Moral and ethical dilemmas of young African men in intimate heterosexual relationships: A dialogical perspective

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that the work is the author's original work and that all the sources have been reported and acknowledged, and that this document has not in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification.

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ABSTRACT

While there is a growing body of knowledge on the study of masculinities, only a few studies have tried to understand the moral and ethical dilemmas young African men experience in relationships with women. The main objective of this study was to understand the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young African men in their intimate relationships with women. The study also sought to understand how various scripts of manhood/masculinities available in their social and cultural milieus shape these dilemmas. Non-probability sampling making use of purposive samples was adopted and a total of seven African male undergraduates and postgraduate students at a local university, between the ages of 21 and 35, participated in the study. Thematic analysis and the voice centered relational method, developed by Brown and Gilligan (1992), were used to analyze the data. Findings indicate that young African men are influenced by the sociocultural constructs of manhood when faced with making decisions in intimate relationships with partners. Dialogical tensions created by multiple voices of the individual self, culture and society, complicate the process of decision-making. At times men are required to choose actions that are contrary to their beliefs, in the desire to conform to the dictates of culture, society or peers. African men in this study shared feelings of guilt and regret due to certain interactions with women, which they later regarded as unfair. At times the participants also found it difficult to 'be men' because of women's social and economic empowerment. There exist a need for further research aimed at the dialogical self, which recognizes the interplay of different voices within an individual, and examines how individuals construct meaning out of this multiplicity of voices.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the research

Human relationships are filled with decision-making and negotiation, particularly in intimate relationships between men and women. The processes of decision-making and the negotiation of issues such as condom use and number of partners are often informed by moral beliefs and values that may differ between partners, thus creating tension in relationships.

Many Western studies on African sexual behaviour concentrate on the false dichotomy of 'us and them' which frequently reveals an author's stereotypical beliefs, focusing on how the 'subject' deviates from the author's beliefs and values. In the process, the subject and his or her own experiences and interpretation of the world may be disregarded (Reid & Walker, 2005). Researchers often neglect understanding the 'subject' and the meaning that the subject makes from their own existence and the context in which they live. In view of this, Cushman (1991), as cited by Hermans, Kempen, and Van Loon (1992), emphasizes the disadvantageous consequences of Western analysis on non-Western cultures. In conjunction with this, Ramokgopa (2001) asserts that Western theories are applied to interpret behaviour and ways of thinking not only of Western society, but also of non-Western societies. This is despite the fact that many studies on non-Western societies emphasize that within each culture there exist problems specific to that culture and the stage at which an individual finds himself, necessitating solutions that will vary from culture to culture.

This calls for extended studies on the self across cultures, time and space, and the influence of culture on various psychological processes including cognition, emotion and decision-making (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Similarly, Asante (1987), as cited by Graham (1999), argues that studies of African people should focus on their own historical and cultural experiences in order to expand our knowledge and appreciation of the diverse human experience.

Due to social and economic changes globally, including women's empowerment in education and the workplace, gender roles are often in conflict. This makes it fruitful to

focus on real-life moral dilemmas that may help us to understand gender responses in decision-making within relationships (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Gerson, 1998).

Masculinity is both a psychic and social identity (Tosh, 2005). These aspects can result in tension when personal needs conflict with those of the 'other', and with the expectations of culture and society. Taking into account the co-constitutive nature of the relationship between the individual and society, the current study draws on the concept of the dialogical self to understand how men make meaning in the midst of moral dilemmas. In other words, what are the voices young African men take into consideration when making decisions?

Various studies have indicated a need to focus more on males, particularly African males, in their process of decision-making and negotiation in intimate relationships, as their experiences are often neglected. The focus of the current study is the decision-making of young African males, particularly regarding issues of intimacy within relationships. The study explores the impact that culture, socialization and conceptions of manhood have on the process of decision-making. In particular, it investigates how African men negotiate aspects of relationships such as safer sex practices, power, multiple partnerships and responses to unwanted sex (Harrison, O' Sullivan, Hoffman, Dolezal & Morrell, 2006).

To ensure an integrated approach in the understanding of moral and ethical dilemmas within relationships, an analysis of young African men should take into account conceptions of manhood in Africa, and how these conceptions may influence negotiation and decision-making, particularly around issues of intimacy in relationships. It should also take into account that versions of manhood are socially constructed and fluid over time and space (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Tosh, 2005).

1.2 Research problem

The study is based on real-life moral dilemmas narrated by men in the context of their relationships with women. A narrative approach was chosen as it enabled the researcher to focus on real-life experiences as opposed to hypothetical dilemmas (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Dawson, 1995; Gilligan, Ward, Taylor & Bardige, 1988; Jopling, 2000; MacDonald, 2002; Mkhize, 2004; Orelus, 2009; Tappan, 2006). The study investigates moral dilemmas experienced by young university males in relationships with women. Such dilemmas could arise from a number of factors such as personal convictions or values in relation to family values, peer considerations, social or religious factors, or dominant cultural versions of masculinity, to mention a few.

When we are faced with a moral dilemma in relationships, we often struggle or experience intense tension in making decisions. Various factors influence men's decision-making in relationships, including cultural beliefs, family, peers and society. Thus the study explores young men's conceptions of what it means to be a man, and how these conceptions of manhood contribute to certain decisions in relationships and shape the action that young men take based on these conceptions.

Establishing a moral identity includes both understanding oneself and understanding oneself in relation to others in our social worlds (Tappan, 2006, Hermans & Kempen, 1993). A moral self is shaped by continuous dialogue between the self and others, with struggle arising when the individual is required to choose between the subtle influences of one or more voices – the individual's own thoughts and feelings and those of family, society, religion and culture. We need to acknowledge the struggle involved regarding 'which voice to listen to' when we endeavor to understand African men.

1.3 Rationale

Sex role theorists argue that males and females are conditioned into appropriate roles of behaviour through socialization. According to Pleck (1987), as cited in Haywood and Ghail (2003), living up to a gender role is more problematic for men than for women because of the level of social expectation that males experience; in particular, expectations of strength, power and sexual competence. Additionally, the hegemonic masculinity in African society is a construct of importance amongst young men and can have a significant impact on behaviour. Rohleder, Swartz, Kalichman, Chisamu and Simbayi (2009), and Reid and Walker (2005) emphasize the increasing need to examine the subtle influence of social values and beliefs surrounding manhood and the tension these can cause in decision-making in relationships. Therefore, this study aims to gain insight into the influences of the conceptions of masculinities, particularly African masculinities, on young university males' relationships with women.

Few studies have explored aspects of masculinity within the context of men's interactions with women, and even less attention has been paid to the ways in which men's relationship behaviours may place them and their female partners at risk (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Harrison et al., 2006; Nshindano & Maharaj, 2008; O'Sullivan et al., Rohleder et al., 2009). The construct of masculinity is thus of vital importance in understanding gender-based violence, risk-taking behaviour and health promotion, amongst others. Moral decision-making in any intimate relationship generally holds different outcomes as it translates into

different actions, such as condom use, having multiple concurrent partners, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/Aids.

1.4 Methodology

This is a qualitative study. It involved data collection from young African males through in-depth interviews with students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with the ages of participants ranging from 21 to 34. The researcher was interested in real-life moral dilemmas as experienced and narrated by participants. Thus participants were invited to tell a story involving a moral dilemma they had faced in their intimate relationships with female partners. This approach allowed the researcher to gain insight into how the participants experienced their own lives and how they made meaning out of their own experiences. The method of storytelling offers an opportunity to explore the moral nuances embedded in subjects' narratives (Mkhize, 2005). Mkhize (2005) cites White (1981), who argues that behind every story is a moral point of view. Furthermore, storytelling draws our attention to the fact that when people tell a story they always do so from a particular point of view, having been exposed to many points of view while growing up.

The impact of family, friends, community, culture and other factors were explored through probing questions (Mkhize, 2003). For this reason, the qualitative approach allowed for a deeper connection and enhanced cooperation between the researcher and participants (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Welman & Kruger, 2001). Ultimately, it allowed for the researcher to better understand the struggle young African men face when having to choose between different voices in the pursuit of perceived roles of manhood. Interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Thematic analysis using the feminist relational approach was used to analyze the data. An elaborate account of the data analysis method is provided in Chapter 3.

1.5 Aims and objectives

The main objective of the study was to understand the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young men in their intimate relationships with women, and how various scripts of manhood/masculinities available in their social and cultural milieus shaped these dilemmas.

The following were the study's objectives:

- To describe the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young university male students in the context of their intimate relationships with women;
- To understand how various forms of masculinities espoused by young men are brought to bear in moral and ethical decision-making within relationships;
- To understand how young men resolve tensions emanating from individualized conceptions of the self/manhood and the dominant cultural scripts of manhood;
- To explore young African men's understanding of what it means to be in a relationship with a woman, from their perspective; and
- To understand the meaning of manhood, from the perspective of the young men.

1.6 Research questions

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young male African university students in their intimate relationships with women?
2. How do various forms of masculinities available to the young men shape their moral and ethical decision-making in intimate relationships?
3. How do young African men resolve tensions emanating from individualized conceptions of the self/manhood and the dominant cultural scripts of manhood?
4. What are young African men's understandings of what it means to be in a relationship with a woman?
5. What is the meaning of manhood, from the perspective of young African male university students?

1.7 Definition of terms

Morality refers to the real behaviour of individuals in relation to the rules and values that are recommended to them through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies such as family, church, educational institutions (Foucault, 1987).

Moral dilemma: According to the Oxford dictionary, a dilemma is a situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternatives, especially ones that are equally desirable or undesirable. This study will adapt the functional definition of Gilligan, (1982). A moral dilemma is a difficult, perplexing, or ambiguous choice between equally

desirable or undesirable alternatives, while 'moral' involves a concern with the rules of right conduct. Gilligan asserts that moral dilemmas are experienced in a deeply personal manner. However, they become social when institutional or cultural contexts make it difficult or impossible to make a socially sanctioned choice; when options might invite disapproval, yet action is nevertheless required.

Dialogical self: The dialogical self, unlike the Western individualistic self, is social, meaning that society, culture and other people can occupy positions in a multi-voiced self (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Hermans and Kempen (1993) further state that meaning is not pre-given, nor does it arise internally, meaning is emergent; it arises from our encounter with others and from the social world we live in.

Masculinity: The term refers to a set of role behaviours that most men are encouraged to perform (Brown, Sorrell, Rafaelli, 2005). It is employed in this study to discuss a specific identity belonging to a specific male person (Ratele, 2011). Masculinity is further defined by Carrigan, Connell & Lee (1985) as a configuration of practices.

Culture: Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols. It constitutes the distinctive achievements of human groups including their embodiments in artifacts, with the essential core of culture comprising traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and their attached values (Hofstede, 1980). Thus culture is the total product of a people's 'being' and 'consciousness' which emerges from their grappling with nature and living with other human beings in a collective group. Therefore culture cannot be ahistorical and it is inevitably a source of self-expression (Kolawole, 1998). Culture can be thought of as the values, meaning and behaviours that are transmitted by the dominant group (Lu, Lim & Mezzich, 1995).

Cultural tools: This refers to the tools, means or instruments appropriated from the culture and then used by the agent to accomplish the action in question (Tappan, 2006).

Socialization: Socialization is the lifelong process by which, through social interaction, we learn our culture, develop our sense of self and become functioning members of our society. Each generation transmits essential cultural elements to the next generation through socialization (Lindsey, 2011).

Gender socialisation: This is a process by which an individual learns the cultural behaviour of femininity or masculinity that is associated with the biological sex of being male or female (Lindsey, 2011).

Gender role: A set of prescriptive, culture-specific expectations about what is appropriate for men and women (Trew & Kremmer 1998). Traditional gender role ideologies are the

perceptions of how men and women are supposed to think and behave in heterosexual relationships and in society (Santana, Raj, Decker, LaMarche & Silverman, 2006).

Gender identity: The term refers to a psychological sense of oneself as a man or a woman that is acquired in a social and cultural context; it is the subjective sense that a man or woman has about his/her masculinity or femininity (Brittan, 1989; Trew & Kremmer, 1998). It can be conceived as a person's interpretation and acting out of the generally accepted social definitions of what it is to be a man or to be a woman (Brittan, 1989).

Hegemonic masculinity: Hegemonic masculinity is a notion of ideal masculinity which cultural groups construct; it is the ideal that men measure themselves against and are measured against by others (Brown, Sorrell & Rafaelli, 2005) The hegemonic form of masculinity tends to occupy a ruling position in a society or group, while other masculinities occupy a complicit or subordinate position (Connell, 1995; Ratele, 2011). Furthermore, the term refers to the things males do that support the subjugation of girls and women as a group (Ratele, 2011).

Sexuality: Sexuality may be defined both as a set of categories which order experience and make it meaningful, and as a set of relationships which are historically and culturally specific. Furthermore, several authors suggest that sexuality is an integral part of identity on both the personal and social level, that it is only through our sexuality that we appear to gain access to our bodies and our identities (Caplan, 1987).

1.8 Outline of the study

Chapter One introduces the background and motivation for the study as well as the aims and objectives. The key terms of the study are also defined. Chapter Two covers the literature and theoretical frameworks relevant to this study. Chapter Three addresses methodological issues such as sampling, research design, procedures and analysis. Chapter Four presents the study findings and results. Chapter Five provides a summary and conclusion of findings and highlights the implications of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A fundamental dilemma that all of us are faced with at one point or another is choosing between two options (Gerson, 1998), particularly when we are in intimate relationships with others. Choosing between two options is very important as it translates into actions. The process of decision-making is inspired by moral beliefs; these moral beliefs and attitudes are deep seated, as they are formed during the early years of development (Dawson, 1995; Trew & Kremmer, 1998). Human development is characterized by different stages, with the stages differing from one culture to another and from one way of socialization to another. Furthermore, each stage of development is imbued with different expectations according to a specific society or culture, (Ramokgopa, 2001). These expectations shape our beliefs. Most researchers work under the assumption that they should seek to identify general principles of behaviour that are applicable to all, unmindful of the specific culture or process of socialization (Idemudia, 2015). Western theories have focused mainly on logic and reason (Haviv & Leman, 2002), which construes the self as individualistic and separates the person from their social and cultural world (Gellner, 1992; Mkhize, 2004; Trew & Kremer, 1998). Such generalized conceptions of morality and the self can have implications for the study of African masculinities, as the meaning of morality varies across contexts because of differences in cultural conceptions of the self.

In view of the above, the current chapter investigates Western and African conceptions of the self. The self-concept is central to any understanding in the area of psychology, whether the aim is to study morality, emotions, cognition or behaviour, with each seeming to follow only once the concept of 'self' is clarified (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006). The self-concept precedes a long history of transmutation (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006), from a traditional Western autonomous 'I', to a more context-inclusive construct (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Hook, 2004).

The chapter will explore the topic of morality, taking into consideration moral development approaches from the works of Kohlberg, Gilligan and Freud, as these theories deliberate issues of cognition, emotions and factors of culture and socialization which are pertinent to the study of young African men. Moreover, these factors are important variables to consider when studying how people come to make decisions in relationships.

The purpose of the inclusion of Gilligan in this chapter is to inform the critique of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Gilligan argues that Kohlberg's approach does not sufficiently address the multidimensional and multi-voiced nature of the moral domain (Tappan, 2006), which underscores the importance of the dialogical self-perspective employed in the current study. The dialogical self is a self beyond individualism, and differs from the Western individualistic conception of the self, in that it is based on the assumption that there are many 'I-positions' that can agree, disagree, understand or question (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). This means that when a man is faced with a dilemma in decision-making, there are many voices that inform or guide him as to what decision to make. Dialogism enables an investigation between social and personal facets of human development, especially the development of identity or self-understanding in cultural worlds (Skinner, Vaalsinner, & Holland, 2001). Moral development theories assist in gaining insight into how men construct their sense of identity (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Furthermore, this chapter explores how various expectations of manhood available in men's social and cultural milieus shape the process of negotiation and moral decision-making that African men go through in relationships with women.

