a feeling of importance from being studied, pleasure from interactions with the researcher, assistance in some task, or actual changes in life circumstances from action research". According to Nama and Swartz (2002:295), "understanding research as psychosocial intervention is one way in which 'giving back' can be non-patronising, while addressing the local ethics of immediate need".

During my fieldwork, the norm of reciprocity – which was informed by philanthropic ethics and the Afrocentric principles involving collective responsibility for what happens to individuals – was achieved through multiple forms of interventions. Given the sensitive nature of sexuality as a field of study, I entered the research site aware that the study had potential to invoke unintended distress or post-traumas. Clearly, one would prefer not to conduct research that harms or injures participants, but sometimes participants' past traumatic

experiences resurfaces unintentionally (Pitts and Smith, 2007). To meet the ethical requirement of minimising harm of risks to participants, I prepared a database of relevant, area-based bio-psychosocial service providers which could be accessed by the school during and after the research.

Dominelli (2002:35) believes that social workers become agents of change when they "ensure that no one has to worry about how they are to access social resources to meet basic needs". This database was announced during assembly and was kept at my mentor's office – since she is in charge of the psychosocial services at the school. As a social worker with more than 19 years of experience, I did not just hand in the database; I facilitated the formation of an alliance and a working relationship between my mentor and the area-based service providers. Moreover, I established a professional referral procedure to be followed, which was discussed and adopted by the service providers and my mentor. The database did not only become a resource to help learners who participated in my study, but became a resource for every learner in the school – including the educators who required bio-psychosocial services. Without escaping my ethical responsibility to address sensitive matters emanating from my research, I also adopted the same referral procedure for learners who came to me needing services. These learners were referred after crisis intervention or assessment services were provided. These were learners who, for instance, needed to test for HIV and sexually transmitted infections, to access contraceptives, or to help their siblings who were abusing drugs and alcohol.

Like the experiences of researchers who have conducted their research with young people in Africa, listening or giving voice to young people became an intervention (Swartz, 2011; Anderson, 2010; Pattman and Bhana, 2009; Pattman and Chege, 2003). "It was in the process of being listened to by an interested adult and being asked endless questions (in enjoyable environments) – that young people spoke of experiencing the most benefit" (Swartz, 2011:62). The talks, as an intervention, not only benefitted research participants, but also all grade 11 learners, and to some extent some of the teachers. The talks facilitated dialogues, which were aimed at shifting and broadening the thinking and the constructions of gender and sexuality. For instance, talks on homosexuality, sexual orientation, and/or gender identities conscientised and affirmed sexual diversity of young people. The values underpinning tese talks required that students learn to respect themselves, others and human rights.

These talks occurred during the orientation month with all grade 11 learners, in the staffroom, during participants' observations, during walks with learners around the school, during our lunch-break sittings, and during our WhatsApp and email conversations. I listened to the stories they were telling, but also to how they were telling their stories, and what they were not telling (Ivey, Gluckstern and Bradford-Ivey, 1997). As noted earlier, invitations from learners to spend time with them were not restricted to research participants, but rather learners who were not part of the research group invited me to visit their groups or classrooms. The friendly atmosphere, non-judgmental attitude, and learner-centred dialogues were most appreciated by the learners, and built learners' confidence in expressing their views.

The active listening was not limited to 'listening with ears': I also 'listened with my eyes and with my heart'. Learners expressed appreciation for my displayed interest in their academic and social activities. I attended, among other things, their sporting activities, debating team forum, their feeding schemes, their baking competitions, and their music rehearsals which I ended up mentoring unofficially. Using my computer and my work data projector, I also presented career information sessions to them. I brought them undergraduate Central Application Office (CAO) forms and helped them with their applications. With Izikhokho, I made extended efforts to attend and help them with their school work projects. They experienced my displayed interest as being supportive and motivational. I also observed that my presence during their activities facilitated some degree of competition among them. While learners competed to impress me during their activities, they indirectly sharpened their academic skills and knowledge, and, in turn, their self-concepts and self-confidence improved. These improvements reaped unintended improved behavioural and academic performance. The improved concentration span and the class stability of *Izikhokho*, for instance, was noticed and communicated by the teachers to me. *Izikhokho*'s final examination performance also surprised everyone (teachers and *Izikhokho* alike). In a class with known bad academic standing and a high failure rate, only two learners failed the 2012 final examination.

While my research "was never designed to be 'research-as-intervention', offering learners opportunities for their own development during the gender and sexuality study seemed to be reasonable within an emancipatory framework, and served to demonstrate an intentional

ethics of reciprocation" (Swartz, 2011:64). During my sponsor's LO lessons, I several consciousness-raising dialogues which were introduced as supplementary activities to the prescribed LO curriculum or having directly emanated from the activities of the curriculum. While I viewed learners as self-directed agents, the assumptions that they are expert in matters concerning their sexuality where their actions or their expressed ideologies could lead to HIV infections, boy superiority and dominance, heterosexism, gender-based violence, or unplanned teenage pregnancy – masked some noxious realities.

Within this reality, I viewed preserving learners' constructed meanings and realities as hypocritical, and silence where their comments and actions were harmful to themselves or others was unethical. During these sessions, I shared with the learners information I had collected that demonstrated the high price that large numbers of young people are paying for the various forms of ideologies and actions that keep them trapped within the vicious cycle of poverty and violence. Through dialogue, we engaged in the process of meanings and identity co-construction. As an enabler, I assisted them in the process of formulating the solutions to their identified problems and challenges. During these consciousness-raising dialogues, I was aware of the risks of denting my relationship with the learners. However, I accepted that as a critical researcher, I was part of social relations and not working outside them in a detached and neutral manner (Dominelli, 2002; Griffiths, 1995).

The research interventions sustained and strengthened my relationship not only with the research participants, but with the whole school. Coffey (1999:7) argued that, "ethnographers rarely leave fieldwork totally unaffected by their research experience". All these unplanned and unintended interventions ended up achieving the ultimate goal of feminist research, which, according to Harding (1998), is to contribute towards social change and reconstruction. My relationship with the school developed from being the 'old girl'/ grade 11 researcher through to being the school's mentor. Towards the final examination, teachers from classes and grades that were not part of my research were referring their learners for academic counselling or motivation, and asked me to do a career-guidance presentation to their learners. Even my sponsor began her plans to register for her Master's degree with my university; she registered for a Master's degree in gender studies in 2013.

The work with the broader school constituency offered me opportunities to say goodbyes in advance – not only to my research participants, but to all learners. Moreover, it served as a best systematic strategy for preparing my research participants for the end of our research relationship. According to Coffey (1999), leaving the field usually means emotional and physical disengagement from people, and perhaps leaving a part of you behind. As learners got used to me working broadly in the school, any dependencies and attractions that might have been created by our close relationship during data collection, were slowly reduced. I got used to the idea of not spending all my fieldwork time with the dedicated group of learners, and they slowly started to accept that our relationship was coming to an end. The formal ending of my fieldwork coincided with ending of the school term, which made it less emotional. When our relationship finally ended, I said my last goodbyes and promised to keep in touch with the learners and with the school, which I have done.

ENACTING ANALYSIS

Rubin and Rubin (2005) and De Vos (2005:338) "describe data analysis as a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". "Unlike quantitative data analysis where the statistical tools are well understood, in qualitative analysis there are no hard and fast rules for analysis" (Gray, 2009:495). The following useful principles suggested by Gray (2009), were applied in my data-analysing process: a) *data transcribing* where my field notes and audio-recorded focus interviews were typed into a document Data were transcribed as an ongoing process parallel to data collection; b) *collect/code/collect* which took place as data emerged. Themes that emerged from data were coded using different colour highlighters; c) *familiarisation* was facilitated by engaging in a careful line-by-line reading of all my field notes, transcripts and documents several times; d) *focused reading* where I underlined pertinent key words, phrases, and patterns – to gain better insight into gender and sexuality discourse. Terreblanche and Durrheim (1999:231) suggest that "themes be explored more closely to capture the finer nuances of meaning not captured by the researcher's original coding system"; e) *review/amend codes*, which allowed me to compare sections of text that appeared to belong together and provided the opportunity for continuous coding, elaboration and re-coding; and f) *generating theory*, where I looked for theoretical principles or models to explain the connections between categories and concepts that emerged from the data.

Even with the careful application of the above principles, data analysis for my study was an anxiety-inducing experience and intensive process. While triangulated methods of data collection – observations, focus groups and loose conversations – were used to reveal a variety of perspectives, to refine data categories, and to offer deeper insight – comprehending the masses of fragmented data emerging through my data-collection processes and tools was a challenge. The rational response to my analysis challenge was to read and re-read literature on sexuality and ethnographic methodologies – trying to find linkages between data I was producing and the literature, hopefully to validate my fieldwork journey. Conducting data analysis thus became an active process which involved engaging and interrogative the emerging data and consulting relevant literature for interpretation and answers. Data collection, data analysis and a literature review for this study, was thus an interwoven and interconnected process. That explains why literature was not reviwed prior to the study's commencement, and instead the literature reviewed were data driven.

In trying to find literature that was neatly packed, to explain the themes that were emerging from the data, I became frantic until I recommitted to the theory that views human beings and their behaviour as diverse, multidimensional, plastic and embedded in multiple-contexts (Berk, 1998). This realisation released me from the constraints of the boxes I was hoping to find and use in cataloguing my data. The only structure I then adopted to underpin my analysis, was the insight from post-structuralism and practices of critical discourse analysis. My analysis rejected the claim that a 'truth' exists, which can be accessed and explained by 'a theory'. Instead, it focused on establishing multiple truths that are relational and contextually produced.

Influenced by social constructionism and the work of Foucault (1980) and Butler (1990), as cited in Connell (2011), my analysis not only established what the learners said or did, but also how it was said and done. I adopted the position that we construct our realities; gender and sexuality constructions are fluid, performative and produced through discourse. Establishing the context of the discourse, showing how discursive processes and structures played out in the field, and studying the ways in which language was articulated, became the focus of my analysis.

This meant that I repeatedly read the field notes and listened to the original audio recordings of the focus groups. This was particularly important, since the medium of communication during fieldwork was IsiZulu and all transcripts were translated from IsiZulu into English. Consequently, meaning was sometimes lost during the translations.

IsiZulu is known from being tonal, expressive, and it also contains metaphors. So, in order to preserve contextual meaning and to present a fair account of the tone which may have been lost during translation, certain isiZulu words and phrases used by participants are cited in the findings' chapters. The aim of my analysis was thus to show up the complex, subtle and sometimes blatant ways in which sexuality constructions and gendered notions of girlhood and boyhood are produced, sustained, negotiated, and challenged in a township high school. Focusing on group dynamics, closely looking at learners' arguments, jokes, teasing, expressions, interpersonal relations within the school, and the way they addressed one another – now became important.

The guiding principles I adopted while analysing data were agency and empowerment. Throughout my data analysis, instead of presenting girls and boys as passive recipients of dominant gender and sexuality discourse, I acknowledged the agency of learners in constructing their sexuality, by exploring the meanings they attach to sexuality in their everyday lives and the ways they define and group themselves as girls and boys in relation to dominant discourses of sexuality and socio-structural constraints that teenagers experience. As such, the research approach used allowed for analytic discussion of "how the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt, challenge and resist, as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221). The approach exposed the social relations of schooling by recognising that we develop a sense of self in relation to others and our social environment.

What I found is that the manner in which teenage girls and boys in my study make meaning of their sexuality in their everyday lives, is influenced by multi-dimensions, which are driven by a complex network of institutions and cannot agree with deterministic or essentialist explanations. Boys and girls are invested in particular forms of femininities and masculinities which they perform within a context, through which they expressed agency – and in some instances their agency was limited (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Hunter, 2010; Bhana, 2002;

Kehily, 2002). "They spoke about their sexuality in ways which both resisted and accommodated, to varying degrees, dominant constructions of masculinities and femininities" (Allen, 2003:216). Such masculinities and femininities are embedded within the historical and cultural contexts through which boys uphold and maintain power and subordinate girls. However, with the complexity of living and "the constant battle between rival meanings of being a girl or a boy" (Bhana, 2016a:68), there are slip ups (disruptions) or violations of norms – where power can turn and return almost instantaneously (Butler, 1990, cited in Bhana, 2002). Thus, there is the rejection of what Connell (2009) calls gender categorialism. It is important to note that the historical and cultural context I am describing here is not inherently African. Asante (2003:2) describes "Africanism as a troupe of ethics". According to him, "to be African is to be against all forms of oppression, racism, classism, homophobia, patriarchy, child abuse, paedophilia, and racial domination" (ibid). This is an African ideal which I personally uphold and subscribe to.

In order to show the complexity of living gender and contradictory sexuality discourses, Bhana (2002) talked about what she termed 'momentary discourses'. The process of negotiating sexuality for girls and boys in my study was filled with 'give and take' episodes, which were highly influenced by their sociocultural experiences at the given time and space. Like in a study by Hunter (2010), girls in my study expressed 'modern' femininities centred around a desire to be 'free' - but "their agency was limited by discourses which made their lives, in cultural terms, more meaningful" (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011:1). Boys were suggesting alternate routes of masculinities centred around the "wish to avoid violence, and through a search for mutual respect, sexual pleasure, romance, and modernity" (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011:4) – but were limited by the dominance of masculinities that place a high value on provider masculinity, acquiring multiple partners, heterosexism, and phallocentricism. This study thus suggests that sexuality and gender are interrelated, giving rise to relations of domination and subordination, but they "are always maintained and disrupted in discourse" (Bhana, 2016a:11).

Learners are unimaginable outside of the institutions that give them meaning. The schooling "processes and practices were imbricated in the formation and generation of gendered and sexual identities and identifications" (Haywood, 2008:1). "School cultures can be seen as active in producing social relations that are contextually specific and productive of social

identities" (Lloyd, 2013:88). My study is context specific and rooted in the agency of young people. I argue that understanding teenage sexualities requires attention to sexual agency – and such agency is embedded within social and cultural contexts illuminating the assertions of sexualities and the limitations. Consequently, the cultural circumstances has a great deal to offer, not only in understanding sexuality, but also in addressing young women's risks of sexual violence, HIV, and young men's construction of masculinity which develop into violence and domination in our country.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an in-depth discussion of the journey I travelled to explore and understand how African teenagers from a township high school give meaning to sexuality in their everyday school lives, and what significance it holds for relations of gender power. Despite some limitations, as with all methodologies, the study methodology offered what other methodologies might not have been in a position to offer. The use of ethnography as a methodology provided rich data and insight through multiple data sources. These were participatory observation, focus-group interviews, and unstructured individual interviews. Participatory ethnographic methods gave 'voice' to research participants and treated them as active agents – shaping their own sexualities.

The approaches, theoretical framework, ideologies, research ethics and principles adopted in this study, which view research as personal, emotional, subjective and relational, were most relevant for the study's subject matter, the study context, and the participants. Given the study processes allowed for constant meaning and identity co-constructions between the researched and I, gave opportunities for development of new insights and expansion of existing but limited knowledge on the construction of gender and sexuality by girls and boys from a township context. Spending a year with the research participants also allowed for the constant analysis, and provided opportunities for clarification on confusing issues. More importantly, the lengthy period spent with research participants allowed for the adoption of a non-simplistic and non-essentialist view of gender and sexuality.

Chapter 5

INKWARI: SEX, GENDER, ALCOHOL AND SPATIALISED CONSTRUCTIONS OF SEXUALITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the ways in which teenage girls and boys express sexuality in relation to social events, parties, and gatherings in the context of *inkwari*. The focus falls on the construction of young people's sexualities in the context of *inkwari*. *Inkwari* or *enkwarini* is isiZulu slang for township raves or weekend festivities. It involves a variety of events, parties, contexts created for special celebrations, or "large gatherings of young men and women in a public space, that usually lasts well into the late night or following morning" (Mimiaga, Closson, Safren, Mabude, Mosery, Taylor, Perez-Brumer, Matthews, Psaros, Harrison, Grelotti, Bangsberg and Smit, 2015:310).

An emerging body of literature has suggested that *inkwari* are highly charged sexualised places providing an "endemic setting for HIV transmission" (Mimiaga et al., 2015). In this chapter, I argue that whilst *inkwari* are a highly sexualised space reproducing power dynamics in ways that are risky, especially for young women, *inkwari* also provides a pleasurable space in the absence of alternate forms of fun in the township context. *Inkwari* is pleasure filled; young people are motivated and excited by it, and it is part of sexualised peer cultures. This chapter thus argues against the discourse that renders issues of desire and pleasure invisible.

By including a discourse of pleasure and desire in this chapter, my intention is not in any way undermining the body of knowledge that highlights *inkwari* as a fertile ground where gendered and risky sexualities are manifested. Nor do I wish to underplay the socio-structural constraints that limit the sexual agency of young people in spaces like *inkwari*. Instead, I hope to draw attention to researchers and programmers that both pleasure and danger have to be in the picture if we are to have a broader conceptualisation of youth sexual cultures. Allen (2007) cited in Mathe (2013:79) "warns that denying young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively, make it harder for them to access the kind of sexual agency which might makes them sexually responsible citizens".

In this chapter I seek to make explicit the realities and experiences of young people at *enkwarini*, and how their experiences and realities become a source of both pleasure and sexual vulnerabilities. I do that by discussing the positive meanings that boys and girls attach to being part of *inkwari,* and their interactions and sexual cultures at *enkwarini.* Consequently, I point to how risky sexual behaviour is entangled with what young people view as acts of indulging in pleasurable pursuits. While the chapter notes the agency of today's girls and boys in their sexuality constructions and identities, it also demonstrates unequal gender power relations, domination, and widespread structural constraints in the construction of sexualities in the context of *inkwari*. The chapter thus highlights that at *enkwarini*, "the negotiation of desires and sexuality practices occur in social contexts in which power is embedded" (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe, Thomson, 1990:339).

Recent studies have reported a strong correlation between risky social venues, substance use, drug use, transactional sex, and risky sexual behaviour among young people (Mimiaga, et al., 2015; Shefer and Strebel, 2013; Gray, 2010; Adshead, Bellis and Macfarlane, 2007). These studies have reported that "sexual encounters between young people often occur in a physical location with a social dynamic involving risky behaviour" (Mimiaga, et al, 2007:308). "For example, the social environments in which young people drink and use drugs are thought to influence patterns of condom use and choices of casual and non-casual sexual partnerships" (ibid). Hlabangane (2014:4) states that "any consideration of sexuality is not complete without considering questions of disproportional vulnerability to HIV risk, risk perception, and risk aversion".

The proposed chapter is thus an attempt to expand our understanding of the extent to which the township social and entertainment spaces are sites for gender and sexuality construction, and, particularly, a source of both pleasure and sexual vulnerability in young people. It aims to expand the "South African studies where high-risk youth sexuality is conceptualised primarily as being an environmental, social and cultural problem that often and effectively prevents youth from transforming safe-sex knowledge into functional, health-promoting, safer-sex behaviour" (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002:23). This has important implications for sexual health programmes and policies.

Like the arguments made by Ashcraft (2006:2146), this chapter stresses "the importance of attending to the complex ways that popular culture in social spaces shapes teen sexualities as teens shape sexualities". This chapter argues that practitioners in the field of gender and sexuality can no longer afford to confine their intervention efforts to formal organisational contexts like schools; rather, they should be willing to extend their programmes and efforts to address sexuality across a wide range of social settings – such as youth social spaces.

INKWARI AND THE PURSUIT OF PLEASURE

A conversation about *inkwari* came about when my research participants were answering a question about the favourite ways in which they spend time as girls and boys – outside the school environment. *Inkwari* has become one of the most popular social spaces in the lives of young people in townships – a space where they hang out or 'chill'. When I asked them to describe *inkwari*, they responded thus:

Bonga:	*Mam, if you never been to inkwari – you know nothing. Enkwarini 'ziyawa' (things are rolling).*
Researcher:	*'ziyawa' in which way? Where, what and, who participate?*
Thabo:	*Mam, you can't claim to be a true 'ulova waseKasi' (township boy), if you never been to enkwarini.*
Sbusiso:	*Mam, let me help you to have a picture of inkwari. You see – in your times, you used to attend the political vigils during weekends ... we go to enkwarini. Inkwari is today's social movements. If you don't attend inkwari - 'usele' (you are left out). (The whole group laughed loud).*
Researcher:	*Ha ha ha, interesting – but I am still lost – update me.*
Smanga:	*You see mam, inkwari are events where boys and girls meet to 'ukudla ubusha babo' (enjoying their youthfulness). It is where [you] 'sidla ubumnandi' (indulge in pleasurable pursuits).*
Thandeka:	*These are parties or social gatherings that are organised in different venues such as kwaHlabisa, kwaMzizi and Mabaleng (mentioning the famous KwaMashu taverns), or sometimes in sport grounds. They are generally hosted by tavern owners or music DJs. Some have performing artists for entertainment or as guests. As groups of friends,*

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	we also organise our own *inkwari* in private venues – depending on what we are celebrating.
Cindy:	*Thandeka, you are forgetting to mention the most important elements of inkwari.*
Thandeka:	*What?*
Cindy:	*Alcohol, umgwinyo (a drug known as an energy drug) and izitshebe (meaning beard – referring to boys and men).*
Nonhlanhla:	*No Cindy – not everyone goes to enkwarini to drink (alcohol), use drugs and get men. I don't use drugs or drink – but I have been to some of these events.*
Cindy:	*No ways sister – I agree that not everyone use drugs – but who does not drink at enkwarini? Just consider yourself an alien. How many people can last the whole night in an open space while sober? The truth is – inkwari is inkwari because of lots of alcohol and music.*
Researcher:	*And men? Where do they fit in?*
Nobuhle:	*Men are ATMs (automated teller machines) mam (with a big smile).*
Researcher:	*Go on. I am listening.*
Sbusiso:	*Generally, they are the ones who pay for the fun. Mam, you can't take 'abantwana' out and don't provide for them (abantwana literally means babies, but used to refer to girlfriends).*

In Chapter 2, the social context of young people in townships has been elucidated. Such a context is deeply embedded within a history of inequalities, the legacies of apartheid, and economic and social fragmentation, which continues to impact on young people in contemporary township life in South Africa. The young people in my study are not separate from these harsh social realities, as this thesis has shown throughout the chapters. As such, finding a space of shared interests and a space for identity constructions, is very special to teenage girls and boys from a township. In the extract above, my research participants viewed *inkwari* as closely tied to their township identity. To them, attending *inkwari* validates one's township identity and also signifies 'fitting in' or being part of youth's social movement of the 21st Century. Those who have never been to *enkwarini* are perceived as being left out and they don't belong.

For young people to see me as ignorant because I admitted to never having been to *enkwarini* was awakening and a loud call for an in-depth understanding of such spaces. When Bonga said, "Mam, if you [have] never been to *inkwari*, you know nothing", his statement clearly highlighted the popularity and significance of *inkwari* to young people. Moreover, it illustrated how *inkwari* within social spaces are taking centre stage in the identity, gender and sexuality constructions of young girls and boys from a township. This suggests *inkwari* as being critical in understanding and engaging with the evolving sexual identities of teenage boys and girls.

Contrary to adults' view of *inkwari* as being risky (Mimiaga et al., 2015), the key features of *inkwari* that teenagers identified depicted them as providing them with the opportunity to meet, to belong, to have fun, and to exhale from everyday realities and confinement of the township context. Expressions like *enkwarini* '*ziyawa*' (things are rolling) asserted their depiction of *inkwari* as being a space for excitement. Risk of any kind was not a priority in the depictions of *inkwari* by young people in my study. Instead, they viewed them primarily as a space where "*sidla ubusha bethu*" (they are enjoying their youthfulness) or where "*sidla ubumnandi*" (they are indulging in pleasurable pursuits).

In many studies, when young people spoke about enjoying being young or indulging in pleasurable pursuits, largely they were engaging in risky behaviour (Graham, 2012; Jewkes and Morrell, 2012). When Cindy spoke of lots of alcohol, *umgwinyo* (an energy drug) and men as the key drivers of fun at *enkwarini*, she clearly demonstrated that the concept of risky behaviour is adult-centric. Attainment of pleasure was her main priority, rather than paying attention to possible vulnerabilities to sexual risks and how her agency as a girl might be compromised by being under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Her reasoning echoed Gould, Adshead, Bellis and Macfarlane (2007)'s assertion that young people have a different kind of logic. These authors reminded us to understand that "young people do not engage in risky behaviour. Instead they experiment and explore, they have different priorities, and they want to try something new" (ibid: 36).

Nobuhle's bold positioning of men as 'ATMs' illustrates how – in the pursuit of pleasure – township girls are complicit in locking themselves into positions that enable and permit a form of femininity that is open to boys' and men's reproduction of relations of power and

complex hierarchies of the advantaged and disadvantaged. While authors like Bell (2012) and Lerclerc-Madlala (2002) acknowledge that girls who engage in material transactions or in what Hunter (2010) calls 'provider-love', are sexual agents who manipulate their environments for personal gain. The main concern though, are the countless inequalities where such transactions happen. These inequalities limit the agency of girls in negotiating their positive sexuality (Hlabangane, 2014; Shefer, Clowes and Vergani, 2012; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

It is important to note that the 'ATMs' are also not merely the victims of material exploitation by girls. Being positioned as an 'ATM' is linked with the gendered socio-economic status. Sbusiso's statement that *"Mam, you can't take 'abantwana' out and don't provide for them"*; clearly illustrates how he openly gloated at being called an 'ATM' and how being an 'ATM' asserted and validated his manly position. "This aligns with other qualitative studies from South Africa, which have shown that young men assert their masculinity through consumption and the use of gifts/money in exchange for love and sex with women" (Mimiaga et al., 2015:313).

In the sections below, I further explore how alcohol, drugs and material resources make girls casualties of power relations, gender violence and vulnerable to sexually-transmitted infections like HIV.

INKWARI, FASHION AND THE EXPRESSION OF DESIRE

Dressing up and showing off trendy fashion was cited by the research participants as being some of the key features *inkwari.* As teenagers wear school uniforms during the week, *inkwari* was depicted as providing boys and girls with the opportunity to express their fashion statements, their uniqueness, and moreover to feel and look good:

> *"Mam, here at school, we cannot wear our school uniform any way we like. It is the teachers who determine the length of your uniform. They even tell you how you should wear it. Enkwarini is the only place where you wear whatever you like. There are no parents or teachers to tell you that this dress is too short, too bright or too revealing. You wear what you like and what you feel good in." (Thandeka)*

"Enkwarini is the only space that allows us young people to express our likes, desires, and our feelings in an unrestricted manner. At school, in churches, during cultural activities and during weddings, dress code is always restricted. But enkwarini – everybody celebrates her sense of being – 'omapakisha' (booty girls), curvy girls, and slender girls – all celebrate their bodies the way they like" (Cindy)

Feminists have argued that the body is the subjective site of struggle that is often engraved with gendered, racial or cultural ideologies and discourses. In the above excerpt, the two girls illuminate the intersection between clothing and their expressions of sexual selves. To these girls dressing up for *inkwari* made their bodies come alive and allows for the expression of their sense of being. To them, "the body is sign-bearing and sign-wearing, and is also a producer of signs – and the clothes they choose to wear at *enkwarini* make a highly visible statement of how they wish to present themselves to the world, who they think they are, or who they would like to be" (adapted from Skeggs, 2004:142).

The two girls spoke about how they challenge social and sexual norms through their dress code at *enkwarini*. They expressed their disapproval of how their bodies in many social spaces are often disciplined, moulded, and re-arranged by dominant powers through dress code. In these girls' opinions, *inkwari* is the only space that provides young people with unrestricted bodily expressions, and a space where their dress code is not policed. Unlike other spaces like wedding ceremonies or churches, *inkwari* is described by the participants as allowing for the freedom of bodily expression, and celebration of one's sense of being. It is depicted as promoting young people's freedom to construct their own bodies:

Smanga:	*When you are comfortably dressed, you feel confident about yourself and when you up your game on the dance floor - 'nezingane ziyaziwela' (girls compete for your attention).*
Researcher:	*Are you saying you dress or you dance in a particular way in order to score with girls?*
Smanga:	*Yes, mam. How you look says a lot about you. Your clothes express your style, your likes and the kind of girls you like. And mam, when you look good, girls shower you with free hugs and kisses.*

Researcher:	*Wow, this is fascinating. Tell me, what makes you more attractive? Your dress sense or your dance move?*
Smanga:	*You see mam – A boy who is wearing fashionable clothes, especially famous brands, is more attractive than the one who dances the most.*
Researcher:	*For girls?*
Smanga:	*The rules of the game are different for a girl. A girl does not have to wear expensive clothes – as long as she is sexy. All that we want to see from girls is fresh flesh – that all. Ask them (referring to the girl participants) – they know it and they dress accordingly.*

A discourse of desire featured strongly in my conversation about fashion with Smanga above. Smanga deployed fashion as a symbolic marker of gender identities and sexual desire. He spoke passionately and with a great deal of pleasure about how brand-named clothes make boys attractive, and how sexy clothes make girls attractive. Smanga's understanding of the role of fashion highlighted "Butler's notion of the heterosexual matrix, where one's gender performance is seen to pre-empt sexual attraction" (Allen, 2013:348). Smanga's statements such as "when you look good, '*nezingane ziyaziwela'* (girls compete for your attention); girls shower you with free hugs and kisses" – clearly depict how young people express sexual desire through fashion at *enkwarini*. To Smanga, the attention from girls, the hugs and kisses, are a major compliment, and also a validation of his desirability.

At *enkwarini*, dressing up in a particular way is one of the erotic codes and a norm for sexual desirability. Smanga spoke about how fashion is used by boys and girls as a tool to flirt with each other. Through self-produced sexy images, teenagers produce 'sexualised' representations of themselves. However, here young people interpreted this self-objectification, "not as oppressive, but as constituting a prime site of sexual liberation, value, and pleasure" (Gill, 2007, cited in Ringrose, Harvey, Gill and Livingstone, 2013: 306). To these young people, fashion allows them to express their sexual liberation and agency. What I also realised during my discussion with these young people, was that these spatial fashion statements are associated with the divide between the public and private space of sexuality, and are context specific (adapted from Groes-Green, 2009).

Smanga's statement about fashionable boys being more attractive and much more desirable than good dancers, displayed the hierarchy of masculinities at *enkwarini*. This reflects how "masculinities are diverse, are performed differently across historical moments and cultural locations" (Allen, 2013:351), and are always contestable (Bhana, 2014). To Smanga, name brands or being fashionable is a marker of one's attractiveness, fame and trustworthiness with peers at *enkwarini*. His statement implied that boys who wear name brands "are socially rewarded with status and power, while others are marginalised and subject to ridicule, abuse, and violence" (Allen, 2013: 351). Furthermore, "due to their access to a certain form of high status 'corporeal capital' (Shilling 1993) derived from material (i.e. bodily and financial) resources, these young men can ''cash in'' on the symbolic economy of what is deemed sexually desirable" (Allen, 2013:358).

It is significant to note that the exploration of young people's sexual desire and pleasure in this section, is in no way underplaying the sexualisation and objectification of young people, particularly girls, in contexts such as *inkwari*. The discussion here acknowledges that through fashion and particular ways of dressing up, the embodied patterns of masculinity and femininity that are power-laden, are expressed at *enkwarini*. Furthermore, it recognizes that by being considered attractive at *enkwarini*, boys and girls become active participants in the heterosexual market, with them reproducing the dominant hegemonic masculinity and femininity discourse.

INKWARI AND GIRLS' AUCTIONED AGENCY

This section illustrates the prevailing heteronormative practices in young people's social spaces – such as *enkwarini*. It further shows how girls' agency is auctioned for material gains in such spaces. The dependency of girls on boys/men to provide for transport, entrance fees and all other provisions required at *enkwarini*, were cited as the main factors that limit their agency in saying 'no' to sexual advances, coercion, and, in many cases, to sexual assaults by boys and men. I have used the term 'auction', because some girls were cited as taking the lead roles in bartering their bodies for attendance at *enkwarini*. The following transpired when we furthered our discussion about the arrangements and attendance at *enkwarini*:

> Researcher: *I am really interested in understanding inkwari. When is the next event? Can I attend with you?*

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Smanga:	*No, no, no Mam, you want to kill our fun. Inkwari is only for young girls.*
Cindy:	*Not exactly Smanga. Fun has no age. Inkwari is [are] attended by anyone 'othanda ubumnandi' (who loves the fun).*
Smanga:	*Hell no Cindy – just imagine our Mam 'ebhenga' (a term used to describe a popular dance of shaking your bums in a particular, sexy way)*
Thandeka:	*Smanga just leave Mam to us. Once we dress her in skinny jeans or isgqebhe (a township word that means a very short outfit) and in all-star (sneakers), and we teach her few dance moves – no one will recognise Mam's age. 'Uzokudida' (you won't recognise her) until she asks you to stop 'hitting' (proposing love) on her. (They all laughed).*
Researcher:	*Ha ha ha, I cannot even begin to imagine myself in that swag – especially isgqebhe. I think I will need to bring a scarf or something to cover myself.*
Sbusiso:	*No Mam, you cannot cover yourself. You know by now, that being sexually appealing makes your night much more fun.*
Researcher:	*How?*
Sbusiso:	*Being sexy is part of inkwari vibe. The more a girl is in skimpy clothes, the better are her chances of getting sponsors for all her needs at enkwarini. Men eagerly pay more for what they can see. (They all laughed). Ask them Mam. That is what they intentionally do in order to get free booze (alcohol), but they always forget that when you are semi-naked; you become defenceless when the same boys take what they view as already being paid for.*
Thabo:	*Thabo is right. Girls use many tricks to get things for free in these parties and they turn around and play victims when they get sexually assaulted. What they are forgetting, is that "ekasi, kudliwa imali, kudliwa umuntu" (In the township, you eat my money, I eat you).*

The above extract illustrates how girls' bodies are both agents and objects, through which a dominant heterosexual discourse is reproduced. At *enkwarini*, girls' bodies are some sort of a currency which is used in exchange for fun. Notably, not all girls were said to be passive participants in this body-fun/booze exchange, but some girls actively use their bodies to get what they want in such settings. Girls were exploiting sexuality for material gain (Selikow and Mbulaheni, 2013; Bell, 2012). Dance moves called '*ukubhenga*' and intentionally presenting certain body images (e.g. dressing in skimpy clothes), were mentioned as the tricks that girls use to entice boys and men to pay for their needs during these events. These enticement acts were stated as girls' expression of their sexual agency.