2.2 The self-concept

During the course of childhood and adulthood, a network of moral self-concepts are formed to guide decisions and behaviour, serving as reference points for the individual (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006). According to Markus and Kitayama *(1991),* although Western Europeans and North Americans are more likely to have independent self-construals that value being unique or expressing one's inner attributes, people from Asia, Africa and Southern Europe are more likely to have interdependent self-construal and therefore to value a sense of belonging and maintaining harmony in society. The type of self-construal a man has shapes how he thinks, feels and reacts in particular situations (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Walker, Deng & Dieser, 2005). Hence it is important to explore the independent and interdependent self-concept in order to understand how African men come to make decisions when faced with moral dilemmas and to explore what they take into consideration when making such decisions.

2.3 The independent self-concept

The independent or Western self-concept is represented as a bounded, independent, self-contained, unique entity (Jopling, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Mkhize, 2003;

Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006; Watkins, Akandi, Fleming et al., 1998). Furthermore, cultural and contextual factors are perceived as secondary and are not viewed as significant in shaping the self, as is believed in non-Western cultures such as African and Asian cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Zondo, 2008). In support of this, a study by Watkins et al. (1998) that probed the impact of gender and culture on the self-concept, established that participants from ten collectivist cultures placed greater emphasis for their self-concepts on 'family and values' than those from individualist cultures did. However, this did not apply to across genders, as women from both collectivist and individualistic cultures were found to highly value family and values. In summary, the Western criteria for a fully matured self-include separation, individuation, distinctiveness, self-containment and independence (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

2.4 The interdependent self-concept

In contrast to the Western view, the non-Western self-concept is indivisible from its context. Collectivist cultures emphasize relatedness between self and other, and as a result develop an interdependent self-concept (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The self-concept in this view emerges as a result of an individual's relation to the self and his context such as relationships with peers, authority figures, family, culture and the social sphere in which he lives (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006; Longshore, Grills, Anon & Grady, 1998; Schiele, 1997; Tappan, 2006). In addition, the self has in recent years been explored within a narrative framework, whereby the everyday stories narrated are understood to be the making of the self, as these stories connect the self to the 'other' (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006). Thus research into the African understanding of the self signifies a normative imperative of interdependence among individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2006; Zondo, 2008).

2.5 The self-concept and masculine decision-making

The self-concept is important for this study as it aims to understand how African men are oriented –how the independent or interdependent self-construal predisposes decision-making. An increased number of theories studying masculinity emphasize that the construct of masculinity is extended into the world, and subsequently merges into organized social relations (Connell, l995; Morrell, 1998; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005). In recent years, many studies on masculinity agree with the sociocultural interdependent construct of personhood, which is based on connectedness and contextualization for

understanding manhood in non-Western societies (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Tosh, 2005; Morrell, 1998). Similarly, research into the African understanding of the self strives for a normative imperative of interdependence among individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Higgins-D'Allesandro, 2006; Zondo, 2008). The concept of the self allows us to make sense of who we are, how we express ourselves and how we behave (Khan, 2009).

It is important for this study to acknowledge that the difference between the independent and interdependent self-concept does not imply that one is superior to the other, but suggests that, firstly, any study of the self should consider explicit contextual differences and the influence these have on moral reasoning and behavior; secondly, a study of the self should also consider that the independent self and interdependent self can coexist in one person, whether of Western or non-Western descent, hence complicating decision-making when a person is faced with a dilemma as to which voice to listen to (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The significant differentiating factor of the independent and interdependent construal is perhaps not entirely embedded in the dichotomy of Western and non-Western self-construal, but rather a significant divergence between these two construals may be found in the role that is assigned to the 'other' in self-definition. 'Others' and the surrounding social context are important in both construals, but for the interdependent self, others are included within the boundaries of the self, because relations with others in specific contexts are the defining features (Tappan, 2006).

2.6 Kohlberg's cognitive-development theory of morality

Kohlberg's cognitive-development theory used hypothetical dilemmas to illustrate that moral judgments develop through a series of six universal sequential and hierarchical stages of progression. Kohlberg's study comprised white male subjects and his theory postulated a universal justice/moral orientation (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Kohlberg, 1984; 1973).

2.6.1 Level 1: Preconventional level of morality

The preconventional level of morality is the first stage, encompassing the first nine years of an individual's life (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Kohlberg, 1984). This level has two stages; the first is known as the 'punishment and obedience' orientation, in which the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, and interprets these labels according to the physical or hedonistic consequences of actions, or in terms of the physical power of those who enact the rules (Kohlberg, 1973; Mkhize, 2003). The

second stage is known as the 'naïve instrumental' stage (Mkhize, 2003) or individualism, and has an exchange orientation (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). This stage recognizes that other people have their own interests. In summary, in the preconventional level of morality the child sees morality as an external construct that he needs to obey, but which he has not yet mastered sufficiently to internalize.

2.6.2 Level 2: Conventional level of morality

This is the third stage, here morality progresses from the preconventional level. In the sense that the individual now identifies with, or has internalized, the rules and expectations of others, especially those in authority, like parents and family (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Kohlberg, 1984). Here morality is seen as more than simple transactions, where one lives up to the expectations of family and community and behaves in 'good ways' in return for approval (Crain, 1985). Being 'good' at this stage is to be a participant in a shared relationship or group (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). The desire to do right at this stage is driven by the desire to maintain rules and authority which support stereotypically good behaviour (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). What is good at this stage is that which earns approval (Mkhize, 2003). During this stage morality is mainly defined in terms of upholding mutual relationships, fulfilling expectations, being viewed as a good person by others and to show concern for others (Krebbs & Denton, 2005). However, Kohlberg argues that the advanced stages of moral reasoning are more cognitively sophisticated, emphasizing that the advanced stages are more complex, differentiated, logical and organized, than the structures they displace (Krebbs & Denton, 2005).

Stage four in this level is known as the social system and conscience orientation (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). It involves a broader consciousness of society, with stage three being more focused on close relationships (Crain, 1985). Stage four is group specific, with morality remaining relative only to one's own group; thus the individual is prohibited from 'deviating' from different interest groups in society (Mkhize, 2003).

2.6.3 Level 3: Postconventional level of morality

The postconventional level of morality is also known as the morality of self-accepted moral principles (Kohlberg, 1984). In level three, morality becomes more 'liberated'; it is freed from the dictates of authorities and from the group (Mkhize, 2003). Stages five

and six within the postconventional level represent the most advanced and most adequate stages of moral reasoning (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Kohlberg, 1984; Crain, 1985). In this stage the individual differentiates the self from the rules and expectations of others and defines moral values in terms of self-chosen principles (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Kohlberg, 1984). In other words, the individual becomes an active participant in society and not merely a follower as in stage four. Hence the argument that a mature individual will operate according to the postconventional stage, differentiating himself from others based on what is relevant in his own eyes.

2.6.4 Implications of Kohlberg's moral development theory

This discussion will highlight three main areas of concern, regarded as relevant to the current study. Gilligan's critique of Kohlberg's study will be used as the primary foundation from which to explore concerns that Kohlberg's theory holds for the current study. Kohlberg's theory of moral development expresses an essentially cognitive orientation that holds that psychological processes are free of contextual influences. Gilligan, on the other hand, gave attention to these largely disregarded factors; she questioned the assumption that psychological maturity involves an increasing differentiation of the self from the social and cultural context (Gilligan, 1985).

2.6.4.1 Kohlberg's moral development stages and impartialist reasoning – implications for African men

Firstly, Kohlberg reasons that the principles that govern right actions, according to the highest stage of moral development, involve formal rationality only, thus downplaying emotions and care towards others as secondary to moral action (Blum, 1988). For Kohlberg, the type of justification provided or the logic of the reasoning used is more important than a particular set of values or moral beliefs (Blum, 1988; Krebs & Denton, 2005).

Gilligan holds a different view and argues that morality is not primarily justice orientated, but is founded on a sense of concrete connection (Blum, 1988). Gilligan's context-oriented emphasis is on maintaining personal relationships, which contrasts with the ethics of rules and rights as stipulated by Kohlberg. In other words, a direct sense of connection exists prior to moral beliefs about what is right or wrong, or the decision regarding which principles to accept (Blum, 1988).

Gilligan's argument is similar to the sociocultural perspective of moral development, which is based on the premise that moral thoughts, feelings, and actions are semiotically mediated, and thus socioculturally situated. As such, they entail an explicitly dialogical conception of the moral self and move away from the independent self-concept of cognitive representations and internally held principles (Holstrom, 2002; Tappan, 2006). Similarly, reviews on gender research in South Africa postulate that men have generally been treated in essentialist terms; hence little is known about the real struggles of men. This postulation emphasizes the investigation of the socially constructed nature of masculinity (Morrell, 1998). In view of the objectives of this study, it is important to investigate men's decisions based on the socially constructed nature of masculinity, and to explore the factors that influence men's decisions in intimate relations with women.

2.6.4.2 The universalistic principle and African masculinity

Secondly, Kohlberg purports that principles of right action are universalistic and applicable to all (Blum, 1988). Gilligan rejects this notion and sees the notions of care and responsibility as providing non-subjective standards by which appropriateness of response can be appraised in a particular case (Forte, 2008; Blum, 1988; Lyons, 1988). It is a standard which allows one to say that a certain thing was the appropriate action for a particular individual to take at a particular time and space, but not necessarily that it was the 'right' action for anyone in that situation (Blum, 1988). Kohlberg's universal stages of moral development fuel the question of what constitutes 'mature morality' – a subject of great controversy. Each society develops its own set of norms and standards for acceptable behaviour, leading many to say that morality is entirely culturally conditioned and not entirely universalistic (Gagadelis, 2006).

The critique of Kohlberg's conventional and postconventional levels of morality are of particular importance to this study of young African men, as controversies exist over how mature individuals should be, regardless of their sociocultural backgrounds. Hence, when we study young African men, do we measure them according to their own social or cultural context and what is eminent in their culture or society, or do we measure their behaviour against a context and expectations foreign to them? Women, according to Kohlberg, are believed not to pass the conventional level because of their socialization, so that they blindly follow the rules of the society they live in without questioning (Lyons, as cited in Gilligan 1982). Similarly, Haviv and Leman (2002)

followed many studies that compared Kohlberg's philosophical dilemmas with real-life dilemmas. One such study by Krebs and colleagues (1997) argued that the highest stages of moral reasoning within Kohlberg's theory rarely exist outside the Western academic context, taking into consideration that Kohlberg's initial philosophical dilemmas were tested within a Western context, hence findings of this study was based on Western moral reasoning. Similarly, according to Zhang and Zhao, (2017), Kohlberg's theory is one of the most influential theories in Western moral development. According to another study by Harkness, Edwards and Super (1981), the higher stages of moral development are 'absent' in traditional and peasant communities. Only stages 1, 2 and 3 were found to be common in traditional and peasant societies, whereas advanced stages (4, 5, and 6) were associated with Western liberal societies (Mkhize, 2003). As cited in Mkhize (2003), Harding (1987), Card (1988) and Chang (1996) argue that the confluence of African and feminine moralities is a Nietzschean slave morality, arising out of the social domination that both women and Africans have endured. There is no reason why Africans should not have developed a different moral orientation, consistent with their philosophies or worldviews, independently of Western domination (Mkhize, 2003).

2.6.4.3 Morality as an abstract phenomenon versus morality as a social determinant of behaviour in heterosexual relationships

Thirdly, in view of Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas, Gilligan (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, et al, 1988; Gilligan, et al 2003) rejects the idea of drawing findings from hypothetical dilemmas and emphasizes that we need to explore stories told about real-life situations that involve moral conflict and choice (Tappan, 2006; Blum, 1988; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The current study explores real-life stories. Gilligan argues that not only is the self radically particularized, but so is the 'other'; the person toward whom one is acting and with whom one stands in relationship (Blum, 1988). Therefore, the moral agent must understand the other person as a specific individual and not merely as a hypothetical situation in need of a hypothetical solution that may be hypothetically just.

In support of this, Atkinson (1965) states that moral philosophy is often treated as an abstract academic subject, so that it's bearing on the problems of practical life are frequently discounted. Atkinson (1965) highlights the importance of a more integrated

approach to morality in practical situations such as sexual relationships. For Gilligan, each person is embedded within a web of ongoing relationships, and morality, importantly if not exclusively, consists in attention to, understanding of, and emotional responsiveness toward the individuals with whom one stands in these relationships (Blum, 1988). Thus morality, according to Gilligan, is a reality we face in everyday life and people are not limited to a single moral voice (Benhabib, 1992; Dawson, 1995).

Moral action which fails to take account of this particularity is faulty and defective (Blum, 1988). This is an important consideration for this study, since it examines the factors that African men take into consideration when they find themselves in moral dilemmas, having to choose between the voice of self and others. Shotter (1993), as cited in Hook, (2004), concurs that morality involves acquiring ways of understanding oneself as a human being in relation to others in our social system through the process of internalization.

2.7 Moral conceptions from a Freudian-psychoanalytic perspective

The study of moral development has undergone significant transformation over the past several decades (Edelstein & Nuner-Winkler, 2005; Killen & Smetana, 2006; Gilligan, et al, 1988; Atkinson, 1965; Gergen, 2001). The history of the moral growth of the child dates back to the notion of the conscience pioneered by Sigmund Freud. Freud focused on parent-child relationships and the role of emotions and guilt, which are controlled by the superego. Freud refers to the superego as the part which represents society within the psyche, and that passes judgment on the actions of the ego (Killen & Smetana, 2006, Sadock & Sadock, 2007; Held, 1980). Freud's theory is explored in this study, based on the fact that one of Freud's areas of investigation was on the role of emotions and guilt, which, according to Freud, are an intra-psychic process; in other words, an autonomous process. Gilligan purports that the essence of moral decision is the exercise of choice and willingness to accept responsibility for that choice, suggesting that moral decisions have a moral consequences (1982).

2.7.1 Morality as intra-psychic process

According to Freud, as cited in Philips (2004), morality is an intra-psychic process of conflict between the id, the superego and the ego, accentuating the psyche as a social space. Freud criticized social psychology, formally known as mass psychology, as lacking

a focus on inhibition or autonomy, even stressing that the mass (social sphere) becomes like the unconscious – devoid of logic, knowing neither doubt nor uncertainty, and that human subjects suffer under the weight of repressive cultural imperatives that force them to act against their own individual natures (Freud, as cited in Philips, 2004).

2.7.2 Masculinity and the quest to mediate guilt and shame with external social voices

Although Freud's psychoanalytic framework has been positioned as mainly intra-psychic and impartial, there are other experiences which are mediated by external voices within the psychoanalytic framework that are relevant to this study. Psychoanalysis emphasizes inner experiences such as unconscious thoughts and feelings, including guilt and shame, which have their own inner logic in the damage they do to people (Seidler, 1991; 1994). Tosh (2005) contends that masculinity is both psychic and social. Furthermore, moral development theory is entrenched in the idea that morality is about the doing of good rather than harm, and sets a standard of virtuous conduct (MacDonald, 2002). Freud's theory focuses on doing good, not on what is hypothetically right, as Kohlberg's theory postulates. Freud's theory is considered in this study, since men find themselves in a moral dilemma, caused by conflict in choosing between two or more options. Edelstein and Nunner-Winkler (2005), who focused on the development of the understanding of moral obligations and interpersonal responsibilities in a cross-cultural context, argued that the principles of justice and care should be considered in the moral dimensions of close relationships. Further, they maintained that issues such as shame or guilt necessitate more attention as topics of research. Seidler (1991) postulates that men grow up with a deep, unacknowledged sense of self-hatred, which can be attributed to the ways culture denigrates their bodies and sexuality, leaving men with feelings of guilt and confusion in the realm of their sexual feelings and intimate relationships.

A study by Terry and Braun (2008), which explored the meaning and place of men in long-term sexual relationships, showed that men position themselves differently according to past and present relationship behaviours. Two imaginary positions were used in this study; one located in the past and described as heroic or immature, and the second located in the present and described as ordinary or mature. The first position encapsulated experiences of treating women as sexual objects rather than individuals with agency, focusing only on penetrative sex, whereas the second position focused on mature behavior, where men considered sex important as a way of enhancing the relationship rather than as an end in itself. The results of Terry and Braun's study showed that men distanced

themselves from the first masculinity position by attributing this behaviour to society and peer influence, not taking agency for it and describing it as belonging to their 'past selves'. Men identified more with the mature position and defined it as the way in which their current self attempted to be different or to improve. The distancing from past harmful behaviours could be an indication of feelings of guilt or shame.