Clearly in the above extract, young people acknowledged girls' ability to manipulate their social world for their own benefits, but, at the same time, they displayed awareness that the same acts of manipulation limited the girls' sexual agency. By occupying the gendered body positions, the girls legitimise heterosexism, compromise their own safety, and become victims of sexual violations – where condom use is often non-negotiable. These are the conditions which, according to the literature, increase their vulnerability to HIV. With this I am not in any way suggesting or condoning the pervasive noxious belief among macho boys/men that girls and women wearing short outfits are inviting or asking for a sexual violation, or that 'good' girls don't get raped. What the above extract suggests is that some township girls are locked into positions that enable and permit a form of femininity that is open to boy's/men's reproduction of hegemonic masculinities (Anderson, 2012).

When Thabo spoke about '*ekasi kudliwa umuntu, kudliwa imali*' and girls knowing it, his statement conveyed a number of gendered messages. First, it became apparent how girls and their bodies in such a context constitute an arena for deployment of gender power. Second, in a township context "gift giving of any kind within a relationship can be associated with sexual leverage – an exchange that somehow entitles one partner to physical and sexual rights to the other's body" (Kaufman and Stavrou, 2002:2). "The power of heterosexual men in a patriarchal system makes it possible to treat women as objects in a way that not only depersonalises desire, but practically dismembers their bodies" (Connell, 2002 cited in Gopaldass, 2012:24). Third, his statement depicted that there are unwritten rules about interactions and sexuality that are context-specific. When girls from those contexts behave,

dance or dress in certain ways, they either actively position themselves or are positioned as active participants.

Hlabangane (2014) reported how girls in her study (based in the Soweto township) viewed the notion of '*kudliwa umuntu, kudliwa imali*' as an outdated tool of exercising masculine power. In view of the high prevalence of HIV infections among African communities and particularly among women, these girls viewed men and boys who force themselves on women as exposing themselves to high risks of HIV infection. "While the young women felt vulnerable to sexual assault by men, they recognised and highlighted the danger that such acts may pose to the men, who do not know the HIV status of their victims" (ibid:5). Clearly, HIV and AIDS has destabilised hegemonic masculinities which sanction and encourage male sexual prowess or the celebration of 'isoka' masculinities. Like Hunter (2010), Hlabangane (2014:5) asserted that "HIV and AIDS has engendered a sense that male authority over women cannot go unchallenged".

It should be noted that not all girls become mere victims of such sexual positioning. Some of the girls actively reject gender power. The conversation below demonstrates how some girls are insightful of the positioning and gender power in such spaces, and thus have devised alternative means of navigating such social spaces:

> Nonhlanhla: *Mam don't listen to them. 'Girls-only' fun has become a safe code for me and my friends. We look after each other and we don't ask or take favours from strangers, particularly boys. But with you, we can make an exception – we will be happy to take you to enkwarini. In return for 'ukukufaka ezintweni' (putting you in the map), you can provide us with obligation-free transport.*
>
> Researcher: *Thank you Nonhlanhla for your offer. I will be happy to go with you. I see that there is an issue about transport and safety. What type of transport do you normally use? And what makes it unsafe?*
>
> Sbusiso: *'Bachutha thina laba' (a township slang for material exploitation or to financially strip someone for your own benefit).*

Nonhlanhla: That is why we prefer to go with Mam instead of you, because when you help us, you regard it as 'ukuchuthwa', and you expect payment for it.

Researcher: Does it mean that if I don't go with you in the next inkwari; you won't go?

Nonhlanhla: No Mam, we will go and we have been to many events before, but through our own means and efforts – not being helped by these 'animals' (referring to the boys).

Researcher: Ok, I see. I can also see that you have taken a serious stand against accepting favours from boys. Was it influenced by what happened to you? And my question is not only directed to Nonhlanhla but anyone here.

Nonhlanhla: Not me personally, but I know many girls that have been treated badly by boys after inkwari. Some of these girls are coerced to have sex and some are raped, and some are left stranded with no transport to take them back home if they refuse to give sexual favours to them.

Nobuhle: Yee Mam, Nonhlanhla is right. Girls are only safe if they go as a group of girls – look after one another and provide for each other. The moment you include boys in your outing – you invite problems.

Researcher: Nobuhle, are you saying that there is inkwari for girls only?

Nobuhle: No Mam. You see at enkwarini, you find people in small groups or in the company of their friends. Girls are safe when they are in the company of other girls.

Researcher: What if you are in the company of boys from your class or your friends from school?

Nonhlanhla: The problem is that inkwari is generally not exclusive to one school and there is no age restriction – it is more of a melting pot. Yes, your school friends can treat you well, but we cannot expect the same from their friends. Most problems happen when a girl is given a lift by her boyfriend's friend or when she is the last person to be delivered home – and this boy tells her that the last person to leave the car pays. That is why I personally insist that if 'uthanda ubumnandi' and you want to be safe – just stay in the company of your girlfriends. Even when it

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happens that you accept a lift back home – don't be left alone in the
car with a stranger.

The above excerpt illustrates how girls articulated their vulnerability to sexual violations within social spaces such as *enkwarini*. Their vulnerabilities were said to be not only heightened by culturally defined sexual and gender norms such as the feeling of entitlement of men having sex, which is widely reported as prevailing in the township context (Bhana and Anderson, 2013) – but also by the unequal gender power relations, boys' and men' economic power, materiality of interactions, and sexual positioning of girls in such spaces. Boys and men in such spaces are paying for *inkwari* expenses like transport and alcohol, and expect sex in return. "This type of economic dependency likely reduces the ability of women to dictate the terms of this exchange, and compromises their sexual decision-making power" (Mimiaga et al, 2015: 313).

Nonetheless, girls like Nonhlanhla are displaying agency in navigating these highly gendered social spaces. They expressed insight in Bhana and Pattman (2011)'s assertion that gender, resources and power are intricately intertwined. They were aware that gender power relations in social spaces like *enkwarini* are not straightforward acts, but are often linked with boys' economic power or with boys' ability to provide things like transport. They seem to know that boys feel that '*bayachuthwa*' (economically exploited) if girls do not return the favour through sex and were aware of the gender violence which they may consequently endure. These girls have thus come up with the ways of rejecting and resisting gender power. According to them, it is through the rejection of material favours from boys and men, that they can exercise power over their bodies and sexuality. Furthermore, they viewed 'girls-only' companionships as another successful strategy they use to destabilise gender power at *enkwarini*.

While the agency of girls like Nonhlanhla in the paragraph above is commendable, it is also important to acknowledge that their agency was influenced by the existing dominant gender discourse at *enkwarini*. "The process of these girls of 'taking up' a position where they rejected material favours from boys, was not simply a cognitive choice, but rather a complex process of becoming that involved being subjected to gender discourse" (Allen, 2003:216). Clearly, the agency of girls like Nonhlanhla is conceptualised "not as the result of a pre-

discursive humanist subject who can choose their sexual subjectivity, but rather as lying within the constitutive force of discourse" (ibid:217). In articulating this, Butler (1990:145) argues that, "there is no self who maintains integrity prior to its entrance into this conflicted cultural field. There is only the taking up of tools where they lie, where the 'very taking up' is enabled by the tool lying there".

INKWARI AND 'DDL' CULTURE

'DDL' stands for '*drink*, get *drunk* and get *laid*'. According to the research participants, DDL has become the major part of *inkwari* culture. They spoke of young people organising and attending *inkwari*, merely for drinking, getting drunk and having sex – including 'no strings attached' (NSA) sex:

Thabo:	*Mam, on many occasions young people, or let me say boys, organise inkwari with two things in mind – lots and lots of alcohol and opportunities to meet sex partners.*
Cindy:	*Not only boys Thabo, girls as well.*
Researcher:	*I am listening.*
Cindy:	*You see Mam, when you fancy a boy here at school and you don't have enough guts to approach him – the easy place to get him is at enkwarini, when you are drunk and he is also drunk.*
Researcher:	*Why is that?*
Cindy:	*Everyone knows that alcohol allows people to do crazy stuff. No one can blame you for anything if you were drunk.*
Sbusiso:	*What Cindy is saying is that, people have no shame when they are drunk. Ay Mam, you must see how girls throw themselves at boys when they are drunk. They totally have no self-control.*
Cindy:	*Admit Sbusiso … boys like that (laughing).*
Sbusiso:	*Yes, I am not complaining. It is always nice to eat a free 'cake' (vagina) – especially when there are 'no strings attached' (NSA) to it.*
Researcher:	*Hold on, I want to follow this well. Are you saying that boys and girls get drunk so they can have sex with the people they fancy And all of this happens at enkwarini – in an open space?*

Thabo:	*Not exactly Mam. You see, there are different types of inkwari. Here, we are talking about the ones that mainly take place in homes. As you know by now, there is no inkwari without alcohol and sometimes drugs, and when teenagers get drunk – anything, and I mean anything, is possible.*
Researcher:	*Wow, the way you are emphasising 'anything', makes me interested in hearing more …*
Thabo:	*Mam, you do not want to know the details.*
Researcher:	*Yes I do (politely insisting).*
Thabo:	*Sbu (Sbusiso) – can you take over.*
Sbusiso:	*Mam, things are happening at enkwarini. One moment you see people drinking, dancing, and the next moment they are in a toilet, in a car or somewhere secluded having sex. Some just have sex right in front of the group. And sometimes the whole group of boys joins the fun.*
Researcher:	*Who initiates sex? And who gives permission for the group to join in?*
Sbusiso:	*Eish, it is not easy to tell. A boy or a girl can take the first move.*
Nobuhle:	*Yes, I agree, there are girls who initiate sex, but many girls are tricked and 'balahle' (a term referring to 'throw in the towel' and have unplanned sex). When they are drunk or drugged, they get pressurised to have unplanned sex. Mam, sometimes a girl agrees to have sex with one person and once she is in the act, it very difficult to escape things like group sex when targeted for it.*
Thabo:	*You see Mam, when these girls get 'wasted' (too drunk), boys just take advantage of them. There are many easy targets there and even when they try to refuse, no one listens – their drunken states make them defenseless – they are outnumbered anyway.*
Researcher:	*Are girls aware that when a person has sex with you after saying no, that constitutes rape? If they do, have any of the girls opened a rape charge against those boys?*
Cindy:	*Girls know their rights, but many girls prefer to keep the rape a secret rather than going to the police, who embarrass you with many unnecessary questions.*

> Nobuhle: *Reporting a rape case will be a total waste of time: 1, Who will believe a story of a girl who got raped after being drunk or 'being high' (on drugs); 2, Some of these group sex [incidents] are with total strangers and when a girl starts asking around – no one wants to be the one doing the pointing, because police can reveal them to the perpetrators; and 3, These incidences are embarrassing; many girls just want to forget that they ever happened.*
>
> Thabo: *You see Mam, even if a girl knows her assaulters, it is very hard to prove that it was rape. Some of these incidences happen after a girl has voluntarily accepted to use drugs like ecstasy – which is well known as a sex potion. The question will be how you accepted using a sex potion, if you were not planning to have sex. Boys are very good in sending their victims on a guilty trip, and, if they fail, they resort to threats of violence.*

A number of authors have identified the association between sexual behaviour and substance abuse as representing major threats to the health and wellbeing of South African teenagers – especially in light of the high prevalence of HIV infection in this population group (Mimiaga et al, 2015; Pettifor, MacPhail, Anderson and Maman, 2012; Morojele, Brook and Kachleng'a, 2006). The above extract depicts *inkwari* as events that are highly charged with drugs, alcohol and sex. Participants in my study spoke of *inkwari* as serving the purpose of achieving two main purposes: the consumption of lots of alcohol (in some cases drugs) and opportunities to meet sex partners. Drunken girls were said to be the main target for sex escapades during, or after, these events.

Like the studies conducted by Mimiaga et al (2015:312), my research participants "described substance use at *inkwari* as a means to an end – a pathway through which male attendees had sex with women". Buying or giving girls alcohol or drugs were mentioned as baits used to trick them to have one-on-one sex or to what one participant termed 'sex trains' (a line up or group sex). *Inkwari* thus creates spaces for some boys to target and sexually exploit "intoxicated girls – believing them to be less inclined or able to refuse or resist their sexual advances" (Morojele et al., 2006:216).

Boys were not the only ones who were said to be using alcohol for sex. Some girls were said to use alcohol or drugs to initiate or actively participate in the sex adventures of inkwari. When Cindy said "*Everyone knows that alcohol allows people to do crazy stuff. No one can blame you for anything if you were drunk*" – her statements evidently demonstrated that alcohol use or drugs creates opportunities for girls to engage in casual sex or risky sexual behaviours, with no shame. These are the girls that participants viewed as being carefree and liberated in expressing their sexual desires. Notably, their behaviour indicates shifts in traditional gender norms and sexual scripts of young African girls and women (Hunter, 2010; Shefer and Foster, 2001). However, as I listened carefully and analysed our discussion, it was apparent that sexual agency of girls in contexts such as *enkwarini*, was not absolute.

Young people's statements were embedded with "contradictions between girls' celebration of, and confidence in, their own 'girl-powered' autonomy and the realities of a hyper-heterosexual discourse that mediates their choices and shapes their lived experiences" (Edell, Brown and Tolman, 2013:276). While they spoke about girls initiating the sex escapades, the level of intoxication and their boy/men partners were more likely to control the pace. The possibility is that when young people get drunk, sex may be their choice; but the unequal power relations and patriarchy limit their agency during sex. Furthermore, the question of whether a girl who initiated sex was agentic or not gets complicated by the fact that drug use weakens judgment, and causes them to participate in reckless sexual behaviours.

Gopaldass (2012:54) argues that "many girls who are intoxicated do not have much control over their bodies, and they are sometimes forced to deal with the emotional and psychological effects of their actions later on in their lives". In my study, participants reported that in many instances, girls have no control of where, how, and how many men they end up having sex with – especially when drunk. Some of the girls were forced to have sex with individual boys or a group of boys – even after openly saying no to sex. These girls knew that the forced sex constituted rape and was a punishable offence, but most victims were said to prefer to keep rape incidences secret. Factors such as self-judgment, guilt, self-blame, shame, an untrusted judicial system, and threats from perpetrators, were cited as the main barriers to fighting and prosecuting perpetrators of sexual violence against girls.

My research participants also reported that many of the sex escapades were largely unplanned, under NSA conditions, or with strangers. "The possible outcomes may be that girls lose willpower or inhibition and have sex; have unprotected sex; don't know that they have had sex – and thus become the victims of sexual coercion or attack, or get HIV" (Hertfordshire, 2016:14). The findings of Gopaldass (2012:54) were that "girls go to nightclubs, consume alcohol and have sex with strangers, and the following day these girls do not know who they slept with or whether they have HIV". "Drugs lessen one's inhibitions, tenseness and awareness of environments - and often have disempowering effects over females" (ibid:52). The discussions here illustrate that drugs and alcohol are at the heart of young people's vulnerability to HIV.

Songs like the famous DJ Siyanda' song *'iwewe'* (commonly interpreted in the townships to mean a vagina) were cited by my research participants as having fueled the DDL culture, especially among girls. The song's chorus is: "*Anginamali, anginalutho, kodwa ngiphethe iwewe*" (I don't have money, I have nothing, but I have my vagina). In the extract below, Thabo reiterated *inkwari* as a common site for transactional sex. He spoke about how DJ Siyanda's song has fueled the exchange between *'iwewe'* and alcohol and drugs:

> *"It has become a common practice, especially among the girls called 'onomusa' (a term that literally means being good hearted but used to refer to 'easy girls') to exchange sex for alcohol or drugs. Influenced by the 'iwewe' song, these girls know that they can get whatever they want, because they have 'iwewe'. They gatecrash parties, get 'umgwinyo' (energy drug for prolonging clubbing) for free, dance all night long in exchange for 'iwewe'. Some of these girls, because they are known for their dancing abilities and for being highly sexed, they get so many invitations to parties and they love it." (Thabo)*

The finding in this study confirms the well-documented literature "that maintains that sex is often initiated in places where sexual networks converge to socialise and use alcohol or drugs – and that drug and alcohol use is a major risk factor for HIV in South Africa" (Sikkema et al., 2011, cited in Mimiaga et al., 2015:312). "For example, the social environments in which young people drink and use drugs are thought to influence patterns of condom use and

choices of casual and non-casual sexual partnerships" (Morojele, Brook, Millicent and Kachieng, 2006, cited in Mimiaga et al., 2015:308).

The research participants' use of terms like 'balahle' (a term referring to 'throw in the towel' and have unplanned sex or loosing self control), being pressurised, 'wasted' girls, being drugged, being high, being tricked, raped, threats of violence, making girls pay through sex, sending victims on guilty trips, *whoonga, ecstacy, umgwinyo* – clearly indicated *inkwari* as a risky social space which is branded by the sexual risks, dangers, addictions, unequal gender power relations, and sexual violation of girls. With this statement, I am not in any way suggesting that boys are safe in such spaces. When boys engage in casual and group sex with strangers, they equally put their lives at risk of contracting sexual diseases like HIV and AIDS. The point I am stressing here is that there is a need for a shift in the focus of our gender and sexuality intervention strategies, from high-risk population groups to high-risk spaces or potentially risky environments.

INKWARI AND CONDOM USAGE

During a discussion about safe-sex practices with my research participants, condom usage dominated our conversations. While the school was not directly supplying learners with condoms, the health practitioners from the clinic across the road, were said to have conducted several safety promotions and have distributed condoms in the school. Condoms were also said to be freely accessible in the clinic and in the local shops, for those who prefer to buy them. All learners agreed that condom usage promotes safer sex, but they expressed a number of hindering factors that contribute to inconsistent use of condoms. Smanga (below) illustrates how young people engage in unprotected, risky, sexual behavior – especially when sex is unplanned and when they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs:

> *"This one time Mam, about 13 of us had inkwari in our friend's house. The event was meant to be a boys-only event. Around 10 pm, two girls came out of nowhere to join us. They said they heard loud music and have come to ask for 'whoonga' (a South African cocktail drug, which is also known as 'nyaope' loosely found in the townships), and also if they can join the fun. One of our friends told them it was a boys-only party, but they can get what they want on condition that they play games with us. Surprisingly, these girls did not ask what sort of games – they just join the fun. They were given 'whoonga' and alcohol and we played 'truth or dare game' with*

them. They were asked questions by any of the boys, and if they answered incorrectly, they had to do whatever that person asked of them. The penalties started with small things like a baby kiss or showing body parts. As they got drunk and the excitement was building up, boys competed to ask difficult questions and the penalties became intense sexual acts like deep kissing, hectic body touching or 'fingering' (penetrating the vagina with finger/s). The game ended with boys 'running a train' (sex line up) on them. Nobody from those who participated in a 'train' talked or asked about condoms. Obviously Mam, this was supposed to be a boys-only event – nobody came prepared or bothered to ask about condoms. Even those girls, they just lay there and allowed about 9 boys to take turns on them 'scoon' (flesh to flesh)." (Smanga)

The above incident stresses that social spaces or environments play a major part in unsafe sex practices, and thus should be at the forefront of the HIV-prevention strategies. Presumably, the boys did not engage in unsafe sex because of being ignorant about HIV or condom use, but *inkwari* culture – which is pleasure filled, highly gendered and fully charged with alcohol and drugs – played a role in young people engaging in unprotected sex. Like the experiences of young people in a study by Groes-Green (2009), the 'heat of the moment' appeared to have played a role in the above incident, and was one of the contributory factors leading to them forgetting or ignoring safe-sex practices.

The fact that young people were also using whoonga, which is perceived as a highly addictive drug with temporal hypnotic effects (Mokwena and Huma, 2014), clearly points to the impracticality of assuming that safe-sex practices could have been promoted by rational behaviour, or, by what Hlabangane (2014) termed the KAPB. Their behaviour was highly influenced by excitement and being 'high'. Peltzer and Pengpid (2006:3) maintain that "HIV-prevention efforts are likely to be most successful when they draw on relevant research areas of human sexuality – particularly on situational factors that can increase or lessen risk".

The appropriation of a dominant discourse of masculinity and femininity seemed to have also played a role in these boys' decision to prioritise their excitement and the sexual violation of the two girls than safe sex practices. Smanga spoke about boys competing to ask the girls difficult questions and intensifying the penalties. This clearly points out that the real expression of masculinity is invested with power (Butler, 1990). The fact that a simple game

that started with innocent activities ended being an arena of intense manifestation of hegemonic masculinity, and also a space for sexual violation of girls, shows that being a real boy at *enkwarini* and in the township context, involves a demonstration gender power (Bhana, 2013; Mathe, 2013; Morojele, 2013). To these boys, the demonstration of manhood and intensity was more important than safe-sex practices.

Apart from alcohol and drugs as barriers to consistent condom usage, some of the boy participants stated that condom use is inhibited by concerns of embarrassment and appearing incompetent – especially when with a new sex partner. The following are some of their statements:

> *"Mam; things happen very fast at enkwarini. Once you have 'scored' (given a yes); you cannot afford for your scores to be reduced by something as small as a condom. You have to act fast, before you begin to embarrass yourself"* (Sbusiso).

> *"When with a new girl, you want to impress her. The more you try to impress, the more you become nervous. Things as simple as opening a condom become nerve wracking. The solution is to forget about the condom – go 'scoon' (flesh to flesh)"* (Thabo).

Gender power seemed to play a role in safe-sex practices. The boys' statements above are that condom use was hindered by fear of losing power in the sexual relationship. These boys did not want to appear incompetent in front of their sexual partner; instead they wanted to portray themselves as powerful, mechanistic and sexual heroes. How these boys spoke about their fears and condom usage highlighted the deep-seated sociocultural ideologies and a specific peer culture, which is inevitably gendered. "Being a boy and gaining power involves a demonstration of sexual prowess and manliness" (Bhana, 2016a:180).

Sbusiso's statements about scoring and scores revealed that some boys view their ability of establishing or engaging in a sexual relationship with girls, as being "a form of territorial conquest that can be incorporated into the masculine repertoire" (Kehily, 2002:141). Inferior sexual performance with a new partner was seen as detrimental to boys' desire to uphold their sexual reputation of being conquerors. "This sense of male power and agency in the domain

of the sexual has been conceptualised from a feminist perspective as the power to control women" (Kehily, 2002:141).

The idea that condom usage was a challenge when with a new partner, was disputed by Smanga through his statements below. He expressed his lack of trust for a new partner and vowed to carry on and use condoms all the time, when at enkwarini:

> *"I can admit that I don't consistently use condoms with my stable girlfriend. We trust each other and we have been together for a long time. But, I cannot say the same about some girl I meet at enkwarini. We all know these girls; they sleep around. If I don't know your status 'uswidi ngiwudla usephepheni' (I eat a wrapped sweet – meaning, I use a condom). I don't take any chances – I carry my own condoms – and no condoms, no sex for me" (Smanga).*

Smanga's above statements, depict that some boys are prioritising safe-sex practices over the domination of girls and exercising male authority. Moreover, he displayed insight on the importance of knowing a person's HIV status, before engaging in unprotected sex. However, the fact that Smanga admitted to inconsistent use of condoms with his stable girlfriend, showed that in South Africa the idea that condoms are only used with 'bad' girls still persists. His statement about trusting his '*regte*' (a term used by Selikow, Zulu and Cedra, 2002 to refer to a stable girlfriend) indicated firstly that stable relationships are equated to no or fewer HIV risks, and, secondly, the idea that only promiscuous or party girls are HIV-positive, persists among South Africans. These ideologies remain some of "the primary drivers of the spread of HIV among young people" (Hlabangane, 2014:6).

Contrary to the boys who spoke about fear of losing power as being the factor that contributes to no condom usage, girls spoke about having limited power in sexual relationships, as influencing their unprotected-sex practices:

> *"Most of the girls are afraid to negotiate condom usage, because they are afraid of being rejected or dumped" (Thandeka).*

"If you carry condoms, boys become suspicious of you. They think you are promiscuous or maybe you are not committed to the relationship" (Nonhlanhla).

"Some girls avoid discussing condoms, because when you introduce the subject, a guy might think you have some disease or you don't love him" (Thandeka).

"Condom usage depends on the type of partner you have. Some partners don't like condoms, because they believe that sex with a condom is not pleasurable. These boys are forgetting that when a girl gets pregnant, she is the only one with the big stomach" (Nobuhle).

The girls' statements above, reveals that some girls do not negotiate condom usage because they fear rejection – they want to be trusted and show their commitment to the relationship. Girls were said to accommodate the sexual desires of their partners and to prioritise the needs of their partners over their own needs. Trust and love to these girls, were spoken as elements of a relationship that make unsafe sex practices legitimate. Being a trusted girl to them meant "compliance with and acting on desires for boys, and accommodating the desires of boys" (Bhana, 2016a:180). "The real expression of femininity to them is embedded within a pre-supposed heterosexuality, and is invested with power" (Butler, 1990:33).

The dominance of traditional constructions of female sexuality as being passive, was evident in the above narratives. The fact that girls in my study spoke about condom usage in relation to what the boys want or expect of them, rather than their own expectations and desires, reflects that many girls in sexual relationships are objects of desire – rather than desiring sexual agents. Ensuring a continued relationship and meeting the boys' expectations seemed to be the main priorities for these girls, rather than expressing the need to be safe within a sexual relationship. These girls gave in to the subordinate positions and became passive recipients of their partners' sexual desires.

Evidently, some young girls still leave decisions about sexual expressions in the hands of boys, and thus render themselves vulnerable to HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as becoming pregnant with unplanned and sometimes fatherless babies. In a study by Hoffman et al. (2006) cited in Gopaldass (2012:23), they also found that where

"some young women may express a desire for their partners to use condoms, they view this behaviour as lying in men's control, and not as something that they could request or negotiate". "These researchers reveal, in their study, that sex was more frequently initiated by the male partner – who was also more likely to control the pace" (ibid). "This resonates with the findings of O'Sullivan et al. (2006) that men initiated most of the sexual interactions that occurred in their relationships" (ibid).

Cindy's statement below reflects that men's power in condom negotiation does not go unchallenged or uncontested. "At any historical moment discursive formations are multiple and heterogeneous, so that even though in every era there will be hegemonic discourses, other non-hegemonic discourses will also exist, forming a discursive mix from which subjectivity can be constructed" (Hekman, 1995:203, cited in Allen, 2003:220). Girls can source other forms of power from the socio-structural factors that are outside of gender. For example, Cindy cited a girl's status or her family status, to influence how she is treated in a relationship. When a girl has a good social standing or comes from a respectable family, and her status or her family status becomes her sense of power and defence against being impregnated or infected with sexual-transmitted infections like HIV:

> *"Life is about who you are. In most cases, a person who has a say is the one with something (implying a good economic standing). In relationships as well, you cannot expect to have a say if you have nothing. Your partner respects you for what you have or what your family has. If he knows your family and fears them, he wouldn't dare infect you with some disease or get you pregnant" (Cindy).*

Cindy's statement above, confirms that "the social order within which femininity is discursively constructed, is not seamlessly consistent, and it is in the gaps opened by this unevenness that the possibilities for resistance can be developed" (Jones, 1993, cited in Allen, 2003:220). The important role played by one's social status and the identity of one's family in a relationship, rather than gender, is stressed. Those with high self-esteem or high status are treated well by their partners. Furthermore, it points to the importance of family involvement or rather families knowing about the type of relationships that their girls get involved in. When families know, the relationship receives extra protection.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the ways in which teenage girls and boys express sexuality in relation to social events, parties, and gatherings in the context of *inkwari*. Ethnographic material cited here suggests that *inkwari* as an important site for young people's sexuality and gender constructions. The discussions in this chapter evidently demonstrate that while *inkwari* is a highly sexualised space reproducing power dynamics and gender inequalities in ways that are risky – especially for young women – *inkwari* also provide a pleasurable space in the absence of alternate forms of fun in the township context. This points to an urgent need for researchers and programmes to find ways to address gender inequalities and to empower girls and women in such spaces. The point is not to take a moralistic stance about such spaces, or to prevent boys and girls from going to such spaces. Rather, it is to find ways of making such spaces equitable, pleasurable and safe for both girls and boys. This chapter thus challenges us, as researchers and programmers, to disrupt the adoption of protective and child innocence discourses when addressing the risks facing our teenage girls and boys. The question that we should begin to answer is – what would it mean for our teenage girls and boys from a township context, to unproblematically express their sexual desires and pleasure as they wished?

Chapter 6

SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITIES AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN SCHOOL: THE SALIENCE OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

"Sexuality can be negotiated, never controlled. That much we should have learned from the failure of the Immorality Act, which tried to legislate sex lives."

(Khumalo, 2015).

"Despite appeals to preserve schools from the visible presence of sexuality, they are indeed sexualised sites" (Bhana, Morrell, Shefer and Ngabaza, 2010:5). Similarly, Kehily (2002) and Epstein and Johnson (1998) cited in Mathe (2013:81) assert that, "in schools, sexuality is present in patterns of personal friendships and relationships, fantasies and expectations about future destinies, talk about popular cultural icons, in playground play, and the power relations of schooling". This chapter seeks to understand how the sexual subjectivities of boys and girls are experienced in school. Here I explore how girls' and boys' sense of themselves – as gendered and sexual people – are constituted, realised, negotiated, and performed in social relations.

The chapter stresses that the gendered experiences of schooling are critical in understanding and engaging with the evolving sexual identities of young girls and boys, and how they make meaning of, and act out their identities. Throughout the study, sexuality is viewed as a medium in which gender is expressed. I thus find myself in this chapter increasingly discussing gender and sexuality as being intrinsically connected, coextensive, intersectional, and embedded in each other. The chapter thus discusses how 'being a girl' and 'being a boy' is made available in social relations – predominantly through dominant discourses concerning 'appropriate' femininities and 'masculinities'. I have used the term 'discourse' throughout the study, not only to represent the spoken words, but as a socially meaningful activity that includes language in action (see Gee, 1999: Chapt. 1).

This chapter holds a view that young people's constructions and knowledge of their gender and sexuality, do not derive from a direct perception of reality, or from an objective observation of the world – but from constant social processes and interactions between them and their environments. "Sexuality is not a discrete domain; it shapes and is shaped by all the surrounding social relations" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:2). Thus, understanding gender and sexuality as discursive. That is, recognising that we are subjects of and subjected to discourse, is crucial to understanding how we are positioned and position ourselves through various normalising techniques and disciplinary practices of surveillance and regulation. Esat (2003) maintains that examining discursive accounts of sexuality illustrates how constructions of sexuality are produced and reproduced.

Kehily (2002:53) regards "schools as sites where a nexus of discourses in relation to sexuality are articulated and struggled over". "These multiple and competing discourses are negotiated and contested as students (and teachers) make their own meanings from them" (Allen, 2007:223). My intention in this chapter is to draw out and highlight the discourses which produce and reproduce gender identities in particular ways. The chapter particularly discloses how the social practices of schooling – including relationship cultures – produce gendered "sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt, and resist, as they carve out a sense of a sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221).

The focus of my exploration is not only on how boys and girls successfully acted upon their subject positions, but also on how they invested in them, enacted them, reproduced them, or/and resisted them. Here I pay particular attention to the relations between the learners themselves and the nexus between them and the institutions that shape them, and are shaped by them. The conceptualisation of sexual relationships is also introduced in this chapter. However, the types of sexual relationship that young people engage in, are further explored in Chapter 7.

Research with young people has documented the intersection of girls' and boys' relationships with inequalities, sexual and other types of violence, and reproductive health concerns (Carrera-Fernández, Lameiras-Fernández and Rodríguez-Castro, 2016; Bhana, 2015; Ngabaza and Shefer, 2013; Anderson, 2013; Msibi, 2012; Ringrose and Renold, 2012; Bhana and Pattman 2009; Allen, 2003). As such, the discussions in this chapter conclude by

presenting an analytic account of how opportunities for gender violence are salient in boys' and girls' friendship relations within the school context.

PEER GROUPS, PEER RELATIONS AND GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS

Informal Peer Groups

The school's free periods and lunch breaks provided my fieldwork with interesting opportunities to observe and learn about the patterns of social relations and friendships among the teenage learners. At face value, the simple and intimate relationships formed among learners were typical of most mixed-sex schools. However, as my expressed interest of understanding learners' identities became as important as understanding the meanings they attach to gender and sexuality, learners became excited about educating me about the descriptive characters and categorisation of their identities – individually and in groups.

Table 2: Informal Peer Groups

Group Name	Group Characteristics
Iziqengqe/Nerds	*'A' students*
Oqonda	*Strict and focused learners*
Olova	*Streetwise boys*
amaPhara	*Boys and girls who are using drugs (dagga or whoonga)*
V-dots	*The virgins*
Izinja/Dogs	*Tough boys*
Ibhotela or cheese boy	*Soft, clean, cool or mama's boys*
Niggas	*Boys who adopt hip-hop style and dress code*
Omasgebengu or Amarobha or Izigroovana	*Party girls*
Jollers	*Party boys*
Izisebenzi	*Those into a gangster lifestyle*
Ozamula	*Poor or ever-hungry learners who survive on hand-outs*
Izingamla	*Rich learners*
Abazalwane	*Religious groupings*

Table 2 (above) presents the informal peer groups I identified and learned about during my fieldwork. Community members have composed these group categories over time. They aree not exclusive to the research participants. They form part of the broader social identities in the township. My presentation of these groups here is not aimed at the in-depth descriptions of each group, but at an analytic presentation of the gender relations within and among them throughout the discussions in this chapter. Thus, they serve as a reference to

many sections of my discussion in this chapter. It is also important to note that these groups were not fixed or totally exclusive to their members or the research site. Some of the membership or identities of the group extended beyond the school walls to the broader township community. Their boundaries were permeable inside and outside the school context.

From my early days in the field, the clearest markers that signified the peer-group membership and status were gender and sexuality. Although the groups mirrored the complex mixture of academic, township culture and socio-structural dimensions, they predominantly subscribed to gendered subject positions. The peer-group interactions in and outside the classrooms were an important site for the definition of femininities and masculinities (Connell, 2008).

Let us look at how being a member of *ozamula*, for instance, was not a neutrally described position – but was a gendered position. In terms of the young people's description of *ozamula,* they are boys and girls whose binding characteristics are poverty and in living on handouts from other learners or teachers. However, this was not the case; being *ozamula* was a gendered experience. Not every poor girl or poor boy was called *ozamula* – but expressions of particular femininities or masculinities made one fit this group of young people. For example, for girls, the subjective visible sign of being a member of *ozamula* was unrestricted diet or eating any handout that came their way. Thus, poor girls who are selective or mindful of what they eat, were not described as *ozamula*. *Ozamula* girls were positioned within a discourse of girls that were unattractive to boys; a discourse embedded within a dominant heterosexual culture that positions the female body as a heterosexual object. This is no way suggests that poverty or academic aspirations were insignificant in the formation of *ozamula's* group identity, but an overarching insight is that their identity was constructed, reconstructed, and acted out within a gender order.

Other gendered markers that signified the peer groups, were power and status. Boys-only groups were perceived as powerful and superior to girls-only groups. In fact, there was a belief that groups like *olova (streetwise boys)* were recognised and possessed a higher status compared to groups like *omasgebengu* (party girls) inside and outside the school. Being *ulova* was perceived as mandatory for boys, in order to survive the township. These beliefs were

embedded in the following statements by the focus groups' participants, when we were discussing how boys and girls live and survive the township:

> "If you are ulova, you are known and respected. And if you are not, the township is not for you. People take advantage of you."
>
> "At school, if you don't submit your work on time and the teachers know or see that you are ulova, they think twice before punishing you. But, if you are umasgebengu, they punish you more because they know that you have been parting. They punish you so you can stop parting".
>
> "Olova rule – inside and outside the school."

It is important to note that the peer groups or the boys' powerful position and status, were not static and solid. Boys and girls were "sometimes together or sometimes apart" in their peer groups through their positions as 'boyfriend' and 'girlfriend' (Thorne, 1993). In addition, girls' groups like *iziqengqe* (A students) who were perceived to be intelligent, and girls that were known to be pretty or who came from economically privileged families, were respected. Wearing a fresh, full school uniform, carrying a well-balanced lunch or money to buy a good lunch, the ability to pay for school requirements and school academic and social trips – were some of the markers of learners from economically privileged families, and those markers earned them respect from peers. While carrying of gadgets like cellphones was prohibited in the school, girls who were known to own the latest cellphone models were respected. Hunter (2010) spoke about how material possessions like a cell-phone and consumer items, offered anyone a chance of being respected. These constructions are explored further in the discussions that follow.

In-line or Out-of-line Friendships: Sexuality and Gender Regulations among Boys and Girls

In drawing out gender boundaries, learners constructed patterns of social relations, interactions or friendships, as in-line or out-of-line with gender positioning. When behaviour was said to be in-line, it meant acceptable or socially-sanctioned behaviour, and an out-of-line behaviour represented a failure to respect explicit or non-explicit gender boundaries. During the focus-group discussions on friendships and the activities that girls and boys share, certain practices and sometimes the friendship between members of the opposite sex itself

were considered inappropriate (see appendix 5: Focus Group Interview Schedule). The research participants mentioned the following as gender in-line or out-of-line relations:

Nozipho: *Well for me, I see no problem in sharing a meal with a boy. School life is tougher when hungry. But the problem is these boys. Most of them don't respect us. They don't treat us nicely. Real friendship with them is difficult.*

Thandiwe: *I prefer boys as friends as opposed to girls. Girls like to gossip, but boys are cool. When going out with them, they have no hung-ups about petty things like hairstyles or weight. I guess I am used to them, because even at home I am the only girl with four brothers.*

Siphesihle: *As olova (boys), our lives are simple. We understand each other, we understand our sufferings. Girls are hectic. I limit my engagements with them. We can do schoolwork together but I keep my distance. Anyway, they also need the space to talk about girls' stuff.*

Sihle: *Girls are always serious with their schoolwork. I am cool in studying with them or getting notes from them. Nothing more, nothing less. I only share jokes or play with my sisters or my baby (intimate girlfriend).*

Namhla: *The problem with friendships with boys – they like pushing boundaries. You invite him to your home and he thinks you are together or assume that you are dating. The next moment he forces himself on you. The best thing is for girls to keep with the girls and boys to keep with the boys.*

Nomusa: *Yeah I hate that. Even here at school, when you are nice to a boy, the boy wants to touch you all over. I am not saying I don't want to be touched, but they should know the difference. Touching of private places is limited to your boyfriend (lover), not any boy.*

Sbusiso: *We are all the same ... maybe girls are worse. When you are nice to them, they assume otherwise. I end up being confused about how I should relate to them. What irritates [me] most about girls, is that they are like weather – one moment they are cold and the next moment they are hot. When they want a good time, you are their friend, but when things are tough, they resort to tears.*

Thandiwe: *I guess my friendship with boys is different. We hug and kiss each other, but everyone knows that we cannot cross the line. We just know where to stop. When we are out together, they protect me.*

Thandeka: *I agree that your boyfriends should protect you, but I think it is also our responsibility as girls to protect ourselves. We should know our limits. We can't be too friendly with boys and expect them not to take advantage of us.*

Mfundisi: *In my prayer group, we are a family. We treat each other as brothers and sisters. Respect is the foundation of our relationship. We look after each other and help one another.*

In the above extract, boys' and girls' comments depict, on the one hand, how gender is actively made and regulated in their peer relationships. They spoke of the difficulty of maintaining platonic relationships and the difficulty of maintaining the friendship once relationships are heterosexualised, and about the confusion surrounding the desire to form or not form heterosexual relationships. These boys and girls spoke of being constantly compelled to define physical, mental or social spaces in preserving their platonic peer relationships.

On the other hand, the extract depicts how the gender boundaries of girls and boys were permeable and not static. For some, studying together as the opposite sex was ok, but being too friendly within the same study group was viewed as not being ok. It is for this reason that Connell (2008:136) "spoke of 'projects' and 'trajectories' – to capture the way young people launch themselves in certain directions in social space". Thandeka's statements about the importance of girls knowing their limits and not being too friendly, evidently demonstrates how sexuality gender constructs are continuously planned navigations and performances.

The Gender Politics of Food: Girls Eating to Belong and Boys Eating to Take Charge in Social Relations

This section discusses how food within the school context was used to maintain, police and regulate relations between boys and girls and the norms of heterosexuality. I begin the discussions with a conversation between myself and a boy learner:

Researcher: *Are you in this line? (Referring to a food vendor queue)*

Thabiso: *Don't worry Mam, you can pass me.*

Researcher: *Why?*

Thabiso: *I am here to buy igwinya (a vetkoek) and they are still cooking.*

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> Researcher: Oh my! Did you see what time it is? (alerting him that the lunch break
>   was nearly finished)
>
> Thabiso: Yes Mam, but I have to wait. I am hungry.
>
> Researcher: There is plenty of food here.
>
> Thabiso: Food? What food Mam? Fruits, jiggies (chips) and biscuits?
>
> Researcher: Yes and many more (pointing at the food displayed).
>
> Thabiso: No Mam, I am really hungry.
>
> Researcher: I am hungry too. I am buying fruits.
>
> Thabiso: Obviously Mam, obviously … (smiling and avoiding a response).
>
> Researcher: Meaning? Talk to me (persuading him to complete his sentence).
>
> Thabisa: You have to watch your figure. Mr Mathe (referring to my husband)
>   will leave you when you become fat.
>
> Researcher: What about you? What will happen to you when you become fat?
>
> Thabiso: No Mam. Igwinya is not fattening to boys, but makes them strong. And
>   girls love strong men. I need real food. Where will I get these muscles
>   from (flexing his arm muscles), if I don't get real food.

The conversation I had with Thabiso (above) during the school lunchbreak demonstrates how food choices and bodies were highly gendered at my research site. They served as an act of constructing femininities and masculinities. Thabiso associated eating *igwinya* with being a man – and muscle gain and eating fruits, with being a woman and weight loss. Masculinity was thus equated with strength, and femininity equated to delicateness or weight loss. Moreover, he spoke of "gender through a 'heterosexual matrix', in which the 'real' expression of masculinity and femininity are embedded within a presupposed heterosexuality" (Butler, 1990:151).

When Thabiso spoke of my food choice as a means to prevent being dumped by my husband, he used heterosexuality as the 'norm' through which everything else is defined. My husband was used as a reference through which my existence as a woman was defined. He held a view that my identity as a woman depended upon, and is stabilised by the heterosexual matrix (adapted from Haywood, 2008). To him, to be a 'real' girl or woman involves a desire to impress or to please boys or men. His statement about men needing muscles and real food revealed that he was trapped within the dominant discourses which support images of

machismo - a form of hegemonic masculinity and power that sustains gender inequalities. Allen (1999:135) asserts that the "dominant heterosexual identities and associated discourses which support an active male and passive female sexuality, are deeply embedded within social and political participation and are perceived as normative". A discourse that subordinates, marginalises, dominates or silences others, is a cause for concern – especially in a country with a long history of racial oppression, gender-based violence, inequalities and where gays and lesbians are 'victimised', 'murdered' and face suicidal risks (Bhana, 2012).

After school, on my way home, I gave a lift to Thandeka and Nonhlanhla (research participants). I deliberately started a conversation about food.

Researcher:	*I am so hungry; I cannot wait to get home.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Shame, I feel sorry for you mam. Why did you not buy anything during lunch break?*
Researcher:	*I bought fruit, but I could not eat them because of lack of time.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Fruits?*
Researcher:	*Yes, fruits.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Ay, you were not hungry.*
Researcher:	*What do you mean? I told you that I am still hungry.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Ay mam, just admit that you are on diet.*
Thandeka:	*No Thandeka. Maybe, mam is one of those who pretends to eat sensibly in public, but when she reaches home she eats everything that comes her way (both girls giggle).*
Researcher:	*Why are you laughing at me? Why should I do that?*
Thandeka:	*Ma – that is what most girls do here (at school).*
Researcher:	*Why?*
Thandeka:	*You know mam, boys tease you if you eat anything. They keep picking on you – calling you names.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Thandeka, not only boys. Other girls isolate you. Noone wants to be associated with ugimba (a person with a big appetite) [both girls giggle].*
Researcher:	*What is wrong with having a big appetite?*

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Thandeka:	*A big appetite is associated with being fat. Being fat is associated with being less attractive. And when you are not attractive you can kiss your chances of getting a date goodbye (both girls giggle).*
Researcher:	*Is that so?*
Nonhlanhla:	*Don't worry mam, you can eat as much as you like – you are married already. And me … I don't care, I eat whatever and whenever.*
Researcher:	*But you (Nonhlanhla) are not married; how come you say you don't care?*
Nonhlanhla:	*Me mam, I am happy with who I am. If a person wants to be my friend, she must accept me as I am.*

Like the conversation I had with Thabiso, in the above excerpt, heterosexuality was used as the 'norm' through which everything else is defined. Nonhlanhla and Thandeka's statements, in essence, implied that girls' sense of belonging, friendships and being liked by boys depended on their physical attractiveness – which is achieved through 'regulated and normalised' feminine eating habits and bodies. My conversation with the girls echoes the widespread notion of culturally inscribed 'docile bodies', which are invested, marked, trained, scrutinedand tortured within heterosexual discourse (Renold, 1999; Foucault, 1975). For girls to be accepted and to confidently participate in friendship or intimate relationships with girls or with boys, there was a lot of pressure upon them to succumb to dominant discourses, which position them in traditionally gendered ways.

The 'attractive' body was the girls' licence to be acceptable in relationships. Nonhlanhla's expressed concern that other girls isolate a person with a big appetite (fat) and Thandeka's suspicion that I was one of those who eat sensibly in public and a lot in private, illustrated that bodies are the means by which girls achieve competent membership of discursive, dominant femininities and relationships. The notion of girls constructing their femininities through their bodies and by heavily investing in relationships with their peers, has also been noted by other researchers (Opie and Opie, 1959; Davies, 1982; Rossiter, 1994; Merten, 1996a; Hey, 1997, cited in Renold, 1999). However, the fact that some girls were eating a lot in private, clearly indicated that this regulated performance of dominant femininity was an illusion that was unattainable for some. Moreover, it was rejected by people like Nonhlanhla, who explicitly admitted to eating everything anytime, and being happy with who she was.

INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

The Gender politics of '*Ukushela'* (Proposing Love): Who Should be Followed for Love or Chasing for Love?

Understanding the dynamics of negotiations of sexual relationships among young people, is critical to unpacking the power and gender dynamics that prevail in local enactments of sexuality (Nyazi, 2008). The question of who should *shela* (propose love) to who, presented important contestations over sexuality among teenage learners at my research site. In fact, there was a competing and conflicting discourse about who should initiate, establish or refuse intimate relationships between boys and girls.

After observing a LO lesson on relationships (21/02/2012), I had a conversation with my research participants. The aim was to follow up on the sizzling debate that took place during their formal lesson, which formed part of a broader understanding of how young people initiate sexual relationships among themselves:

Researcher:	*I really enjoyed your discussion on forming relationships. It was interesting to listen to who approached who in a relationship.*
Smanga:	*What was interesting mam? Don't you see what kind of girls these are?*
Researcher:	*What do you mean Smanga?*
Smanga:	*Mam, do you think it is normal for a girl to propose to a boy? Be honest mam, whose culture is this? Have you ever done that?*
Sthembiso:	*(jumping to the conversation before I could respond or invite him to comment) Why, girls are trying to be something they are not born for. They must leave 'ukushela' (proposing love) to the experts, mam. Their role is to 'yes' or 'no'.*
Bonga:	*Mam, I think we need to give these girls our trousers. If they want to be men, 'akucace' (it should be clear), or if they are gay that should be clear too. (followed by class laughs).*
Researcher:	*Girls, what are you saying?*
Nothando:	*People are too westernised now. They don't know who they are anymore. 'Lafa elihle kakhulu' (the African idiom meaning good days are gone).*
Sbongile:	*Mam, pardon these idiots, they want to live in the past. Girls nowadays have the right to choose who and what they want.*

(Yes, yes, yes, tell them Sbo – other girls shouting in support of Sbongile).

The above excerpt points at how "young peoples' sexual encounters are negotiated within a context where dominant social norms of masculinity portray young men as conquering heroes in the sexual arena – and where the social construction of femininity predisposes women to use the responses of passivity in the face of male advances" (Campbell and MacPhail, 2002:333). The dominant discourse among these young people was that 'boys are leaders in intimate relationships – they do the chasing, and girls should wait to be approached and followed for love'.

The discussion also highlighted how gender is naturalised, and how it is used to describe a normal behaviour for girls or boys in a given sociocultural context. Their voices claimed that the gender role of proposing love was the boys' prerogative according to nature and culture. Their arguments were laced with patriarchal undertones, which claimed that it was improper for a girl to propose love to a boy. For Nyanzi (2008), the answer to why it was improper was perhaps because it was a silent threat to the overruling male supremacy: an indication of the potential for patriarchy to crumble.

The boys felt that girls who chase for love were challenging their status and role as 'the man of the relationship'. Consequently, Smanga questioned the authenticity of girls who propose love to boys and his statement was laden with homophobic tones. In this discourse, normal girls were expected to be naïve and submissive, when it comes to proposing love (sexual issues), and, according to Villanueva (1997), these are the characteristics that promote girls' dependence on, and subordination to, boys. The discourse reinforced and preserved heterosexual male power in a broader sense – and placed constraints on women. Hunter (2002) views the portrayal of township girls as being sexually passive, as fitting the longstanding stereotype of the presumed role of African women in romantic love. This stereotype positions girls who initiate love as rebellious and culturally defiant: thus being *izifebe* (loose girls/sluts) (Hunter, 2010, 2002). "The insult of *isifebe* hovers over women who challenge gendered taken-for-granted roles in the home and elsewhere" (Hunter, 2005:398). This act was clearly viewed as a lack of '*inhlonipho*' (respect) for the powers and privileges of heterosexuals.

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Bhana (2015) and Bhana and Pattman (2011) cited in Bhana (2016d:130) assert that, "in South Africa, gender is compounded by social and cultural scripts which influence and have effects on the ways in which teenage boys and girls give meaning to sexuality". For Nothando, above, to perceive girls who propose love as a symbol of a fallen nation, a result of western influence, and un-African, was troubling. Her statements confirmed the findings of the study conducted by Jewkes and Morrell (2012) cited in Bhana (2016d:130), "that femininities in South Africa are often based on acquiescence to male domination, and accommodation of control rather than contestation". The intriguing part is that her understanding of who should initiate love in an African context seemed to represent a distorted history or an unfounded contention. According to Vilakazi (1962), *amagqikiza* (the head girls) played a crucial role in negotiating love and marriage proposals between boys and girls. Nothando's '*lafa elihle kakhulu*' statement seems to represent the hope for an irretrievable past. Hunter (2002) wrote that in the late 19th Century, young women had relative freedom to choose partners and some went as far as using *izintando* (love potions) to attract and induce men to love them. These love potions might have had their origins in human desires, but they worked through the spiritual world of *amadlozi* (the ancestors). Thus, Nothando's notions of what is African do not derive from the experiences of African women, they challenged girls' agency, and were prejudicial towards the emancipation of girls from heterosexism and patriarchal oppression.

Listening to the discursive production of subjectivities in the talk of girls and boys about their sexual selves, was unsettling. Similarly, Butler (1997) states that the most disturbing factor is how girls and boys actively regulate interpersonal relationships through the policing and shaming of gender performances and constructions. However, I found comfort in knowing that "the power of dominant discourses is not fixed" (Allen, 2003:216). Foucault maintains that this is because 'where there is power, there is resistance' (Foucault, 1978, cited in Allen, 2003:216). He explains by stating: "as soon as there's a relation of power there's a possibility of resistance. We're never trapped by power: it's always possible to modify its hold, in determined conditions following a precise strategy" (Foucault, 1980:13, cited in Allen 2003:216). Evidently, in the extract above, Sibongile's statements contested and resisted the dominant discursive construction of her peers' sexual subjectivities. Using the human rights' framework, she asserted her agency as a contemporary girl, who should enjoy her freedom of choice to initiate love.

The gender politics of '*Ukushela' (proposing love)* was further explored during the girls' only focus-group discussion. Evidently, Sbongile and the lonely voices of girls who cheered her statements, were not the only voices that were going against the dominant discourse about the code of behaviour relating to who initiates sexual relationships. During the focus-group discussions, some girls spoke about how they tell, approach, or attract the boys into intimate relationships:

Cindy:	*In this day and age, why should we wait for boys to propose to us? When I am interested in a boy, I make sure that I get him.*
Researcher:	*Let us hear how Cindy does that.*
Cindy:	*I do as the boys do when they want a girl – I play their game. I show interest in him, in things he does or does not do. I keep on appearing in his life until he pays attention.*
Researcher:	*Wow! This is getting interesting. Do you stalk him? (asking in a joking manner).*
Sthandiwe:	*Hell no mam! There is no need to be a stalker. You just spend enough time with him so he can realise that you are attracted to him. What I do, if the boy is here at school – I visit him during school breaks, and I ask to go with him after school.*
Researcher:	*What if he misinterprets your actions as 'pure' friendship?*
Cindy:	*That is highly unlikely mam. Boys are clever. They can tell when a girl is into them. They can differentiate between the innocent and non-innocent gestures.*
Nonhlanhla:	*What with the gestures? What prevents you from telling him?*
Cindy:	*Nothing, but telling a boy that you love him for the first time, is not always as easy as demonstrating it to him.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Just admit it Cindy, you are afraid of being rejected. I am a straight-forward person. When I am interested in you (boy), why should I beat about the bush? In South Africa, we are all free to speak our minds, boy or girl. When I am not confident to tell you in person, I have my cellphone which does that for me.*
Researcher:	*Your cellphone – that is interesting.*

> Nonhlanhla: *Yes mam. As long as I have your number – I write you a text (sms) message or a WhatsApp message expressing how I feel about you. In that way, I get to say all what I might be embarrassed to say in person.*
>
> Thandeka: *Call me old fashioned. I think a girl who proposes love to a boy is 'isishimane' (an isiZulu term to describe a person with nobody intimately interested in him or her).*
>
> Nonhlanhla: *No no no – I call it knowing what you want and going for it.*

The extract from the focus-group discussion, as well as the earlier discussion on proposing love, highlight that in the presence of the dominant gendered discourse on proposing love, there are emerging narratives of intimate equalities. These are the girls' voices that resist and challenge the gendered construction of proposing love. What is worth noting among these girls' narratives, is the shift fostered by modernity and the liberal democratic South Africa towards individuals having a greater say in choosing their partners and initiating love. When Nonhlanhla spoke about the 'freedom of speech', she clearly demonstrated the qualities of the 'born frees' (discussed in chapter 3), who supposedly mirror the South African Constitution of 1996. When she spoke about the use of text and/or WhatsApp messages as a mediator between her lack of confidence and proposal initiating, she confirmed the liberating effect brought by the modern technology on love matters.

Holford (2012) speaks about what she termed cybersexuality. She spoke about how Facebook was providing young people with an opportunity to interact with friends, to flirt and, to move from friendships to more-than friendships. Similarly, Hunter (2010:182) speaks about how text and WhatsApp messages have sped up love in recent years. According to him, text messages, with their quick beeps upon arrival, have emerged as the quintessential way of communicating love in South Africa (ibid). He further said that text messages suggest the "fleeting nature of love: that love proposals can be quick, replies brash, and unwanted contacts immediately deleted" (Hunter, 2010:182).

The discussions in this section thus assert that at any historical moment, discursive formations are multiple and heterogonous – so "that even though in every era there will be hegemonic discourses, other non-hegemonic discourses will also exist, forming a discursive mix from which subjectivity can be constructed" (Hekman, 1995:203, cited in Allen,

2003:217). It further illustrates the ways in which gender and sexuality have become an arena of contestation and accommodation in the interpersonal relationships of learners.

Heads or Tails: Girls' and Boys' Game of Sexual Exploration

One of the questions explored during my focus-group discussions was: how, where, and when do young people learn about sex and intimacies? One of the ways young people learn about sex is a game called 'Heads or Tails':

> Nobuhle: *The game's rules are that: a group of boys and girls – up to ten players participate – one person becomes a game leader and carries a money coin ... the game starts and ends at the leader's command ... the game is played with everyone standing or sitting in a circle ... and participation is voluntary, based on respect and non-discrimination. However, the one controversial rule is that once a person has enjoyed any benefit from the game, he/she cannot refuse to give similar benefits to other players.*
>
> Researcher: *Who can play the game? How are the players chosen?*
>
> Nobuhle: *In fact, this game generally takes place when a group of people have been sitting or studying together. As an energiser, any person suggests it to the group and the group agrees or disagrees.*
>
> Sthembiso: *Tell the Mam that in most cases, we agree to play.*
>
> Researcher: *Why is that?*
>
> Sthembiso: *Who will refuse free kisses and hugs?*
>
> Researcher: *Ow, free kisses and hugs – this is juicy. Nobuhle or can anyone explain in detail what you do in this game?*
>
> Nobuhle: *Ok, let me continue. The leader spins the coin on the floor, hides it with a hand while it is spinning, [and] once the coin settles on the floor members are asked which side of the coin (head or tails) will be visible when the leader removes his/her hand from the coin. A member that guesses correctly, is given an opportunity to ask any question about sex, ask for any sexual benefit, or ask to be taught any sexual act by a member of his/her choice.*
>
> Researcher: *These sex questions, sexual benefits or acts are?*

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Sandile:	French kisses, intimate hugs, and intimate body touches. The questions could be any question about relationships or sex. For example, how do you tell that someone loves you, if he/she does not say it, what do you do on a first date, where to go – or serious questions like how to romance a girl or how to undress a girl?
Researcher:	Are there any limits on what you can ask for or do and does each act have a time limit? If someone ask a question that cannot be answered by members of that particular group, is there a way of asking anyone outside the group – a parent or teacher?
Nobuhle:	Mam, I forgot one more rule – what happens during the game, stays in in the game. In fact, parents or teachers don't know about this game. We are telling you, because you are interested in what we do and we promised to be open with each other, but other people are not interested.
Nonhlanhla:	Nobuhle is right, most adults won't like to hear about this game. About timing each activity – yes, the leader times everyone and players kind of know things that are too much.
Researcher:	Such as?
Nonhlanhla:	Serious touching of private parts or sex (sexual intercourse). I am not talking about touching each other's breasts or bums here. Mam, you know what I am talking about.
Zinhle:	No sex Mam – we don't want to be impregnated by our friends. And some of us are not even ready for serious relationships. The best thing about this game is that it is clean innocent fun that introduces us to intimacy, with no obligation.
Sandile:	What excites me the most about this game, is that I get to kiss hot girls that I don't even dream of having as my girlfriend. The best thing, they can't say no – once in the game.
Thando:	Weee, is that all that matters to you (Sandile)?
Researcher:	What matters to you Thando?
Thando:	The fact that I am no longer too dumb about love matters. When I start dating, I won't be all passive.

The game of heads and tails seemed to be the young people's social capital or platform that provides opportunities for them to shape and take charge of their sexualities. Thando's statement about the game's ability to decrease her chances of being passive when she starts dating, is consistent with a large literature that suggests that knowledge and talk about sex are "an important precondition for young people to have control over important aspects of their gender and sexuality" (Campbell and MacPhail, 2002:332), and can consequently influence them to engage in healthy sexual relationships. "Research in Europe and America has suggested that teenagers are more likely to practise safe sex if they have opportunities to communicate openly about sex, with sexual partners, peers and parents or other significant adults" (Aggleton and Campbell, 2000, cited in Campbell and MacPhail, 2002:338).

The data suggest that my research participants view themselves as individuals with sexual desires, and that the sex game of heads and tails is a safe environment where they acknowledge and explore their desires. The message that also came out strongly was that the exploration of desire happens under the 'no strings attached' rule and the rule is applicable to both boys and girls. This unorthodox sexual freedom for both boys and girls, was breaking the normal rules and regulations of heterofemininity. It was contrary to many research findings that have reported that in low-income urban settings, young men believe they are the only ones entitled to sexual freedom (Anderson, 2009). Here, I am not rejecting a discourse on the subordination and policing of girls' sexual desire, but am acknowledging 'some' shift in sexuality constructions of young boys and girls in such contexts.

It is also important to note that while I acknowledge the sexual freedom experienced by these young boys and girls, the impact of this on other people and on broader gendered discourses, as discussed in many sections of this chapter, and in the next chapter, was limited. Another limitation I identified with this game is that this game takes place in a vacuum, with young people having few or no opportunities to openly and critically discuss sex beyond the game space or themselves as peers. My concerns are: how do (existing) gender power relations become mediated or equally shared among boys and girls; how do such games enhance girls' sense of agency in sexual relationships; how are dominant gender and sexuality discourses destabilised or legitimised by such a game; and the lack of resource/s that young people can tap from, when confronted with challenges during the game.

"I wish to maintain that understanding the positives and pleasures of young people in relationships can offer an equally insightful window for understanding their behaviour and inform safer sex promotion" (Allen, 2004:464). By examining games such as the heads and tails game, "we can understand the productive nature of power that structures them" (ibid).

The Toilet Affair: Adult's Conceptions of Young people's Sexual Relationships

The adult members of the school (particularly the teachers) associated young people's intimate relationships with negative outcomes, and also a discourse of danger such as sexually transmissible infections, sexual exploitation of girls by boys, unplanned pregnancy, and sexual coercion. Their conceptions seemed to be influenced by a discourse which conceives sex as a rite into adulthood and "constitutes adolescence as a time of fickle desires reflecting a need to 'play the field' – before selecting and settling into a serious relationship" (Coleman, 1980, cited in Allen, 2004:465). "As a consequence, the meanings and significance young people attribute to their relationships, remains a mystery and has not always been afforded the attention and respect it deserves" (ibid).

The adult discourse that views sex as a hazard for children, was evident during the Valentine's Day (14/02/2012) morning assembly talk. As part of a motivational Valentine's message, one teacher spoke about what he termed a 'toilet affair'. The teacher used the toilet metaphor to describe the sexual or romantic relationships that the learners form with each other. He warned girls not to be used by boys as toilets. According to the teacher:

> *"Individuals don't form a long-term intimate relationship with a toilet. They go to the toilet only to relieve themselves from a temporal pressure. Most individuals clean the toilet or show interest in it, before the pressure has been relieved. Immediately when the pressure has been removed, most individuals want nothing to do with the toilet. Some even destroy the same toilet that has helped them to relieve the felt pressure. Very few individuals look after the toilet, once the pressure is relieved."*

In closing, the teacher strongly encouraged the girls to delay sexual relationships, because they are young and still incapable of distinguishing between the toilet affairs and real affairs.

The 'toilet' metaphor is typical of many adults' protective messages that the researcher listened to during her stay at the school. The 'toilet affair' message continues to proliferate and endorses heterosexuality, passivity, and irrationality discourses. The teacher placed the responsibility for policing sexuality on the girls – not the boys. It was the girls who are expected to say 'no', not the boys. Girls were constructed as lacking agency, as being vulnerable and also susceptible to danger. Girls were positioned as passive recipients of male desires, as if they, themselves, have no sexual desires. What was more disturbing, is that sexually active girls are compared to a space of defilement – making them dirty, impure and meant to elicit disgust. Moreover, girls are assumed to desire long-term relationships and view them as ideal. Such sexuality discourses serve to limit the development of positive perceived choices in relationships by women/girls – reinforcing traditional gender roles in which men/boys retain more power than women (Powell, 2005).

By positioning boy learners as needing sexual relief, this language prioritised male sexual desire and pleasure. In this narrative, boys were absolved as merely following biological urges, and did not care about where, how, and with whom the urge was relieved. Their sexual acts are equated with defecation and urination. This discourse stands in contrast to recent literature reporting on new definitions of masculinity that "have emerged as a response to high levels of morbidity and mortality, that stress responsibility, moderation and healthy bodies" (Hunter, 2004, cited in Bhana et al., 2007:135).