Kanu (2010) states that an African man is first and foremost a member of his family, the extended family, the community and his society, before being an individual. This view supports the above multicultural research which stipulates that men identify more openly or publicly with a more mature position and a position that reflects positively on their masculine identity. Terry and Braun (2008) suggest that this quest towards improvement is part of hegemonic sense-making which is borrowed from Western ideals of self-improvement and individualism. Research done by Amuchastegui and Aggleton (2007) studied ethical dilemmas for Mexican men in sexual relationships and found that men experience some level of guilt when interviewed about moral dilemmas experienced in heterosexual relationships.

It could be deducted from these studies that men experience a sense of guilt for their actions that may be perceived as harmful in relationships with women, yet at the same time experience shame when they cannot adhere to the requirements of their peers or what society expects of them. Thus Tosh (2005) posits that masculinity is both a psychic and a social identity. It is psychic because it is integral to the identity of every male and is shaped in infancy and childhood, and it is social because masculinity is inseparable from peer recognition which in turn depends on performance in the social sphere (Tosh, 2005). Freud's psychic theory cannot be entirely excluded in understanding men and society, as it contributes to the understanding of the self in conflict with society. Notably, the issue of shame and guilt is imperative in a study of African masculinity, as some culturally and socially sanctioned ways of manliness can cause dilemmas regarding which choice to make. This can ultimately cause harm to the female partner in a relationship (Izugbara, 2011).

2.7.3 Criticism of Freud's moral development theory

Graham, (1999) argues that Freud's theory of moral development lacks operationalization of constructs. In other words, it is too abstract. Secondly, the theory emerged out of a European culture, therefore it is likely to apply mostly to individuals brought up in that culture. Postmodernism calls for a shift from a European universalist paradigm of human

knowledge to a cultural, pluralist one, taking into account people's experiences, histories and traditions as the center of analysis (Graham, 1999). Thirdly, Freud's theory is criticized for the absence of meta-levels, for being too individualistic and for not taking into consideration the social context of the individual (Killen & Smetana, 2006; Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002). Despite the criticism psychoanalysis has endured, it enables us to understand the inner conflicts and feelings that young African men may experience as individuals living in a society into which they are socialized. This idea is discussed below.

2.8 Socialization and what it means for men in the African context

The period 1936-1974 marked a period when it was generally assumed that family provided the basic social milieu within which boys and girls were socialized into their natural roles, namely masculine, task-oriented, breadwinning male roles and feminine, socio-emotional, nurturing and caring female roles (Trew & Kremer, 1998). More recently cross-cultural research has demonstrated that societies construct a version of the self that is more interdependent and relational (Trew & Kremer, 1998; Tappan, 2006; Wallace, 2007). In view of this evolution in understanding, critical psychology locates psychological functioning in its social, historical and cultural contexts (Hook, 2004), debunking the idea that family is the primary source responsible for the socialization process.

Socialization enables an understanding of the internal representations of sexual differences associated with sex roles. Thus gender identity is acquired through sex roles (Brittan, 1989; Crespi, n.d.). Sex role theorists argue that the process of socialization conditions males and females into appropriate roles of behaviour (Gillmore, DeLamater, Wagstaff, 2001; Haywood & Ghaill, 2003). Similarly, Foucault (1987), Kurtz (1988), Connell (2001) and (Sadock and Sadock 2007) postulate that gender differences and moral reasoning exist as a result of behavioural norms and values which are embedded and gendered in the society in which we live. Thus we act according to how our behaviour is reinforced. Gender is one component in a matrix of structures that intersect to establish a social location for each individual in society (Segal & Demos, 1998).

In support of these views, Epprecht (2007; 1998) contends that studies of African masculinities constitute an important contribution in the field of men's studies, asking critical questions such as how African boys are socialized to become men in specific historic and cultural contexts and why they behave the way they do in order to be respected as

masculine. To help explain this, one might consider that children in traditional African societies are socialized according to the moral values regarded as important in their community. Socialization takes place partially through storytelling, since stories are imbued with moral and other lessons that children must internalize to become competent members of their society (Shotter, 1993, as cited in Hook, 2004), and specifically competent, masculine men in their societies.

According to Pleck (1987), as cited by Haywood & Ghaill (2003), living up to a gender role is more problematic for boys than for girls because of the level of social expectation that males experience. Expectations include that of strength, power and sexual competence. Similarly, Barker & Ricardo (2005) emphasize the difficulty African men experience in the process of socialization, pointing out that a chief requirement for being a man in Africa is to achieve some level of financial independence, and subsequently to start a family.

Because socialization makes men see culturally-sanctioned masculinity practices as natural, few men in Africa are able to realize the dangers to which their socialization exposes them (Izugbara, 2011). This author further elaborates three chief requirements for being a man in Africa: to gain sexual experience – which creates the perception that sex is a vital act of performance; to achieve some level of financial independence, becoming a provider by being employed and having an income; and to start a family. Furthermore, socialization into manhood largely depends on an older man or men who normally hold more power in the family and societal context. Such a man represents an authority figure, as we see in traditional African societies where status and respect are accorded to elders. This practice still manifests itself in contemporary Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Hook in Shotter, 2010).

2.9 The meaning of gender identity and sexuality for the African male

It is important to understand what gender is before the topic is discussed in some detail. The concept of gender emerged in the 1970s with Marxist feminists, who conceptualized it as the social construction of masculinity and femininity, noting that masculine and feminine characters are not necessarily based on the biological sex of people. A man can possess feminine characteristics and woman can be said to be masculine (Connell, 1995).

Sexuality may be defined as both a set of categories which order experience and make it meaningful, and a set of relationships which are historically and culturally specific (Caplan,

1987). Sexuality is an integral part of gender identity (Hunter, 2008; Silberschmidt, 2001; Caplan, 1987). Latka and Frye (2006) suggests that we need to widen the lens of investigation beyond the individual, and examine men in their social context within which sexual behaviour occurs. Men in the African context are also socialized through practices such as initiation or rites of passage. These practices are normally associated with gaining sexual experience, which suggests to young men that they should adhere to prevailing norms of sexuality and manhood (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). These steer them to be knowledgeable, aggressive and experienced regarding sexuality (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Furthermore, Barker and Ricardo assert that sexual experiences in many African cultures are seen as sexual competence, achievement and victory, instead of intimacy (2005). Caplan (1987) adds to this finding by citing Seidler's study of heterosexuality, which postulates that masculinity has been identified with reason, whereas femininity embodies irrationality and unreason. Therefore Seidler concludes that men generally fear intimacy in relationships, preferring to remain in control and appear 'rational'.

During the process of sexual socialization, men also assume certain sexual behavior patterns or actions in their relationships with women (Haywood & Ghaill, 2003) in terms of power and decision-making. Thus a study by Silberschmidt (2001) which explored the disempowerment of men in rural and urban East Africa found that women's empowerment affects men's social value, identity and self-esteem, steering men into sexual behaviours such as multiple partners and sexual aggression to restore and strengthen their male identity. Wyrod (2008), emphasise the need for increased studies to focus on conceptions of masculinity in relation to women and their rights. Moreover, Foucault, in Caplan (1987), states that sexuality helps human beings to gain access to our bodies and our identity, which suggests that men may engage in certain sexual behaviours to restore identity and to appear in control.

Research conducted by Ruppel (2008) focusing on gender roles concluded that decision-making powers in heterosexual relationships are usually vested in the man, with women being the dependents who follow the decisions and directions of the man with regard to resources, income or assets, condom use, etc. (Ruppell, 2008). Rentzetti (2003), agrees with this and relate gender inequalities to social practices such as socialization of girls and boys.

It may be concluded that the socialization of men in Africa places strong emphasis on the internalization of representations of sexual differences associated with the learning of sex

roles (Hunter, 2008). The learning of sex roles stems from social and cultural contexts; hence the study of men is not complete without a distinct consideration of culture.

2.10 Culture and African men

Culture is passed on from generation to generation. The acquisition of culture is a result of the socialization process (Idang, 2015). The sociocultural perspective on moral development suggests that processes of social relations give rise to moral functioning, with social interaction always taking place in the context of culture (Tappan, 2006). Having considered the sociocultural conceptualization of morality, Campbell and Bell (2000) suggests that a key insight into masculinity studies should be from a social constructivist viewpoint, similarly, Beynon (2002) states that masculinity is equally interpolated by cultural, historical and geographical location. This is contrary to media representations that express essentialist views, configuring femininity and masculinity as naturally determined by sexual differences, unmindful of men's or women's context or culture. When people think of culture, they often tend to do so in very simplistic and monolithic ways. Culture is not only about dancing and theatre, nor is it limited to music; culture is about people's total way of life, and is the totality of a set of bequeathed ideas, belief system, values and norms, which constitute the common basis of generally agreed-to social actions (Arowolo, 2010). Culture, for the purposes of this study, is an important consideration as it provides the context within which men make decisions. It provides context for how men understand themselves and which world views they adopt, and it certainly drives behaviour.

Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characteristics that are peculiar to a people, marking them out from other peoples or societies. It also includes a people's social norms, taboos and values. Values here are to be understood as beliefs that are held about what is right and wrong and what is important in life (Belgrave, Townsend, Cherry & Cunningham, 1998; Idang, 2015). Since the 1960s, the predominant approach to social and cultural research among social scientists has been to examine a clearly defined society, population, sector, geographically defined area or topic. Such research tends to steer away from cultural and psychological generalizations at higher levels of social organization, such as the ethnic group, society, nation or geographical regions like sub-Saharan Africa (Lassiter, 2000). Moreover, cultures also differ in their conception of personal identity. In general, Eastern and African cultures favour a group identity, whereas Western cultures favor the idea of individual autonomy.

Owusu-Ansah and Mji (2013) strongly urge that a knowledge or science and its methods of investigation cannot be divorced from a people's history, cultural context and worldview. Therefore, all cultures and the indigenous ways of knowing are to be respected and valued in their uniqueness.

In contrast to the sociocultural or constructivist views of culture, philosophers such as Descartes hold that culture is questionable, but reason is not. According to Descartes, that which is collective and customary is non-rational, and therefore for him error is to be found in culture, while individualism and rationalism are closely linked (Gellner, 1992). Moreover, from a sexual health perspective, research in this field postulate that culture plays a vital role in determining the level of health of men, family and the community at large. Increasingly, the centrality of culture is being recognized as important to the health sector, impacting issues such as HIV/Aids prevention treatment, care and support (Airhihenbuwa and Webster 2004).

2.10.1 Culture and sexual health

With culture having both positive and negative influences on health behaviour, international donors and policy makers are beginning to acknowledge the need for cultural approaches even within the health sector (Nguyen, Barg, Armstrong, Holmes, & Hornik, 2008). Airhihenbuwa and Webster (2004) espouse this and assert that culture has been shown to have both positive and negative influences on sexual health behaviour, governing culturally driven factors such as when to become sexually active, the issue of multiple partners and the use of condoms.

Nshindano and Maharaj (2008) conducted a study that explored youths' perspectives on multiple sexual partnerships in the context of HIV/Aids in Zambia and found that although young men and women are generally aware of the health risk of having multiple partners they maintain that there is nothing wrong with multiple partners, as long as they get what they want out of the relationships. It could be financial gain or, for men mostly, for social status and a sense of belonging. Yet according to Nhsindano and Maharaj (2008), only a few females expressed concern about multiple partners. Some respondents in this study even expressed fear of disappointment as one reason why young men had multiple partners. Barriers created by cultural beliefs can also contribute to the phenomenon of multiple partners. Another study by O'Sullivan et al. (2006) examined the role of gender in health risks and found that gender roles for heterosexual interactions appeared to support men's sexual risk-taking, especially in the pursuit of multiple sexual partners. The

study also assessed the associations between men's and women's relationship attitudes and experiences and their sexual risk encounters. Men's endorsement of traditional sexual roles and lower relationship investment were associated with higher numbers of sexual partners. Among women, compliance with men with regard to engaging in unwanted sex was associated with higher levels of participation in unprotected sex, which can lead to health risks such as HIV/Aids (O'Sullivan et al., 2006). Another study by Varga (1997) addressed issues surrounding sexual decision-making and negotiation among black South African youth in the face of HIV/Aids in KwaZulu-Natal. A primary aim was to examine the potential role of youths' self-perceived risk of HIV infection in the sexual negotiation process. Hence the study explored choices made by young people regarding when, how (i.e. protected or not), and with whom to have sex, and the extent to which HIV/Aids influenced this process. Findings appeared similar to those of O'Sullivan et al. (2006) mentioned above, in that a measure of health awareness was evident among youth, yet such concerns were frequently overridden in the sexual negotiation and decision-making process by a complex set of social and cultural factors which far outweighed the potential threat of HIV infection (Varga, 1997; Vuyelwa, 2008).

2.10.2 The cultural construct of hegemonic masculinity

Connell (1995, 2000) asserts that hegemonic masculinity as a concept has developed from a fairly narrow empirical base to a broad definition applied in research and debates about masculinities. The notion of hegemonic masculinity is a very useful one for understanding the broader social and gendered context within which boys create and maintain their identities (Connell, 2001).

In view of the evident effect that culture has on ideas of masculinity, Connell (2011) suggests that the dominant theoretical framework for understanding gender in general and masculinity in particular is social constructionism. This theoretical perspective proposes that, although integrated with the biological aspect, gender is primarily a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon, through which men are broadly privileged over women in most domains (Connell, 2011). The importance of context is also emphasized, not just in qualitative studies but also in some studies that make use of quantitative methods. One such quantitative study conducted by Luyt (2005) investigated the use of instruments in measuring masculinities, and found that research instruments must demonstrate contextual relevance, suggesting that instruments of masculine measurement fall into one of two categories – gender orientation and gender ideology. Gender ideology

emphasizes socially constructed gender norms, and regards gender as a sociocultural artifact rather than being merely biological or psychological.

Social constructionism postulates that people use culture as a guide to construct perceptions in order to understand the world around them (Swartz, 1998). Hence cultures make use of different constructs to guide how men make sense of masculinity in their specific social contexts (Khan, 2009).

One such culturally and socially constructed phenomenon is that of hegemonic masculinity. Connell (2008) describes 'hegemony' as the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life. Hegemonic masculinity, to this author, is the configuration of gender practices which embody the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 2008; 2011; Vuyelwa, 2008). Hegemonic masculinity refers to that which constitutes a 'real man' (Langa & Eagle, 2008), men are socialized to act as 'men' from an early age (Malebranche, Fields, Bryant & Harper 2007). These standards of masculine behaviour are often culturally informed or culturally situated (Henderson & Shefer, 2008). It can be interpreted that hegemonic masculinity is a concept or a set of criteria against which certain cultures measure men and the qualities they possess or do not possess.

Lindegger and Quale in Rohleder et al. (2009) state that according to Connell, one of the most influential theorists in the field of masculinity research, male privilege and social power is produced and perpetuated through the construction of hegemonic masculinity that demands male dominance. According to Connell (2001) as cited by Ngatia (2002), different cultures and periods of history construct masculinity differently. In order to fully understand the social construction of masculinities, we must acknowledge their relationship with the history of patriarchy, violence and domination over women (Elliott, 2011; Wade & Brittan-Powell, 2001). Hegemonic masculinity is a notion of ideal masculinity which cultural groups construct; it is the ideal that men measure themselves against and are measured against by others (Brown, Sorell & Rafaelli, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is introduced to boys at a very early age (Elliott, 2011). As such the power of hegemonic masculinity is deeply embedded in all forms of social activity, giving it the appearance of inevitability and ensuring that it is naturally produced and reproduced in social interaction.

In this sense hegemonic masculinity is an ideal or set of prescriptive social norms, symbolically represented in culture and a crucial part of the texture of many social

activities of men (Wetherell & Edley, l999). Connell (2008), espouses the notion of patriarchy in masculinity and postulates that while the social construction of gender undoubtedly produces a 'patriarchical dividend' that privileges men over women in most respects, some men benefit from this gendered sense of privilege in very unequal ways. Some men benefit and others do not benefit at all.

In addition, manhood is equated to power, both over women and other men (Adetunji & Adesida, 2009; Kimmel, 1994). Kimmel (1994; 2004) further states that although feminist theorists argue that masculinity is about the drive for domination, power and conquest, some men believe the contrary, seeing themselves as lacking in power, because of social and economic changes in society. In agreement to this, Twenge, (2009), states that women's economic status have increased, thus placing men in compromised social positions.   Similarly, in an analysis of fatherhood from a sociocultural perspective, Mkhize (2006) notes that negative masculinity identities do exist, especially in township males, with economic marginalization being one of the influencing factors. Olawoye et al. (2004) carried out a study to determine the significance of sociocultural factors upon gender relationships in Nigeria, and found that gender relationships and the social prescriptions for males and females are not static. Even in traditional cultural settings, gender roles have changed, mainly due to economic challenges.