After assembly, I visited '*Iziqondane*' (one of my designated grade 11 classes described in chapter 4) – during their free period to have an informal conversation with them. The aim was to further discuss the 'toilet affair' concept. I wanted to give learners an opportunity to reflect on and air their views on the matter, since they were not provided with an opportunity during assembly. When asked how they felt about the talk, at first those who responded said the talk was useful and important. When asked to expand and be more specific about what was useful and important about the talk, a change in the learners' initial position on the matter was observed. Most boys said that the 'toilet affair' talk was used to prevent girls from having intimate affairs with them:

> Smanga: *Mam, that teacher was scaring girls away from us. If you don't get a*
> *girlfriend at high school, where else will you get one? At least in high*

	school no one expects you to be 'Mr know it all'. Girls accept us as we are – because we are all young here.
Mfundisi:	*Although I respect our teacher as an adult – but mam, he was out-of-line. He insulted us. We need each other here. Girls need us and we need them.*
Thandeka:	*You know mam, it was wrong for the teacher to just assume that all relationships between boys and girls are sexual. There are many people in relationships here, but they don't engage in sex.*
Bonga:	*I am confused mam. In primary school, we are told we are too young and we must wait until high school. High school again, and we are warned against relationships. In my view, dating should be between two people. As long as they keep it safe – we should all stay out of their business.*
Nonhlanhla:	*Mam, it is a fact that some boys are players, but there are girls who also like to play.*
Zinhle:	*Some girls are the ones who ask boys for love – especially the charmers (attractive boys)*

Contrary to the adult discourse, learners presented intimate relationships among peers as being based on choice, love and personal preferences. Most of them talked of the high school years as a 'must' for establishing intimate relationships. While acknowledging the dangers and risks associated with intimate relationships, they still viewed it as an important milestone for a growing person, who is exploring his/her world. The girls' voices were also loud in terms of rejecting the assumptions embedded in the 'toilet affair' talk. They rejected that they (the girls) were victims of sexual exploitation by boys. They viewed the talk as being one sided. Some girls felt that it was insulting, because they were in sexual relationships by choice – not because they were victims of a 'toilet affair'. One girl openly said she was no longer a virgin, and that it was a planned act. Disagreeing with the assembly teacher, she said sex was not the only thing she shared with her boyfriend:

Thandeka:	*My baby (boyfriend) and I are the best of friends. We study, cry, and play together.*

Girls also said that not all learners who are in intimate relationships choose to be sexually active. Two girls – who openly admitted to being virgins – said they were supporting each other to remain virgins until they reach 21 years of age. When asked what influenced their decisions to remain virgins, they cited their religious and traditional beliefs, their parents' wishes, and, above all, their own wishes – which were mostly influenced by academic aspirations. Some of the dangers they associated with intimate relationships were HIV infection, teenage pregnancy, and cheating.

As much as a strong cultural and patriarchal influence was evident in how these girls viewed their sexual identity, they were not simply passive. They positioned themselves conversationally as self-empowered: preserving or losing virginity was presented as a choice. Statements like "I decided" reflected what Maxwell and Aggleton (2012) call an 'agentic' approach to relationships and sex. In pointing to these girls' agency, this chapter does not underestimate the constraints they experience in constructing their girlhood within the South African context – but draws attention to the importance of engaging in a more complex exploration of the emerging vocal forms of femininities, in a country where female passivity is often the norm.

Few boys openly admitted that they were delaying intimate relationships, because they are not ready to deal with the complexities of being in love. Mhlengi said:

> Mhlengi: *Miss, at present I cannot afford not to sleep at night thinking about some girl that is fast asleep.*
> Researcher *What will keep you awake?*
> Mhlengi: *Love, Miss, love (these words were expressed with a great smile and look of affection).*

Despite the expression of his lack of power to control girls, Mhlengi's nonverbal facial expressions positioned love as a feeling – one he was hoping for. Other learners who attested to the expression of desire, said that they share hugs, kisses, hold hands, and also share erotic messages. In the highly-charged discussion, it was evident that while adults position love as being risky and dangerous, teenagers' experiences and their fantasies about love are often positive. Again, this view is not meant to downplay the risks that the learners associated with

being in an intimate relationship, nor is the gendered discourse, which views a relationship with a girl as an addition to a masculine repertoire.

What was noted was that learners possessed clear knowledge of the risks associated with being in an intimate relationship – since the school seemed populated with sex-education programmes. These programmes, however, "have been widely criticised as being irrelevant to teens' experiences, interests, and needs" (Ashcraft, 2006:2146). The 'toilet affair' talk, for instance, is a typical example of how a teacher who is fully aware of teens' sexual desires resorted to a talk intended to dissuade the learners, and constructed sex as disgusting instead of presenting a more positive understanding of sexuality. Baxen and Breidlid (2009) suggest that for the education sector to enable learners to make informed choices about their sexual behaviour, there is a need to pay close attention to how and where young people make meaning of their sexual selves.

Naming and Shaming: Adult Culture of Dealing with Intimacies at School

Teacher 1:	*Staff, here are the two learners who are turning our school into a brothel.*
Teacher 2:	*So, why are they here? Or maybe they are expecting us to give them medals? Sorry, medals are for academic excellence – not delinquency.*
Teacher 3:	*My my my, you should be ashamed of yourselves. What gives you the guts to stand here before us? I can't even look at you. Surely, you are here to disrespect us.*
Sanele:	*Mam … (Interrupted while trying to respond)*
Teacher 2:	*Mam, mam what? Just shut up and listen to what we have to say. The fact you can do what we adults do - does not give you the right to talk to us anyhow.*
Teacher 3:	*No Mam, I think we need to allow them to talk. Since they have proven that they are adults like us, we need to give them a chance to explain in detail what they were doing (a very sarcastic statement followed by laughter).*
Teacher 1:	*You have heard what the Mam said – we are all waiting. Please don't waste our time. The real children are waiting for us in the classrooms.*

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> *(Anele and Sanele did not talk – they looked fearful and unsure of what to say)*
>
> Teacher 3: *Sanele, say something. You were Mr lover-man yesterday, and now you are quiet. Or maybe – ladies first.*
>
> Teacher 2: *Sorry guys (referring to other teachers); these two just disgust me. Worse, you Anele – I don't want to hear anything from you. 'Uwuskhotheni' (an isiZulu term used to refer to a street girl). Where is your dignity? How can you allow a boy to use you in the classroom?*
>
> Teacher 1: *That was my question as well. What kind of a girl agrees to have sex within school walls? Anele, we have to see your mother.*
>
> Teacher 4: *Girls these days are so dumb and don't respect their bodies. They allow these idiots (referring to Sanele), who sleep around, to ruin their future. Guys, I think Teacher 1 was right – we cannot waste our breath on these two. We need to see them with their parents.*
>
> *(The meeting was concluded by suspending Anele and Sanele from school, until they came back to school with their parents for a formal disciplinary hearing.)*

The school has very strict rules regarding the supervision of learner-activities during and after school hours – but these rules are largely overlooked during assessment (examination) periods, in order to encourage unlimited studying and group discussions among learners. Learners are aware of this inconsistent supervision, and sometimes use the opportunity beyond permissible academic activities: hence Anele and Sanela's case. Anele and Sanele, grade 11 learners, were caught having sex in one of the classrooms by Teacher 1, who was randomly supervising and checking after school activities such as the study groups and sport practices. The two learners were asked to report to the staff room after the morning assembly of the next day, which they did.

The conversation above is one of many 'naming and shaming' conversations I listened to at the staffroom during my fieldwork. The meeting became a kangaroo court, where the two young people were rendered voiceless, and shamed and named by the powerful adult members of the school. There was no formal agenda for the meeting – and the questioning that took place followed no order. A platform which could have been used for a dialogue and

to gain an understanding of these learners' sexuality, rendered them voiceless. Evidently, "the social relations of schooling that structure the ways in which power operates, suggest that teachers cannot approach issues of sexuality in a decontextualised manner" (Kehily and Nayak, 1996; Lupton and Tulloch, 1996, cited in Kehily, 2002:216).

Pertinent questions on subjects like emotions in sexual relationships, communication with a partner around sexual activities, sexual debut, condom use, voluntary or coerced sex, use of contraceptives – that can broaden our understanding of youth sexuality and inform transformative intervention programmes especially in the South African context – were not asked. Instead, the conversation was a gendered ambush which was diluted and loaded with cultural and moral undertones. For Sanele to be referred to as '*Mr lover-man*' and Anele to be called '*uskhotheni*', reflected the teachers' subject positioning of girls and boys within heterosexual relationships. This represented a discourse which mirrored what Powell (2005) called the 'sexual double standard'. This discourse valued Sanele's '*isoka masculinity*' (a hyper-sexualised man with multiple sexual partners), while Anele's sexuality was rated in opposite terms, through her failure to say 'no' to sex and she became '*uskhotheni*' (a bad girl). Allen (2007:222) warns that: "denying young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively makes it harder for them to access the kind of sexual agency which might make them sexually responsible citizens."

In contemporary South Africa, a country where masculinities and femininities are being constituted in the unavoidable context of HIV and AIDS, which suffers from the highest rape rates in the world, and where teenage pregnancy is normative – a protective discourse is viewed as illusory and dangerous (Prinsloo and Moletsane, 2013; Mathe, 2013; Epstein and Morrell, 2012).

POLICING GENDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Legitimising Gender: Establishing Sameness in Peer Groups

"School relations are organised around the assumption that heterosexuality is the natural order of things" (Kehily, 1999:58). As a social mirror, the school continues to have a need of persons who are uncomplicatedly female or male. The school uniform is one of the elements that are used to deny learners the possibility of alternative ways of being, and is explicitly

created so that there is no room for the expression of difference. In the following extract, Nondumo was scorned by a teacher as her group of girls was lining up for an academic class presentation. Nondumiso was wearing a prescribed school uniform, but the teacher had a problem with Nondumo's image. She had a baggy shirt and a very long-sized skirt which made her look different from the dominant 'girly' look of her peers.

Teacher:	*Nondumo, what is it with you?*
Nondumo:	*What Miss? (looking lost)*
Teacher:	*Just look at yourself. Girls, just look at her (referring to Nondumo's group members).*
Nondumo:	*But Miss …*
Teacher:	*But Miss what? You should be ashamed of yourself. No girl at your age dresses like this. Look at your group members and look at yourself. Do you see anyone looking like you?*
Class:	*(laughs and facial expressions of disapproval).*
Nondumo:	*But Miss … (looking confused and questioning using her hands).*
Teacher:	*Mmm, what kind of a girl are you? I wonder who will marry you (shaking her head – expressing her condemnation).*
Class:	*(very loud laughs).*

This extract is one of many school-based gendered messages that compels sameness, prescribes some normative requirements, and assumed gender realism among girls or boys. For the teacher to instruct Nondumo to look around her, she expected her dress sense to mirror that of her peers, assumed that Nondumo desired a 'girly' look, and explicitly compelled her to measure her girlhood against her peers (collective identity).

The school was indeed an official locus for the gender order. When the teacher switched to saying, "I wonder who will marry you" – she clearly located girlhood within the heterosexual matrix, where she reinforced a gendered metaphor. She used heterosexuality to organise and keep the social (gender) order. To her, being feminine and being desirable by men was an expression of being a 'normal' girl. Her message clearly propagated and sanctioned that for girls to achieve 'true' girlhood/ femininity, their value was dependent on being marriageable, and marriage was a prescribed way to achieve a sense of belonging. She positioned Nondumo

(girls) as a passive being, waiting to be rescued by a man through marriage: a typical 'Romeo and Juliet' idealism. Such gender ideologies naturalise heterosexuality, reinforce a gender stereotype that positions girls as commodities in a heterosexual market, and marginalises and renders deviant any girl who does not adhere to gender norms (adapted from Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

By not giving Nondumo a chance to respond, the teacher showed no interest in knowing how Nondumo made meaning of her sense of being. Instead, she imposed her predetermined gendered attribute. To the teacher, girlhood is fixed, and girls are a homogenous group who share a unitary notion of gender. "Thorne (1993) and others have observed teachers urging children to act like 'boys or girls'" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013:277). Such behaviour by teachers is contrary to Butler's (1990) assertion that there are no essential properties for women or men, and that gender is an illusion maintained by prevalent power structures. The fact that Nondumo was wearing a gender-coded uniform, seemed insufficient to proclaim her a 'real girl', and, clearly, her sense of belonging was questioned. Her failure to 'look like' other girls rendered her an outcast and she became a joke among her peers.

It is worth noting that my analysis of this incident is in no way positioning Nondumo as a passive recipient of the dominant gendered discourse. The fact that Nondumo was rendered voiceless during this conversation does not mean that she agreed with what her teacher was prescribing as the 'the normal way of being a girl'. Her non-verbal cues reflected passive resistance, and that the heterosexual matrix did not appeal to her. To me, an unconventional femininity portrayed by Nondumo was not unusual at my research site. In fact, I noticed that there were many boys and girls who functioned outside the socially-acceptable masculinity or femininity in one way or another, and that did not render them less girls or boys.

To name the few, these were:

> *Girls wearing boxer shorts instead of girls' underwear, girls with chiskop (the clean-shaven haircut), girls doing bodybuilding as a sport, girls who wore boys' school shoes, aggressive girls, boys who are netball players, boys who wore school scarves, amabhotela (soft boys), and domesticated boys.*

Lunsing (1995) warns that, when constructions of gender are taken strictly, it is likely that the vast majority of all people are anomalous in one way or other. Seeing a society's gender ideology as being some monolithic construction, and therefore the category of the woman as unitary and opposed to the category of the man, is over simplistic (ibid). There are hardly any people who totally fit either the female or the male gender.

Legitimate and Illegitimate Classmates: Representation of Girls and Boys in the Classroom

"The gender structure imposes a social dichotomy in terms of labour and human relations on women and men" (Lazar, 2007:146). At schools, the persistence of gendered options continues to designate physical sciences, computing and technology subjects, as masculine disciplines. At my research site, curriculum choices were highly gendered – in spite of learners 'having freedom' to choose any curriculum of their choice. These informal processes of what appeared to be choice, exacerbated the development of a specific peer culture which was inevitably gendered.

In a class of '*Izikhokho*' (see chapter 4 for full description), a class for technical subjects (e.g. drawing, computing and technology, welding) which comprised 25 boys and 3 girls – this composition impacted on the learners' freedom to express alternate views, thus decreasing the possibility of negotiating new meanings or constructing new or diverse identities. Consequently, the gendered class composition led to male dominance and homophobia (Kehily, 2002).

In order to gain insight into the situation, I asked why there were only three girls in the class. The response to the question reflected a strong male prejudice against girls who do not conform to dominant gender positionings:

> *Bonga:*   *Miss, do you see any girls here? These are not girls. No 'real' girl can choose welding as a career.*

When I encouraged the three girls to respond to the attempt to silence them, their reply was that they did not need to defend their choice of doing technical subjects:

> *Nonhlanhla:* Mam, we know who we are. We are here because we like to be here, not because of who we are. We don't have to study home economics so that we can prove that we are real girls.
>
> *Nomzamo:* We owe no one an explanation of why we are doing technical subjects, except for our parents. In fact we chose to be here. We don't care how they view us – girls, boys, green or white.

The girls' responses reflect that "gender identities are not like shoes we simply step into" – but are negotiated (Pattman and Chege, 2003:16). "While we derive a sense of who we are from the ways in which we are treated and classified by others, we are also active in the process of constructing our identities" (ibid). Despite being in a male-dominant classroom, the girls expressed resistance and agency. They have freedom to construct femininity as they see fit, to become whatever they decide – and they were visible and assertive, pushing boundaries and testing new ground (Ntombela and Mashiya, 2009). This incident unsettles the view "that most people voluntarily go along with the dominant social prescriptions of their gender status, and that norms and expectations get built into a sense of worth and identity" (Ross, 2004:7).

However, the girls' solidarity and resistance was short lived, when a conversation that exposed the presence of classroom homophobia emerged. Bonga demanded that I ask one of the girls who is a 'proud' lesbian, whether she is a girl:

> *Bonga:* Mam, you can't be seriously accepting what these two (pointing at the girls who responded) are saying. Don't act naive. Mam, you can clearly see what is happening here.
>
> *Researcher:* What is happening Bonga?
>
> *Bonga:* Mam; welding, drawing and girls ... that is like water and paraffin. To be fair, just ask Nomhle if she is a real girl or not. Ask her (insisting).
>
> *Class:* (Everyone laughed, including the two girls).
>
> *Researcher:* Wait, wait, wait ... you know that I also like to laugh, but I don't get the joke here. Please help me to understand, so we can all laugh together.

Class:	*(the laugh continued).*
Researcher:	*Nomhle is there anything that you would like to share with the class or you want them to help me understand as to why they were laughing?*
Nomhle:	*Mam, Bonga is just childish. He is trying to tell you something which is not a secret. Everyone in this school knows that I am a lesbian – even the principal knows.*
Class:	*(a spontaneous big laugh).*
Researcher:	*Bonga, is that what you were trying to tell me?*
Bonga:	*You see mam – Nomhle has admitted to not being a 'real' girl.*
Researcher:	*I have not heard Nomhle talking about her sex. Maybe that is still coming. I only heard her telling us about her sexual choice.*
Thabo:	*You see now … you are confusing us mam. You are talking about sex and sexual choice – there is no difference mam.*
Smanga:	*For sure Thabo … lesbians have girlfriends (intimate partner) just like us boys. So, how can Nomhle be a girl?*
Bonga:	*Maybe Nomhle must tell us why lesbians are 'hitting on our cheeks' (township slang for approaching their girls for love).*
Class:	*(laughter).*
Nomhle:	*Mam, I knew that this had nothing to do with being a girl or not. These retards (mentally challenged) can all see that I have breasts and I am wearing a skirt – but their main issue is about losing their girlfriends.*
Sthembiso:	*Don't flatter yourself Nomhle, we are not in any competition and we will never be. Who will leave this (pointing at himself) – for that (pointing at Nomhle).*
Nomhle:	*But girls do. Do you want me to start counting or do you want me to 'hit' on your girlfriend?*
Sthembiso:	*No, no, no, Nomhle. I was just joking … we are brothers, and brothers don't do that to each other (shaking Nomhle's hand, as a way of retrieving his words and asking for peace).*
Class:	*(the laughs subsided and conversations focused on Nomhle continued).*

Epstein and Johnson (1994), cited in Kehily (2002:57), hold that "the pervasive presence of heterosexual relations and the simultaneous invisibility of its structure, make heterosexuality normatively powerful in the lives of learners". "Its 'natural' status as a dominant sexual category gives it a 'taken for granted' quality" (ibid). Bonga's statements in the conversation above, reflected an intention to confirm the assumptions that girls who engage in what is considered non-traditional forms of learning and labour, are deviant – and thus that the contradiction of the girls' presence could be reconciled by their sexuality. In Bonga's eyes, the girls were illegitimately participating in 'their' (boys) academic space (technical subjects).

What was also present in Bonga and Smanga's statements, was an intention to isolate, humiliate or verbally harass the lesbian learner. Their statements were in support of the essay written by Monique Wittig, which concluded that lesbian women are not women – because they are not socialised as women (Wittig, 1992, cited in Lunsing, 1995). The confusion expressed by Thabo demonstrated that these boys' meaning of the term "woman" was altered, in the sense that it does not refer to sex, to genitals – but rather to female gender attributes, which according to Wittig, includes loving men (ibid). These boys constructed gender as something fixed to sex. Bhana (2012) warned that it is difficult to shift meanings when gender is seen as something fixed.

Msibi (2012:518) notes that "verbal abuse appears to be a prevailing theme across all studies in detailing the experiences of gay learners in schools". Abuse was evident when the class isolated the lesbian learner in their midst. The resistance and gender alliance displayed by the girls earlier on, had disappeared. The laughter served as a form of homophobic harassment, constructing the lesbian learner as the 'other' and her sexuality as illegitimate or abnormal. Butler et al. (2003:7) states that "most adolescents have heard others laughed at and taunted for being 'faggots' or 'dykes'. As a result, they begin to fear similar humiliation or even physical violence".

This incident evidently demonstrated that the hegemonic conceptions of gender were understood by these learners as being an ideological structure that divides people into heterosexual identities concomitant with their gender. The class denied homosexuality as the right to sexual choice (McIntyre, 1992). While Hetrick and Martin (1987) report that many

gay and lesbian teens experience sexual difference and the pressure to conform to the heteronormative gender order, as isolation, alienation, anxiety and depression, Msibi (2012), writing about the classroom experiences of gay learners, warns against the tendency of positioning these experiences as negative. When we view this group as a helpless, powerless group that is victimised in schools and in society, we reinforce stereotypes that our work wishes to break down – we remove the agency from homosexual learners (ibid).

I was thus prompted to explore and challenge the meanings that these learners might attach to the laughter. By inviting Nomhle to the conversation, I provided her with an opportunity to articulate her own meanings of her gender and sexuality, and to make visible the discursive processes by which heterosexuality was legitimised by her classmates. It was, at this time, that I realised how my study sample did not manage to destabilise heterosexuality as a normalised sexual category. Consequently, by giving the lesbian learner this opportunity, I was making up for the limitations of my research sample composition, which did not include sexual diversities, and, at the same time, I was affirming sexual diversity.

The exploration led to interactions that placed heterosexuality under scrutiny, destabilised the dominant constructs of sexuality and gender, and offered opportunities for dialogue, reflection and transformation. The opportunity for the lesbian learner to assert her sexuality, was experienced as empowering. This was an opportunity for her to speak passionately about her intimate relationships, and how, in her view, girls were more in favour of lesbian sexual relationships compared to heterosexual relationships. At this point, there was no more laughter. All the attention was on her. She gained power and celebrated her difference.

Nomhle's statements, such as the ones below, seemed intimidating and threatening to the masculinity of the heterosexual male learners:

> "*Girls prefer to engage in a lesbian relationship, because they know that there is no risk of unplanned pregnancy.*"
> "*Lesbians have greater insight into what girls want, since they, themselves, have 'the femininity' components.*"

The lesbian relationships were perceived by male learners as providing serious competition to heterosexism. These discussions were a reminder that sexuality is a means of exercising power, and that where there is power, there is bound to be resistance. "Gay and lesbian learners are sometimes able to resist, and also find ways of navigating within the repressive schooling environment – by subverting the negativity and using it positively" (Mac an Ghaill, 1994, cited in Msibi, 2012:518). They can be constructed as actors in their environments and not just as helpless or powerless victims. Another positive outcome of the dialogue was the evidence of a more enabling environment that has come with a progressive South African Constitution – which makes it possible for the lesbian learner to openly claim her lesbian identity as a teenager.

By noting Nomhle's experience as positive, this chapter is not underplaying the struggles – particularly the incidences of so-called 'corrective' rape experienced by lesbians in South Africa. The chapter however highlights the agency of the lesbian learner under adversity. One might anticipate passivity and powerlessness in confronting classroom homophobia. Instead, she Nomhle constructed lesbian intimate relationships as being positive in an environment where they are highly contested. Her narrative is evidence of how "relations of power and dominance can be discursively resisted and counteracted in a dynamic classroom struggle over gender identity, gender difference, and sexual preference" (Lazar, 2007:148).

While we might celebrate the positive homosexuality discourse which took place in this class, the emancipatory role I played needs to be acknowledged. My exploration did not only focus on overtly expressed meanings. I attentively focused on "less obvious, nuanced, implicit meanings – to get at the subtle and complex renderings of ideological assumptions and power relations" (Lazar, 2007:151). I did not pretend to adopt a neutral stance when other learners clearly isolated and laughed at the comments made about the lesbian learner. My behaviour was thus in line with Lazar's (2007:149) assertion, that "the task of feminists is to examine how power and dominance are discursively produced and/or (counter-) resisted in a variety of ways, through textual representations of gendered social practices and through interactional strategies of talk". Butler et al. (2003) reminded us that "one can attempt to eradicate overt homophobic behaviours by passing laws, but covert homophobia is not easily legislated against.

Anti-gay sentiment is compounded in South Africa by a strong patriarchal Christian ethic that views same-sex sexual encounters as sinful and wrong". Lazar (2007:150) further asserts that "there needs to be a critical awareness of relations among women". While I positively noted how all girl learners rallied together in solidarity to oppose discrimination by boy learners, I showed how all learners (especially the girl learners) perpetuated heterosexist bias against a lesbian learner. The 'non-sameness' of all women was rendered visible. What was important, was that being heterosexual, I did not try to represent the lesbian learner. Instead, the learner was given a platform for self-representation, and my intervention was aimed at enabling openness, sexuality agency, equity, and emancipation.

Grooming Boys and Girls for the Heterosexual Market

Aikman, Unterhalter and Challender (2005) claim that there are important questions to be asked regarding what girls and boys are being taught about themselves in formal schooling. Life Orientation is one of the subjects which are the product of South African curriculum transformation. It involves the study of self in relation to others and society. LO mainly aims at encouraging "the development of balanced, confident learners who will contribute to a just and democratic society, a productive economy, and an improved quality of life for all" (DoE, 2003:7). The intentions to achieve this aim are evident in the contents page of the Grade 11 LO workbook. Some of the topics covered are: Setting personal and fitness goals; constitutional values; accessing support, advice and assistance; how to reduce risk behaviours, violations of human rights and environmental rights; how to protect human dignity; bullying is brutal; and democracy in action. However, despite such a rich list of topics, the LO curriculum is full of contradictions. It contains messages that portray or reinforce certain gender stereotypes, and normalise heterosexuality.

The following statements are from the Grade 11 LO workbook, under the heading 'marriage and religion' (DoE, 2007):

Table 3: LO Workbook on Marriage and Religion

Religion	Perspective
	"Religion is a universal part of human life."
Bahá'í	"Marriage is the union of a man and a woman."
Buddhism	"Marriage is regarded as an institution created by man for the well-being and happiness of man, to differentiate human society from animal life and to maintain order and harmony in the process of procreation."
Christianity	"Historically, marriage has been regarded as ordained by God for the lifelong union of a man and a woman."
Hinduism	"No man or woman's life is seen as complete without marriage."
Islam	"Marriage is a legal bond and social contract between a man and a woman as prompted by the Shari'a."

For LO to contain messages that exclusively recognise a marriage as a union between men and women, in a country where same-sex marriage is legal and constitutional, is disturbing. I found it strange and contradictory for the curriculum that is informed by the principle of inclusivity and anti-discriminatory doctrines, to be silent about same-sex marriages. I view the messages above as gendered and perpetuating the heterosexual market. They conscientise girls and boys to see themselves as having a place within the heterosexual market – from which to claim worth and value. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013:16) maintain that the "heterosexual market is the means by which the social order comes to presume heterosexuality, marginalising and rendering deviant anyone who do not eventually participate".

My arguments here don't view this section of LO curriculum as intentionally perpetuating heterosexism. But, what is not being said by this section is particularly concerning. Eckert et al. (2013:29) warn that "discourses of gender unfold, not only in explicit talk about gender, but also in talk about things that may be grafted onto gender". Furthermore, "the concept of the 'hidden curriculum' has been used by educationists to acknowledge that learning extends the boundaries of the official curriculum and may have inadvertent effects" (Kehily, 2002:49). In a country where "anti-gay sentiment is compounded by a strong patriarchal religious ethic that views same-sex sexual encounters as sinful and wrong" (Butler et al., 2003:8), this study views heterosexual discourse as dangerous, an impediment to the development of positive identities, and possibly limiting the exploration of alternative markets such as the academic market.

GENDER POWER RELATIONS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender Power Relations: Boys' and Girls' Inequalities through Physical Education

Learners' participation in Physical Education (PE) allowed me the opportunities to observe power relations between boys and girls – and the dynamics of weaving violent masculinities in the school. Although post-apartheid South African education is based on gender equity and democratising processes (Department of Education 1996), boys still enjoy privileged positions in education. "Different status is attributed to the masculine and the feminine, with the woman's body given an inferior status" (Bartky, 1990 cited in hook, 2004:200). Girls are considered to be more fragile than boys and constructed as vulnerable and predisposed to risk (Mathe, 2013; Kehily, 2012; Bhana et al., 2007). It was interesting to observe the pervasive powerful presence of heterosexism in the lives of teachers and learners during sessions aimed at gender equality.

"The gender order in PE was such that girls were generally marginalised and absent, because boys were at its centre" (Hopper and Sanford, 2006:256). Gender differences were exaggerated and these differences were used to legitimise and perpetuate power relations between girls and boys (Osmond and Thorne, 1993). During PE, the teacher portrayed her sensitivity to difference by assigning roles along gender lines – which promoted narrow forms of masculinities and femininities. Throughout PE activities, boys were expected to behave like boys, be competitive, tough, heterosexual, and show bravery. One of the games observed was the "*Trust Circle*":

> *The game is aimed at developing and establishing the positive social health of the group. Learners form groups of six. One learner stands in the centre of the circle and stands firm. When the centre learner is ready, with his/her eyes closed and body rigid like a plank of wood, that learner gently leans backwards and is then passed around and across the circle. The safety of the centre learner is paramount.*

In a class of 12 boys and 20 girls, boys formed the safety circle and girls took turns at being in the centre. This meant that girls were bystanders most of the time, and were only assigned a role when they had to place their trust in the boys' ability to carry them (boys' physical strengths), protect them, and ensure their safety throughout the game. The explicit focus on

physical strength or bodies became a site for the construction of gender and the embodiment of unequal gender relations (Light and Kirk, 2000; Butler, 1999). This game overtly promoted hegemonic masculinities and positioned girls as being physically weak and passive recipients of boys' safety and security. "The differential power status accorded to this PE, coupled with girls' and boys' diverse abilities in performing it, was a source of subordination and ridicule for those seen as not conforming to the core values of gender" (Morojele, 2011:688).

There were girls who expressed interest or attempted at being part of those who formed the trust circle – but the teacher was expressly intolerant of girls who did not conform to dominant constructions of femininities or who questioned being assigned to a traditional girl's role. To avoid being called '*umdlwembe*' or '*isinxantu*' (derogatory isiZulu words for a rebel, hooligan or carefree girl), girls passively or actively obeyed and accepted the role assigned to them. The teacher disguised her intolerance for rebels, as sympathy and respect for the girls' fragile bodies. I view this protective discourse as a dangerous one and also as continued subordination of girls. When young girls are positioned as fragile within interpersonal interactions, they become vulnerable to gender violence, rape, and male advances. Indeed, "PE in schools is part of the regulation and disciplining of bodies which post-structuralist research has shown to be involved in the construction of gender" (Theberge, 1991, cited in Connell, 2008:140).

Constructing boys as physically strong, gave them more freedom to actively participate throughout the session. The boys' bodies became an instrument for physical domination and the invasion of a space which was supposed to be equally shared with girls. An activity whose original objective was learner empowerment and promoting equality, became an arena of intense manifestation of hegemonic masculinities. This game also became a measure and a platform for boys to prove their physical strength and manhood. It provided no space or scope for boys who wanted to explore being carried or taken care of. This raises questions about the implications of such masculinity constructs for gender violence. While I acknowledge that hegemonic masculinity is not a synonym for violence, it is in such contexts, where boys are prepared to defend and protect, that violence can occur to ensure entitlement and secure and assert power (adapted from Hamlall and Morrell, 2012).

Connell (1983) cited in Gerdin (2008:16), "contends that masculinity that is typically connected to the ideals of dominance, force and physical competence, assumes positions of hegemony to operate as uncontested". Thus, when provocation occurs, violence becomes inevitable. Similarly, Kehily (2012:263) warns that "a discourse that places young men in the impossible position of needing to take on the role of hero and conqueror" – does not lead to a positive identity.

Gender-Based Violence

"Gender oppositions focus not simply on difference, but on the potential for conflict: the *battle of the sexes"* (Eckert et al., 2013:24). At my research site, opportunities for conflict or gender violence presented themselves in a variety of forms. The dominant form was heterosexism. In the following incident, a PE game became a site for the marginalisation and domination of girls. The game was the "*Jogging Activity"* that took place on the school playing field:

> *Thirty learners from 'Iziqondane' class (20 girls and 10 boys) were present. The LO teacher asked the learners to form groups of six. The aim was to promote a healthy lifestyle through body movements and the promotion of a team spirit among learners. The teacher made it clear that the teams were not competing; the aim was to promote teamwork among group members. Immediately after the teacher's instructions, sex became the determinant of group composition. All 10 boys clubbed together. Girls followed the instruction of six per group, and two girls were left without the required number of group members.*

The teacher announced:

Teacher: *I need five groups. I said, six in a group.*

Girl 1:   *Miss what can we do? You can see that the boys don't want to mix with us.*

Boys: *(silence).*

Teacher: *I said, six in a group. Please don't waste my time. Just tell me if you do not want to do this activity.*

Boys: *(resisting silence again).*

Researcher: *Oh, what now? (The researcher talking directly to the boys).*

Boy 1:	*Eish Mam, we are fine like this.*
Researcher:	*But your teacher said six per group – and you are 10.*
Boy 2:	*Honestly Mam, do you also expect us to join those girls (pointing at the two girls)?*
Researcher:	*Ismoko? (a township slang to mean what is the issue?)*
Boys:	*A big mocking laugh from the boys.*
Researcher:	*Please share the joke.*
Boy 2:	*Us with these fat girls? Please Mam – don't start to undermine us.*
Girl 2:	*Do you hear them Mam, do you hear what they are saying?*
Girl 1:	*Hey you! Don't take us lightly.*
Boy 3:	*You – shut up!*
Girl 1:	*If I don't, what are you going to do?*
Boy 3:	*I do not have to tell you, you will see for yourself (a very threatening tone).*

Noting the heightened emotions and violent verbal attacks that were likely to end in physical violence, I intervened in the argument between the boys' group and the two girls. To defuse the tension, one of the boys gave a big smile and said to me:

"*Mam, don't take them seriously. They are just teasing each other.*"

This response seemed very strategic. Thorne (1993) wrote how the use of a smile or a certain tone of voice could frame an incident that looked like a fight as a 'play fight' – and therefore something not to be taken seriously. Even if the learners were teasing, this chapter is critical of the extent to which teasing plays a role in harassing girls and gender violence. Since teasing normally takes place in a crowded setting, the presence of an audience may enhance the sting, and can make the cross-gender interaction risky (adapted from Thorne, 1993). In this study, I view the tendency to mask the dynamics of gendered power relationships in play, as continuing to proliferate and endorse violent masculine conduct.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored how girls' and boys' sense of themselves as gendered and sexual people are constituted, realised, and performed in social relations. It examined the ways in which being a boy and a girl is negotiated within social relations, and how these relations are policed, regulated and constrained through dominant discourses of gender and sexuality. The focus was on open and close relationships of boys and girls; the characteristics that define the groupings; how the relations of boys and girls are discussed and viewed within the school context, and how gender power and gender violence impact on the relations of boys and girls.

Evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the school continues to be a site where sexuality and gender roles are produced, reproduced, enacted and contested (Bhana, 2016b; Epstein and Morrell, 2012; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). Boys and girls draw on dominant discourses of gender and sexuality to negotiate and mediate their social relations. For instance, culture was used as a reference in setting boundaries on how boys and girls should or should not relate. Furthermore, the adult members of the school – particularly the teachers – served as the ambassadors of the heteronormativity and 'child innocence' discourses. I view such discourses as being responsible for fuelling gender inequalities, gender violence, and power inequalities among young people.

These findings have important implications for policy and transformative programmes aimed at quality education. Like Bhana (2013), I assert that the political climate of rights and gender equality in South Africa provides a fertile environment to firmly place gender equity as a priority on the quality education agenda. Within the school walls, we need nurturing and enabling spaces to empower boys and girls as the ambassadors of the South African rights-based era – particularly gender equity. Empowerment of girls, in particular, needs to be prioritised. For schools to be relevant, they need to make transitions in the ways they conceptualise young people and childhood sexuality. Viewing boys and girls as agentic, rather than as passive and incompetent, may be the first step in transformation (Mathe, 2013).

Chapter 7

TEENAGE SEXUALITIES: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITIES, COMPULSORY FEMININITIES AND THE ALTERNATIVE SEXUALITIES

INTRODUCTION

In the previous two analysis chapters, I outlined informal sexual cultures of young boys and girls within and beyond the school context. Drawing on the work of Butler (1990) on performativity, I have argued that in the school context, in the variety of spaces and social interactions, young people perform and negotiate their gender and sexuality in multiple ways. What this thesis has also shown, is how the sociocultural context and the history of the locality (in this instance, KwaMashu township) are tied to the ways in which young people in my study negotiated and gave meaning to sexuality in their everyday lives.

What this thesis continues to highlight is that sexuality among teenagers is perceived very differently across cultures (Kehily, 2007). "Different social contexts involve different rules and taboos associated with sexual practice" (Okiria, 2014:128). KwaMashu, being a community plagued by HIV and AIDS, crime, inadequate basic social services, and more of the social distresses, thus provides a distinct feature for our understanding of gender and sexuality (Hunter, 2010; Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana and Moletsane, 2009). This is not, in any way, intending to view my research participants as a homogenous group impacted by their locality in the same manner. I stress the importance of "contextual variations in the experiences of young sexualities in South Africa, as boys and girls take on different co-ordinates that intersect with local cultures" (Bhana and Anderson, 2013:549).

This chapter furthers these arguments by delineating the various ways in which boys and girls in my study speak about and perform their sexuality in ways that both conform with and deviate from, to varying degrees, traditional constructions of femininities and masculinities. In this chapter, the focus turns to the various means through which sexuality is negotiated and contested. I show how hegemonic masculinities and traditional femininities are produced and reproduced in interactions and relationships. In the same breath, the chapter shows that alternative ways of being are emerging in the mist of dominant constructs. However, the

alternative negotiations are not exclusively an act of cognitive choice; sometimes it is partly dependent on a person's location in a space that offers other ways of constructing sexuality (Butler, 1990). The chapter thus highlights the fluidity of meanings attached to sexuality, and the various ways through which sexuality shifts and changes – and draws attention to both agency and the underlying gender inequalities.

UPHOLDING HEGEMONY: A TOWNSHIP IS NOT A PLACE FOR *'AMABHOTELA'*

KwaMashu township – intimately known as 'Esinqawunqawini' (a place where dust never settles) – dominantly triggers thoughts of adversity, political unrest, vulnerability, poverty, and inequalities (see chapter 2). These conditions have become inseparable and are commonly used interchangeably with the township social identity. To properly navigate such conditions and to ensure survival in a township context, boys in my study strongly believed that a township was not a place for *'amabhotela'* (butter, soft, or feminine boys). Having or displaying bravery, courage and self-reliance were cited as key qualities to survive the township lifestyle.

During a conversation with the boys' only group on surviving the township life, a group of boys who had established a macho code of 'izinja zami' (my dogs), was highly idealised as 'true' township boys. The boys spoke with pride about an incident where Sanele, a member of 'izinja zami', protected her sister by confronting a much-feared territory (a taxi rank). To them, Sanele's brave conduct was a symbol of 'true' manhood:

Senzo:	*Hey Mam, a township is not a place for 'amabhotela' (butter boys).*
Mondli:	*Your son won't survive even one day here (boys giggling). Only boys like John Cena survive here. (John Cena is the name of a professional American wrestler).*
Researcher:	*Who is John Cena?*
Mondli:	*Sanele, Mam.*
Researcher:	*Ow Sanele, is John Cena your other name? (asking Sanele).*
Sbonelo:	*(interrupting with excitement). Tell her why we call you John Cena. Tell her about the taxi rank incident.*

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Senzo:	*(bragging). Hey Mam, Sanele was named John Cena after he beat a taxi driver who harassed his sister. Mam, who in his right mind could attack a taxi driver at the taxi rank? Ey, this guy Mam, 'iskhokho' (a strong and resilient person) and fearless. You should have seen him Mam. (honour him, Senzo stood up and shook Sanele's hand).*
Researcher:	*Did this happen Sanele?*
Sanele:	*Yes Mam. I wanted to teach him a lesson. If he wanted to fight, he was not supposed to pick a woman - but a man like him. Taxi drivers are a bunch of cowards.*
Sbonelo:	*Sure 'njayami' (my dog) (an expression of praise and affirmation towards Sanele).*

During our conversation, being physically strong, able to endure pain and protect oneself, and protecting your loved ones, emerged as a recurrent theme. 'Izinja zami' were famous for being 'no-nonsense' boys, highly competitive, and physically tough. The bodies of these boys were viewed as 'pain free' zones and any of their violent performances were regarded as a compulsory component of 'doing boy' and asserting one's manhood (Renold, 2004). Nayak and Kehily (1996) and Epstein (1997) cited in Martino (1999:245), maintain that "boys who do not measure up to what is considered appropriate *manly* behaviour, are positioned as the 'other'". In order to protect their integrity and social status, some of them end up engaging in real fights and those fights are normalised – and the normalisation of violence in the township school context is troubling. Violence and aggression seemed to be viewed as an important tool for survival, since a township is no place for 'cheese boys' (soft or fragile boys). This leads the 'good boys' to adopt these warrior narratives as a definition of masculinity (Jordan, 1995). "Boys are incited to adopt certain practices of masculinity and to display themselves as particular kinds of boys" (Martino, 1999:245).

TEENAGE BOYS: GIRLS, GIRLFRIENDS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Boys Want Girl-Guides: Respect, Honour, and Sexual Ideals

The idealisation of girls who are decent, humble, virtuous, self-respecting, beautiful, focused and loyal, featured strongly in the boys' constructions of gender and sexuality at my research site. When I asked them about ideal girlfriends during our focus-group discussion, they cited a group of girls who are the members of the school's girl-guides as being every boy's dream:

Sihle:	*Mam, do you know Philile's group?*
Researcher:	*I know Philile (a grade 11A learner), but I am not sure about her group.*
Sihle:	*Eish Mam, if you know that group, you will understand exactly what an ideal girlfriend is. Those girls are every boy's dream.*
Researcher:	*Wow, you seem to have high regard for them. What makes them special?*
Sihle:	*Eish Mam. Those girls 'know their story' (they are focused), yet are 'bayazihlonipha' (self-respecting). They know that they are in demand, but 'baziphethekahle' (well behave), and they are humble.*
Sthembiso:	*Ha ha ha, Mam, Sihle is being modest. Those girls are hot. You must see them in their girl-guides uniform. They look like air hostesses.*
Researcher:	*Girl-guides' uniform? Are they members of the school's girl-guides' group?*
Sanele:	*Yes, Mam. You must see the way they speak, walk, and behave. These girls have killer bodies, are well mannered, and look or behave nothing like most township girls.*
Researcher:	*Meaning? How do township girls look?*
Bonga:	*Mam, don't pretend to be ignorant. You know that township girls 'axegelwa izimilo' (have despicable conducts). You can identify them from far off due to their wobbly bodies. But Philile's group ... eish.*
Researcher:	*Go on, I am listening.*
Bonga:	*Their bodies are firm and they tell a story.*
Researcher:	*What story?*
Bonga:	*That I am worthy, I respect myself, and I respect my body.*

The extract above depicts how the boys' constructions of ideal girlfriends were invested in girls who are polite, ethical, respecting and have firm bodies. To these boys, the school's girl-guides' group, whose promise and belief is of doing a duty to God and being trusted, loyal, helpful, friendly, polite, obedient and respectful to self and to others (Girl Guides South Africa, 2015) – make them ideal girlfriends. What these boys missed in their analysis of the girl-guides' promise and law are the teachings which emphasise self-confidence, equity and assertiveness – the teachings that fight against a submissive girl or woman.

Entrenched in these boys' constructions of ideal femininity, were the moral and conservative sociocultural beliefs that expect girls to be 'good', remain deferential, and be virgins. Interestingly, the description of the girl-guides' group and the characteristics of an ideal girlfriend mentioned by these boys, fulfil the dominant femininity and Zulu cultural ideals through which male power is reinvented and reproduced. By placing high value in girls who are humble, '*azihloniphayo*', '*aziphethekahle*', and '*anesimilo*' – suggests that these boys want girls who they can dominate, control and police. Bhana and Anderson (2013: 558) believe that "maintaining an image of respectability is an important means to regulate female sexuality, as it provides the coherence of good girl".

The boys' preoccupation with shaky bodies and firm bodies indicated how girls' bodies are scrutinised, sexualised and objectified. The boys' ridiculing of girls with shaky bodies indicated their subscription to an ideology that persists in many African contexts, and that a shaky body is a result of a loss of virginity or an indication that a girl is sexually active (Nkani, 2012). Paradoxically, these are the same boys who spoke of young people's intimacies and sex as being positive, when they were contesting the adults' conceptions of young people's sexual relationships (see 'The Toilet Affair': Chapt. 6). This also clearly pointed to the operations of a sexual double standard, whereby teenage men's sexual activities are concealed and normalised, while teenage girls are cast under the sexual and cultural gaze and disparaged (Bhana, 2014; Harrison, 2008). Like the studies by Bhana and Pattman (2011), Anderson (2009) and Allen (2005), the data suggest that girls' sexuality is under surveillance and while boys can get away with multiple simultaneous partners, girls' reputations are at stake – and with it emerges the old and familiar 'virgin-whore' dichotomy, which means that while men are promiscuous to a degree, girls (women) are not allowed to be 'impure'.

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Alpha Boys: A Girlfriend Needs to Know Her Place

The subjective self-embodiment or embodiment of boys as Alpha boys (a natural leader, provider, protector, sexually active and unbridled males) and of girls as Beta girls (sexually passive, caring, docile and vulnerable females) were common identities in my research site and appeared to influence how girls and boys constructed their intimate relationships. Some of the boys and girls in my study have accepted and appropriated the Alpha boy-Beta girl polarity, and view them as somehow innate identities, or see themselves as trapped in them.

During a single-sex focus-group discussion about intimate relationships, boys expressed readiness and experiences of being leaders in intimate relationships. They viewed themselves as compelled to be hard on a girlfriend who is 'out-of-line'. According to these boys, when their 'manhood' is threatened, they are left with no choice, but to defend their sense of selves, and the only way they know how, is by showing their girlfriends who is an alpha male in a relationship. The transcript below highlights how alpha boys viewed the control and regulation of girls' sexuality as being their responsibility:

Sbusiso: *In this neighbourhood, girls are either 'omathandizinto' (township slang for girls who are materialistic or into 'nice times') or they think they are too important.*

Researcher: *Is that a good or a bad thing?*

Sbusiso: *Hell no, how can you ask Mam? Who wants a girlfriend who is into nice times or a girlfriend who is 'up there' (high class)? That is degrading Mam.*

Thabiso: *Indeed Mam, that is not good for your manhood. Other boys undermine you, take you for granted, tease you, or they call you names.*

Researcher: *Names – such as?*

Thabiso: *'isiyoyoyo' (someone who is easily manipulated or too soft), or 'isnayi', 'impatha', or 'ibhari' (a rural boy, non-urbanised boy, or a person who is not streetwise).*

Researcher: *So what do you do to avoid being taken for granted?*

Thabiso: *Only one thing Mam. You have to straighten her and show her who is in control.*

Bonga:	*If it means you put a leash on her – just do it dog (man) (referring to Thabiso).*
Sthembiso:	*For sure brothers. A girlfriend needs to know her place. Two bulls cannot live in one kraal. If you don't make sure of that, the girl dances on top of your head and you become a joke.*
Researcher:	*Hold on – you are talking about straightening, putting on a leash, knowing one's place – exactly what are you talking about? What do you exactly do?*
Thabiso:	*Eish Mam, details are for boys only.*
Researcher:	*Just relax, you know me by now – I am just trying to understand you and your everyday realities.*
Bonga:	*Yes – anyway, you don't even know our girlfriends – you won't tell. You know what Mam, being in the driving seat is not easy. One thing that works for most of us, is to be hard on them. The moment you appear to be too sweet, too understanding or needy, girls take advantage of you. You see Mam – a girlfriend should know that she is not indispensable. If you want to be with her or want her (implying wanting to have sex), she must ensure that she avails herself. If not, she must be ready to face the consequences.*
Sthembiso:	*You (researcher) don't know these girls. Whenever they can't be with you, they are with someone else. Or else you become their toy to use.*
Thabiso:	*With me Mam, if my girlfriend thinks that she is 'all that' (meaning - important) and always coming up with stories when I want to be with her, I make sure that she knows that she has competition.*
Researcher:	*Competition – meaning?*
Thabiso:	*Other girlfriends, Mam. And the moment she knows her competition, whenever I want to be with her – she jumps for the opportunity.*

The above conversations illustrate how these boys enacted the Beta boy identity in their construction of hegemonic masculinity. These boys did not perceive relationships as a shared partnership. They viewed themselves as being in the drivers' seats of their relationships and their girlfriends as being on the receiving end of patriarchal power. Thus, they expressed a sense of entitlement and viewed their role as that of dominating, straightening and controlling

their girlfriends. Influenced by the strong cultural and patriarchal discourses that position boys as superior and girls as subservient, they legitimised and viewed the control of girls as an unavoidable way of being.

The boys' condemnation of 'omathandizinto' and girls who are 'up there', reveals the fragilities that these boys experience in the economic world, where they cannot provide for girls who aspire towards material and social goals (Bhana, 2014; Bhana and Pattman, 2011; Hunter, 2010). These boys evidently subscribe to the patriarchal arrangement which is hierarchical and governed by notions of respect and male power. They viewed these girls as challenging the boys' legitimate power and positions of being 'men' in relationships. This is why in Bhana and Pattman (2011)'s study, township boys expressed preference for dating '*farm julias*' (rural girls), because they regarded them "as subordinate, poor, conservative and without the city slickness through which young township girls are often constructed" (Ntshangase, 2002 cited in Bhana and Pattman, 8). To these boys, the attempt of 'omathandizinto' and 'high-class girls to negotiate the terms of intimate relationships are unsettling the masculine privileges, symbolised defiance or a lack of respect of established gender norms. Hence, there should be 'consequences'. Butler (1990) asserts that, for boys, the real expression of masculinity is invested with power.

The boys spoke about being hard, as being a way of asserting one's manhood in a relationship. They perceived the expression of positive emotions – such as being sweet or showing empathy and understanding in intimate relationships – as being a sign of weakness and a root cause of girlfriends who 'get out-of-line'. Moreover, this non-expression of emotions was seen as a township bravado code, which they were compelled to prove being worthy of it. Those who fail to achieve it risk being referred to as '*isnayi*' or '*ibhari*'. Being '*isoka*' (having more than one girlfriend), being hard, and the 'unspecified consequences' were cited as the boys' tools to protect and legitimise their masculinity in the township context. Predominantly, being a real boy in a township thus involves demonstrating frigidity, power and '*isoka*' masculinity (Bhana, 2013; Mathe, 2013; Morojele, 2013; Hunter, 2010; Connell, 2005).

It was unsettling to listen to these boys talk about having multiple girlfriends, as being one of the ways they use to validate their power and Beta boys' identity, and as a tool they use to

coerce their girlfriends to have sex. To these boys, having multiple partners was also a way of proving their sexual conquest and to put their girlfriends in their rightful place – subordinated femininities. This is of great concern, especially in a country with the highest rate of HIV infections, and where the sexual debut of young people is reported to be before the age 15 (HSRC, 2014), and where there is widespread rape – including forced first sex (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Peltzer and Pengpin, 2006; Wood and Jewkes, 1997).

Gays are Going Nowhere: Regulating Masculinity, Sexuality and Power

During the focus-group discussion with the boys' only group, the naturalisation and legitimisation of gender derived from two categories – females and males – dominated how the boys interpreted masculinity. To them, each category has distinct features that make each sex naturally different and cause them to behave differently. They viewed boys with 'female characteristics' to be in a state of gender confusion, a shame to the male species, and to have some sort of abnormality. Thus, homosexuality was regarded as a sickness and a cultural displacement. These boys, who identify themselves as 'Alpha boys', threatened to use homophobic violence to exert and yield power over non-conforming peers (Bhana and Mayeza, 2016). Their rejection of homosexuality and threats of violence against gay boys, are captured in the narratives below:

> *Researcher:*   *You keep on emphasising that boys are different from girls. What are the main differences?*
>
> *Sbusiso:*   *Mam, are you serious? Do you really want us to tell you?*
>
> *Researcher:*   *Yes, please.*
>
> *Sthembiso:*   *Mam, I totally understand your source of confusion – there is a growing number of 'Senzo and Jason' (referring to the gay couple acting in a famous South African TV sitcom called Generations) in this school. (a big laugh).*
>
> *Bonga:*   *Ya Sthe, these people are causing confusion and are making people like Mam to start questioning our manhood. Worse, they see gays on TV and think it is a cool thing - not realising how shameful they are to the African nation.*
>
> *Sbusiso:*   *Worse, they are becoming too comfortable…*

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> Researcher: *Wait boys, you are talking about confusion, being shameful and being too comfortable – what are your issues about homosexuality?*
>
> Bonga: *Mam, honestly? Are you serious? Can you approve of your own son being gay? This is not 'our' (Africans) thing. This is white people's culture and it suits them.*
>
> Researcher: *Why does it suit them?*
>
> Thabiso: *White people would rather own dogs than have kids.*

The above extract depicts how the boys in my study were invested in sexuality constructs which view homosexuality as a foreign import which is incompatible with African culture. While the boys acknowledged the existence of learners who are 'open and proud' homosexuals at my research site, the claim that homosexuality is 'un-African' and a sexual displacement, was still strong among these boys. These boys viewed homosexuality as a new movement which was out there to taint or wipe-out authentic African manhood. This is "despite evidence showing the manifestation of homosexuality in pre-colonial Africa" (Epprecht, 2008, cited in Bhana, 2014:193). Muthuray (2000:4) argued that "if the 'archaeology' of tradition reveals a word in the local language (the shona word *ngochani*) and a traditional cure for homosexuality", then those who characterise homosexuality as being un-African are clearly occupying the place of imaginative recreation of an irretrievable past. The teenage boys in my study viewed homosexuals as sexually displaced individuals who have adopted the white men's culture. They viewed a TV sitcom like Generations that portrays a married gay couple positively, as being deceitful and creating a confused African nation. Bhana (2014:194) argued that "the deployment of cultural arguments to regulate gender and sexuality are dangerous – especially in the context of homophobic violence". If culture is regarded as so innate and impervious to change, then the possibility of addressing issues around sexuality and sexual orientation, become limited (ibid).

The views of the boys seemed to subscribe to the constructions of homosexuality that denied homosexuality as being the right to sexual choice, and instead viewed it as being shameful to the nation. These are constructions that are pervasive and supported by the criminalisation of same-sex relationships in 38 out of 55 African countries. Uganda is at the extreme end, having passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2014, which made homosexuality a crime punishable by life in prison (Bhana, 2014). An extreme assertion was made by President

Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who claimed that not only was "homosexuality un-African, but that gays and lesbians were worse than pigs and dogs" (Muthuray, 2000:1).

The boy's association of homosexuality, with white people's preference for owning dogs instead of having kids resonating with the popularly-held notion that homosexuality is an unnatural, deviant act, which is against God's blessing to Adam and Eve to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and have dominion over every living thing that moves on the Earth" (Genesis 1: 28). They viewed homosexuality as a threat to the dominant gender order which fulfils God's purpose for creating men and women on earth – which is procreation. Homosexuality was seen as disrupting the heterosexual market. These were reflected in the following statements:

> Sbusiso: *These people are acting against nature and against God's will.*
> Thabiso: *God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve – so they can have babies – grow the nations.*
> Sthembiso: *We owe it to God – we have to fulfill our purpose as humans.*

The statements above, evidently portray how young boys in my study marginalised homosexuality, and viewed it as inhuman and acting against nature's purpose. They expressed the feelings of agitation and annoyance about homosexuality. The questions that troubled my mind were how these boys attend to these feelings when they are in in spaces outside the school, and how do they protect what they perceive as being the normal gender order? Statements like the following highlighted the possibility of violent attacks on gay men:

> Bonga: *These people need to get their act together or else 'sizobathela induku' (we are going to beat them).*
> Thabiso: *Cool down Bonga – there is no need to be violent. Mam, here is a social worker – she can counsel them or institutionalise them to a rehabilitation centre, which is full of girls.*
> Smanga: *Guys, stop fooling yourselves. Just face the reality – gays are going nowhere, the sooner you accept that, the better.*

> *Bonga:*   *Hey Smanga, are you gay? Why are you speaking on their behalf? Since when are you the Pride's (South African gay organisation) lawyer?*
>
> *Smanga:*   *No guys – I am just being realistic.*

Bhana (2014) warns that when sexuality meanings are left unattended, there is a real danger that constricted meanings can lead to and compound the growing intensity of 'hate crimes' against homosexuals in South Africa. She contends that without attention to the locally specific ways in which knowledge about homosexuality is forged, young people are at risk of creating meanings and reinforcing values which will not interrupt the scourge of homophobic violence identified in South Africa (Bhana, 2015, 2012).

'*Ben10*' Masculinity

"In South Africa, there is a growing body of work which recognises the centrality of materiality within relationship dynamics" (Hunter, 2010; Harrison, 2008; cited in Bhana, 2014:3). Furthermore, in close examination of sexual activities that continue to place young people at high risk of contracting HIV, transactional sex has been highly explored as one of the structural drivers of the epidemic (Zembe, Townsend, Thorson and Ekstrom, 2013; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna and Shai, 2012). However, most studies have focused on girls' (women) participation in transactional sex and how their participation makes them vulnerable to sexual risks – particularly HIV infections. Not much is known about boys' participation in transactional sex.

The boys in my study spoke about how many of them are becoming or are incited to become a *Ben10* for material gains. The name *Ben10* is borrowed from a cartoon series played by a cute 10-year-old boy – that has been adopted in the township to represent a young man or toy boy who dates a 'sugar mom' (a resourceful older woman):

> *Thabo:*   *I won't mind being a Ben10, because dating older women is beneficial on the guy – than dating younger girls.*
>
> *Researcher:* *Beneficial in what way?*
>
> *Thabo:*   *Mam, life is very expensive – it is good to have a sponsor for what you eat, what you wear, and your lifestyle in general.*

Mhlengi:	*Ben10s live very comfortably. You won't see them eating 'amagwinya' (fatkoeks) like us. They get a Steers' burger for lunch.*
Researcher:	*Really?*
Thabo:	*Yes. My friend has this 'sugar mom'. She is single and in her 30s. She showers him with expensive gifts, has taught him to drive her car, she buys him expensive clothes, and they have been to places that many of us [only] dream of.*
Researcher:	*Are they open about their relationship?*
Thabo:	*Sort of – because we know about them.*
Researcher:	*Does your friend have any other girlfriend - someone his age?*
Thabo:	*Yes, but the 'sugar mom' can't find out – she is very controlling. My friend can lose everything.*
Researcher:	*How do most boys generally perceive the Ben10s and women who are in a relationship with Ben10s?*
Mhlengi:	*Ben10s, 'izinkunzi ezivula kuvaliwe' (translated as – they are bulls who open restricted or locked gates).*
Sbusiso:	*Mam, it is not that young boys are disrespecting their elders. In fact, boys are providing essential services to older women – what these women are not getting from their counterparts who are either married or have diabetes.*
Thabo:	*Young boys are hot between the sheets. The Ben10's role is simple – it is to respect and keep the 'sugar mom' sexually happy, so that the mom keeps on pouring the sugar (they all laughed with excitement).*

The above extract suggests that young boys in my study perceived being a *Ben10* as being a lucrative economic strategy. These boys seemed envious of '*Ben10*s' – as they viewed them as having opportunities to escape the economic deprivation in their township context, and being in relationships that promise a luxurious lifestyle. Like the findings of studies by Masvawure (2010) and Leclerc-Madlala (2003) on girls who engage in transactional sex, *Ben10*s were using their sexuality to access goods and services – as well as to fashion themselves as high-status, successful modern subjects.

The boys in my study construed being a *Ben10* as being a pragmatic adaptation to modern and costly township life. Being a *Ben10* was seen as an opportunity "to access plenty in the context of little" (Zembe, et al, 2013:13). Moreover, the benefits that come with being a *Ben10* like eating a Steers' burger at school instead of a 'vetkoek', or driving your sugar mom's car, assigned them a higher status than their peers – and that is crucial to their social identities. For Mhlengi to view *Ben10*s as 'izinkunzi ezivula kuvaliwe' (*bulls who open restricted or locked gates)* reflected that a *Ben10* identity was constructed as being a superior form of masculinity. Positioning *Ben10*s as bulls reflected that their abilities to cross traditional relationship boundaries were equated to male strength, domination, and superiority.

This identity was, however, not perceived without criticism. The boys described older women in such relationships as controlling and being jealous. Despite such criticism, the boys expressed a clear understanding and acceptance of a *Ben10*'s role in the relationship – which is to respect and sexually satisfy the sugar mom, so that 'she keeps pouring the sugar'. The 'sugar' (sweet benefit) promised by such relationship appeared to supersede any risk or disempowerment that might be experienced through being a *Ben10*. The boys' statements indicated that they are fully aware that they are acting in a calculating and exploitative way (Leclerc-Madlala, 2003).

While we acknowledge that "transactional sexual relationships are not a recent phenomenon in Africa, the young boys' engagement in transactional sex – especially with older women – is uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa" (Zembe et al., 2013:3). Notably, the *Ben10* masculinity not only suggests an alternative masculinity, but seems to also suggest an unconventional gender order fueled by the changes in the political economy that have disrupted gendered organisations. Changes in women's socio-economic status and access to resources facilitated by equality policies, are moving women from sexual repression to alternative ways of expressing their sexuality and feminine success – such as having a *Ben10*.

'Double Adapter' Masculinity

Another unconventional masculinity which emerged during my fieldwork, was a' double adapter'. This is a concept that the boys in my study used to represent a boy who is heterosexual – but is having a sexual relationship with men for material gain:

Thulani: *Times have changed. If you don't have money – it's very hard to get a girlfriend.*

Bonga: *A girlfriend wants to go to the movies. I am a student: where do I get the money from?*

Themba: *That is why boys are becoming 'double adapters'.*

Researcher: *What do you mean?*

Themba: *They are knocked by men, they knock the girls (men have sex with them, and they have sex with girls).*

Researcher: *I am still lost.*

Thulani: *Mam, a double adapter is a boy who has a male who he has sex with, in addition to his 'normal' everyday girlfriend. An older man has sex with him, and he revenges by having sex with his girlfriend.*

Researcher: *Are you talking about a bisexual man?*

Thulani: *No Mam. This is a straight (heterosexual) boy who is grand with his girlfriend, but on the side he has a male sex partner who provides him with material benefits. In most cases those benefits are used to make the girlfriend happy.*

Researcher: *Where do they get these men from?*

Themba: *They are everywhere. Most of them are married. They know that young boys are materialistic.*

Khumbulani: *These men know our needs and use them as fishing rods. A man was interested in me. He bought me airtime and just texted the voucher numbers to me. I refused the airtime and returned the voucher to him.*

Themba: *That was one gift I was not going to accept. If anyone can try that with me there will be serious consequences.*

The boys' statements above highlight how transactional sex provided young boys with the economic ability to meet the financial demands of their girlfriends – "transforming their

position from beneficiary to benefactor in sexual-exchange relationships" (Zembe et al., 2013:16). Being a 'double adapter' was seen as not only yielding "profitable rewards to meet subsistence and consumption needs" (ibid:12), but also created opportunities for a young boy and his girlfriend to be included in the local popular youth and relationship culture. Successful participation in intimate relationships in the township context is equated with pressure to afford a sophisticated and modern lifestyle, like taking your girlfriend to the movies. From the perspective of these boys, taking your girlfriend out to the movies is a necessity and defines their manliness in their relationship.

Contrary to the boys' mutual envy and approval of *Ben10* identity, the boys did not openly express interest in being 'double adapters'. Themba's comment about Khumbulani's encounter with being proposed to by a man reflected his strong rejection of 'double adapter' masculinity, and possible homophobic tendencies. While the benefits of being a *Ben10* were similar to being a 'double adapter' – sex between men seemed to carry the stigma of homosexuality, which the boys openly criticised and condoned in other discussions we had.

Cheeseboy Masculinities: Caring, Loving and Domesticated Boys

IMAGE 7: A Picture Depicting Caring, Loving and Domesticated Boys.

Picture of girls and boys preparing and serving food during a school excursion (fieldwork, 18 September 2012)

The above picture was taken during a field trip I had with my research participants in 2012. It depicts the alternative versions of young masculinities that I observe during field work. These are the boys who resisted, subverted and challenged the existing popular norms of hegemonic masculinity that are dominant within township contexts (Langa, 2013). During this excursion, there were several boys who equally participated with girls in all arrangements for the event – from designing the menu, shopping for the event, bringing catering equipment, preparing and serving the food, washing the dishes, and cleaning the venue when the event was finished. Boys' participation in what are traditionally constituted as girls' roles, was not an isolated incidence during my fieldwork. I observed many other incidences at school, and spoke to some of the boys about the meanings they attach to being a boy in the township context:

> *Sihle:*   *Not all boys from the township are the same or have similar interests. Unfortunately, if you are from the township, people outside of here always assume the worst of you, and boys from here judge you if you are different from them – they call you names. They call me 'ibhotela' (butter), because I don't like playing rough, [and] I don't go to night clubs or smoke. Honestly, I am happy with who I am. I don't care what they call me.*

Sihle's statement highlighted a strong assertion that township boys are not a homogenous group (Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman, 2003). He emphasised that boys are unique, have different ways of expressing their boyhood, and should be accepted that way. Sihle rejected young township masculinity as being characterised by engaging in rough play and risk-taking behaviours:

> *Lungani:*   *Many boys believe that they need 'ukudla isbaca' (to frown)– so that they are taken seriously.*
>
> *Sihle:*   *I believe that my respect for others earns me respect in return. Learners and teachers alike like me, because of treating myself, my school work, and other people with respect.*

These boys rejected the concept that surviving the township or being taken seriously at school or around the township required them to be hard, violent, disrespecting of others, or neglecting of their school work. These boys were proud of conforming to school rules, not

defying teachers, and also performing well academically. While other boys were calling them derogative names like 'ibhotela' (butter boys), cheeseboy or mommy's boy – which are often used to represent boys that are too soft, loving, domesticated and dependent on their mothers for approval and survival – these boys believed that their caring, loving and much more understanding nature, was making them more popular around the school, and more loved and desirable by peers and teachers alike.