Among the major contemporary forces driving change is the economic crisis in many developing countries, forcing masculinity to adopt a more fluid approach. It is noted that in the last few decades there are very few individual males who are still certain about their role and place in society. Only a handful of males can say with confidence who they really are and what they can and cannot do in their relations with women, children and other males.

To account for the social and economic changes that men experience in their views of traditional masculinity, Wetherell and Edley (1999) draw attention to the notion of multiplicity in hegemonic masculinity; in other words, the idea that men adopt hegemonic masculinity when they need to, in particular situations. Coupled to this, Adetunji and Adesida (2009) emphasise the need for a conceptualization of gender that recognizes multiple definitions of masculinity. In order to understand hegemonic masculinity, Connell points out four types of hegemonic relations that are hierarchically positioned, which can reflect either similar or different characteristics in relation to hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005 & Wetherell and Edley 1999). The four types of relations are described in the section below.

2.10.3 Hierarchical components of hegemonic masculinity

To help understand hegemonic masculinity, Connell (2001), as cited in Khan (2009), suggests that hegemonic masculinity includes four types of hierarchical relations. This study will discuss the four components of Connell (2001), as summarized by Khan (2009), as they are succinctly conceptualized. The first type is dominant masculinity, which refers to the idealized and socially expected ways of being male (Khan, 2009). Dominant masculinity emphasizes heterosexuality, competition and aggressiveness. A second masculinity is complicit masculinity. Men who receive the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. In other words, it is a masculinity that in and of itself is not dominant, but which supports dominant masculinity (Khan, 2009). Khan (2009, p. 35) tells the story of his friend whose bedroom walls were covered with posters of male heavy metal artists. His father came into his room one day and chastised him for having pictures of men all over his walls, calling him derogatory names in order to emphasize that it was not acceptable for a male to have posters of men in his room. Soon after the incident, his friend ordered Playboy calendar posters that featured photos of models, and hung these on his walls. The next time his father came into his room, he congratulated his son on the good choice. This illustration is important to the current study as it demonstrates the impact that older men, family, friends, peers, society or culture can have on men. Their narratives carry meaning for men in a given time and space to such an extent that they are willing to change according to what is desirable (Khan, 2009). Connell (2001) as cited by Khan (2009), says that this behavior bestows on men the 'dividends' of patriarchy. Even when they do not benefit directly from patriarchy, they still benefit by being complicit with it (Khan, 2009). The third masculinity is marginalized masculinity, operational in a group that is on the outskirts of dominant masculinity, where the members identify with a social grouping that is not dominant. These masculinities are based on ethnic, religious or racial identifications. Such men are marginalized because their interests and perspectives are not recognized by the dominant culture (Khan, 2009). An example may be men who have a strong interest in grooming and self-care; their interests may be regarded as beautification, which is not viewed as part of dominant masculinity (Khan, 2009). A fourth masculinity, according to Khan (2009), is subordinate masculinity. This refers to aspects of masculinity that are viewed as degraded forms of masculinity, where men behave in ways that are not part of 'what men do', and would apply to, for example, gay men.

A study by Maliski, Rivera, Connor, Lopez, & Litwin (2008) investigated how men in Latin and African American contexts renegotiated masculinity after diagnosis and treatment for prostate cancer. One of the findings was that such men discussed things that most men would consider normal topics for men; however, they reverted to 'normalizing' their situation, accepting that they were now different men, having survived cancer. They identified as older, no longer having to show sexual conquest or dominance according to the prescriptions laid out for younger men. However, men who experienced co-morbid symptoms such as incontinence or impotence chose not to share it with their male counterparts, fearing that they would be shamed and not seen as real men. Men indicated that they now valued respect for women and being a good example for their children, far more than when they lived their previous dominant versions of manhood. This indicates how masculinity is indeed fluid over time and space. It is important to note that although the concept of hegemonic masculinity is based on practices that permit men's dominance over women to continue, it is not surprising that in some contexts, hegemonic masculinity involves toxic practices, including physical violence, that normalize gender dominance in a particular setting. However, violence and other abhorrent practices are not always the defining characteristics, since hegemonic masculinity has numerous configurations, such as being competitive or being the breadwinner.

The components of hegemonic masculinity are of interest to the current study as they support the idea of multiple masculinities, where the individual takes on different masculine positions at different times when so desired. For example, a man may shift his definition of masculinity from one that epitomizes the more dominant version of masculinity to one that is more complicit than dominant. Day (1991), as cited in Tappan (2006), provides empirical evidence of multiple voices, by which the author means that multiple forms of reasoning characterize moral life within persons and across communities. The multiplicity of social selves is further explored by Hermans and Kempen (1993), who draw attention to the self and the conflict among its constituent components. This phenomenon may be viewed in conjunction with complicit masculinity, and how it aligns itself with the dominant version of masculinity in order to share the same perspective and to avoid humiliation by peers, family or society.

2.11 Moral dilemmas and the dialogical self

Although masculinity is a social construct, ideals of manhood may differ for people (Luyt, 2005). The notion of self is one instance of the cultural process, as it involves notions and

concepts from a particular framework (Guimaraes, 2013). According to Markova (2006), as cited by Guimaraes (2013), dialogical approaches in psychology focus on tensions between different viewpoints or 'voices' that exist as a result of interaction with others. The concept of 'voices' constitutes a central idea in the theory of the dialogical self, as may be seen in the interplay between the individual and culture. A 'voice' is an emotionally grounded, personally constructed, meaningful focus in one's life at any given time and space (Koning, 2009).

Essentialists hold that gender characteristics are innate essences, and quote studies that find evidence of these essences in chemical and biological differences; they trace consistent gender characteristics across cultures and back across recorded history (Swartz, 1998). Social constructionists on the other hand, reject notions of innate consistent characteristics, arguing that gender constructions are purely the result of intersecting historical, social and cultural factors at a particular moment in time (Swartz, 1998).

According to Wertsch (1998), as cited in Tappan (2006), the purpose of the dialogical or sociocultural enquiry is to understand the relationship between the person and the social, cultural, historical and institutional contexts in which the person lives. Dialogical relationships, on the other hand, presuppose an 'other' with whom one can agree or disagree, according to Mkhize 2003, cited in Hook (2004). This implies that the self is represented as a space composed of a multiplicity of internal positions, representing the person's inner circle, such as 'I as a man', or 'I as a student' or 'I as a father'. The external positions represent the person as part of his environment or the social group in which he finds himself, such as 'my girlfriend' or 'my friends', or 'my culture' (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The dialogical perspective sheds light on understanding the self in relation to others. According to Hermans (2001) and Damon and Heart (1982), as cited in Konig (2009), the 'I' has three features: continuity, distinctness and volition. The continuity of the self-as-knower is characterized by a sense of personal identity, that is, a sense of sameness across time. A feeling of distinctness from others, or individuality, also follows from the subjective nature of the self-as-knower. Finally, a sense of personal volition is reflected in the continuous appropriation and rejection of thoughts by which the self-as-knower proves itself an active processor of experience.

A study by Mkhize (2003) explored indigenous South African isiZulu speakers' conceptions of morality, where the subjects lived in urban, rural and suburban areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Participants were invited to tell a story about a moral dilemma that occurred in their lives. Mkhize found that conceptions of morality were related to

participants' understanding of the self, which in turn was mainly associated with a sense of connection, identified as the 'communal' or 'familial' self. Nevertheless, Mkhize also found that tensions indeed existed between the communal self or the interdependent self and the independent self. These tensions ultimately complicated participants' responses to moral conflicts and dilemmas in their lives (Tappan, 2006). This indicates that people are generally involved in dialogues in which representatives of the community, family, culture or friends position themselves within an individual (Hermans & Kempen, 1993).

The dialogical self conceives of self and culture as a multiplicity of positions, among which dialogical relationships may be established. This allows for the study of the self as 'culture inclusive' and of culture as 'self-inclusive' (Koning, 2009; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). This multiplicity of positions often causes a dilemma regarding which voice to choose from when men engage in decision-making and negotiation in intimate relationships with women.

Time and space are also important to consider in the narrative structure of the dialogical self. Men behave or make decisions in a particular time and space, meaning that they are not stable over time and space (Tappan, 2006; Koning, 2006; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Wertsch (1998), asserts that people must not limit their focus to individual mental functioning, on the one hand, or to sociocultural setting, on the other; instead we must find a way to live in the middle.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the implications that generalized conceptions of the self and morality may have for the study of African masculinities. The chapter explored the traditional Western concept of the self as well as the more context-inclusive African self-concept. It highlighted that men can at times vacillate between choosing one or the other voice; that of the Western independent voice or the context-inclusive African voice.

Furthermore, the chapter investigated moral development theories from Kohlberg, Gilligan and Freud, as these theories encompass issues such as cognition, emotion, culture and socialization, all of which influence behaviour. In order to understand the multi-voiced nature of the moral self and the moral domain, the dialogical self was investigated. The concept of the dialogical self was shown to be helpful in understanding men from a relational point of view, taking into consideration how men make meaning when they have to choose between 'voices', one of which will ultimately inform their actions.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach used in this study. It discusses the research design, sampling method and data collection techniques, as well as the equipment used to collect the data. The procedure used to analyse the data is presented in some detail. The study concludes with a discussion of ethical considerations.

3.2 Research paradigm – the social constructionist paradigm

This paper draws on social constructionism to investigate and understand how men make meaning of decision-making in relationships with women. The social constructionist model locates psychological functioning in its social, historical and cultural contexts (Hook, 2004). Social constructionism has demonstrated how the performance of heterosexual males is unarguably tied to the understanding of masculine identities within their social context (Terry & Braun, 2008).

Social constructionist theory asserts that gender is not a stable internal characteristic of the individual, but exists in particular transactions that are understood to be appropriate to one sex (Trew & Kremer, 1998). In other words, gender is brought into being by means of social transactions and interactions which prescribe socially affirmed roles for a particular sex. Furthermore, constructionist research aims to show how versions of social worlds are produced in discourse, and demonstrates how these constructions of reality make certain actions possible and others unthinkable (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Social constructionist theory rejects the idea of a singular self, recognizing multiple personal realities and holding that people possess many voices, and hence depend on changes in time and space, shifting from one position to another (Mkhize, 2003). The social constructionist paradigm aims to enable an understanding of how various scripts of manhood/masculinities available in the social and cultural milieus of young men shape their conceptions of manhood and their responses in different spheres. The sociocultural approach to psychology provides the tools to explore psychological processes such as the emergence of self-understanding in the social sphere of life (Gergen, 2001; Killen & Smetana, 2006). Vygotsky posits that any higher mental function appears on two planes; firstly on the social plane, and then on

the psychological plane. Hence, higher mental functioning appears first between people, inter-psychologically, and then within the individual, intra-psychologically (Killen & Smetana, 2006). Neuman (2000) further states that social research is 'reality-based', in that it studies human social-cultural life which consists of beliefs, behaviours, relationships and interactions. In contrast to these views, Western cognitive development theorists such as Piaget, whose work was extended by Kohlberg (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987; Crain, 1985; Killen & Smetana, 2006; Kohlberg, 1984), posit that the individual has his own philosophical structure, enabling the individual to form active and independent moral constructions, distinct from passively learned assertions of adults and the environment (Kohlberg, 1984).

3.2.1 Research design

The main aim of the study was to explore the sociocultural issues that impact on young black males' decision-making. Hence an explorative, qualitative research design was used. The qualitative design allowed the researcher to understand meaning from the perspectives of the young men interviewed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Jick, 1979; Kerlinger, 1986; Silverman, 2000; Welman & Kruger, 2001). In addition, the qualitative method allowed the researcher to study the issues under investigation in an open and detailed manner, to better understand the information that emerged from the raw data (Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Furthermore, the focus of this study was on real-life dilemmas narrated by the participants as they unfolded in their lives. Qualitative research allows for studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally; it is non-manipulative and non-controlling, and open to whatever emerges from stories as told by various narrators (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). This study was interested in feelings and opinions expressed, and thus a qualitative research method was ideal, since it allows respondents to express feelings and opinions in their own words, so that the study could represent how events or actions took place rather than representing abstract phenomena (Nishando & Maharaj, 2008). Moreover, qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours and social contexts of particular populations. It provides information about the 'human' side of an issue; that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs and relationships of individuals (Lincoln & Guba, l985).

3.2.2 Sampling method

Data gathering is crucial in research as the data contributes to a deeper understanding of the theoretical framework. It is imperative that the manner of obtaining data is done with sound judgment (Daniel, 2012; Etika, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). The method of sampling was non-probability sampling, with the researcher making use of purposive samples. The purposive sampling method, also known as judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of certain participants due to qualities that they possesses (Etika, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Moreover, purposive sampling is used in exploratory research to study a particular phenomenon, since it has the potential to generate valuable insights that may be applied to understand the construct better (Chaudhuri & Stegner, 2005). In this case, the purpose was to understand what constructs play a role in the decision-making process of young African men

Hermans (2001) states that the method by which members of a population are selected for a study provides the bridge a researcher needs to connect the goals of the study with the practical considerations of the research. Purposive sampling is used in qualitative research to identify information-rich cases where participants are identified and selected to share knowledge and experience in a reflective manner (Etika, Musa & Alkassim, 2016; Chaudhuri & Stegner, 2005). Non-probability sampling refers to any kind of sampling where the selection of the units of analysis is not determined by statistical principles of randomness, whereas purposive sampling is not based simply on availability or willingness to participate, but on whether or not participants have experience of the phenomenon under study (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Folch-Lyon & Trost (1981) emphasize that although the numerical incidence of any specific attitude is not measured, all persons expected to hold any of the possible diverse opinions of the central theme of the research should be represented in the sample; hence the selection of relevant respondents for a particular subject is imperative (Folch-Lyon & Trost, 1981).

Non-probability purposive sampling enabled the researcher to obtain a unit of analysis that may be regarded as representative of the relevant population of young men involved in intimate relationships with women (Welman & Kruger, 2001). On the other hand, one of the major shortcomings of non-probability purposive sampling is that the researcher does not know with any precision whether or not the sample selected represents the total population. Purposive sampling is helpful when randomization is not possible, such as where the researched population is very large. In this study, the population of African men was very

large, making non-probability purposive sampling the most appropriate choice (Etika, Musa & Alkassim, 2016).

3.3 Description of participants

Participants were drawn from the tertiary student population of KwaZulu-Natal, and came from both urban and rural areas. They were young, black, African males from various cultural backgrounds, aged from 21 to 35 years. Seven students were interviewed, four were undergraduate students and three were postgraduate students; two of the postgraduate students have been formally employed after graduate studies and returned to university to complete their postgraduate studies. To gain access to the sample population, approval was first obtained from university authorities to advertise via campus notice boards. Participants had the opportunity to respond to the notices voluntarily and contacted the researcher telephonically to participate or to gain more information about the study. Due to the sensitivity of the research and the potential psychological impact of discussions of this nature, psychological counseling was arranged with the university psychological counseling for the participants, should such a need arise.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

The researcher proposed to meet with the respondents and hosted an information session, where a detailed description of the purpose of the study was presented, along with all the issues to be discussed. During this time the researcher realized, to her surprise, that apprehension existed amongst respondents, as it became clear that focus groups would derail the outcome of the study. It became evident that individual interviews is easier for this research as focus groups can be intimidating at times, especially for inarticulate or shy participants (Gibbs, 1997). Although this was a homogenous group, in terms of gender, differences amongst men's experiences and socio-cultural backgrounds could influence the levels of participation in a focus group setting (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1998). Subsequent to this session, the respondents expressed their interest in the study, but proposed more private, face-to-face interviews. A supervisory consultation was held between the researcher and her supervisor and it was agreed to make use of individual, in-depth, semi-structured interviews and to do away with the focus groups, based on the concerns of the participants.

In-depth individual interviews were used to collect data from participants. Qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews ask mostly open-ended questions that allow participants to respond freely and in their own words, providing more complex responses than a 'yes' or

'no' might do (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Silverman (2000), voice and subjectivity allows for authenticity of human experiences in responses, which is a strong feature of qualitative research.