On the boys' relationship with girls and participation to school chores, the following was observed and said:

> *Mfundisi:*   *Girls are our sisters. Hurting girls in any way is unacceptable. We need to treat them as we like to be treated.*
>
> *Siphiwe:*   *I cook and clean at home. Why should I expect to be treated any differently here.*

These are boys who embraced gender equality. They viewed girls as their sisters and rejected any form of gender violence. These boys' voices signified hope for an equitable South Africa and an end to violence against girls that is frequently reported in South African schools. We need similar voices to increase in our schools. These boys did not end at vocalising gender equity, but they also positively participated in school chores that are dominantly perceived and performed by girl learners. They rejected the pervasive gendered distribution of chores at school, like: girls sweep the floors, write the notes and announcements on the blackboard, and prepare the food during the school parties – while the boys clean the windows and the blackboard. These boys contested the interpretation of successful masculinity. To them, love; respect; care for yourself, your work and for others; and no violence against girls and women, were qualities that define a successful masculinity.

TEENAGE GIRLS: BOYS, BOYFRIENDS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Girls Want Boy Scouts: Strength, Self-Reliance and Sexual Prowess

In contrast to the boys who were invested in an ideal girlfriend who is humble, virtuous, polite, docile, God-fearing, and self-respecting – for girls the most appealing characteristics of an ideal boyfriend were reported to be someone who is loving, trustworthy, and yet

'*osezintweni*' (socially connected), '*ozithandayo*' (stylish), financially independent, and strong:

> Nonhlanhla: An ideal boyfriend for me is someone who is loving.
>
> Sbongile: Someone who is trustworthy. No cheating.
>
> Zinhle: Love alone is not enough. He has to be educated and financially stable.
>
> Nothando: Someone I can rely on. A person who knows what he is doing.
>
> Cindy: 'asazi istayela' (be stylish). I can't afford to be seen with 'ulayilayi' (someone who is out of fashion).
>
> Nobuhle: Someone I can trust, who can protect me against the township thugs.
>
> Nothando: Yes Nobuhle, I am sure you are referring to someone like Sanele.
>
> Nobuhle: Sort of.
>
> Nozipho: Someone who is not boring. A person we can share good times with … not too serious. A person 'osezintweni'.

The girls in my study seemed to fantasise about boy-scout masculinity – boys who are loving and trustworthy, and yet adventurous, physically strong, and self-reliant. While some girls cited characteristics like love and trustworthiness for their ideal boyfriends, most of them were invested in sexuality and gender constructions that are complicit in reproducing a hegemonic form of masculinity. These girls seemed to strongly idealise boys who are fashionable, not 'olayilayi', boys who are able to live up to the provider and protector masculinities, boys 'asezintweni', and boys who exercise control and take a lead in sexual relationships. The status and looks of a male partner reflected on the woman herself (Bhana, 2014; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

Notably, there were contestations in the girls' constructions of sexuality. While girls like Nonhlanhla and Sbongile aspired to boyfriends who were loving and trustworthy, girls like Zinhle and Nothando believed that love was not enough in a relationship. These girls seemed to uphold an isiZulu idiom that says, "ubuhle bendonda zinkomo zayo", which is directly translated as: a man's beauty is his cows (cows representing wealth in traditional African contexts). "These girls' ideals of love were not separate from the love-money-masculinity conundrum" (Bhana and Pattman, 2011:1). They upheld the provider masculinity, as they imagined and hoped for financially secured futures. Bhana and Pattman (2011) and Hunter

(2010) view this ideal as sustaining ideologies of sexuality that re-inscribe gender inequality, in spite of girls doing so through their own agency.

Unlike boys who sealed their status and power through humble girlfriends, girls expressed interest in fashionable boys, and boys that are not 'olayilayi'. These girls linked being stylish with economic power and the promise of a better life for them. In chapter 2, I wrote about how fancy clothes, cars, and electronic gadgets like cellphones, tablets, or computers were perceived by my research participants as a symbol of economic freedom, that is promised by post-apartheid South Africa. "In poverty-stricken township contexts, fashion is hotly pursued by many young people identifying with the allure of the middle class, differentiating themselves as they do from the poverty of the township, but also from 'olaylayi' who are associated with poor rural boys, who are constructed as backward, without money and with offensive dress style" (Bhana and Pattman, 2011:5). An ideal boyfriend for these girls is also a means through which their status is elevated, and a parade of their success in achieving middleclass prestige (Selikow and Mbulaheni, 2013; Shefer, 2012). "Girls acquire status by being associated with men who wear brand names" (Bhana and Pattman, 2011:5).

Physical strength was also identified by the girls in my study as being one of the important characteristics of an ideal boyfriend. For Nobuhle (above), to equate love with protection from thugs, indicated the vulnerable conditions through which girls in this township negotiate their sexualities. In this context, physical strength was perceived as being a resource through which boys maintain a reputation among peers, sustain a sense of masculine identity, and is a form of 'self' protection and security for their girlfriends and sisters against the township thugs. For the girls, physically strong boyfriends embodied their ideas of what made them feel feminine (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

Beta Girls: Boyfriends, Sexual Pressures and Domination
The experiences and stories of teenage girls who are victims of sexual harassment, coerced sex, rape, and corrective rape for lesbians in the South African townships – play an influential role in the ways in which young femininities and masculinities are worked out in relation to each other. The girls in my study perceived themselves as prey who are living 'under siege'. Their sexual experiences and stories are so different from the stories and experiences of other young girls in other parts of the world. For instance, in a study on Finnish girls' views on the

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factors contributing to their decisions concerning their first sexual intercourse, the average sexual debut of girls was reported to be at age 16, and "the most usual motives for one's first sexual intercourse were falling in love, curiosity, excitement and sexual arousal" (Kuortti and Lindfors, 2014:507). The factors of the Finnish girls are still a fantasy for most young girls who live in South Africa's disadvantaged contexts. Researchers exploring a discourse of sexual desire in young girls from such contexts, are always faced with a challenge of harmonising and differentiating between agency and risk in the sexual behaviour of these girls (see Jewkes and Morrell, 2011).

In the following discussion on sexual behaviour that I had with the girls' only focus group (see themes in focus group schedule - appendix 5), the girls spoke of their first sexual intercourse as mainly not based on the girls' planning or 'wish list' – but mostly on the pressures and persuasions of boyfriends:

<blockquote>

Thandiwe: *Mam, many girls once they are in intimate relationships, feel compelled to have sex with their boyfriends.*

Mbali: *No Thandiwe, I don't agree with you. It is the boys who trick girls to have sex with them. In many cases, relationships are not about what girls feel, but more about what the boys want and expect of girls. Most boys believe that by agreeing to be in a relationship, means agreement to [have] sex.*

Researcher: *Mbali – how are girls are tricked to sex?*

Mbali: *You see Mam, boys can be very patient and strategic when they want something, but the moment they get it, ha ha ha, you see their true colours. When a boy is still proposing love to you, he agrees with all your terms including 'no sex', but once you are his – the terms change. Here at school, many boys treat their girlfriends very well and respect them, but the moment they are out of school in private spaces, girls then see their nasty sides. To avoid pain or humiliation, most girls then give in to their sexual advances or pressures.*

Nomusa: *Exactly Mbali. That is why I tell my friends that it is undisputable that in the jungle, the 'lions' dominates, but you only become prey if you are in the jungle.*

</blockquote>

Researcher:	What do mean Nomusa?
Nomusa:	*Mam, I tell them to stay away from sex-prone spaces. If you want to be safe – just stay away from your boyfriend's home or their friends' home, especially where there are no adults at home.*
Researcher:	*What happens in the homes?*
Nomusa:	*In many cases a girl doesn't leave the boyfriend's home until he gets what he wants (referring to sex). Boys use every lie you can think of to convince girls to have sex with them. If the lies don't work, some boys resort to physically overpowering their girlfriends, in order to get what they want.*

The above conversation discloses how the teenage girls constructed their sense of selves and their sexual behaviours relative to their perceived and lived vulnerability to sexual domination. Their conversation evidently "draws on conventional discourses of sexuality, in which women are positioned as the reluctant recipients of male desires – rather than the initiators of sexual activities" (Allen, 2003:220). The fact that these girls viewed intimate relationships as not being about what the girls feel, but being more about what the boys want and expect of girls, illustrates how girls continue to be subordinated in the township context and how they are vulnerable to sexual risks. Their risk is increased by boys' relational power that impacts on the way in which sexual intimacy is negotiated.

Like the study by Jewkes and Morrell (2011:5), the girls alluded to having considerable agency in "choosing partners, but once the choice was made, their power was greatly circumscribed, and in many respects surrendered". These young girls negotiated their sexuality against the dominant, gendered constructions of girls and under conditions of patriarchal inequality. When Mbali spoke about girls giving in to their boyfriends' sexual pressures in order to avoid pain or humiliation, she evidently attested to the fact that most girls set themselves up for risky conduct, as they attempt to rescue relationships in the interests of their emotional wellbeing (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). Also, "girls are afraid of their boyfriends, even if they had not been beaten up by them – reflecting awareness of the power and violent potential of boys" (Jewkes and Morrell, 2011:6). Giving in to male desire for sex shows teenage girls' complicity in and the reproduction of asymmetrical relations of power (Bhana, 2014).

It is, however, important to note that the girls in my study were not simply passive and submissive prey of male sexual domination and sexual coercion. When Nomusa spoke about boys using lies and physically overpowering the girlfriends, she demonstrated that the girls 'give in' to the sexual pressures of their boyfriends, while resisting – intellectually and physically. Furthermore, Nomusa's comments demonstrate that some girls can recognise spaces that are susceptible to coercive sexual tendencies and strategise with peers accordingly. Some girls can challenge, resist and negotiate their strained contexts. These girls are strategisers who create sexual meanings within a context of sexual oppression and resistance (Bhana and Pattman, 2011). "At any historical moment, discursive formations are multiple and heterogenous, so that even though in every era there will be hegemonic discourses, other non-hegemonic discourses will also exist, forming a discursive mix from which subjectivity can be constructed" (Hekman, 1995:203, cited in Allen, 2003:220).

Asexual Youth: "I am a Person First"

This section demonstrates how the constructions of sexuality are never static, and are the product of particular discourses in a specific context. During the mix-sex focus-group discussion on boy-girl relationships, the following emerged:

Mfundisi:	*Mam, I think that being a boy or a girl and a relationship between the two is sometimes too overrated.*
Researcher:	*What do you mean?*
Mfundisi:	*Not everyone of us is fixated in whether they are a boy or a girl before engaging in a life project or starting a relationship. I personally have other priorities in life – than my life as a boy.*
Researcher:	*Such as?*
Mfundisi:	*Me, Mam - understanding myself, getting comfortable with me, and understanding my capabilities.*
Nomusa:	*You see Mam, for some of us, being a girl or boy don't matter in our daily realities or when it comes to friendships. We have too many struggles that do not ask you if you are a girl or a boy. They just happen. So, why obsessing about being a boy or a girl I make friends with whomever I like, because I see myself as a person first.*

> Thandeka: *Yes, relationships should not be determined by your gender, but should be driven by what you want from that friendship.*
>
> Researcher: *But, what happens practically?*
>
> Sihle: *People are very judgemental. As a boy, if you have girls as your friends – they assume that you are gay.*
>
> Sbongile: *Parents and even teachers here do not approve of a girl who is always in the company of boys.*
>
> Mfundisi: *Yes I agree, but we also have a right to define ourselves and freedom of association.*

The discussion depicts that some young people from my research site have started to deconstruct the gendered status quo, particularly the heterosexual identities and performances ascribed to them, and shaped by the social institutions. These boys and girls emphasised that they view themselves as persons first, before they see themselves as girls or boys. They also maintained that their relationships with others are determined by their interests, goals and realities, not their gender. These young people contested the dominant view that pervasive gender performances are a route through which teenage boys and girls construct their identities and gain social approval as sexually competent girls or boys. Instead, they maintained that sexuality is not an intrinsic part of their lives. They express to have no interest in sexual sexual orientations.

Informed by South Africa's culture of choice and human rights brought by the post-apartheid policies; these young people asserted their rights to define themselves and their freedom of association. However, these assertions were not left unopposed. Parents and teachers were said to be particularly opposing young people with unidentifiable sexual orientation. To them, asexuality is a hindrance in regulating and policing gender in and outside the school. The teachers' condemnation of boy-girl relationships and their inclination towards same-sex friendships, reveals how they are sexualising learners in their process of desexualising the school (Epstein and Johnson, 1998). Schools and homes are indeed the important "sites for the production and reproduction of gender and sexuality" (Epstein and Johnson, 1998:2).

"I am Not a Lesbian, I Just Prefer Dating Girls": Girls Only Intimate Relationships as Ideal

"Cindy *Mbali for life"*
(Field note, 2012).

The above message was engraved in bold, colourful ink on Cindy's desk at my research site. I got to notice it when I was sitting at her desk during one of my classroom observations. There was no way to ignore it, because of the decorative manner in which the message was written. During lunch break, when I was giving back her desk and thanking her for allowing me to sit at it, I commented on the message:

Researcher:	*I could not help but see and read the colourful message in/on your desk.*
Cindy:	*Which one Mam?*
Researcher:	*The one about you and Mbali.*
Cindy:	*Ow, that one (her face just lightened up, and she smiled).*
Researcher:	*Ha ha ha, I see that this message is either bringing good memories to you or Mbali is one special person for you.*
Cindy:	*Yes Mam, I need to admit that Mbali is very special to me.*
Researcher:	*Ah, I can see that, and your writing is communicating it boldly.*
Cindy:	*Yes Mam, when I am into something, I don't hide it.*
Researcher:	*Yes, I agree – why should a positive expression such as love, be hidden?*
Cindy:	*Yooo Mam, you don't know here. They still frown at girls as lovers.*
Researcher:	*Why?*
Cindy:	*To them, love should only be between a boy and a girl.*
Researcher:	*Cindy, are you telling me that you and Mbali are intimate?*
Cindy:	*Not you again Mam!*
Researcher:	*No, not like that Cindy. All along I was not clear about the type of love you share with Mbali. I just want to clarify what I am hearing.*
Cindy:	*Yes Mam, Mbali and I are lovers. And we are not the only ones in this class or at the school who are doing it.*

Researcher: Are you saying there are many lesbian relationships here at school.

Cindy: *No Mam, don't confuse issues. I am not Caster Semenya (a famous South African female athlete who won a gold medal at the 2009 World Championships and was later subjected to gender testing). And this is not about lesbianism. We are just girls loving each other.*

Researcher: *Please clarify the difference for me.*

Cindy: *You see Mam, many girls have realised that they don't need boys in order to complete themselves as girls and to express their feelings of love. Girls are now choosing to share their love with other girls, because boys are full of nonsense. This does not mean that I cannot love a boy if I want, but I have chosen not to love a boy because boys are controlling. The difference with lesbians, is that they only love girls.*

Researcher: *Are you saying you are bisexual?*

Cindy: *Not exactly Mam. Bisexual is a sexual orientation, but with us it is a conscious decision. Many girls are saying enough with the boys' nonsense. Instead of wasting our love, we have decided to share it among ourselves. And, to tell you the truth Mam, girls are better lovers than boys. There are fewer sexual risks and one is not more powerful than the other.*

Researcher: *In what way?*

Cindy: *Girls' relationships just become the whole package – an intersection of friendships, sisterhood, and intimacy, and, if you are in the same grade, you even become study partners.*

My conversation with Cindy above demonstrates the emerging constructions of sexuality among young teenage girls in a township context. The girls are involved in same-sex relationships as a symbol of rejecting intimacies with boys. These girls don't view themselves as lesbians or bisexuals, but simply as girls who reject heterosexuality and male power. According to Cindy, girls are tired of being dominated by boys in relationships and have begun to assert themselves as girls, who are capable of loving one another. These girls are rejecting heterosexual relationships as being fundamental in constructing or maintaining their femininity. The choice of these girls evidently demonstrates that gender is performative

(Butler, 1990). It is performed, however, in relation to the violence and fear that marks heterosexual relationships, where girls are mainly on the receiving end of violence; the shaping of sexuality and the fluidity are produced by the very context of heterosexual domination and male privilege.

When Cindy spoke about their choice of girl-on-girl intimate relationships as being influenced by girls' awareness of the non-reciprocal nature of heterosexual relationships, the oppressive power of men, and the sexual risks associated with heterosexual relationships – she demonstrated that girls from the township are not passive recipients of their environmental issues, but are active agents shaping their sexuality. However, while this agency and the significant departure from heterosexuality in these girls' construction of intimate relationships is noted and applauded, nonetheless, their choice was still defined and negotiated within the confines of heterosexual relationships. This alternative form of intimacy is thus not exclusively an act of choice – but is partly dependent on a person's experience of or knowledge of heterosexual relationships.

Diva Femininities: "Me, Myself and My Destiny"

In exploring the girls' construction of their gender and sexual identities – exploring femininity desired and accessed by the girls in the study, took centre-stage. This section explores how being a diva, or, aspiring to be a diva, was a highly rated form of femininity among girls who participated in my study. According to Stephens and Phillips (2003:1), "a *diva* is an Italian word derived from the Latin term for goddess or the female equivalent of a god". The basic sense of the term 'diva' is usually used to represent two types of women. One is a role model, a leader, or a well behaved woman – who 'has made it'. The other one is a 'bitchy' woman who is selfish, high-maintenance, and requires several material resources to remain happy and retain their social status (Stephens and Phillips, 2003). In South Africa, the term 'diva' has gained its popularity as part of the human-rights discourse brought by the post-apartheid policies. It is often associated with feminism, because divas are known to be women fighting for their physical, political and economic autonomy; they question societal norms and define their sense of identities.

The meanings attached to diva femininities were explored during the girls' only focus-group. The emerging construction of girlhood was ignited by the powerful images and messages

from the following 21st Century South African magazines brought by the girls as part of the exploration of diva femininities:

IMAGE 8: Zamajobe - Single, pregnant and loving it (*True Love SA*, November 2005)	**IMAGE 9**: Dr Precious Motsepe – Young, Black and gifted: A dazzling dynamo (*Tribute*, August 2007)	**IMAGE 10**: Rihanna – Fashion and beauty Goddess: Let's party! (*Cosmopolitan*, December 2007)
IMAGE 11: Oprah – Which way to meaningful success? (*The Oprah SA Magazine*, August 2010)	**IMAGE 12**: Nkhensani Nkosi – Forging ahead: Breaking barriers at work, at play and in love (*Destiny*, August 2010)	**IMAGE 13**: Oprah – Write your own story and claim the life you're meant to live – today (*The Oprah SA Magazine*, March 2012

The following comments illustrate the meanings around diva femininities, as represented by the icons in the above magazines, and as experienced/aspired by the girls in my study:

> *Researcher:*   *This is an interesting selection of magazines and the women in them. Let us talk about their significance or insignificance in your girlhood.*
>
> *Nonhlanhla:*   *These women are hot and successful and I want to be like them – except [for] Rihanna (international singer).*
>
> *Researcher:*   *What is hot about them and why not Rihanna?*
>
> *Nonhlanhla:*   *Mam, these are true divas. They are beautiful, loaded (rich), independent, and they know what they want in life.*

Researcher:	*And Rihanna?*
Nonhlanhla:	*Not anymore. I admit she is beautiful and talented, but is now too bitchy and full of herself. Look at her image (pointing at the magazine) – you might think she is a porn star that is a successful musician.*
Namhla:	*I don't see anything wrong with that. In fact, out of all these women, I see myself more like Rihanna. I'm also living my life untamed. As long as I do no harm to others - I don't care who says what!*
Sbongile:	*Me too. I see Rihanna as a diva. She is young, beautiful, talented, and sexy. Moreover, I like her strength – her ability to turn her life around. She is now in charge of her life and career. No men are telling her what to do. Exposing Chris Brown to the world for beating her and dumping him showed the world that the days of 'ukubekezela' (perseverance) are over.*
Zinhle:	*I have nothing against Rihanna, but to me she is Khanyi Mbawo (Famous South African celebrity) kind of a Diva.*
Sbongile:	*Hell no Zinhle, Khanyi is 'iqola' (a gold digger) – with no talent. Only uses men to get further in life.*
Nothando:	*Yes, let us take Khanyi out of the Diva list. She is the reason why we still have girls who believe that beauty or men are their tickets to success.*
Researcher:	*Is that so? What is your ticket to success?*
Nothando:	*People like Nkhensani are our example Mam. She comes from an affluent family and has a handsome husband, but that did not stop her making a name as a successful iconic South African fashion brand.*
Sthandiwe:	*Look at Oprah – Her success came from hard work and not beauty or men. Eish, that woman is an inspiration to the world. I truly respect her for her intelligence, confidence and big-heartedness.*
Researcher:	*So why have you included Precious in your list? She is known for being a beauty and for being married to a billionaire?*
Nonhlanhla:	*I admit that Precious is a beauty, but she is not dependant on it or her husband. She has brains – she is a medical doctor with her own businesses and excellent fashion sense.*
Researcher:	*And Zamajobe – she is a beauty who got pregnant at the age of 20?*
Namhla:	*Mam, Zamajobe has a lovely voice: who won't love a pop idols' winner?*

> *Sbongile: Yes, she got pregnant at a young age, but she did not view it as a curse or the end of her life. She embraced and celebrated it. I respect her for not being a chewing gum (sticky) to her man. She openly refused staying with her boyfriend – because of the pregnancy. It was she who said that she was young and not ready for a commitment.*

The above extract highlights that the profiles of the prospering Black women in the South African media – especially in the magazines – are an important tool that young people are using to resist dominant constructions of femininities. The powerful messages such as 'I am pregnant and loving it', 'young, Black and gifted', 'fashion and beauty Goddess', 'meaningful success', 'breaking barriers at work, at play and in love', and 'write your own story and claim the life you're meant to live' that accompanied the profiled icons – are exposing the young girls to other ways of constituting sexual subjectivity. They are fueling the construction of what my participants termed diva femininities. The girls in my study used the term 'diva' to represent elite women whose positions in society are not only dependent on shifty things like beauty or sex appeal – but more on their independence, hard work, talents or wealth. They constructed a 'diva' as a notable woman (girl) who is a brand. A woman who is independent, liberal, with a specific attitude towards life, and who takes charge of her destiny.

In contrast to a discourse on young African American divas in Stephens and Phillips (2003), the girls in my study did not subscribe to the representation of divas who are bitchy, cocky or women who use manipulation and power to get what they want. They spoke against women who are using their beauty or bodies as a ticket to success. Some of the girls, for instance, contested that a girl like Rihanna qualifies to be a diva because they viewed her media images as being that of 'a good girl gone bad'. However, girls like Sbongile were able to identify the qualities that make Rihanna a diva beyond her cockiness, fashion, beauty and sexy body – which are embedded in the dominant construction of femininity and overt notions of heterosexuality. Sbongile idolised Rihanna as a diva because of her musical talent, being in the driving seat, taking control of her life, her ability to come out of an abusive relationship, and also her independency.

The critical engagement of the girls with diva femininities disclosed their agency in resisting and rejecting the dominant constructions of femininities. Their representation of who is a diva that emphasised independence, intelligence, being hardworking, bold and powerful women, indicated that femininities are shifting – especially in the democratic South Africa. This does not mean that these girls totally rejected the importance of beauty and fashion in their constructions of femininity, but, what was notable, was their ability to describe girlhood beyond what Emma Renold (1999) called hyper-femininities. Similarly, Hunter's work in Mandeni township showed that femininity ideals that cast women with sexualised bodies and dependency on men, have begun to shift (Hunter, 2010). He demonstrated that passive and subservient girls waiting for male validation are by no means common Black or township sexual identities (ibid).

These young girls' conversations strongly draw on the discourse that resists the "positioning of young women as always wanting commitment and love from a relationship" (Allen, 2003:219). When Namhla constituted Zamajobe as a diva because of her ability to define herself apart from the dominant heterosexual culture that is heavily invested in belonging or being seen to belong to a heterosexual relationship; her depiction illustrated that she was embracing agentic women who are asserting their position of independence from men (Hunter 2010; Allen, 2003). Zamajobe represents the growing number of young women who are embracing and being proud of being single mothers. This is a position traditionally frowned upon in many African communities – one that is generally not a matter of choice, but a circumstance that many young women found themselves in because of being rejected by their boyfriends (Nkani, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This chapter contributed to debates about masculinities, femininities and the alternative sexualities of teenage boys and girls from a township context. Throughout the chapter, the intersection of the identities of teenage girls and boys, and their sociocultural and historical context, was explored and discussed. The chapter revealed that the ways in which young people articulate the dominant ideal of hegemonic masculinity and compulsory femininity, is tied to the daily realities of living in a township. These realities are embedded within patriarchal and heterornormative discourses (see Bhana and Mayeza, 2016; Bhana, 2014; Mathe, 2013).

It is important to state that this understanding is by no means viewing township boys and girls as a homogenous group who are similarly impacted by their sociocultural and historical context. Instead, the chapter demonstrated the multiple and plural ways in which masculinities, femininities and alternative sexualities are constructed and performed by teenage girls and boys from a township context. As such, the chapter evidently demonstrated that while the hegemonic masculinities and compulsory femininities are dominant in the township context, alternative ways of being are emerging. The chapter thus acknowledges the agency of teenagers in accepting, adapting, contesting, or rejecting the dominant constructions of masculinities and femininities.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"People in varied social contexts are the products of their social and linguistic histories, gendered cultures, construction of gender and sexual identities, taboos around the sex discourse, construction of class, social construction of age, and educational philosophies" *(Bahl, 1997).*

I begin this chapter with the above quotation – as an assertion of the key tenets influencing understandings gained during this research journey. This chapter sets out a summary of the study by reflecting on the study focus, its major findings, and the conclusions drawn from it. The findings are thematically presented. These broad themes reflect how the thesis has answered the key questions and sub-questions it set out to explore. These were: How do township teenage boys and girls learn about, constitute, negotiate and perform gender and sexual roles within and around the school context; What are the gendered discourses within and around the school context that influence boys' and girls' constructions of sexuality and identity; In what ways do boys and girls reproduce, adapt, negotiate or reject the sexuality positioning's made available to them within and around the school context; How do teenage boys and girls construct pleasure, desire, and sexual risks within a township context; and What are the places of pleasure and/or risk in a township context? The chapter then considers how the study contributes to knowledge, its strengths and limitations. It concludes with recommendations. It is hoped that the discussions throughout the thesis, and, particularly in this chapter, have far-reaching implications for the framing of practice and policy, and can give directions to further research.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This thesis reports on an ethnographic study conducted in a township school setting. The study investigated young people's informal sexual cultures and how they negotiate their sexualities within a school context. The study further examined the significance that young people attach to sexuality in their everyday lives. It subscribed to the view that schools are sexualised sites, and learners are active agents whose sexual identities shape and are shaped by social relations (Morojele, 2014; Allen, 2013; Boshoff and Prinsloo, 2013; Renold, 2004; Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). It drew upon the literature which illustrates "how

the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce sexual identities which students negotiate, adopt and resist, as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221).

Furthermore, the study emphasised the importance of understanding the contextuality and diversity of youth sexuality, and hence the study participants were drawn from a population of grade 11 learners aged 16 to 18 from an African township context. The exploration of the multiple, nuanced ways that young people's sexualities are performed within a township context, took centre stage. The study highlighted that despite South Africa being referred to as a rainbow nation, it is still impossible – or rather it would be a mistake – to ignore the significant role played by race, class, culture and the area of location in the constructions of sexuality. It acknowledges that the understandings and arguments that surfaced during this study were mainly influenced by the African township context, the schooling contexts, and the historical moments as highlighted in chapter 2 of this report (Foucault, 1990). This position thus required this study to adopt a broader, yet closely focussed examination of young people's sexuality, and the abandoning of common sense, stereotypic assumptions that many studies generally hold about young people and their sexuality.

The study supported the argument that understanding the ways in which young people in varied social contexts give meaning to sexuality and gender, are key to developing appropriate forms of educational interventions designed to address sexuality, HIV and AIDS education, and gender equality (Bhana, 2015; Ramadhin, 2010, Bhana and Pattman, 2009). It maintained that efforts aimed at developing transformative interventions to address gender and sexuality problems in varied social contexts, should be informed by research which takes into account how and where young people make meaning of their sexual selves. What became evidently useful throughout the study was the situating and understanding of young people's performances, lived experiences, and their constructions of sexualities within a spatial context – something which other studies with young people do not always consider.

Framed within the feminist post-structuralist and the social constructionist theories, the research methods adopted were youth-centred and participatory in nature. Pattman and Kehily (2004) stress the importance of a youth-centred methodology that values young people's perspectives and attempts to centre them in understanding social phenomena. One of the central features of the study was its commitment to foregrounding learners' own

experiences, and using the research process as a vehicle through which learners are enabled to communicate experiences that are important to them. Throughout my fieldwork, every effort was made to respect and treat the teenage learners as knowledgeable active agents who are negotiating their own social worlds. As such, it became a common occurrence to hear young people, during our conversations, saying "Ok mam, let us shed some light on this aspect". This, evidently, indicated that they felt empowered and perceived themselves as being knowledgeable agents.

Data were collected and produced using the participatory research methods. These were observations, focus-group discussions and unstructured conversations. These tools focused on creating an environment that 'gave a voice' to individuals under study, and allowed examination of "how the daily routines and rituals of schooling produce sexual identities which learners negotiate, adopt, challenge and resist – as they carve out a sense of sexual self" (Allen, 2007:221). As such, the approach revealed the social relations of schooling by recognising that we develop a sense of self in relation to others and our social environment. The approach allowed us "to see how we 'do gender' through social interaction, and how this social interaction is framed through a specific context alongside wider political, economic, religious and cultural histories" (Ward, 2013:49).

Furthermore, integrating focus groups with participant observation, enabled me to fully explore the performativity of learners' sexual identities from multiple perspectives and dimensions – and provided ways of troubling and simultaneously making sense of the kinds of gendered sexuality identities and relations of high-school girls and boys (see Renold, 2005). Triangulating these ethnographic tools has highlighted how an interview-based study alone could have not been able to capture the richness and the depth of data collected. These tools captured the messy complexities of participants' lives, and allowed the iterative, open-ended, constructive, deconstructive, co-constructive process to happen; a process that was highly unlikely to be achieved through reflecting only participants' accounts of events in the context, and at the time of interviews.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, my fieldwork journey is better described using the metaphor of a spider web. Although the study was not about me, my subjective self was also central to my experiences of fieldwork and the nature of data I collected. It was interesting to

note how my own sense of identity was co-constructed to respond to different realities of the field. For instance, I entered the field aware that my identity of being an African, adult, married, middle-class woman created a power imbalance between me and my research participants, and was going to negatively impact on open communication. As part of my impression-management strategies and as a way of mediating power relations between myself and the research participants, I presented myself in such a manner which communicated that I am approachable, open to friendship, and very humble.

To achieve this, I cut my hair very short and kept it natural, abandoned my high heels, and wore casual clothes which made me look younger and much more approachable. The indication that these strategies worked was the warm, open communication which developed between me and the research participants; their ability to separate my role from that of other adult members of the school, and the fact that they could confide in me about many of their dissatisfactions and satisfactions about the school.

Many of my research participants ended up viewing me more as their adult friend or a big sister whom they had never had. Interestingly, some of the boys viewed me as their prospective 'sugar mama' (as discussed in Chapter 7). Furthermore, there was strong competition among them for my attention as my prospective 'Ben10s'. Having spoken about my impression-management strategies above, it is, however, also important to emphasise that throughout my fieldwork, my ethnographic enterprise was not just a matter of what I did or said, but how the two sides of an encounter arrived at a delicate workable definition of our engagements (adapted from Davies, 1999).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Structural and Social Factors Affecting Young People's Constructions of Sexuality

- **The Township Context and the Constructions of Sexuality**

After two decades of South Africa's freedom, the townships continue to be marked by the legacy of apartheid, by extreme socio-economic disparities, and by a high degree of gender-based violence. The realities of living in a township (as described in chapter 2) are unavoidable terrain of continuing struggles, and a medium through which girls and boys in

my study construct their gender and sexuality. The township's geographic location; its high rate of unemployment; the history of political struggles; the heavy burdens and infections of HIV; experiences and stories of teenage girls who are victims of sexual harassment, coerced sex, gang rapes and corrective rape for lesbians; boys being perpetrators of sexual violations; and high rates of unplanned teenage pregnancies; play an influential role in the ways in which young girls and boys in my study negotiate their sexualities, masculinities or femininities (Hunter, 2010; Mathe, 2007; Prinsloo, 2007).

Notably in my study, the social identity of 'Esinqawunqawini' (a place where dust never settles) intersected a great deal with the gender and sexuality identities of my research participants. Among my research participants, on the one hand there were those who aspired to and/or lived up to the dominant gender and sexuality characteristics of the township. These were boys and girls whose construction of sexuality was mainly influenced by the strong cultural, religious and patriarchal discourses that position boys as strong and superior – and girls as fragile and subservient.