The researcher was interested in the lived experiences of the participants, in particular their experiences of intimate relationships. This was a very personal entering into of participants' lives, confirming the observation by Kvale (1996) who states that the interviewer has an empathetic access to the world of the interviewee; the interviewee's lived meanings may be immediately accessible in the situation, communicated not only by words, but by tone of voice, expressions and gestures in the natural flow of a conversation. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed, which allowed for the direct capture of what was said and the tone of voice in which it was said. The interview process was explained to all participants during the information session. The researcher explained that all interviews would be tape recorded to ensure that data gained via the interviews were a true reflection of what was said. The researcher received consent from the participants for interviews to be recorded.

Recording devices can make participants feel self-conscious in the early stages of an interview, but in this case, the thorough preparation done beforehand helped participants to feel at ease from the onset. Interviewers can use recording devices with great success when participants are informed from the onset about the recording device and the purpose thereof (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

This study employed thematic analysis and the voice-centered relational method developed by Brown and Gilligan (1992) to analyse the data. The voice-centered relational method allows individuals' narratives to be explained in terms of the broader sociocultural contexts within which they live (Gilligan, 1982; Bright, n.d). The current study acknowledges that a study of African men should entail an explicit inclusion of context, in a deliberate move away from the idea that the individual is disembodied and autonomous (Tappan, 2006). Beliefs about adolescent boys' and men's autonomy and individuation, however, are not based only on theories of male development created during earlier historical periods than the more recent theories of female development, or within predominantly white, middle- and upper-class populations (Way, 1997). They are also based on studies of boys and men that use fundamentally different research methods from those used by contemporary feminist researchers studying girls and women (Way, 1997). Psychologists using voice-centered, relational research methods have focused almost exclusively on the development of girls and women, whereas psychologists studying the development of adolescent boys and men have typically used surveys, questionnaires, observations or structured interviews to understand

development (Way, 1997). Because the methods we use determine the kinds of findings we get in our research, problems clearly arise when research findings are compared that are based on entirely different methodological approaches to the study of human development (Way, 1997). Furthermore, the relational method is a flexible tool that fits this researcher's theoretical framework, of which the dialogical self is a chief component. The relational method is also appropriate to the research questions (Bright, n.d.). To attune to the multiplicity of voices within a person's narrative, as specified by the dialogical self and the relational method, Brown and Gilligan (1992), as cited by Bright, (n.d.) developed a listening guide, which involves four sequential readings to attend to the different voices and how they develop.

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher, which meant listening to the data repeatedly. In addition, the process of self-transcribing helped the researcher to review data in light of the research questions (Silverman, 1993).

Silverman (1993) states that an appropriate way to help the researcher understand the participants' responses is to view them as describing either an external reality (facts, events) or an internal experience (feelings, meanings). In other words, the interviewer needs to locate mental functions such as decision-making within the framework of the individual-society dichotomy (Hook, 2004).

The voice-centered relational method was applied to help the researcher understand the self in relation to significant others in which knowledge of the self is linked with knowledge about significant others (Andersen & Chen, 2002). In other words, the method helped the researcher to understand men from their individual perspective in relation to significant others such as family, friends and the community in which they grew up or currently lived. Andersen and Chen (2002) postulate that the relational method assumes that each of the significant others is linked to the self; hence it is important not to study men as individuals, but rather to approach such a study with consideration of the significant others and how such others may impact moral decision-making.

The individual-society dichotomy served as guidance in analysis which allowed for the researcher to consider and understand moral dilemmas that young African males experience when they attempt to make decisions based on both internal and external factors. Mkhize (2003) argues that the relational method is best suited to understanding morality, as real-life dilemmas are elicited from participants rather than presented hypothetically by researchers.

Thematic analysis was used in collaboration with the relational method mainly to help with the identifying and organizing of themes. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying,

analyzing and reporting themes within data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The coded extracts of thematic analysis were used to do a preliminary mapping of broad codes within the margins of the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method of analysis helped the researcher to review the initial codes comprehensively and relate them to the literature and to the research questions.

The researcher combined thematic analysis with the relational method, both being qualitative approaches to data analysis. Qualitative approaches are incredibly diverse, complex and nuanced (Braun & Clarke, 2007), for which thematic analysis should be seen as foundational. This study applied thematic analysis to help with the initial identification of codes. In support of this, Braun and Clarke (2006) identify 'thematising meanings' as one of a few shared generic skills used across qualitative analysis. For this reason, Boyatzis (1998) characterizes it not as a specific method, but as a tool to use across different methods. Similarly, Ryan and Bernard (2000), as cited by Braun and Clarke (2006), locate thematic coding as a process performed within 'major' analytic traditions (such as grounded theory), rather than a specific approach in its own right. However, many researchers argue that thematic analysis should be considered a method in its own right and should be used autonomously to analyze data.

The researcher followed a sequence of steps to interpret the data, combining the initial steps of thematic analysis and thereafter engaging the relational method, as follows:

Subsequent to transcribing the data, transcripts were printed and the researcher identified extracts which were of interest. These extracts were noted as codes within the margins of the printed transcripts. The process included active reading and examination of the ways in which events, meanings and experiences become the effects of discourse within society for young African men (Aronson, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method helped the researcher to categorize raw data in meaningful ways quite early on in the analysis process.

After the codes were generated, the data was collated into overarching themes. The relevance of the themes were tested in relation to the codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher consistently tried to relate data to other data, and applied recursive reading to sets of data, moving back and forth between data. This helped the researcher to view data in a categorised manner and to review the themes comprehensively, relating them to the literature and to the research questions (Aronson, 1994). Although this method helped the researcher, Jonathan Shay, a psychiatrist known for his work with war veterans, observes that all too often our mode of listening deteriorates into intellectual sorting, or coding the content of what someone says into categories (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017). Taking this into consideration, the study

combined thematic analysis with the relational method, the latter preventing the researcher from becoming constrained by categories of coding only. Instead, the researcher was able to listen empathetically to participants' experiences of their inner worlds in relation to others. Listening was supported by the Listening Guide, a method of psychological analysis that draws on voice, resonance and relationships as ports of entry into the human psyche (Petrovic, Lordly, Bringham & Delaney, 2015; Gilligan; Spencer, Weinberg & Bertsch, 2003).

The Listening Guide method comprises a series of steps, which together offer a way of tuning into the polyphonic voice of another person (Gilligan & Eddy; 2017). Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2001) argues that subjective positions or 'voices', if carefully listened to, reveal ways in which we engage in shared meaning-making in social locations. She states that the voice-centered relational method helps to identify connections between 'I' and the other. In doing so, it allows the researcher to identify tension areas between 'I' and various sociocultural positions. The Listening Guide helped the researcher to move from data categorisation to listening to voice and descriptions of relationships that set the parameters of the inquiry in terms of the following questions: Who is speaking and to whom? In what body or physical space are they speaking? What stories are they telling, about which relationships? In which societal and cultural frameworks are they situated?

The first reading involved attending closely to the stories in the data and the researcher's responses to these stories, asking, 'What is going on here?' (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998, as cited by Bright, n.d.). Attending to their own response makes the researcher's role in constructing knowledge explicit, acknowledging that the researcher is in relationship with the participant and the data, and that their own social location influences how they construct the data (Bright, n.d.). In this study, the researcher listened to the participants, but also listened to her own intellectual and emotional responses to what they were saying. When listening for the plot, the researcher attended to the main themes, absences, contexts and characters (Balan, 2005). It was important for the researcher to remain aware of her own emotions and thoughts in responses to participants' experiences, since she is a female listening to sensitive information shared by males. This helped the researcher to remain objective and non-judgmental in her interactions with the participants, allowing them, in return, to be open and confident enough to share information as genuinely as they could. The reading was then summarised in order to compare similarities and differences with other readings (Balan,

2005; Bright, n.d.). In each interview, the researcher wrote out how she identified with the participant, questions she had, and noted her overall feelings during the interview.

A second reading focused on the voices of the participants; how they spoke of themselves, the different ways they acted and the roles they played (Balan, 2005; Bright, n.d. & Letvak, 2003). The guiding question in this reading was, 'Who is doing the talking?' It focused on how the participant experienced, felt, and spoke about himself. This step is crucial; by carefully listening to the participant, the researcher remains in relationship with the participant and discovers how he speaks of himself in relation to his experiences and in relation to others (Letvak, 2003). This helped the researcher to understand how the participants saw themselves and how they believed others saw them. The researcher noted all emerging themes from this reading, and then read the data again to understand better and to note any themes that may have been missed the first time around. This stage was imperative as it explored the emotions, reflections, opinions, actions and intentions that became evident. A highlighter was used on the text to mark passages that the researcher felt exemplified what it was like to be an African man.

The third reading involved moving through the text and underlining what roles the participants were playing in their stories. How did they perceive situations, words, actions and symbols, and how did this impact on their decision-making and actions?

Reading four has to do with the broader social, political, cultural, professional and structural contexts surrounding the participant's story, experiences, actions and interpretations (Letvak, 2003; Bright, n.d.). In this reading, important elements are investigated; the researcher listens to the spoken and unspoken, overt and taken-for-granted elements, and whose voices can be heard informing the situation. The researcher also considers social values and the culture that surrounds the actions and decision-making of the respondents; in this case, young African men. The meaning of each man's story was interpreted, and as more interviews were collected, areas of contrast and correlation were noted. The analysis of the data finally involved organising the data into broad categories and themes (Letvak, 2003).

The Listening Guide encourages the reader to pay close attention to the form (i.e., how the story is told) as well as the content of the interview, and to follow one's own process of interpretation. The method encourages continual self-reflection by the researcher concerning why particular interpretations are being made or themes are being detected (Letvak, 2003; Bright, n.d.).

3.5 Reliability and validity

This final section of this chapter discusses the reliability and validity of the study, taking into consideration data gathering and the literature review.

Qualitative researchers prefer to work with small non-random samples of information that they can study in depth (Terre Blanche, et al., 2006). This ensures that the researcher is able to delve into questions of meaning and to examine social practices and processes (Starkes & Trinidad, 2007), given that one participant may generate many concepts, and large samples are not necessarily needed to generate rich data sets.

Furthermore, Silverman (1993) mentions that understanding social action in terms of its specific context is more important than attempting to generalize to some theoretical population. This study collected data from a small sample of university students who met the criteria of the envisaged population under study. In-depth interviews were conducted, allowing for the researcher to interact freely with participants, thus creating a platform where the participants felt free to express themselves in a safe and confidential environment.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Kvale (1996) states that an interview inquiry is a moral enterprise, as the personal interaction within the interview may affect the participant, and at the same time the knowledge produced by the interview may affect the researcher and readers' understanding of the human situation. In view of the effects that an interview may have on a participant, Folsch-Lyon and Trost (1981) emphasize that sensitive topics such as family planning or sexual relations require that the researcher or moderator is of the same sex as the participants. Regarding the sensitive nature of this study, the researcher considered the impact that her gender might have on the participants. Participants might have, at any time, found the researcher judgmental or lacking in impartiality, since the researcher was female and might have been tempted to defend the female point of view. To counteract any possibility of being perceived as biased, the researcher explained that the purpose of the research was to serve as a knowledge base for lived experiences in the social, cultural and health spheres, and that this was not a feminist study or a study to criticize men's behaviours. Based on this, participants expressed a sense of understanding, acceptance and confidence, and gave their written consent to participate. Their confidence is evident in the rich content gathered during the interview process.

The issue of confidentiality also surfaced, as participants shared intimate and sensitive information and raised the concern that in one way or another, someone close to them might

link the data in the final thesis to them – particularly as the thesis was to be published and kept in the university library premises, where they and the people they spoke about were still studying. The researcher explained that all information published would be anonymous, and that pseudo names would be used where necessary.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in the study, starting with a description of the research paradigm. The study made use of a social constructivist paradigm that locates psychological functioning in its social, historical and cultural contexts (Hook, 2004). The chapter also outlined the research design, the sampling method and the data analysis process. The relational method was embedded in the interpretation of the data, which helped the researcher to explore the intra-psychic voices and the influence of others in the discourse. The chapter also addressed the matter of the reliability and validity of the study and the important ethical considerations that arose during the study. The next chapter presents and discusses the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results obtained from the study in relation to the literature and the research questions. The main objective of the study was to understand the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young African men in their intimate relationships with women, and how various scripts of manhood/masculinities available in their social and cultural milieus shaped these dilemmas. Results of this study indicate that young African men were influenced by the sociocultural constructs of manhood when they were faced with making decisions in intimate relationships with partners. Another finding of this study was that African men find it difficult to 'be a man' because of expectations held by culture and society. African men in this study also shared feelings of guilt and regret as a result of some of their interactions with women, which they later realized had been unfair.

The findings of the study provide answers into the research questions. For this reason, the chapter is organized around five themes derived from the research questions, as stipulated in Chapter One. The five themes are as follows: the types of moral and ethical dilemmas African men face in relationships with women; the influence of culture, society and various forms of masculinities on moral and ethical decision-making in intimate relationships; tensions young African men experience, emanating from individualized conceptions of the self/manhood and the dominant cultural/social scripts of manhood; the conceptualization of what it means to be a man in a relationship with a woman; and the meaning of manhood for young African men.

4.2 Moral and ethical dilemmas African men face in relationships with women

The young men interviewed were diverse in age, and therefore their experiences in relationships with women differed. They also came from different backgrounds; some from rural and some from urban areas, some having strong religious backgrounds and others having strong cultural influences. Still, these young men narrated more or less the same moral dilemmas with regard to their relationships with women.

The two major themes that emerged from the moral dilemmas African men faced in relationships were the matter of decision making or power in the relationship, and the matter of multiple partners. Regarding the first theme, that of decision making, the issues were who decides when to have sex and when not to have sex in the relationship, and who decides on the use of condoms in the relationship. Decision-making power is regarded as a vital component that helps in defining what it means to be a man, this is engendered in the socialization of African men. A study by Ruppel (2008) focusing on gender roles is in line with this and concluded that decision-making powers in heterosexual relationships are usually vested in the man. With regards to the second, the issue was whether or not to have two or more partners at the same time. Men generally indicated that they were involved in multiple partnerships, one or the other time in their lives. This is in line with a study conducted by Nshindano and Maharaj (2008) that explored youths' perspectives on multiple sexual partnerships in the context of HIV/Aids in Zambia and found that although young men and women are generally aware of the health risk of having multiple partners they maintain that there is nothing wrong with multiple partners, as long as they get what they want out of the relationships.

Men experienced the situations or stories narrated below as moral dilemmas, because they had to choose between a multiplicity of 'I' positions created by culture and society. Men would tell the story of a dilemma they faced; for example, a girlfriend deciding to use a condom and their inner conflict as a result of this; however, as each interview unfolded, it became clear that the dilemma stemmed from relations with others and with cultural expectations. The question that became paramount and which guided the researcher throughout the analysis was, 'Who is doing the talking?' In asking this question, the researcher came to the understanding that many times men talk from voices of culture and society that have been internalized. What was remarkable was that these voices of society were embedded in men from a very young age. They become internalized in the self and operate as part of the self. It is difficult for an African man to separate from these voices. We will first discuss moral dilemmas of multiple partners, followed by decision-making powers in relationships.

4.3 The moral dilemma of multiple partnerships

The phenomenon of multiple partners emerged in almost all the interviews. Most men said that they had been involved with more than one partner at a time.

This extract is from one of the undergraduate participants who grew up in a rural area around KwaZulu-Natal, with his siblings and parents.

Interviewer: Thank you for participating in this research study. I just want to know if you could relate to me a short story, involving you and your partner, where you found yourself in an ethical dilemma, where you did not know what to do? Where you were caught in a situation, where you were thinking, is this the right thing I'm doing, how do I go about it? So, if you could tell me a short story about that dilemma that you found yourself in. Tell me what was happening and what led to it.

Extract 1

Interviewee 6: This was a recent time ... let me see, around this time last year. I was caught in two relationships with my partner and a previous one from the past, an ex that came from my past and I thought we had a good thing going. The issue is, what happened actually, was my ex came into my life and then she found out that I actually have a second partner. Which is something that I can tell you, guys my age are currently doing ... you have to have a back-up relationship so if this one fails you have something to fall on. It may sound weird though ... yeah. So what happened was, my ex came back into my life, and then I agreed because I thought probably we had something back then, it will probably work out, 'cause I didn't feel like the current one will work out. So when she found out, she actually went on hysterically and she went to tell the current girlfriend everything I told her whilst we were in a relationship before. She went to an extent to go on about my whole history, how I changed, what changed me, saying things like: 'Once he got a job all of a sudden he is into money, thought that he can now do whatever he wants to do' – she told the lady that. The issue is, my problem that I had with her was, she went to that lady in the middle of the night, but before that she spoke to me and said: 'I won't tell her anything, but we have to end this.' But after her telling me, she actually went there and spoke all these things about me. Then the relationship ended there ... till today I decided not to talk to her ... but, the moral of the story, or the dilemma that I was in ... I believe that society plays a role, instead of you sticking to one relationship or being faithful to one partner, everyone I hang around with has more than one lady ... it's more like peer pressure, you actually try to blend in ... to fit in.

The above extract typifies the common theme of having two or more partners. The problem that this participant faced was not being caught out by one of the women. However, what defined it as a moral dilemma for this participant was that he had to choose between a multiplicity of voices; that of society or friends and the self. He illustrates the dilemma as follows: '… *moral of the story, or the dilemma that I was in … I believe that society plays a role, instead of you sticking to one relationship or being faithful to one partner, everyone I hang around with has more than one lady, it's more like pressure, you actually try to blend in … to fit in.'*

Below is an extract of a postgraduate student from West Africa. He came from an urban area and said that his family was very religious. He related his dilemma as follows:

Extract 2:

Interviewee 3: 'Actually … (chuckling)… I was actually cheating on my girlfriend, because hmmm … the person … OK, there were two people – one was a lady involved in another relationship, and the other person … but the other person was only faithful to me. That's the situation. Hmmm … basically I was cheating on my girlfriend with someone else … and whenever she confronted me, I denied that. Anyway, that was the situation, I think I will explain to you. Basically, what was happening is that … OK, uh … I was involved in those two relationships, OK. My girlfriend, she provided money for me and that's the reason why I was in the relationship in the first place. And the second one, was really good in terms of sex and my girlfriend really wasn't that good in sex, so I would, like, run to the second person to get sexual gratification that I couldn't get from my girlfriend.

Another participant, a young undergraduate student, coming from a strong cultural background with a strong bond towards his friends and their views, shared why it was important in his view to have multiple partners:

Extract 3

Interviewee 5: I don't see a problem with multiple partners, no problem with that…

Interviewer: Do you engage in having multiple partners?

Interviewee 5: Yes, yes, I do, and so do all my friends. It is good for young guys like us to have more than one girlfriend. It shows that you are a man and that you are wanted and liked by girls, so the more girls you can juggle, the better you look and the more girls like you…your friends admire you more. So it makes you feel good.

Interviewer: It makes you feel good to have more than one girlfriend?

Interviewee 5: Yes. The girls also have a lot of respect for you and they feel good when you chat to them, because they know that you can get anyone…also, one day when you have to marry you will know what type of woman to marry as you tested out so many girls.

Not all participants in the study shared the same belief. Participants had different views on multiple partners. The interviewee below is young undergraduate student who has a strong cultural background, but chooses to live his life according to religious values.

Extract 4:

Interviewee 7:   I don't believe that multiple partnerships are good…no, I don't…

Interviewer: Would you like to elaborate?

Interviewee 7:   As I explained earlier, I am from a traditional Zulu background, where it is acceptable and as I see with my friends, it is even 'good' to have more than one girlfriend, but for me, personally, I don't believe in it as a Christian. I differ from my family, maybe the men in my family does not like for me to be like this, that is why I like being far from them here at university…as my uncles feel that I am not like other men…but, for me, it is one girl at a time…

The interviewee below said that although it was culturally acceptable, he did not practice it, and was also not against other men having multiple partners, and shared as follows:

Extract 5

Interviewee 2: From where I come from it is traditionally and culturally acceptable, this is from where I come from. Education levels have exposed me to the health risk of this behaviour, but I am not one to judge, I am not one to judge … if it is a cultural practice, then by all means

The discussion on multiple partnerships with this participant was filled with tension, as he has a strong cultural background, but also feels that education has taught him different ways of looking at relationships. He acknowledged what culture prescribes; hence the rest of his response to the matter of multiple partnerships will be further discussed under the section tensions in 4.6. Tension can be caused by choosing between individual self and broader sociocultural scripts of manhood, which he discussed in relation to culture.

4.3.1 Young men's attitudes towards multiple partnerships

The construct of multiple partnerships holds a certain meaning to young men in relationships with women. In Extract 1, the participant said his reason for dating two women simultaneously was firstly to serve as security – to ensure that he still had a relationship should the one relationship not work out – and secondly, it was a normal practice amongst young men or in his social environment, as he stated, 'men my age' to engage in this practice. This finding is similar to that of Nshindano and Maharaj (2008), who found that young people did not think that there was anything wrong in dating multiple partners as long as each got what they wanted from the relationship. Young men could gain status, or a sense of belonging and identifying with a dominant masculinity, and could avoid disappointment or heartache when one partner leaves them.

Similarly, the participant in Extract 2 viewed having two partners at the same time in a utilitarian fashion, in that both women with whom he was involved served specific purposes in his life. The one woman supported him financially, as he was a student and she was working, and the other provided sexual satisfaction, as she was perceived by him as being better in bed than his actual girlfriend.

The participant in Extract 3 stated that it was good to have multiple partnerships when one is not married, as one has to test out different partners in order to see who the right one to marry is and that you gain respect from others. This finding is similar to that of a study by Nshindano and Maharaj (2008), who investigated reasons for multiple partners in Zambia, and a study by Varga (1997), where some of the participants argued that having multiple partners provided a sense of power or a feeling of control, as illustrated by one of the participants, in the extract below:

Extract 6

Interviewee 6:   *'My English disappears for a while, what I am saying is that it gives you that confidence that you have someone under you that you can control, we want to control someone, as a guy you usually want people to do what you want to, so when you have more than one partner you can actually go, like, I can tell this one to do this and that one to do that and then you have control over everything, you can determine what and what not should be done.'*

4.3.2 Young men's perceptions of women having multiple partners

Some of the men in the study shared interesting thoughts and feelings about women having multiple partners. Some men feel that it is acceptable for men to have multiple partners, but not for women, as it is considered an acceptable traditional part of African manhood (Nshindano & Maharaj, 2008). One participant argued that it is emotionally unhealthy for women to have multiple partners. He also said that it is biologically not healthy for women to have more than one partner, describing the effect as one of 'wear and tear':

Extract 7

Interviewee 2:   *It's wrong, I mean it goes back to society again that society ... but personally I ... uhm ... I dunno ... but women for me has more to lose by having multiple concurrent   partners than men.*

Interviewer: What do they have to lose?

Interviewee 2: (Laughing.) It is biologically, firstly, let's just ... (laughs)

Interviewer: Biologically?

Interviewee 2: It is biological ... do you want me to elaborate?

Interviewer: Yes, please.

Interviewee 2:   Having three or four sexual partners at once as a woman, I believe have serious implications for your female reproductive body parts.

Interviewer: Organs.

Interviewee 2: Organs, thank you. It just does, it's just not good for it, and too, as I said, women are emotional.

Interviewer: Is that in terms of disease, or in terms of what?

Interviewee 2: In terms of wear and tear.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 2: Listen, this is a human body, there is a wear and tear ... so if a man wants to have multiple concurrent partners, in terms of that wear and tear concept, it does not have that much of an impact on them as compared to women.

Another participant illustrated his view as follows:

Interviewee 1: My culture allows men to have multiple partnerships, but it does not allow women to have multiple partnerships.

48

4.4 Sexual decision-making and negotiation in relationships

Participants in this study showed quite a bit of commonality in views –almost all men seemed to think the man should make the decisions and viewed decision-making as important in relationships. Decision-making is seen in relation to sexual activities in the relationship and narrated in terms of timing, as to when to use condoms or when not to use condoms, when to have sex and when not to have sex (Varga, 1997).

The extract below is from a postgraduate student who worked in an urban area a few years after completing his undergraduate studies and had now returned to do postgraduate studies. He was raised in a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal and has a strong cultural background, despite his exposure to a different environment as a working man.

Extract 8

Interviewee 1: *Yeah, (clearing throat). Firstly, it was my ... with my ex-girlfriend, uhm, because when we were in a relationship in most cases she doesn't want us to use a condom. So, there was a time when I heard some of my friends now were HIV positive. So, I took her from her home to my home. So, at night we supposed to engage in a sexual relationship and so forth, so she decided that we should not use condoms. So, I refused to her to say: 'No, no, majority of my friends that I stay with are HIV positive.' And there's that preaching around saying: 'Let's condomise, ABC, abstain, be careful, condomise'.*

So, I said because I am too old to abstain, and so forth, but to be faithful is something else, I can be faithful, but I don't know on your side. So, I decided to say, 'No, let's take a decision to use condoms forever.' By that night she refused, up until I just sleep next to her, and not facing her, facing the other side. So at night she was touching me up until in the morning, early in the morning, roughly 2 or 3. We ended up having sex without a condom. In the morning, during the course of the day, eish, I saw that I did something wrong. Because I've seen my friends and I have heard that they are suffering from HIV/Aids, so for me to engage on a sexual relationship without protection, it gave me a hard time during that week, almost even a month. I also even took a decision to go to VCT to check whether I was positive or not, only to find out that I was not. And I followed all the processes, the three tests and so forth. And she continued that we mustn't use a condom,

because I've even tested negative, but she never told me that she went for HIV testing, but she only told me that she knows that she's HIV negative.

So, from there I started to move from her, because I wasn't sure, why at an early stage she wanted us not to use condoms. So that decision I took that night, I was in a position ... but it gave me a negative impression to say I did it. But it definitely show that it didn't come within myself to do it. I normally say that I was seduced in that night, because maybe I was in a sleeping process and so forth, and even the way she was touching me, I ended up doing it.

The problem that this young man faced was that his ex-girlfriend refused to use a condom. It was a problem for him, as he was faced daily with people close to him that were HIV positive. He started doubting his own status and went for HIV/Aids testing, but was surprised that the woman declined to share her own test results, claiming to be negative. This brought about feelings of uncertainty as to why she refused to use condoms. He was deeply troubled because he eventually gave in to her wishes not to use a condom; he stated that the act of having sex without a condom did not come from him and gave him a negative impression of the woman.

Part of the dilemma that this participant shared will be further discussed under culture in point 4.5. The real dilemma for him was that it is against his cultural practice for a woman to tell a man what to do; hence her insistence made him feel inferior in relation to his culture. The following is a shortened extract of how he illustrated it:

Extract 9

Interviewee 1: '*To give me orders to say we must use it or not, to say no, no we can't use a condom, I felt inferior, according to my culture, that I have to listen to a female, because if ever if I was going to get HIV or pregnant, to tell the people in my area, to say, 'No, this girl was not supposed to be pregnant, because she refused ...' to tell people that, it shows that you are not a real man.*'

The following extract is from another postgraduate student who came from a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal and had returned to university for postgraduate studies. He prided himself as a traditional Zulu man when he was in the village, but also saw himself as an urban man, having worked in urban areas in and around KwaZulu-Natal. He was very attached to family and traditional practices and referred to his father as the king.

Extract 10

Interviewee 2: *Firstly, I must say it's a pleasure to be part of this study. Big study. The one which stands out is the one where a girlfriend of mine would set ... uh ... put our sexual encounters, sexual intercourse in ... into schedules. Uhmm ... for example, saying that she wouldn't have sex with me today, because we had sex the day before ... or that we'll have it today, provided that we don't do it tomorrow.*

The story that this participant narrated was that his partner scheduled their sex according to her own preferences instead of consulting him, not considering his feelings about the matter. It is important at this stage to investigate why the stories narrated above and below were seen by the participants as constituting a dilemma. Extract 11 in the following section, relating to the use of the condom, illustrates the nature of the dilemma quite succinctly.

4.4.1 Gendered approaches to sexual decision-making

The extracts below all illustrate that to the participants, the decision of whether or not to use condoms should be decided by the man. Although the participant in Extract 8 conceded that women normally insisted on condoms, according to African culture, especially Zulu culture, the man makes this decision. He attributed his own use of the condom to health concerns. In a study by O'Sullivan, et al. (2006) on the role of gender in sexual risk-taking such as the practice of having multiple partnerships, women reported higher rates of unprotected intercourse in their primary relationships. This finding is of particular interest because young men typically have greater decision-making power about condom use than women do. Although women insist on condom use, the man ultimately makes the decision as to whether or not to use one. In this regard, the participant in Extract 10 faced a dilemma when it became apparent that his girlfriend was deciding when and when not to have sex. He maintained that such sexual decisions should be made by the man in the relationship. According to Barker & Ricardo, (2005), young men often have a disproportionate share of decision-making power and voice in intimate relationships with women.

Extract 11

Interviewer: *OK, you just said earlier that women normally demand using condoms. So, we can say that it's more women demanding to use condoms than men. Looking at that now, what does that say about you as a person, about you as a man, because now you are the one demanding using condoms?*

Interviewee 1:   *It shows that I do understand the dangers of sexual relationships and so forth. Because for me, according to what I know, for women – they are at the forefront and champion in that there must be a condom when we engage in a sexual relationship and so forth. So whenever a female … she's the one who doesn't want to use a condom, because in most cases according to African culture – or not an African, the Zulu culture – in most cases a man is the one in the forefront to tell the female what to do, even if the female doesn't want to engage in sex and so forth, but when the man has said so, she has to, willingly or not willingly. So, for me, according to my culture, I saw it as something as contrary to what was supposed to happen. When I say let's use a condom, she says, 'No we can't use a condom.' So, that gave me an impression, according to my culture, where I am coming from.*

Another participant held the same view:

Extract 12

Interviewee 2:   *So obviously with – with my … African background, you find it very difficult for a woman to dictate terms and conditions, particularly in the bedroom … in the bedroom.*

Interviewer: *Uh-hmmm.*

Interviewee 2:   *So … uh … one felt (chuckles) very uncomfortable, cause you caught in a situation where you want to respect this woman and respect her views, on the other hand you also need to do … to have the sex … uhh … but not in this confined, scheduled environment.*

Interviewer: *OK.*

Interviewee 2:   *So, ja … it – it – it provided a dilemma.*

Other participants shared their views on decision-making in relationships as follows:

Extract 13

Interviewer: *OK. Do you think men and women should have the same decision-making power in relationships?*

Interviewee 4:   *No.*

Interviewer: *Why not?*

Interviewee 4:   *I think we should try and maintain a balance, but not like ... the thing is, OK, I might think that we shouldn't but, there will never really be a same power structure, you see, even though a woman might be more powerful in terms of*

financially over a man, but a man's always gonna have that power over a woman.

Interviewer: *Why is it that a man should have power over the woman?*

Interviewee 4:   *I am not saying that the man should have the power over woman, but it happens.*

Interviewer: *It so happens?*

Interviewee 4:   *It happens, you see. I believe that we shouldn't try to force out our powers on each other, you see. You compliment me in terms of you bringing out the best in me and I bring out the best in you, and in that way there aren't any power struggles.*

This participant believed that men should have the decision-making power in relationships; he believed that it should be that way, and seemed almost to be suggesting that it is normal or natural for men to hold decision-making power in the relationship, illustrated in his words, *'I am not saying that the man should have the power over woman, but it happens.'* Research by Ruppel (2008) focusing on gender roles concluded that decision-making powers in heterosexual relationships are usually vested in the man, with women being the dependents who follow the man's decisions and directions, with regard to resources, income or assets and condom use (Ruppell, 2008).

Another participant believed that men should consider women's input into decision-making, but must allow men to take the ultimate decision, as follows:

Extract 14

Interviewee 7:   *According to culture and the word of God, men should make the decisions in a relationship.*

Interviewer: *And how do you feel, who makes the decisions in your relationship?*

Interviewee 7:   *I think…I try to consult my partner, but I want them to consider me and respect me as a man and also think about my opinion or my choice…so, I do give a chance for my partner to say her opinions, and together we make a decision which I should be happy with.*

4.4.2 Men's perceptions of women's decisions to use condoms

The researcher was interested in men's perceptions of women who insist on using condoms. The extract below conveys gendered perceptions on this matter. It became clear that more

than one participant thought that when a woman insists on a condom, she might be cheating – as we see in Extracts 15 and 16 below.