There were boys in my study who believed that being a real boy in a township involves the demonstration of frigidity, power, violence, being invincible, and being what Hunter (2010) calls '*isoka*' masculinity. These are the boys who spoke passionately about the fights they had been involved with in the past, who expressed the right to control their girls; and viewed their role as legitimate and unavoidable – to dominate and 'straighten' their intimate partners. These characteristics were seen as bravado codes for being 'ulova' (a streetwise boy) and the tools for protecting and legitimising their manhood in a township context. As such, these boys believed that they were compelled to use force, and sometimes commit violent acts as tools to survive the township and to prove being worthy of a township social identity. Those who fail to achieve them, risk being referred to as 'ibhotela/ cheese boy' (soft or fragile boys), 'isnayi' or 'ibhari' (non-urbanised boy or a person who is not streetwise). This leads the 'good boys' to adopt these warrior narratives as a definition of township masculinity (Jordan, 1995). A history of violence and dispossession has bred a toxic masculinity (Gqola, 2015).

In the same breath, there were girls who defined and aspired to fit within the dominant township constructions of gender and sexuality which promote sexual passivity, and being

respectable, submissive, obedient, and fragile girls. These are the girls who viewed the role of boys and men as being that of a leader, provider or protector. These girls' main arguments were around the township being a dangerous place. Without a feared strong protector by your side, there are many 'wolves' who will jump at an opportunity to harm you. To them, it was easier to submit to the control and discipline of boys and men – than to constantly be on lookout for danger. These are the girls who viewed intimate relationships as not being about what the girls feel, but more about what the boys want and expect of girls. Moreover, these constructions clearly illuminate how girls continue to be subordinated in the township context, and how they are vulnerable to sexual risks. Their risk is increased by boys' relational power that impacts on the way in which sexual intimacy is negotiated.

On the other hand, there were those who perceived themselves as being 'trapped' in the dominant constructions of gender and sexuality. Among my research participants, some girls felt they had no option but to submit to their boyfriend's authority. These are the girls who spoke about giving-in to their boyfriends' sexual pressures in order to avoid pain or humiliation. The conversations I had with them are evidently drawn from "conventional discourses of sexuality in which women are positioned as the reluctant recipients of male desires - rather than as the initiators of sexual activities" (Allen, 2003:220). Like the studies by Bhana and Anderson (2013) and Jewkes and Morrell (2011:1), these are the girls who "expressed highly acquiescent femininities – with power surrendered to their boyfriends, as a 'choice' which made their lives in cultural terms more meaningful". Among the boys, the common belief was that surviving the township requires a constant demonstration of strength, of being fearless, and of risk taking. They viewed these characteristics as the same which enabled township youths in the past to conquer the struggle against apartheid.

On the extreme end, there were girls and boys who challenged the dominant constructions of township identities. These are girls and boys who viewed themselves first and foremost as unique beings with aspirations and hopes for a better future. They defined themselves outside the confines of the township's dominant boyhood and girlhood characteristics. For instance, these are the boys who took pride in being gentle, loving and domesticated. They expressed their support of gender equity, of no violence against girls and women, and they viewed themselves as being equally vulnerable as girls on issues like intimacy, safety and crime. Like Mpama (2007), these are the boys who are viewed by their peers as not being 'township

enough' and were called names like 'cheese boy', 'coconut' (black on the outside and white on the inside), or 'ibhotela'. The girls in this category described themselves as being active agents with abilities to choose the body size they want, how to dress and what to wear – and the relationships and the partner of their choice.

The fluidity and the diversity in these young people's identities and their constructions and experiences of gender and sexuality, stress that while there are several commonly shared township realities among young people, boys or girls from a township are not a homogenous group. Within the township, there are variations in the experiences of sexualities, as boys and girls take on different co-ordinates which intersect with multi-dimensions constituting their everyday lives. We should thus refrain from squashing their identities and experiences into essentialist, implied, stereotypic, or racialised explanations – such as 'they lack a moral code of conduct or their behaviour exhibits their surroundings'.

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasised the fluidity, diversity and context-specificity in the constructions of gender and sexuality, and have viewed my research participants as actively involved in their identity constructions. I have maintained that to truly understand how young people produce and reproduce gendered sexual identities, multiple spaces, daily routines, rituals, social values including relationship cultures which learners negotiate, adopt and resist – should be explored.

Having said that, it is worth noting that this study continuously demonstrated that the agency of my research participants and the diversity of their sexual identities, were not absolute. In many instances they were influenced by a particular discourse, different settings, and different people (peers, the researcher, or teachers). As such, whenever the participants were accepting, adapting or contesting dominant constructions of sexuality, they did so within the constraints of their socio-structural, historical and interpersonal realities. I found that the demands placed on them by their peers, society and the school – to either conform, challenge, adapt to the sexuality identity chains created by the legacy of apartheid, patriarchy, oppressive cultural and religious practices – were enormous. As a result, even the alternative constructions of sexuality which I reported on in chapter 7, are constantly viewed as a contestation of, sometimes a camouflage of, or a suppression of, the dominant ones. "There are consequences for those who perform their gender and sexuality in a locally specific way,

or those who diverge from the script" (Ward, 2013:228). My data suggest that despite the positive political and economic strides that South Africa has achieved since 1994, living in a township is a continuous struggle – a struggle that many people from other parts of South Africa and of the world, cannot completely comprehend.

- **The Belief Systems: Culture and Religion**

Bhana (2015) and Bhana and Pattman (2011) cited in Bhana (2016a:130) assert that, in South Africa, "gender is compounded by social, religious and cultural scripts which influence and have effects on the ways in which teenage boys and girls give meaning to sexuality". These values or beliefs which inform sexuality, influenced my research participants' sexual behaviour in a positive or negative way. For instance, one of the value systems which influenced the way in which my research participants gave meaning to gender and sexuality, was their 'discursive constructs' of God's will and of providence. They used them to naturalise and legitimise sexuality constructs like heterosexuality. This naturalisation and legitimisation was used to perpetuate gender inequality and to discriminate and oppress other gender groups such as gay or lesbians.

The notion that sex is to only occur within heterosexual marriage, that young people should be non-sexual, that abstinence as a favoured sexual choice as opposed to being sexually active, and that girls are responsible for delaying and fighting sexual advancement by boys – dominated my research site. The high prevalence of practices like 'ukuhlolwa kwezintombi' (virginity testing) in the community under study, suggested strong support for these constructions of sexuality. These views were regardless of the learners known to be involved in intimate relationships, the on-going incidences of learners caught having sex inside the school, and the reported cases of learners with unplanned pregnancies. These persisting, dominant constructions of sexuality evidently reflected the strong influence of early Christian teachings which viewed celibacy as a personal victory over worldly temptations, sexual intercourse outside marriage as being sinful, denounced sexual intercourse unless procreation was intended, and the belief that masturbation was worse than rape because it could not result in conception (Westheimer and Lopater, 2002).

The girls' bodies were viewed as fragile, sexually passive and 'docile bodies' which are invested, marked, trained and tortured within heterosexual discourse. The school morning

assembly was one of the platforms where cultural and religious messages aimed at policing and disciplining girls' bodies, were delivered. Messages on 'Ukuhlonipha' (showing respect) or 'ukuzihlonipha' (self-respect) or preserving one's virginity dominated many of the morning assembly talks directed at girls and their bodies. Touching or allowing another person to touch your erogenous zones, particularly your vagina, was regarded as impure and demonstrating a lack of self-respect. I found this very disempowering for girls and very hypocritical – since these messages are delivered in the same context that upholds and promotes virginity testing. The contradiction that girls are discouraged from exploring their bodies – while a stranger (a virginity tester) is permitted to police girls' bodies.

The main concern is that these girls learn to surrender their bodies to people other than themselves – the tester, the boyfriend, and then the husband. The majority of girls in my study did admit that within their intimate relationships their boyfriends are in charge of where, when, and what happen to their bodies. Consequently, many of the girls were highly invested in the notions of reputation and respectability, which are rooted in Zulu culture and serve as a regulatory technique that inhibits free expression of sexual desire (Mathe, 2013).

The inhibition of free expression of sexual desire was also applicable to boys. Many of the boys in my study talked about being from religious or cultural backgrounds that prohibit sexual expressions such as masturbation, and a background that equates sex to penetrative sexual intercourse. These backgrounds clearly limit the safe sexual exploration options like 'thigh sex' or what the young people termed 'ukushaya iqhude' (rooster sex, which refers to humping over a dressed girl) that young people had in a traditional African context, and which increases girls' vulnerability to being violated through penetrative sex.

As much as a strong cultural and patriarchal influence was evident in how these girls and boys viewed their sexual identity, they were not simply passive. For instance, some of the girls positioned themselves conversationally as being self-empowered. To these girls, preserving or losing virginity was presented as a choice. Statements like "I decided" reflected what Maxwell and Aggleton (2012) term an 'agentic' approach to relationships and sex. In pointing to these girls' agency, I am not underestimating the constraints they experience in constructing their girlhood within the South African context, but draw attention to the

importance of engaging in a more complex exploration of the emerging vocal forms of femininities, in a country where female passivity is often the norm.

The School as a Social Institution

Despite appeals to preserve schools from the visible presence of sexuality, they are indeed sexualised sites (Bhana, Morrell, Shefer and Ngabaza, 2010). Though sexuality is hoped not to be, or is perceived not to be, one of the core elements of schooling in my research – it was everywhere. It entered the curriculum, the rules, the procedures, and the power relations of schooling; it was present in patterns of personal friendships and relationships; it was present in fantasies and expectations about future destinies; and it was present in play, on the playgrounds and in talk about popular cultural icons (adapted from Kehily, 2002; Epstein and Johnson, 1998). Gender expression and performance are part of everyone's everyday experience and cannot be separated from the curricular, pedagogical and policy work that goes on in public schools (Ingrey, 2013). I have thus maintained throughout this study that the gendered experiences of schooling are critical in understanding and engaging with the evolving sexual identities of teenage learners, and how they make meaning of and act out their identities.

As a social mirror, my research site was typical of many schools that continue to have a need for persons who are uncomplicatedly female or male. My research site was indeed an official locus for the gender order. One of the ways my research site achieved the gender order, was a compulsory school uniform for boys and girls. Through the school uniform, learners were denied the possibility of alternative ways of being, and explicitly created no room for the expression of difference. In one instance, for example, a girl learner was not wearing her uniform appropriately, and the teacher instinctively switched to saying, "I wonder who will marry you". This statement clearly stabilised girlhood within the heterosexual matrix, where she reinforced a gendered metaphor. She used heterosexuality to organise and keep the social (gender) order.

Formal schooling processes were found to play a vital role in asymmetrically relegating girls to subservient positions which constrained their abilities to negotiate favourable relationships and conditions within the school. During physical education activities in the (LO) subject, for instance, girls felt compelled to succumb to dominant values of femininities like being

polite, reserved and modest. Some of LO activities – a subject informed by the principle of inclusivity and anti-discriminatory doctrines – were incorrectly implemented by educators. In some cases, they were used to silence some learners, particularly girls and homosexual learners, who were used to reinforce certain gender stereotypes. For example, in activities that required a demonstration of strength, boys were an obvious choice to participate, and where expression of emotions was necessary, girls became mandated to play such roles. One of the LO lessons contained messages which exclusively recognised marriage as a union between men and women. This message was read as meaning that a marriage should only be between women and men. This is disturbing in a country where same-sex marriage is legal and constitutional. I view such messages as gendered and perpetuating the heterosexual market. They conscientise girls and boys to see themselves as having a place within the heterosexual market - from which they claim worth and value.

Another process and practice which legitimised gender at my research site was curriculum choices. At my research site, curriculum choices were highly gendered – in spite of learners 'having freedom' to choose any curriculum of their choice. These informal processes of what appeared to be choice, exacerbated the development of a specific peer culture which was inevitably gendered. The technical class, for instance, had 25 boys and only 3 girls. In Chapter 6, I spoke about how a boys' friendship group called '*izinja*' (dogs) was in a technical subject class, and the group was known to be ill- discipline, and performed a more traditional form of hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 1995). On the other hand, I spoke about how a friendship group of boys called '*Oqonda*' (strict and focused) were in the 'A class', did mathematics and science, expressed views supportive of gender equality, were viewed as 'softer', and treated girls in their class in a much more friendly and respectable way compared to '*izinja*'. However, I argue that while character types matched certain forms of gender and sexuality performances, boys and girls could occupy multiple subjective positions. The sexuality of young people should never be viewed as being concrete, but as multiple, fluid, and lived out in different social relations, spaces, and specific special contexts.

Adults' Discourse on Sexuality

The dominant discourse on learners' sexuality by adult members of the school was that children are: sexually innocent and incompetent, their expression of sexual desires are hazardous and a potential obstruction of academic excellence, they are in need of protection from their own impulsive sexual urges, their expression of sexuality is a sign of moral decay, girls are victims of male sexual gratification and are expected to say 'no' to sex, and 'boys will always be boys'. For learners caught in any sexual or intimate acts, the conversation was a gendered ambush, which was diluted and loaded with cultural and moral undertones. Clearly, the adult's conceptions of learners' sexuality seemed to be influenced by a discourse which conceives sex as a rite into adulthood, and which constitutes adolescence as a time of fickle desires (Coleman, 1980, cited in Allen, 2004).

It is important to note that my research site was populated with sex-education programmes which equipped learners with knowledge about sex. As a result, learners possessed clear knowledge of the risks associated with being in an intimate relationship. What was lacking was a discourse of desire. In every sex education and reproductive health talks I attended at the school, adults (the teachers and health promoters) associated young people's intimate relationships with negative outcomes like sexually transmissible infections, sexual exploitation of girls by boys, unplanned pregnancy, and sexual coercion. As a consequence, the meanings and significance young people attribute to their relationships remains a mystery and have not always been afforded the attention and respect they deserve within the school walls.

The message which was echoed within the school walls was 'abstinence'. In instances where family planning or safe sex messages were presented to learners, such topics often generated a great deal of anxiety, as teachers and health promoters appeared frightened of being perceived as encouraging sexual activities – or they felt it was inappropriate for them to talk about such things to learners who are so young (see Jewkes, 2009). As such, little or very superficial attention was given to topics like proper condom use, family-planning options available to young people, and their correct usage. Instead, on many occasions the presenters found a way of diverting attention away from such topics – to talk about statistics on teenage pregnancies, HIV infections, and school dropouts resulting from unwanted pregnancies. These are messages which instilled fear in issues relating to sex.

Heterosexual identity was the only 'acceptable' and 'recognised' identity for adult members of the school. To them, there was no room for other forms of sexual orientation. This does not mean that there were no learners whose sexual orientation was being homosexual, for instance. These learners existed, but their sexual orientation was rejected or discouraged in the school context. The teachers played an important role in policing and naturalising heterosexuality. They attached stereotypic attributes to boys (males) and girls (females), which were the ground for unequal and gendered human aptitudes.

The 'toilet affair' message discussed in chapter 6, for instance, is one of the discourses which proliferated and endorsed heterosexuality at my research site. During this talk, the teacher constructed girls as lacking agency and being fragile – with nothing but their biological make-up to blame, and boys as sexual heroes and conquerors. While these discourses might appear old-fashioned in light of South Africa's rights-based era with its gender equity agenda – several research studies post-1994 continue to report on the dominance of conservative sexual mores located within the heterosexual and patriarchal discourse (Bhana and Anderson, 2013; Msibi, 2012; Jewkes and Morrell, 2011; Bhana and Pattman, 2009; Baxen and Breidlid, 2009; Hunter, 2005; Pattman and Chege, 2003).

I have argued throughout this thesis that the protective and heterosexual discourses serve to limit the development of positive perceived choices in relationships by women/girls – reinforcing traditional gender roles in which men/boys retain more power than women (Powell, 2005) and which are the breeding grounds for homophobia. Furthermore, they come at a high price, especially in the South African township environments where there are many incidents of sexual crimes and HIV infection (Mathe, 2013). Unarguably so, a need to protect children from harm is a very real concern – particularly from the violence and terrors of the township. However, a concern is that protection becomes surveillance and control, which renders children voiceless and prevents them from acting on matters concerning their own sexual lives.

The Discourse of Girls and Boys on Sexuality

- **Young People as Active Sexual Beings**

Contrary to the adults' discourse and constructions of teenage identities as being passive and innocent on the one hand, and being risky, rebellious with girls as victims of boys' sexual urges on the other hand – my research participants spoke of and viewed their sexual identities positively. According to them, they are active sexual beings with diverse preferences; and they should be listened to instead of being controlled or policed. According to them, things like intimate relationships or sexual intercourse among peers were mainly based on choice, love and personal preferences – not only on coercion or peer pressure.

As such, some young people spoke about being in intimate relationships that are non-sexual; relationships that fulfil their love, support, emotional and academic needs. They spoke of study partners, lunch partners, or partners sharing their daily challenges, accomplishments and future aspirations. They, however, admitted that maintaining platonic relationships and the friendship once relationships are heterosexualised, was difficult. These learners spoke of being constantly compelled to define physical, mental or social spaces in preserving their platonic peer relationships.

Like the finding of the study by Jewkes and Morrell (2011:5), while the girls in my study spoke about their "agency at the point of choosing partners, once the choice was made – their power was greatly circumscribed, and in many respects surrendered". Many openly admitted to being aware of the power their boyfriends and of their boyfriends' potential to hurt or inflict violence on them when things are not going their way. Consequently, girls spoke about how they were afraid to challenge their boyfriends' authorities – even if they have not experienced any gender violence. Campbell (2000), cited in Jewkes and Morell (2011:2), however, alerts us to the fact that, although young "girls negotiate their sexuality under conditions of patriarchal inequality, we should not view them as being simply passive". Some of the girls in my study spoke about how things like being an 'A' student or from a family of feared gangsters, mediated the chances of being taken advantage of by their boyfriends. Many researchers have overlooked this agency.

Of particular interest, is how the study revealed that young people employ creative ways of negotiating their sexuality? The exploration of their sexual desires was not limited to intimate relationships. The game of 'heads or tails', for instance, provided young people with a safe platform and resource to learn about intimacies, and to shape and take charge of their sexualities. Sandile in Chapter 6 spoke about how the game afforded both girls and boys a 'no strings attached' space to learn and practise sexual like a French kiss, an intimate hug, or intimate body touches. During the game they also get a chance to ask each other questions like how does one tell that someone loves you, what do you do on a first date, where to go – or serious questions like how do you romance a girl or undress a girl?

The game of 'heads or tails' is viewed as being self-empowering and it decreases their chances of being passive when they start dating. This is consistent with a large literature that suggests that knowledge and talks about sex are an important precondition for young people to have control over important aspects of their gender and sexuality, and can consequently influence them to engage in healthy sexual relationships. "Research in Europe and America has suggested that teenagers are more likely to practise safe sex if they have opportunities to communicate openly about sex, with sexual partners, peers and parents, or other significant adults" (Aggleton and Campbell, 2000, cited in Campbell and MacPhail, 2002:338).

Furthermore, this unorthodox sexual freedom for both boys and girls was breaking the normal rules and regulations of heterofemininity. It was contrary to many research findings that have reported that in low-income urban settings, young men believe they are the only ones entitled to sexual freedom (Anderson, 2009). By acknowledging the sexual freedom of both boys and girls, it is important to note that I am not rejecting a discourse on the subordination and policing of girls' sexual desires and the gendered nature of the activities in such games (see limitations discussed in Chapter 6). Rather, I am acknowledging 'some' shift in sexuality constructions of young boys and girls in such contexts.

Some girls openly admitted to being virgins as a choice. When asked what influenced their decisions to remain virgins, they cited their religious and traditional beliefs, their parents' wishes, and, above all, their own wishes which were mostly influenced by academic markers. As much as a strong cultural and patriarchal influence was evident in how these girls viewed their sexual identity, they were not, however, simply passive. They positioned themselves

conversationally as self-empowered: preserving or losing virginity was presented as a choice. Statements like "I decided" reflected what Maxwell and Aggleton (2012) call an 'agentic' approach to relationships and sex. In pointing to these girls' agency, this thesis does not underestimate the constraints they experience in constructing their girlhood within the South African context, but draws attention to the importance of engaging in a more complex exploration of the emerging vocal forms of femininities, in a country where female passivity is often the norm.

Heterosexuality as a 'Norm'

Most of the young people in my study talked of the high-school years as a 'must' for establishing intimate relationships (see Mathe, 2013). While acknowledging the dangers and risks associated with intimate relationships, they still viewed it as an important milestone for a growing person still exploring his/her world. They viewed the teenage years as being an important period of exploration and development of gender identity (see, also, Jewkes and Christofides, 2008). This exploration took place in friendships, the sex games of 'heads or tails', peer groups, intimacies, in fashion, and in the township's social and entertainment spaces like 'inkwari' (see Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis). This allows us to show how young people 'do gender' "through social interaction, and how this social interaction is framed through specific contexts alongside wider social, economic and cultural histories" (Ward, 2013:228). Their sexuality and gender identities were indeed relational, and were shaped by socio-economic and cultural forces within social spaces and institutions like the school, entertainment spaces, cultural clubs and church.

In my in-depth exploration of young people's identities, friendship groups and intimate relationships, the findings of this study revealed that heterosexuality was used as the 'norm' through which everything else was defined. Most of my research participants were invested in a discourse which naturalised and essentialised heterosexuality. As part of the summary of my findings, I not only show how learners successfully acted upon their subject positions, but also discuss how they invested in them, enacted them, reproduced them, and/or resisted them.

In the school environment, for instance, things like eating habits and bodies were a marker of particular femininities and masculinities. For girls to be accepted and to confidently participate in friendship or intimate relationships with girls or with boys, there was much

pressure upon them to succumb to dominant discourses which position them in traditionally gendered ways. For instance, some girls believed that their sense of 'belongingness', friendships, and being liked by boys, depended on their physical attractiveness – which is achieved through 'regulated and normalised' feminine eating habits and bodies. These findings echo the widespread notion of culturally inscribed 'docile bodies' that are invested, marked, trained, scrutinised and tortured within heterosexual discourse (Renold, 1999; Foucault, 1975).

Many of the girls in this study invested a great deal in their appearance, in order to make themselves beautiful for men. As such, being 'sexy' was a prescribed dress at events such as 'inkwari'. Young people spoke of how wearing revealing clothes was equivalent to being 'hot', was their passport to getting invited to social events, and getting free booze, transport and food. Furthermore, a 'sexy' dress code was said to increase a girl's chances of being sexually attractive or of getting a date. Research has also indicated that it is crucial for young women to secure and maintain sexual relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, 2000; Jewkes et al., 2009) by making themselves appealing to men. Thus, young women are reinforcing the existing gender norms and definitions of femininity (Litosseliti and Sutherland, 2002; Marcus, 2003).

The notion of girls and boys constructing their femininities and masculinities through their bodies and by heavily investing in relationships with their peers, has also been noted by other researchers (Coffey, Budgeon and Cahill, 2016; Allen, 2013; Bowley, 2013; Reay, 2001). However, these notions of femininities and masculinities were an illusion that was unattainable for some, or were contested by others. There were girls and boys who did not pay attention to eating habits, fashion, and body types as markers of their gender and sexuality. Instead, they acknowledged the high price they were paying for not succumbing to dominant sexuality constructs, and spoke of having different priorities like academic aspirations or being unique as the marker of their gender and sexual identities.

The idealisation of girls who are decent, humble, virtuous, self-respecting, beautiful, focused and loyal, featured strongly in the boys' constructions of gender and sexuality at my research site. Their constructions of ideal girlfriends were invested in girls who are polite, ethical, respecting, and with firm bodies. By placing high value on girls who are humble,

'azihloniphayo' (self-respecting), 'aziphethekahle' (decent), 'anesimilo' (not sexually loose) – suggests that the boys want girls they can dominate, control and police.

In contrast to the boys who were invested in an ideal girlfriend who was humble, 'enesmilo', polite, docile, God-fearing, and ezihloniphayo' – for girls the most appealing characteristics of an ideal boyfriend were reported to be someone who is loving, trustworthy and yet 'osezintweni' (socially connected), 'ozithandayo' (stylish), financially independent, and strong. They upheld the provider masculinity, as they imagined and aspired towards financially-secured futures. These girls linked being stylish with economic power and the promise of a better life for them. In chapter 2, I wrote about how fancy clothes, cars, and electronic gadgets such as cellphones, tablets, or computers, were perceived by my research participants as being a symbol of economic freedom that is promised by post-apartheid South Africa. "In poverty-stricken township contexts, fashion is hotly pursued by many young people identifying with the allure of the middle class – differentiating themselves as they do from the poverty of the township, but also from 'olaylayi' (rural boys), who are associated with being backward, without money, and with an offensive dress style" (Bhana and Pattman, 2011:5).

- **Heteronormativity, Heterosexual Power and Privileges**

The legacy of gender inequality perpetuated by apartheid; and cultural, religious and patriarchal ideologies dominant in the township context were evident – and strongly impacted on the ways in which boys and girls in my study gave meaning to their gender and sexuality. Although there were contradictory and competing views on these dimensions that have been brought by feminism, the post-apartheid and human-rights agenda, the dominant discourse among my research participants' position was masculinities being superior and stronger than femininities, and homosexuality being un-African and unnatural. Gender was 'essentialised' and naturalised, and there was strong 'othering' of homosexual practices and identities.

This thesis found that male dominance and power, objectification and subordination of young girls in a township context, is mostly perpetuated in entertainment spaces. One such space is '*Inkwari*' (see Chapter 5). This does not mean that girls have no power at *'inkwarini'*. However, it was found that *'inkwari'* is a highly gendered space where girls negotiate their gender and sexuality within the confines of patriarchy, and cultural, gender and economic

inequalities. The type of entertainment, the power relations, and the structure of '*inkwari*', makes girls produce, advance or become victims of gender power. Because boys and men are the ones who organise '*inkwari*' events, who choose who should or should not be invited, who pay for the venue, food, alcohol and entertainment, and generally provide for transport to and from the events – it allows them to assume superiority and dominancy over girls and women. As girls know that if you are invited to '*enkwarini*', you have to dress in 'skimpy' or 'sexy' clothes and dance in ways that make you attractive to men – they actively participate in the heterosexual market. When girls are provided with free food, alcohol and transport, or display emphasised femininities – they contribute to producing and advancing 'provider' masculinities, accept their subservient position, institutionalise that they are commodities that can be bought, and, in turn, become victims of gender power. As such, my research participants reported that constructs like '*kudliwa umuntu, kudliwa imali*' (you eat my money, I eat you) were dominant at '*enkwarini*' – a construct viewed as being behind many rape cases or sexual coercion in such spaces.

It is important to note that the boys' powerful position and status was not static and solid, but they were highly dependent on specific environments and situations. In the school environment, for instance, there were girls who were highly respected and recognised by boys as being superior because of their academic achievements or social status. These were 'A' students, beauty queens ('creams'), or girls from affluent families. When I confronted them about this recognition, the boys easily admitted that not all girls are a homogenous group. This attests to the fluidity of sexuality and how gender performances can be alternated, depending on the audience, location, and situation.

In the school context, social relationships were constructed as hierarchical. The power dynamics that existed in the school legitimised the hierarchy between girls and boys and between social groups. As the male principal controlled the school, the boys in my study legitimised and viewed the control of girls as being an unavoidable way of being. They did not perceive relationships as being a shared partnership. They viewed themselves as being in the drivers' seats of their relationships – and their girlfriends as being on the receiving end of patriarchal power. Thus, they expressed a sense of entitlement and viewed their role as that of being dominating, straighten and controlling of their girlfriends. Influenced by hegemonic masculinity, compulsory heterosexuality, and machoism, these boys spoke about being 'hard'

as being a way of asserting one's manhood in a relationship. They perceived the expression of positive emotions such as being sweet or showing empathy and understanding in intimate relationships, as being a sign of weakness and a root cause of girlfriends who 'get out-of-line'.

When boys and girls spoke about their sexual encounters, it became evident that most of them negotiated their encounters within a context where dominant social norms of masculinity "portray young men as being conquering heroes in the sexual arena – and where the social construction of femininity predisposed women to use the responses of passivity in the face of male advances" (Campbell and MacPhail, 2002:333). Some girls viewed intimate relationships as not being about what the girls feel, but as more about what the boys want and expect of girls – demonstrating how girls continue to be subordinated in the township context and how they are vulnerable to sexual risk(s). When, for instance, Mbali (see Chapter 6) spoke about girls giving in to their boyfriends' sexual pressures in order to avoid pain or humiliation, she evidently attested to what Gqola (2015) termed 'female fear factory' – which keeps women silent and biddable. "Giving in to male desire for sex illustrates teenage girls' complicity in and the reproduction of asymmetrical relations of power" (Bhana, 2016a:137).

The voices of young people in my study claimed that the gender role of proposing or initiating love, for instance, was the boys' prerogative – according to nature and culture. The dominant discourse among these learners was that boys do the chasing and girls should wait to be followed for love. In this discourse, normal girls were expected to be naïve and submissive when it comes to proposing love (sexual issues), and, according to Villanueva (1997), these are the characteristics that promote girls' dependence on and subordination to boys. This stereotype positions girls who initiate love as being rebellious and culturally defiant – thus being *izifebe* (loose girls) (Hunter, 2010, 2002). Furthermore, "the insult of *isifebe* hovers over women who challenge gendered taken-for-granted roles in the home and elsewhere" (Hunter, 2005:398). The act of girls who initiate love was clearly viewed as a lack of *inhlonipho* (respect) for heterosexuals' powers and privileges. Hunter (2002) views the portrayal of township girls as being sexually passive – as fitting the longstanding stereotype of the presumed role of African women in romantic love.

Notably, the dominant voices on gender politics and proposing love, did not go unchallenged. There are emerging narratives of intimate equalities. In Chapter six, for instance, I presented a narrative of how Sibongile and Nonhlanhla contested and resisted the dominant discursive construction of her peers' sexual subjectivities. Using the human rights' framework, they asserted their agency as contemporary girls, who should enjoy their freedom of choice to initiate love. What is worth noting among these girls' narratives, is the shift fostered by modernity and the liberal democratic South Africa – towards individuals having a greater say in choosing their partners and in initiating love. When Nonhlanhla spoke about the 'freedom of speech', she clearly demonstrated the qualities of the 'born frees' (discussed in chapter 3), who supposedly mirror the South African Constitution of 1996.

Interestingly, the girls spoke of many modern enablers of girls' agency on love matters. To them, there is no justification for why girls still wait for boys to propose to them, instead of them taking the first step. For instance, they spoke of the liberating effect brought by modern technology on love matters. The use of cellphone texting and/or WhatsApp messages, was cited as a mediator and an enabler when girls were lacking confidence to propose love. These girls confirmed what Holford (2012) termed cyber-sexuality. She spoke about how Facebook was providing young people with an opportunity to interact with friends, to flirt, and to move from friendships to more-than-friendships. Similarly, Hunter (2010:182) speaks about "how text messages – with their quick 'beep's on arrival – have emerged as the quintessential way of communicating love in South Africa" (ibid). He further said that "text messages suggest the fleeting nature of love: that love proposals can be quick, replies brash, and unwanted contacts are immediately deleted" (ibid).

This discussion asserts "that at any historical moment, discursive formations are multiple and heterogonous – so that even though in every era there will be hegemonic discourses, other non-hegemonic discourses will also exist, forming a discursive mix from which subjectivity can be constructed" (Hekman, 1995:203, cited in Allen, 2003:220). It further illustrates the ways in which gender and sexuality has become an arena of contestation and accommodation in the learners' interpersonal relationships.

According to my research participants, females and males are either boys or girls who are always interested in each other as the opposite sex. Homosexuality was openly labelled as a

foreign import, a sexual displacement, and a shameful practice that is un-African and against God's will. Statements like "these people are acting against nature and against God's will" depict the strong views that homosexuality was 'some sort of a sickness'. The boys, in particular, viewed homosexuality as a new movement that was out there to taint or wipe-out authentic African manhood. To them, being gay reflected an adoption of the white man's culture – and they blamed the media for promoting and making homosexuality 'fashionable'. This construction was in spite of the participants admitting to the existence of boys and girls who are 'open and proud' gays and lesbians in the school, and also in their community. It was also despite evidence showing the manifestation of homosexuality in pre-colonial Africa (Epprecht, 2008, cited in Bhana, 2014).

Threats like "these people need to get their act together or else 'sizobathela induku' (we are going to beat them)" depicted boys' agitation and annoyance that accompanied the boys' views on homosexuality. They also reflected the constructions that are pervasive and supported by the criminalisation of same-sex relationships in 38 out of 55 African countries Bhana (2012) cautions that a discourse that subordinates, marginalises, dominates or silences others, is a cause for concern, especially in a country with a long history of racial oppression, gender-based violence, inequalities and where gays and lesbians are 'victimised', 'murdered' and facing suicidal risks (Bhana, 2012). In a country where "anti-gay sentiment is compounded by a strong patriarchal religious ethic that views same-sex sexual encounters as being sinful and wrong" (Butler et al., 2003:8), this study views heterosexual discourse as risky, an impediment to the development of positive identities, and potentially limiting the exploration of alternative markets such as the academic market.