Extract 15

Interviewer: What will happen if your girlfriend tells you, 'No, we are going to use a condom now.'

Interviewee 6: Yoh ... that one I have never encountered. Yoh, to encounter such a situation whereby your girlfriend says we should use a condom ... actually some thoughts would come by, like, why is she telling me to use a condom now, when previously we did not use a condom? So you can start doubting her like, so what are you doing now, what are you doing differently now than what we have done before?

Interviewer: OK, and what might one of those thoughts be about why she is insisting?

Interviewee 6: Cheating ... you actually believe that she is cheating.

Another participant had a similar perception on decision-making in terms of condom use, as follows:

Extract 16

Interviewer: Do you think women have the right to demand using condoms?

Interviewee 2:   Demands must be in context and they must make sense. If you are using me as an example – a person who test every three months, and as a result may have come to a conclusion of not using a condom, for a woman to suddenly out of the blue suggest using a condom, it ... it raises eyebrows ... it raises eyebrows ... one or the other ... you know it raises eyebrows, but – but you'll find it difficult – but ...

Interviewer: Why does it raise eyebrows, what's coming to your mind at that time?

Interviewee 2:   She is cheating ... she is having another sexual partner ... or, too, she does not trust me, she thinks I am having another sexual partner.

Interviewer: Hmm.

Interviewee 2: That's what's coming to mind.

Interviewer: Hmm, so it raises some suspicion when someone demands to use a condom?

Interviewee 2: Of course, as I have said, there must be context and logic and sense, now outside of those, of cause ... it – it ... eyebrows will have to be raised.

Interviewer: Hmm.

The above extracts illustrate the need for researchers to continue to examine the subtleties of sexual decision-making in the exploration of sexual behaviour and the factors which influence it (Varga, 1997). We need to understand the perceptions men hold when women demand the use of condoms, in order to refine educational approaches and educate and sensitise both men and women differently.

The following section focusses on the influence that culture, society and various forms of masculinity have on men's decision-making process.

4.5 The influence of culture, society and various masculinities on moral and ethical decision-making in intimate relationships

It is important to note that the concept of gender emerged as a result of the social constructivist approach to masculinity and femininity (Ngatia, 2002). The acquisition of culture is a result of the socialisation process (Idang, 2015). Sociocultural perspectives on moral development suggest that processes of social relations give rise to moral functioning, with social interaction always taking place in the context of culture (Tappan, 2006). Hence, we will explore the concept of socialisation first.

4.5.1 Socialisation

The acquisition of culture is a result of the socialisation process, in which human beings are socialized in accordance with their cultural beliefs and values (Idang, 2015). Socialisation enables an understanding of the internal representations of sexual differences associated with sex roles; thus gender identity is acquired through sex roles (Brittan, 1989; Crespi, n.d.). Sex role theorists argue that the process of socialisation conditions males and females into appropriate modes of behaviour (Haywood & Ghaill, 2003). Critical psychology debunked the idea that family is the primary source responsible for the socialisation process (Hook, 2004). Below are extracts that show how socialisation – that is, family, friends, and community members – can impact men's behaviours. The first extract conveys the words of an undergraduate student from KwaZulu-Natal, who faced a dilemma when, as a teenager, he dated girls who were not faithful to him, although he described himself as being faithful at the time. He said that this brought about a change in him from being a 'one-girl guy' to a man who enjoyed multiple partnerships. What was at stake for him here was that he was behaving against the Christian values of his family, but conforming to the expectations of friends:

Extract 17

Interviewer: Before we go into the point where you decided to be single, the time that you had multiple partners, who else featured in that story?

Interviewee 4: Friends, friends mostly. My cousin, my cousin was my biggest alibi. He is like the black sheep in the family, you see (laughing). We really got close, we really, really got close. And yah, we started hooking up and if he had an ex he'd switch it over to me. I asked him all the right questions, he gave me all the right answers. That's how it all started with my cousin.

Interviewer: OK, so he would give you some girls as well?

Interviewee 4: He would give me some girls, you see.

Interviewer: And your friends – what role did they play in this?

Interviewee 4: My friends, we all started off good. All me and my friends, high school, all good, but came matric, everything changed. Tables were all upside down, you see. So all my friends started developing this attitude, OK, we all gonna do whatever we wanna do. But, it's all for one cause, this whole musketeer little tradition. One for all, all for one, that's our theory with me and my friends. Whatever we do, we don't sell each other out, whatever happens.

Interviewer: Is that in terms of the many girlfriends?

Interviewee 4: Ja.

Interviewer: OK. And how did you guys see it, having all these girlfriends in your group?

Interviewee 4: We didn't care. At first, you see, it was just a status thing.

Interviewer: Meaning … status thing?

Interviewee 4: As in, like, you the cool guy, see. We went from Mr. Nice Guys to Mr. Cool Guys. Gee, we were popularised in high school – we were 'idols'– should I put it in inverted ..? So, that's what happened. It carried on and it carried on and it got worse and it got worse and I got sick of it, you see.

Interviewer: So at that stage what was at stake for you in these situations?

Interviewee 4: What was –?

Interviewer: At stake, or important to you when you were indulging in these multiple partners?

Interviewee4: My parents. I am very respectful towards my parents, and you know some of the values that my parents taught me, like being a Christian and respecting myself and respecting other people. You know I didn't respect women, women were just a thing to me.

Interviewer: How did that coincide with your family values at that time?

Interviewee4:   Lot of conflict, especially with my mother, a lot of conflict.   That's when I started confiding in my father, you see because at home it's only a small family, we only four, me my brother, my mom and dad.

Another participant also shared how socialisation, particularly from friends, impacted his behaviour. He was an undergraduate student and told the story of dating a girl who was at first not ready to be sexually involved with him. He pressurised her to do so, in order for him to give feedback to his friends. He illustrates this as follows:

Extract 18

Interviewee 5:   The dilemma I should say, is all of sex ... you really wanting sex ... and she doesn't, like, something like that.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 5:   That's the dilemma ... you see, 'cause, on the other side ... you will say ... you have to say something, you have to tell your friends something, you see. But you are facing the dilemma of if you have to tell your friends ... like, they ask you what happened ... did you sleep with her? They ask you those questions, right, then you actually have to – sometimes you have to lie. Suppose if it's been going on for two months or so and you did not sleep together, and you have to tell your friends, 'I haven't done it,' that's when your friends will pressurise you and say, 'Man, you wasting your time.'

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 5: But her on the other side, she's telling me ... hmm ... I can't do it, maybe she's talking about I am not ready or stuff like that, so I would also tell her my side ... hopefully ...

Interviewer: OK. So if I understand you correctly, it's like you're seeing someone a month or two months and you guys did not have sex and your friends are actually asking you, 'Wow what's happening?'

Interviewee 5: No, they ask questions like, 'How was it?' or things like those you see, like they wanna know if 'it' happened. The dilemma is what do I tell them… my friends'.

It is evident from the two extracts above that men are expected to live up to social expectations as established in the process of socialisation, showing a level of strength, power

and sexual competence. The two extracts show the impact of society on men's sexual behaviours. Society prescribes or accepts that men should have multiple partners and attaches a certain status to the practice. Friends, as is evident in the second extract, also play a role, as they adhere to what society expects as behaviour for a man; for example, that a man ought to show virility and dominance when engaging in sexual encounters. Barker and Ricardo (2005) emphasise the difficulty African men experience because of the process of socialisation. Social expectations for African men can dictate scripts of how to behave, and these scripts may at times be harmful towards women or even to the man himself. And because socialisation makes men see culturally sanctioned masculinity practices as natural, few African men may be able to realize the dangers to which their socialisation exposes them (Izugbara, 2011).

4.5.2 Culture

This section discusses how culture impacts upon young men's moral decision-making. The first extract is from the same postgraduate student who faced the situation of his girlfriend refusing to use a condom. The participant described this as a dilemma, since he was not sure of the girlfriend's HIV status and was afraid of contracting HIV/Aids. It was worrisome to him, because he had many friends who were HIV positive. As the interview progressed and we explored this dilemma further, it became clear that internal conflict was not entirely due to HIV concerns, but that culture played into it, too:

Extract 19

Interviewer: *OK, coming back to what you were saying about your culture – that men normally would tell women what to do and how to do it, and you said, like, you being in a dilemma of using a condom and stuff like that … how did you feel in relation to your culture?*

Interviewee 1: *Ja. You see, firstly, whenever – according to what was happening within my culture, unlike now, because I am a little bit within the institution of higher learning, I understand these things. But, for me was that, because when you go back to where you stay, you … you behave – I don't know what word I can use. The township, the area where you going to, assimilate you, so that you can balance with the people who are living there. So, for me to say, let's use a condom, and for her to refuse, number one, it shows that now she thinks she is the one who is a man, you see?*

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 1:   To give me orders to say we must use it or not, to say no, no we can't use a condom, I felt inferior, according to my culture, that I have to listen to a female, because if ever if I was going to get HIV or pregnant, to tell the people in my area – to say 'No, this girl was not supposed to be pregnant, because she refused ...'   To tell people that, it shows that you are not a real man.

Interviewer: You are not a man, because she refused to use a condom, not you?

Interviewee 1:   And she told me not to use a condom, why do you have a condom?

Interviewer: And if it was the other way around? If you are positive and you reflect back to the family, and they ask why you are positive and you say because I didn't want to use a condom, how would they see that?

Interviewee 1:   You see, it was going to say that it means I am not, maybe I need to be taken to a deep rural area, we call it a village, where they can teach me how to be a man and all those things, to say to be a man you must give orders and all those things, if you don't give orders it's the other way around, you see, and they would not be sure if I am a real man, or what ... so those were the things.

Interviewer: So that is now if she decided you are not using a condom?

Interviewee 1:   A condom, yeah.

Interviewer: And what if you have decided, you as the man, we are not using a condom and you go back to your society in the rural area?

Interviewee 1:   Ai, there's nothing. Because in most cases in the rural areas, especially in the KZN province, to have more children, it's like a culture or tradition, because they are saying we are the surname of that family and so forth, so for them to hear that now I am having a child it was going to be a good situation, especially if it's a boy, because if it's a boy, it's going to replicate the surname, you see. Well, if it's a female girl, yeah, they don't have so much problem but they feel happy whenever you are giving birth to so many children.

Interviewer: OK, even if you would have broken the news to them that you are HIV positive also and the girl is pregnant, would they see it in the same light?

Interviewee 1: No, no, no, if ever they heard that I was HIV positive, and the girl she is pregnant. Maybe they can push it to other way around, you see, to say, 'Ha,

maybe that lady she's got so many partners,' and so forth. You see, according to my culture, most of the bad things are being pointed to the females. In most cases they want them to be inferior to the male, you see?

Another participant who faced a dilemma of his ex-girlfriend making the decisions as to when to have sex said the following in relation to culture:

Extract 20

Interviewer: *OK, so if you look back at the situation, what do you think, uhm, made this a conflicting situation for you?*

Interviewee 2: *(Silence.) You see, uh … one is taught as a black man that you need to, uh … you need to stamp your authority, you know, you need to, uh … make your presence felt.*

Interviewer: *Stamp your authority?*

Interviewee 2: *Yeah.*

Interviewer: *What do you mean by that?*

Interviewee 2: *Especially in a relationship (raised voice), males are set to, to take charge … must have the responsibility to take charge within the relationship. And to be dictated to the terms and conditions of when and how you going to have sex … provided me with some serious difficulties.*

Interviewer: *Hmm.*

Interviewee 2: *Cause on the other hand you love this person, you respect them, but also … you are now being scheduled by them as to when and how to have sex … it – it was to me a serious dilemma.*

Interviewer: *OK, so … thinking about it … uhm … what were the things that you took into consideration as a man at that time?*

Interviewee 2: *In – in terms of what?*

Interviewer: *In terms of, like, you said, it – it gave you serious problems or conflicting ideas, like someone's dictating when you should do this.*

Interviewee 2: *Hmm … as I said, you know, as a man, or as male … I come from a background where it says … you … you set the tone, you set the rules.*

Interviewer: *OK.*

Interviewee 2: *To be now in an environment where … where someone was dictating rules to me, or rules of the game on how to have sex or when … it – it – geez! It – it felt as if my manhood has been undermined.*

Interviewer: Your manhood has been undermined?

Interviewee 2:   My manhood has been undermined, yes. (Said in a matter of fact way.)

Interviewer: OK. And you said, like, your background ... what background is that? Could you tell me a little about that?

Interviewee2:   I am an African man. I am – I am Zulu, coming from Zululand ... from the heart of Zululand.

Interviewer: Hmm.

Interviewee 2:   Uh ... to a certain extent I will call myself traditional.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 2:   A traditional man. I practice some significant Zulu rituals ... and with the upbringing I received, it has – there's – there's things I been taught from a young age of how a man behaves ... particularly when it comes to interactions with women.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 2:   In a relationship context. So, it's things you can't run away from.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 2:   You educated, you learn to respect, to listen ... to do that ... but also there's that background, uh ... traditional background, if I can call it like that.

4.5.2.1 Culture as mediator

The above extracts illustrate the significant influence that culture has on men and moral-decision-making. Culture, for interviewee 1, in Extract 19, is seen as harmonising the self with others in the same environment, as may be seen in his statement, *'The township, the area where you going to, assimilate you, so that you can balance with the people who are living there.'* Moral functioning is necessarily mediated by words, language, and forms of discourse. Such mediation occurs in inner dialogue, and such dialogue gives rise to moral functioning; hence moral development is always shaped by the particular social, cultural and historical context in which it occurs (Tappan, 2006). The participant viewed himself as one with his context, being inseparable from the cultural and social context. Culture, according to this participant, is what 'balances' him as part of a group with distinct beliefs and values. A person becomes human only in the midst of others and seeks both individual and collective harmony as the primary task in the process of becoming a true person (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013).

The second participant, in Extract 20, illustrated the role of the prescriptions of culture with respect to making decisions in relationships. He related his argument in relation to cultural practices, where boys are taught to be men from a young age, especially in relationships with women, as is clear in these words: *'I practice some significant Zulu rituals ... and with the upbringing I received, it has – there's – there's things I been taught from a young age of how a man behaves ... particularly when it comes to interactions with women.'*

Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characteristics that are peculiar to a people, to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies (Idang, 2015). Hence culture, for the purposes of this study, is an important consideration, as it is valued as the context within which men make decisions; it provides meaning on how men understand themselves and which worldview they adopt, and drives behaviour.

4.5.2.2 The influence of masculine hierarchies: 'From Mr Nice Guys to Mr Cool Guys'

Different cultures and periods of history construct masculinity differently (Connell, 2008). One such construct of masculinity is hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a notion of ideal masculinity which cultural groups construct; it is the ideal that men measure themselves against and are measured against by others (Brown, Sorrell & Rafaelli, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is introduced to boys at a very early age (Elliott, 2011) and is therefore deeply embedded in various forms of social activity. In order to deepen the understanding of hegemonic masculinity, this study draws on the four types of hierarchical relations of masculinity described under point 2.10.3: dominant, complicit, marginalised and subordinate.

The extracts below demonstrate men's continuous efforts to fit in with a dominant group in the quest to belong.

Extract 21

Interviewee 6: *The moral of the story, or the dilemma that I was in ... I believe that society plays a role, instead of you sticking to one relationship or being faithful to one partner, everyone I hang around with has more than one lady ... it's more like peer pressure – you actually try to blend in, to fit in.*

Interviewer: To fit in ...

Interviewee 6: Yes, to fit in.

Interviewer: So what was critical for you at that stage was to fit in?

Interviewee 6: Yes, to fit in and have a backup plan.