Boys and Girls' Sexual Risks and Risky Behaviour

The young people of South Africa – particularly Africans from township contexts – continue to construct their sexualities under volatile gender and sexuality contexts. The literature has revealed that in 2013, of the 3,2 million children living with HIV around the world, sub-Saharan Africa is home to 91% of them (UNAIDS, 2014). Of the 17,8 million children under the age of 18 orphaned as a result of AIDS worldwide, around 15,1% live in sub-Saharan Africa (ibid), and more than 40% of new infections among women are in young women aged 15-24. Furthermore, 39% of sexually experienced girls were coerced into having sex (Ranuga, 2006), and South Africa has the highest reported rape incidence in the world. Police

statistics released in September 2015, state that in 2014/2015 there were a total of 53 617 sexual offences reported to the South African Police Services – translating into 147 cases per day. Some studies estimate that if all rapes were reported, the figures could be as high as 482 000 annually for the country (Rape Crisis Cape Town, 2016).

Learning about the high prevalence of coerced sex and boys with multiple partners in my research context, was alarming. Boys talked about having multiple girlfriends as being one of the ways they use to validate their power in intimate relationships, to put their girlfriends in their rightful place (subordinated femininities), and to blackmail them to accept their sexual advances. The main purpose was for a girlfriend to realise that she is dispensable and in competition with another girlfriend – and needs to meet all her boyfriend's sexual needs in order to safeguard their relationship. The argument of this thesis is that girls' lack of or 'actioned' agency in intimate relationships, reduces their ability to negotiate safe-sex practices and increases their vulnerability to HIV. In agreement, Hlabangani (2014 states that HIV vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of power of individuals to minimise or modulate their risks.

The findings of this study also revealed the prevalence of a culture of 'no-strings-attached' sex escapades, that take place in environments or during events where young people drink alcohol or use recreational drugs like '*whoonga*', ecstasy and '*umgwinyo*'. Without sounding like I am denying young people opportunities for sexual exploration, I view these escapades as being risky and it confirms that drug and alcohol use is a major risk factor for HIV in South Africa. Participants, themselves, admitted that teenagers use such substances in order to limit any inhibitions in relation to unwanted or unplanned sex escapades. Statements such as "Everyone knows that alcohol allows people to do crazy stuff. No one can blame you for anything if you were drunk", evidently demonstrated that alcohol use or drugs create opportunities for young people to engage in casual sex or risky sexual behaviours – with no sense of responsibility. While boys gloated about getting girls drunk in order to have sex with them, what they failed to comprehend was the politics of HIV risk. By engaging in unprotected sex or having multiple partners, boys lacked insight into how they were putting their lives at high risk of HIV infections. Remarkably, boys expressed awareness that the girls of today are not trustworthy, '*omathandizinto*' (girls into nice times) or '*izifebe*' (sluts) – but, in pursuit of their sexual powers, denial of risk of sexual infections prevailed. Statistically, young girls'

sexual debut is reported at ages much younger than of their male peers, and girls' HIV infections are reported to be much higher than that occurring in their boy peers (UNAIDS, 2014; WHO, 2012). This has unintended consequences for boys who dominate girls sexually or coerce them to have unprotected sex. While the young girls might be enduring sexual assaults from their boyfriends, boyfriends may be exposing themselves to a high risk of HIV infection.

What is worth noting is that young people's construction of sexual risk or risky behaviour is so different to adults. What adults see as risk, young people see as an experiment, an exploration, or a different priority. For instance, spaces such as *inkwari* 'night clubs or places with excessive alcohol – are often identified by adults as risky spaces, but the young people in my study viewed such spaces as providing them with the opportunity to meet, belong, to have fun, and to gain release from the everyday realities and confinement of the township context. Expressions such as *enkwarini* '*ziyawa*' (things are rolling) asserted their depiction of *inkwari* as a space for excitement. In spite of the girls in my study being aware of the sexual risks associated with *inkwari,* the attainment of pleasure was their main priority, compared to paying attention to possible vulnerabilities to sexual risks.

In sharing insight into the construction of risk – particularly sexual risk for young people from the townships – Hlabangane (2014:4) pointed out "how young people perceive how risk could be influenced by the fact that life in the townships is characterised by want and deprivation". "This results in the general feeling of vulnerability that endangers the high levels of risk tolerance. She further states that young people have daily encounters with risk, to the extent that their daily decisions may be influenced by a hierarchy of risks" (ibid). "Sexual risk is but one of such risks, and may not be foremost in their assessment of danger" (ibid). This understanding is highlighting the importance of shifting the focus of our gender and sexuality intervention strategies from high-risk population groups to high-risk spaces or potentially risky environments such as '*inkwari*'.

Emerging Constructions of Gender and Sexuality

Throughout this thesis I have argued that it would be a mistake to think or assume that young people from a township are a homogenous group, or are impacted on by their socio-structural conditions in the same way. Evidently, some young people from my research site have started

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to deconstruct and destabilise the gendered status quo – particularly the heterosexual identities and performances ascribed to them and shaped by the social institutions. These are the boys and girls who viewed themselves as asexual, who subscribed to 'diva' femininities, who aspired to be or were comfortable with being 'Ben10s', or displayed tendencies or performed their gender along the 'cheese boy' or 'double adapter' masculinities (refer to Chapter 7).

The asexual young people viewed sexuality as not an intrinsic part of their lives. Instead, they viewed themselves as 'persons first' – before they see themselves as girls or boys. To these young people, sexual preferences are more relevant that sexual orientation. These boys and girls also maintained that their relationships with others are determined by their interests, goals and realities other than their gender. For instance, there were girls among my participants who spoke about being in a same-sex relationship – not because they are lesbians, but because of their current preferences.

The 'divas' on the other hand were girls who defined the characteristics of their sexuality and gender performances as being independent, intelligent, hard working, having power to define one's identity, and the right to live without a man. This does not mean that these girls totally rejected the importance of things like beauty and fashion in their constructions of femininity. Rather, what was notable was their ability to describe girlhood beyond what Emma Renold (1999) called hyper-femininities. Similarly, in Hunter's work in Mandeni township, the femininities of the 'divas' have begun to shift away from femininity ideals that cast women with sexualised bodies and dependency on men (Hunter, 2010). As such, I conclude that passive and subservient girls waiting for male validation, are by no means common Black or township sexual identities (adapted from Hunter, 2010).

During my fieldwork I not only witnessed how the rights-based era and changes in the political economy and in women's socio-economic status, have influenced the emergence of femininities like the 'divas' – gendered organisations have also been disrupted. The emergence of 'Ben10' and 'double adapter' masculinities not only suggest alternative masculinities, but seem to also suggest an unconventional gender order. The boys in my study seemed envious of 'Ben10s', as they viewed them as having opportunities to escape the economic deprivation in their township context, and being in relationships that promise a

luxurious lifestyle. While we acknowledge that "transactional sexual relationships are not a recent phenomenon in Africa, the young boys' engagement in transactional sex – especially with older women – is uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa" (Zembe et al., 2013:13), and is a sexual practice that needs to be widely explored.

On the other hand, being a 'double adapter' was seen as not only yielding "profitable rewards to meet subsistence and consumption needs, but also created opportunities for a young boy and his girlfriend to be included in the local popular youth and relationship culture" (Zembe et al., 2013:13). Transactional sex provided young boys with the economic ability to meet the financial demands of their girlfriends – transforming their position from beneficiary to benefactor in sexual-exchange relationships (adapted from Zembe et al., 2013). What was interesting to note was that both the 'Ben10s' and the 'double adapters' expressed clear understanding and acceptance of their role in the relationship – which is to respect and sexually satisfy the partner that supports them financially, to 'keep the sugar pouring'.

A promise or hope for an equitable South Africa and an end to violence against girls that is highly reported in South African township schools, was demonstrated and pronounced through the boys' voices that displayed 'cheeseboy' masculinities. These are the boys who resisted, subverted and challenged the existing popular norms of hegemonic masculinity dominant within the township contexts (Langa, 2013). They rejected that surviving the township or to be taken seriously at school or around the township requires them to be 'hard', violent, disrespecting of others, or neglecting of their schoolwork. These boys were proud of conforming to school rules, not defying teachers, and also performing well academically. They believed that their caring, loving and much more understanding nature was making them more popular around the school – and more loved and desirable by peers and teachers alike. These boys embraced gender equality. They viewed girls as their sisters and rejected any form of gender violence. These boys did not end at vocalising gender equity – but also positively participated in school chores dominantly perceived and performed by girl learners. They rejected the pervasive, gendered distribution of chores at school. Furthermore, they acknowledged the roles that are played by their mothers and sisters (women) in funding their lifestyles, as most of them were from fatherless households.

SIGNIFICANCE/CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The key contribution to knowledge made by this study is the illumination of the meanings, understandings and the ways that young people define and group themselves as boys and girls, in a particular context. This insight elucidated not only what young people do, think or perceive about their sexual selves, but also the multi-dimensionality, fluidity, and the complex nature of young people's sexuality. The study highlighted that after two decades of South Africa's democracy, it is still impossible – or rather it will be a mistake – to ignore the significant role played by race, class, culture and places of residence, in the constructions of sexuality. Furthermore, the study disclosed a school as being an important site for the construction, reconstruction, co-construction or reproduction of young people's sexual identities.

The participatory and youth-centred approach adopted benefited this study. I viewed my research participants as being active agents, who are expert in matters concerning their sexuality. This approach created an environment that respected and gave 'a voice' to the children under study. As such, instead of me running after my research participants for information – they were running after me. For example, I used to receive WhatsApp messages in the evening from research participants as a follow-up to a conversation we had during the day. These messages would come without me chasing after them or requesting them. But they felt the need to explain themselves or to express their individual views in a less threatening or private environment. Furthermore, it became a norm for my research participants to begin a discussion by saying: "Ok mam, let us shed some light on this aspect". This clearly reflected that young people viewed themselves as experts on matters concerning their sexual selves.

My status as both an outsider and insider at my research site allowed me to navigate in and out of different roles in responding to the demands of my research field. My outsider status allowed me to divorce my identity from the symbols of authority and power relations that existed at my research site. Because I was not a teacher at the school, and that I ensured in my early research days that I asserted my identity as a research student, made me escape being entangled in the power relations at the school. While my obvious status of being an adult who occupies a different position from young people in my study defined some boundaries between me and my research participants in the early days of research – they

viewed me as a visitor rather than a teacher. This identity helped me to be viewed independently of the adult members of the school, who are generally viewed by many learners as being judgemental, not empathetic and unfriendly to the young members of the school.

As an insider, my background of being from KwaMashu and of being an old girl of the school made participants accept me not as not being a total stranger – but as one of them at certain times. In their and my views, I was not totally ignorant – especially in matters concerning their struggles as young people growing up in the township context. There was an unconfirmed assumption that I know and clearly understand their world. Although I was not looking for any truths, it was common to hear my participants warn each other that they should not lie or hide things from me – because I know them. This assumption limited cases of participants who lied for the sake of lying or sought sympathy as a way of testing my commitment to their life experiences or agenda.

My insider status also made it easy for me not to misinterpret or simplify some of the informal sexual cultures I learned about my research participants. There is a tendency of researchers who are total outsiders to focus on problematising their participants – or 'othering' them and often 'perverting' their sexual experiences or sexual behaviours. Even the feminist researchers have been criticised for conceptualising their experiences in the world through the use of narratives that reinforce the legitimacy of both their dominant social position and existing race, class and gender arrangements (McCorkel and Myers, 2003:200). Ethnographers studying Black people or lesbians, in particular, tend to distort, marginalise and commodify the experiences of people who occupy positions different from theirs (adapted from Collins, 2000; Harding, 1991; hooks, 1984).

My understanding of the broader context from which such sexual experiences or behaviour occur, enabled me to interpret and understand them within their cultural, political and historical contexts. Using all means, I avoided a discourse that is patronising, victimising, commodifying or essentialising of their experiences. While the study found behaviours or sexual cultures peculiar to my research participants, I did not view them as some sort of 'alien behaviour'. Instead, the study emphasised that the social, political, religious, cultural and economic conditions and histories have influenced the uniqueness of their experiences.

This is not to say that my research participants are at the messy of their social environment, rather I acknowledge that gender and sexuality are social constructs that can be better understood within a given cultural and historical context.

IMPLICATIONS

The study set out to better understand the construction of sexuality among township youth, in order to contribute to the theoretical debates on the construction of sexual identity among young people – and to inform the planning, design and strategies of future school-based sex education and HIV and AIDS programmes. As such, this section presents some of the major recommendations to inform transformative sexuality and gender intervention programmes, policy and practice, as well as recommendations for further research.

I support the findings by previous school ethnographers that schools are well placed as intervention sites and are the key strategic ground on which the battle against gender violence, gender inequalities, unplanned teenage pregnancies, and HIV and AIDS, will be won or lost (Allen, 2013; Kehily, 2009; Baxen and Breilid, 2004; Bhana, 2002). The school as a social institution that is entrusted with responsibilities of addressing young people's sexual experiences, interests and needs, as well as educators, parents and policy-makers – need to make transitions in their own thinking about children and childhood. This transformation begins with a recognition of children as active agents, who are sexual subjects.

I maintain that for schools to be relevant, children should be viewed as active agents rather than as passive and incompetent children, who should be protected from their sexual urges. Like Allen (2007:222), I warn that "denying young people's sexuality or constituting it negatively makes it harder for them to access the kind of sexual agency which might make them sexually responsible citizens." This thesis strongly recommends the visibility of a discourse of sexual desire, sexual pleasure, and of viewing learners as sexual beings who are agentic. This thesis also views the sexual innocence discourse as being an impediment to the development of positive identities.

This thesis views subjects such as sex education, which is taught as part of LO, as providing the opportunities for teachers and learners to openly explore issues of gender and sexuality.

This study recommends that sex education should not be embedded in the broader LO curriculum – but should have a stand-alone curriculum. The LO curriculum, as it currently stands, is overloaded with themes that need individualised attention. When these themes are put in a melting port, their depth is lost and sex education, in particular, ends up being taught at a descriptive and superficial level. Moreover, instead of inculcating the transformative agenda, teachers end up teaching and promoting heterosexism as a norm. I argue that such an approach deprives learners of the opportunity to explore their sense of being, to learn about one another, or to acknowledge diversity in their gender and sexuality constructs.

The school should create an environment which 'gives a voice' to young people. It should be prepared to truly engage with young people on matters concerning their gender and sexuality. This thesis demonstrates that the assumption that teachers often make, is that when dialogue is minimised on gender and sexuality issues, conflict among learners with opposing views is minimised. What the teachers fail to realise is that we cannot avoid conflict – it comes out in power relations, and, in turn, we end up reproducing the status quo. Evidently, the cases of gender violence, unplanned pregnancies, coerced sex and homophobia that continue to persist within and around township schools, symbolise a lack of dialogue, lack of consciousness raising, and lack of a process that leads to co-constructions on gender and sexuality matters. This is while I acknowledge that the stigma attached to child sexuality might create discomfort between young and old. This thesis stresses that teachers must find a way of working with that discomfort. They should engage with current realities and learners' interpretations of the curriculum – instead of sanitising or neutralising the curriculum, and, in turn, reproducing the status quo.

The gender and sexuality constructs of young people from South African townships are known for the dominance of hegemonic masculinities and passive femininities. However, Adichie (2009) warns us against the 'the danger of a single story'. This thesis demonstrated that young people from a township context are not a homogenous group. There are many stories about their gender and sexuality that are missing from many of the existing township youth-sexuality research reports. This thesis recommends future research to pay attention to individualised narratives – particularly on sexuality constructs emerging from a township context. We need to further explore, nurture and support boys and girls who are displaying alternative femininities and masculinities. This can be done, for example, by popularising 'cheese boy' masculinities and 'diva' femininities – which will demonstrate that surviving the

township context does not require boys to be violent or to dominate girls, and does not require docile girls who exchange their bodies for material gain or to escape pain.

We must continue talking to young girls and boys, paying close attention to the lessons they are absorbing about what it means to be a man or woman in the new South Africa. Attention should be drawn to how these young people assert their sexual agency, and, at the same time, to how the socio-structural realities of living in the township limit their agencies. This study clearly demonstrated how the lack of recreational facilities in a township context influence many young people to construct and negotiate their sexuality in risky spaces like '*inkwari*'. This suggests a need for the South African government to aggressively commit to creating positive and safe spaces/environments, particularly in previous disadvantaged communities where young people can positively engage with each other and explore their identities.

Like Baxen and Breidlid (2009), this thesis recommends that for the education sector, sexuality researchers and programmers should enable learners to make informed choices about their sexual behaviour. There is a need to focus on how and where young people make meaning of their sexual selves. Part of this thesis attempted to achieve this recommendation. I thus recommend further research that will pay special attention to entertainment activities and spaces like 'inkwari', the meanings that young people attach to such activities and spaces, and their influence on the sexuality of young people.

This study clearly demonstrated that while South Africa won the struggle against apartheid, the struggle against gender inequalities, gender violence, sexual offences, and unplanned teenage pregnancies, is the biggest threat to our hard-earned freedom. To win this struggle, all stakeholders – the Department of Education, teachers, learners, researchers, parents, the community, religious and cultural organisations, programme designers and policy makers – should join forces in designing holistic transformative interventions that are youth-centred.

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Dear Ms Mathe

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **Negotiating Sexuality: Informal Sexual Cultures Amongst Young people at a Township High School,** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where   the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The Period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 January 2012 to 29 February 2013.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please not that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to the following School:

    10.1   Nqabakazulu High School

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education

...dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.

APPENDIX 2: CONSENT LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

10 October 2011

The Principal
Nqabakazulu Comprehensive High School
PO KwaMashu
4360

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Sibonsile Mathe, a Social Work Lecturer in the School of Social Work and Community Development, University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN). Presently, I am registered for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the School of Sociology, UKZN, Howard College. I am writing to request permission to undertake research in your school.

The title of my study is 'NEGOTIATING SEXUALITY: Informal sexual cultures amongst young people at a township high school in KwaZulu-Natal'. The aim of the proposed study is to better understand the construction of sexuality among township youth in order to contribute to the theoretical debates on the construction of sexual identity among young people; and most importantly to inform the planning, design and strategies of future school-based sex education and HIV and AIDS programmes.

I hope to conduct the research over a period of three to six months by means of ethnographic methodology. Participant observation and focus group discussions with learners between the ages of 16 and 18, who are in grade 11, will be the main research instruments. Participation to the study will be voluntary and non-threatening.

There is no possibility of discomfort or danger that I think would be involved in my research. Should any of the participants experience any discomfort, crisis social work intervention will be rendered. For learners who will require disclosing sensitive information, individual conversations will be conducted with them in private.

Throughout the research process, I will take written field notes, and when necessary or appropriate an audio recording will be made. These will not jeopardize privacy of the school and research participants. I will ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants by using coded and sudo names in the report. The informed consent from the parents, and grade 11 learners will be sought before learner participation. All participants will be briefed as to the exact nature and purpose of the study. In addition, they will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw or discontinue participation at any time. They also will have the right to refuse to answer certain questions if they choose to.

It will be greatly appreciated if permission to conduct this study would be granted. As a former student of Nqabakazulu Comprehensive High School, I view the proposed study as my community service to the school and the beginning of a long-term professional relationship with it.

Your co-operation in this regard will be greatly appreciated.

Thank You.
Yours faithfully

Researcher: Mrs Sibonsile Mathe
University of KwaZulu Natal
Faculty of Humanities, School of
Applied Human Sciences
Howard College, Durban, 4000
Tel no (w): 031 2601216
Cell no   : 0836422298
Email   : Mathes12@ukzn.ac.za

Supervisor no1: Prof Deevia Bhana
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel no (w)   : 031 260 2603
Email   : Bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za

Supervisor no2: Prof Rob Pattman
University of Stellenbosch
Tel no (w): 021-8082940
Email   : rpattman@sun.ac.za

REPLY SLIP

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING

I......Virginia......Gloria......Zeshe......the Principal of Nqabakazulu Comprehensive High school herby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of the research project, and I grant permission to Sibonsile Mathe to conduct the study in my school.

....
Principal's Signature

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KZN DEPT OF ED. & CULTURE
NQABAKAZULU COMP H.S.
    TECH & SERVICES

      1 0 JAN 2012

P O. BOX 27068  KWAMASHU  4360
     TEL : 031 503 4808
     FAX : 031 504 3996
```

10/01/2012
....
Date

APPENDIX 3

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Informed Consent Form
Parents and Participants

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a registered doctoral student at the University of KwaZulu–Natal. This informed consent form is for parents or guardians of NqabakaZulu High School learners who I am inviting to participate in research titled: NEGOTIATING SEXUALITY: Informal sexual cultures amongst young people at a township high school in KwaZulu-Natal.

Young people, particularly from KwaZulu-Natal province are faced with many sexual related problems. These are HIV/AIDS, unplanned pregnancies and gender based violence, to name the few. Understanding how young people learn, experience and negotiate their sexuality is crucial. This knowledge might help us to develop or improve sexuality intervention programmes or strategies. This study seeks to investigate how Nqabakazulu learners give meaning to their sexuality. Learners' informal sexual cultures will be the focus of this investigation.

This study will be a year-long ethnographic study which will utilize observations, focus group discussions and loose conversations as data collection methods. Both classroom and subgroup observations will be conducted. Focus groups will be divided into single sex and mixed sex groups. Loose individual conversations will only be conducted on request or on need basis.

Data will be collected in the school premises and as far as possible during the school hours. As an ex-Nqabakazulu student and a social worker who is aware of the school ethos, the study won't destruct the school programme. Instead the presence of the researcher in the school will add to the school support systems.

I hereby seek permission to include your son or daughter to participate in my study.
Should permission be given, the following will be ensured:

- Your son/daughter's participation is entirely voluntary and includes the right to withdraw. Withdrawal won't affect your daughter/ son's school marks or relations.
- It is your son/daughter's choice whether he/she participates.
- I am aware that I am asking your child to share with us personal and confidential information, and may feel uncomfortable talking about them. Your child does not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion if she/he doesn't wish to do so.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The researcher will ask all focus group participants not to talk to people outside the group about what was discussed in a group.
- Your daughter/sons identity will be anonymous.

It will be greatly appreciated if you would allow your daughter/ son to participate in this study. I assure you that all participants will be treated with the utmost care and respect. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study.

Your co-operation in this regard will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Researcher: Sibonsile Mathe
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Tel: 031-2601216
Email: Mathes12@ukzn.ac.za

Supervisor: Prof Deevia Bhana
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel no (w): 031 2602603
Email: Bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za

REPLY SLIP

I_____, the parent **/** guardian of_____
understand the contents and conditions of the above mentioned study. I hereby grant
permission/ do not grant permission for him/her to participate.

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian Signature   **Date**

PARTICIPANT

I_____, a grade 11 learner at Nqabakazulu High School
hereby **agree/do not agree** to participate in the study under the conditions mentioned
above.

_____   _____
Learner Signature   Date

Supervisor of research: Dr .Deevia Bhana   Researcher: Sibonsile Mathe
University of Kwazulu- Natal   University of KwaZulu-Natal
Tel no: 031-2602603   Tell no: 031-2601216/ 0836422298

APPENDIX 3b

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Isiqephu Sokukucela Imvumo
Umzali nomtwana

Sawubona Mzali/ mqaphi

Ngingumfundi oqeqeshelwa iziqu zobudokotela eNyuvesi yakwaKwaZulu–Natal. Ngenza ucwaningo olunzulu oluhlose ukuqonda ukuthi abantwana bafinyelelela kanjani ekuzazini ukuthi bangobani uma bekhula nokuthi bangena kanjani ezigabeni zokukhula. Lokhu kuqonda ngizokuthola ngokucwaninga amasikompilo abo ngesikhathi besesikoleni. Lesi isiqephu sokucela imvume kumzali noma kumqaphi womtwana ofunda eNqabakaZulu High School ukuba abe ingxenye yalolucwaningo.

Lolucwaningo lungenxa yokuthi abantwana, ikakhulukazi abaKwaZulu-Natal babhekene nezinkinga eziningi ekukhuleni kwabo. Banezinkinga eziphathelene nesifo sengculaza, ukukhulelwa okungahleliwe kanye nokuhlukumezeka ngokocansi nangobulili. Ukwazi ukuthi abantwana bafunda kanjani ngokungena ezigabeni zokukhula, bakwamukela futhi bamukelana kanjani ekukhuleni kwabo, futhi bazizwa kanjani uma bengena esigabeni sokukhula; kubalulekile. Sinethemba lokuthi lolulwazi lungaba umthelelo ekuqalweni noma ekuthuthukiseni izinhlelo ezibhekele ukufundisa ngokukhula kwabantwana futhi lungandisa ulwazi lwethu ngemizwa noma ngezimo abantwana abazithola bekuzo uma bekhula.

Lolucwaningo luhlawumbiselwa ekuthatheni izinyanga ezintathu noma eziyisithupha luqhubeka esikoleni. Siyathembisa ukuthi ngeke luziphazamise izinhlelo zesikole ngoba luzoqhubeka ngesikhathi sesikole futhi umcwaningi uzobe ebheka implilosiko lwabafundi ezintweni abahlale bezenza uma besesikoleni. Emva kokuhlola impilosiko lwabafundi, umcwaningi uyobe esiba nezingxoxo namaqembu ambalwa abafundi lapho ayokhulumisana nabo ngezinto azibonile ngenkathi efunda ngabo. Umcwaningi njengoba kwayena wayengumfundi wakulesisikole, unolwazi lwemithetho nemigomo yalesiskole futhi uzimisele ukungayiphazamisi ngesikhathi socwaningo. Kunokuyiphazamisa ubona ubukhona bakhe buyoba inzuzo esikoleni ngoba ungusozenhlalakahle ongasiza uma kunomfundi odinga usizo oluphuthumayo.

Ngicela imvumo yakho ukuthi umtwana wakho abe ingxenye yalolucwaningo. Uma uvuma, ngithembisa lokhu okulandelayo:

- Ukuzimbandakanya komtwana wakho nalolucwaningo kusothandweni lwakhe.
- Engayeka noma inini ukuba ingxenye yalolucwaningo uma engasathandi. Ukuyeka kwakhe ngeke kuphazamise imiphumela yakhe yeskole.
- Ngiyazi ukuthi eminye imibuzo izobe inxusa umtwana wakho ukuthi akhulume ngezinto azibona ziyimfihlo kuye. Ngiyaqinisa ukuthi umtwana wakho akaphoqelekile ukuphendula imibuzo angathandi ukuyiphendula.
- Yonke into azoyisho kimi umtwana wakho ngizoyigcina iyimfihlo. Ngizonxenxa futhi nabanye abantwana ukuthi bangazikhulumi izimfihlo zabanye abantwana ngaphandle kwemihlangano esizobe sinayo.
- Igama lomtwana wakho ngeke libhalwe ngasosonke isikhathi kumaform esiwasebenzisayo ngoba asifuni kube khona umuntu onolwazi ngokuba kwakhe ingxenye yalolucwaningo.

Ngingakuthokozela ukuthi uvumele umtwana wakho ukuthi abe ingxenye yalolucwaningo. Ngiyathembisa ukuthi lonke ucwaningo ngizolwenza ngenhlonipho kubantwana bonke futhi abukho ubungozi abangazithola bekukho ngenxa yokuba ingxenye yalolucwaningo

Ngiyojabula uma isicelo sami siphumelele.

Yimina ozithobayo,

Sibonsile Mathe
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Tel: 031-2601216

Isiqephu Sempendulo

Mina_____, mzali noma umbheki
ka_____ ngiyaqonda yonke imigomo yalolucwaningo
eluchazwe la. Ngiyavuma/ angivumi ukuthi umtwana wami abe ingxenye
yalolucwaningo.

_____   _____
Kusayina uMzali noma umbheki womtwana   **Date**

UMfundi

Mina _____, ofunda ibanga leshumi nanye eNqabakazulu
High School ngiyavuma / angivumi ukuba ingxenye yalolucwaningo.

_____   _____
        Kusayina uMfundi   Date

Supervisor of research: Dr .Deevia Bhana   Researcher: Sibonsile Mathe
University of Kwazulu- Natal   University of KwaZulu-Natal
Tel no: 031-2602603   Tell no: 031-2601216/ 0836422298

APPENDIX 4

Focus Group Member's Confidentiality Contract

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

As a group member I am fully informed that
1. The law may require the researcher to notify the authorities if I reveal that I am abusing children or if I express an intent to harm myself or to harm other people
2. If I reveal secrets in the group, the secrets may be told outside the group by other members of the group. I can be hurt emotionally and economically if my secrets are told outside the group.
3. Other group members may tell their secrets to me. If I tell the secrets outside the group, the member whose secrets I tell might have legal grounds to sue me for money for telling the secrets
4. If I violate the confidentiality rules of the group, the researcher may take disciplinary actions against me.

I have read and fully understand the information provided above about the risks of group work.
I have discussed the risks with the researcher, and I have had the chance to ask all the questions that I wished to ask about the matters listed above and about all other matters. The researcher has answered all my questions in a way that satisfies me.
I understand that I can leave the group at any time.
By signing this document, I agree to accept the risks listed in this form and the risks explained to me by the researcher.

……………………………………….. …………………………………
SIGNATURE OF FOCUS GROUP MEMBER DATE

……………………………………….. …………………………………
SIGNATURE OF THE RESEARCHER DATE

……………………………………….. …………………………………
SIGNATURE OF WITNESS DATE

APPENDIX 5
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview questions include the following in no particular order, with the participants' responses determining the direction and pace of the interviews:

Topics Covered

Demographic details:

Age, sex, religion, home circumstances and culture, likes and dislikes.

Social relations:

What are participant's daily chores in school?
What are participants' social activities in school?
Do boys share any activities with girls or visa versa?
How the academic performance of girls or boys is viewed by each sex group?
What are the favorite ways in which participants spend time as girls or boys?
What are the least favorite ways to spend time as girls or boys?
Are participants aware of problems with safety and security of girls or boys in school?
What specific forms of violence against girls and boys
Who do girls or boys go to for help?
What are the safe and unsafe spaces in school?

Friendships

How friendships are formed between boys or between girls
Where are participants' friends (inside or outside school)?
How old is their best friends compared to them?
How do participants define a friend?
Are participants close to their friends?
Do they form friendships with opposite sex?
Do their same sex friendships differ from their opposite sex friendships?
What do they value in a friend or in friendship?
Relationships with girls and other boys
Describe your relationships with other boys in the school.
Describe your relationship with girls in the school.
Do you respect girls or boys?
What friendship problems do participants experience as girls or as boys?
What practices are considered sexually inappropriate, abusive or violent in the in school context?
When and where does sexual violence occur in the school context?

Sexuality development

What factors shaping the development of participants' sexuality constructs?
What are the parental attitudes?
What is the role of their peers in their sexuality constructs?
What are the cultural norms shaping participants' sexuality development?
What are participants' ages at first kiss?
How do participants express their sexual maturity?
Who has a girlfriend or a boyfriend?
Why having a girlfriend or a boyfriend
Who does not have a girl or a boyfriend?
Why the participant has not yet had a boyfriend or girlfriend?
What are the expectations of a girlfriend or a boyfriend?
How do you treat your girlfriend or boyfriend?
How do you expect them to treat you?
What was participant's age at first intercourse?
How it happened?
How participants learnt about sex?
How some participants has not yet experience first kiss or intercourse
How they feel about their current status
How others view them and their current status
What kind of relationship do they have?

Subsequent sexual behaviour

What are participants' sexual histories, feelings relationships since first intercourse?
What are their recent relationships or events?
Do girls usually wait until after marriage to have sex? Do boys usually wait until after marriage to have sex?
If a girl and a boy are having sex and do not want to become pregnant, what do they do?
What do girls do when they are pregnant but don't want to be?
Do you know girls who are pregnant? What do you think of this?
What kinds of problems do young unmarried mothers have?
Without mentioning names or indicating anyone specific, do you know boys or girls who have gotten sexually transmitted diseases? What kinds of sexually transmitted diseases?
Do they see a health worker for treatment? If not, whom do they see?
Do girls use condoms? Do boys use condoms? Where to get them?
Do they know how to put them on and how to use them?
What do your friends think of condoms?
Without mentioning names or indicating anyone specific, do you know girls who have been forced to have sex against their will by their boyfriend or anyone else?
What is the extent of participants' perceived control or lack of control over their sexual dealings with others?
What are participants' patterns of relational behaviors and development of protective behaviors? What are participants' choices of partners?
What are their knowledge, attitude and usage of the sexual health services provided for young people?

APPENDIX 6

Observation Checklist

The natural settings in which observations will take place will include but not be limited to:

1. School assembly – structure, school uniforms, messages during assembly,
2. Classroom – curriculum messages; sexuality discourses; interactions; gender, sex, and power relations, teacher/learner relationships; division of labour; school chores'
3. School culture - Share norms, beliefs and symbols about sexuality
4. Dress codes
5. Identities – name calling knowledge, feelings, and understanding of sexuality
6. School corridors – interactions, expressions of girls and boys,
7. Toilets – sexuality discourses, how the toilet is constructed, safety and security
8. Playgrounds – type of games, boy /girl interactions, boy/boy interactions, girl/girl interactions
9. Staff rooms - learner / teacher interactions.
10. Sexual language