This participant explained that he was raised in a house where his father made the decisions, and he still strongly believed in that practice. What was interesting was how this early childhood conditioning spilled over to sexual decision-making, including areas such as the use of condoms. The participant felt that condom use should be decided by the man. He illustrated it as follows:

Extract 22

Interviewer: *What do you think is the role of a man in relationship with women?*

Interviewee 6: *For me it is more like the man is the head, the lady should be submissive, that is what I believe. Like the man should provide, it should not be like the lady should give all the suggestions and provide for the man. It's more about my pride. I can't be in a relationship where a lady is providing for me. Even in my current relationship, I do not ask from my girlfriend. I grew up that way – that you should provide for the lady, the lady should only offer what she can, if she doesn't offer than you just let it be.*

Interviewer: *So that belief comes from the way you were raised?*

Interviewee 6: *Yeah. I was raised like that, my mom and my dad, my dad always provided. He always made sure that there is food in the house. Whenever something goes wrong, my mom was responsible, my mom was responsible for the discipline of the house, whenever something major goes wrong, that is when my dad comes in and he will be like, 'No, you guys, now I need to discipline you.' So we take advantage of our mothers that is why I rather feel like no, the man should always say the last say. The woman can't have the last say.*

Interviewer: *OK, so when it comes to certain things like the use of condoms, who should decide in a relationship whether we gonna use a condom or not?*

Interviewee 6: *In my opinion ... hmm ... the man should be the one to say, 'Let's use a condom.' Actually ... the woman ... (pause) ... OK, the only thing I can say is that the guy has the say to decide to use a condom or not ... that is all I can say.*

The participant in the extract below illustrated the construct of a complicit masculinity, in that at one stage of his life he agreed to the practices of dominant masculinity:

Extract 23

Interviewer: *OK, and when you were having a relationship with both ladies, let's look at it this way, being a dilemma – how did you feel as an individual when you talked to your friends and they say it is fine? Looking at your family*

values, looking at your individual values, what did that create, did it create something in you?

Interviewee 3:   *Definitely, there was a conflicting information in myself, and in a way in my subconscious I knew that those are the (unclear), but I told myself, you know, what let me also experience it. This is the situation where you are and you get money, but you not getting the sex that you want. So, there was that thing that would tell me, 'OK, in as much as you doing wrong ...' it's not really ... it's not about you to decide, it's actually the situation driving you to do that ...*

Another masculinity in the hierarchy of masculinities is the marginalized masculinity. This participant was an undergraduate student from a strong Zulu cultural background who had religious beliefs which was different from what his uncles expected from him. He does engage in relationships, but as a born again Christian, he wants to abstain from sex in relationships. His dilemma was as follows:

Extract 24

Interviewer: *Do you think that your decision not to have sex before marriage is in line with your family values?*

Interviewee 7:   *I might say yes or no ... I don't know. The only way I might answer the question is, I don't have some elder man in my family to tell me these things, because I have a single parent, only my mother. But so far I am scared to talk to people about these things, because maybe my uncle, he says things like you are not at a man, at this age you still have not had any sex, you don't involve yourself in sexual activities. But I say, OK, it is fine, if I am not a man ... (pause). At some stage I used to say what kind of person am I, because I am willing to ... but because of what they teach us in church they say if you have sex before marriage this thing might affect your family, because along the way you will maybe start having affairs around. And according to what I believe about not to have sex before marriage – no, it is not in line with my family beliefs, it is my own decision.*

Interviewer: *How does this impact your relationships in your family?*

Interviewee 7:   *With my uncles it is negative ... because they say I am ... I don't know how to say it, it is like you are not in line ... you are out of line that is what they say. They say I should go stay at the village to undergo rituals and learn what it is to be a man. I don't have friends outside the church, because most of the*

guys at university don't agree with my way ... they say it is not a good way ... sometimes it is lonely, but it is my religion – I am a Christian.

The above extract shows the construct of marginalized masculinity – the group that is on the outskirts of dominant masculinity, where members identify with a social grouping that is not dominant. These masculinities are based on ethnic, religious or racial identifications. They are marginalized because their interests and perspectives are not recognized by the dominant culture (Khan, 2009).

4.5.2.3 Is it difficult to be a man?

Extract 25

Interviewee 1:   *'Yes, that's why now that there's that "contestation" that majority of the females who have been to the institution of higher learning ... You see, there was that thing, it's called patriarchy, so now it's* vice versa *when you go there, it's matriarchy, if I am not mistaken – that the females now, they want to make sure that they are seen as being in charge, not to be in a feminist thought, but to make men subordinate to them.'*

Another participant concurs that it is difficult to be a man, as follows:

Extract 26

Interviewee 5:   *Yes, it is very difficult to be a man. You have to at all times be in competition with other men…(silence) it is like you are always competing. If you don't do things like have many girls than other guys make fun of you, so you always have to be on top of your game. It is difficult to be a man, because if you have a wife and kids they expect you to take care of them, to work, your parents want you as a man to provide. So, yes it is fun to be a man… sometimes…but it is hard.*

Masculinity is often viewed as being about the drive for power and conquest, yet some men do not wholeheartedly agree with this view. It was noted that negative masculine identities do exist, especially in township males, with economic marginalization being one of the influencing factors (Mkhize, 2006). In juxtaposition to this, Olawoye et al. (2004) conducted a study to determine the significance of sociocultural factors upon gender relationships in Nigeria, and found that gender relationships and the social prescriptions for the roles of males and females are not static. Even in traditional cultural settings, gender roles have witnessed changes, mainly due to economic challenges.

In view of the changing face of masculinity due to social and economic changes, the question was asked of participants whether it was difficult to be a man. The participant in Extract 25 agreed that it was difficult to be a man for the following reasons: the rise of women's economic freedom, which translates into men losing dominance over them; women becoming more independent and taking up power positions in the workplace; and the resultant changing roles in households, where many women become breadwinners while men become homemakers. Interviewee 2 experienced hardship in being a man, defining it as 'tough'. He said that there was a lot of focus on men – how they act, dress and behave – and explained that it was difficult to be a man because of the demands and expectations from the environment. He also said that mistakes made by other men are often generalized to all men.

Extract 27

Interviewer: *Is it difficult to be a man?*

Interviewee 6:   *Yes, nowadays it is difficult to be a man, because women are becoming more independent with time. Like literally, like now women can buy their own things and they can live independently, they don't have to be dependent anymore, so it is like you lose your dominance over the lady. Women are becoming more educated, taking up power positions and we are left with nothing.*

Interviewer: *Hmm … dominance, you say.*

Interviewee 6:   *Yeah … the dominance is going … you go, like, I have to go cook while the lady is at work. Now it is the other way around, usually it is the lady who is supposed to make the house a home – now you have to make the house a home.*

Interviewer: *Would you see yourself in a relationship like that? As you are saying, economic times have changed, women are equally educated, and have equally big positions.*

Interviewee 6:   *I would not want to see myself in such a situation, honestly, that is why I always try to be better than before. No guy would want to be undermined by his woman. Cause woman nowadays, whatever they buy, in the middle of an argument she will remind you of the shirt she bought you (laughing) then you have to humble yourself and be quiet.*

Another participant shared his view of what it means to be a man in the following way:

Extract 28

Interviewee 4:   *Being a man is tough, it is tough!*

Interviewer: *Why is it tough?*

Interviewee 4:   *There's so many demands from the environment as a whole, so many expectations.*

Interviewer: *For example?*

Interviewee 4:   *How people see you.*

Interviewer: *Yes ..?*

Interviewee 4:   *How you dress up, OK, dressing up, how you act, how you behave, right.*

Interviewer: *OK.*

Interviewee 4:   *Cause I might behave one way here at varsity, but another way at home. Nobody will ever really know, you see. But, yes, as you behave in a certain way, people expect something, you see?*

Interviewer: *OK.*

Interviewee 4:   *And people respect me at home. I have to say, people do respect me and they look up to me and also the kids – they actually do want to spend time with me and that makes me happy. 'Cause, I see as a man, OK from what I was to now, things have changed so much better, you see. And as a man you know when you see one person like that, you see we can judge many people upon you. 'Cause for a man to get a bad reputation, it only takes one man to do one stupid thing, and all of us are in the dog box.*

Interviewer: *Hmm.*

Interviewee 4:   *Every man! You see, women like calling men dogs, one woman gets hurt, every guy is a dog. You see women start judging us on other people's mistakes, and I try my best to actually invert that, you see. And I do it with all my power to invert that, and I try my best to actually work on that pertaining to women, you see.*

4.6 Tensions experienced by young African men based on conceptions of the individual self and the dominant cultural/social scripts of manhood

This section discusses tensions that arise between individualised conceptions of the self and the dominant social or cultural scripts of manhood. The discussion covers the tensions men experience in relation to moral decisions they have taken, they led to certain action, especially where these causes a sense of guilt or shame.

4.6.1 Dominant voices and tension

The existence of the dialogical self suggests that most people in normal circumstances are formed by multiple cultural and social influences (Koning, 2009). Tensions may arise when collective voices speak through the voice of the individual person (Hermans & Kempens, 1993). What is important in this section is that the two dominant notions of the dialogical self – the intersubjective exchange and dominance – presuppose a multiplicity of 'I' positions. Hence some positions are agreed with, others are disagreed with and others may simply be rejected (Hermans & Kempens, 1993). This gives rise to the concept of dialogical tensions. Dialogical tensions, for this researcher, stem from the tension created between two or more positions.

The participant in Extract 29 below illustrated a moral dilemma:

Extract 29

Interviewee 6:   A moral dilemma is where I find myself in between what I know is right according to society and beliefs, and what I think should be right as an individual. Choosing between these two options makes it conflicting and difficult for me.

The two notions of the dialogical self are present in the above definition which incorporates intersubjective exchange and dominance. The participant offered insight into the tensions that arise in exchanges with others and with the self. Having to decide on the dominance of either one of the positions is difficult and causes internal conflict.

The extract below describes clearly how dominant scripts of manhood prescribed by culture and society can influence men's moral decision-making and negotiation in relationships with women. We see the intersubjective exchange of external voices positioned within the self, with both external and internal voices seeking dominance. The participant below had engaged in multiple partnerships, in accordance with what was viewed as normal practice among young men; to fit in, he once engaged in multiple relationships, giving the reason as follows:

The moral of the story, or the dilemma that I was in … I believe that society plays a role, instead of you sticking to one relationship or being faithful to one partner, everyone I hang around with has more than one lady … it's more like peer pressure, you actually try to blend in, to fit in.

In the extract below, this same participant shared that the 'I' position changed, stating that he as an individual did not agree with multiple partnerships, but that he was caught up in the

expectations of culture and society, with culture and society ultimately achieving the dominant position:

Extract 30

Interviewer: *Looking back at the dilemma that you shared ... if you look back now, how do you feel about multiple concurrent partners, as an individual in relation to your culture?*

Interviewee 6: *As an individual I don't agree with that, I feel like it is actually not necessary to have more than one partner, even though culture begs to differ. And then, as an individual, culture pushes you that way and society pushes you that way, so you lose, two against one ... so majority wins.*

Interviewer: *What are you saying with that? Is it culture and society against individual?*

Interviewee 6: *Yeah. If you can't stand your ground and society and culture comes into play, you will lose your footing, you will end up flowing with the stream.*

Interviewer: *So that is a young man's thoughts?*

Interviewee 6: *Yes, but later those thoughts might also change as you get older and learn a different way.*

Another participant defined the concept of moral dilemma as follows:

Extract 31

Interviewer: *What does a moral dilemma mean to you?*

Interviewee 4: *A moral dilemma, that's when everything starts to crash. Moral dilemma is when you start ... it's like things that I value, and I go against things that I value, that's when we start being morally wrong, and ethically wrong, you see?*

Interviewer: *Yes.*

Interviewee 4: *And that's when we start having disagreements, you see? Cause we might have different perceptions of moral dilemmas, but when it comes to me, whenever I actually look against something that I value, that's when I find it morally wrong.*

4.6.2 Guilt and shame

In contrast to Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas, Gilligan draws findings from real-life dilemmas and emphasizes that we need to explore stories about real-life situations that involve moral conflict and choice (Tappan, 2006; Blum, 1988; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). What is important for this section is Gilligan's argument that not only is the self radically particularized, but so is the 'other', the person toward whom one is acting and with whom one stands in relationship (Blum, 1988). In the current study, the 'other' can refer to family, friends, girlfriends or wives of the participants in the study. Furthermore, Gilligan states that the essence of moral decision is the exercise of choice and willingness to accept responsibility for that choice, suggesting that any moral decision has a moral consequence (Gilligan, 1982).

The following extracts express feelings of guilt that men experienced in relationships with women. The first extract illustrates the sense of guilt experienced by a man in multiple partnerships:

Extract 32

Interviewer: OK, and if you were faced with a similar situation again, would you do the same thing again?

Interviewee 3:   I don't think I'll do the same.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee3:   Because I don't like hurting people, really.   Look, seriously, I didn't believe it would go to the extent of hurting. Because ... pheww ... both of them were hurt, because the other person didn't even know that I was involved with the older one, the older one didn't know, but I came to realise that the older one and the other one, they knew each other actually, and they collided somehow, so it was a bit of a mess up.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee 3: And broken their hearts, and I don't think I am that type of person.

Interviewer: OK. So looking back at the situation, what did you learn from it?

Interviewee 3:   I've learned that you, no matter the circumstances, there are some values ... if you cherish some values, you should abide by it. If I valued honesty, I should have abided by the honesty, yes, and stick to that. So what I learned is that, you know, stick to your belief, stick to the truth, no matter the situation.

Interviewer: *OK. So what does a moral dilemma mean to you?*

Interviewee 3:   *A moral dilemma, it's ... (silence). It's when you faced with a situation where you have to (unclear) all your moral beliefs, and only focus on the situation at the moment. It's when actually your moral beliefs are challenged, your cultural beliefs are challenged by a certain situation. It could be your environment, it could be anything else. So you are confined in a place where you say, I know this is what I'm supposed to be doing, but I am not doing it, I am not doing it, because of A, B, or C. But at the bottom line of it, you know that you are not doing the right thing.*

Another participant expressed the following:

Interviewee 5:   *I think it is just okay, everyone in life like manipulating (giggling)...It's just a game to outsmart the other person*

Interviewer: *Hmmm...Okay, thinking of the other person involved, would you do the same again?*

Interviewee 5:   *Yes. In terms of going to my friends and telling them all that happened, was good. So for my friends it is good...(silence)*

Interviewer: *And for you?*

Interviewee 5:   *For me...for me ...I am okay, (silence) sometimes I feel guilty, as the other person ...maybe if it was up to her, she would not want to have sex with me, maybe I forced her a bit into it...*

4.7 Conceptualisations of what it means to be a man in a relationship with a woman

Participants were asked what it means for a man to be in a relationship with a woman. Most gave similar responses. Young men largely saw their role in relationships with women as providing leadership or direction, with some saying it included being the providers in the relationship. These definitions show a close resemblance to what Connell (2008) describes as hegemonic masculinity. He defines the concept 'hegemony' as the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life (Connell, 2008; 2011).

Some illustrations are given below:

Extract 34

Interviewee: *What do you think is the role of a man in relationship with a woman?*

Interviewee 5: *A man must lead, he must be able to show society and his friends that he is the one to take all decisions in the relationship, that he holds the power, he must be able to work and provide for the woman.*

Another participant said:

Extract 35

Interviewee 7: *The man must be the head of the family, but he must also listen to the woman, he must take care of her and follow God's word in the relationship. If the woman has good advice he must be able to listen and consider her advice and not just ignore her. The woman must listen to her husband but the husband should never hurt his wife.*

Another participant said:

Extract 36

Interviewee2:   *But, firstly it means I am the head.*

Interviewer: *OK.*

Interviewee2:   *And everything I do … listen, I – I – I have subjected myself to female leadership and I've been giving the capacity of women to lead, but being a man, it tells me that I am the head. Whatever I do – relationships, family, what not – that I should be a provider, should be a provider …*

Interviewer: *Hmm, provide for whom?*

Interviewee2:   *If I speak in relationship context, relationship context. If I speak in a family context, family context. If I speak in a community context, community context. As well, I will also link that to protection as well.*

Interviewer: *Hmm.*

Interviewee2:   *But, all and all, to provide leadership as a man, in different spheres of life that I find myself in.*

Interviewer: *Leadership. Can you elaborate a little more on that?*

Interviewee2:   *I believe a relationship needs direction and vision.*

Interviewer: *Hmm.*

Interviewee2:   *And it is my responsibility as a man in a relationship to provide that direction. 'Cause I would not like to find myself in a relationship that is*

just circling and not move anywhere. But there would be a direction that I believe as a man I should set. I would say that with family, I would say that with community.

4.8 Time and space

The issue of time and space was implicit in the study, in that men indicated that they frequently thought differently *now* from when they were studying, and thought and acted differently at the *university* from when they were at *home*. One of the participants who shared how his girlfriend decided when they would have sex said that it would not have been a dilemma back home, because at home they are traditional and don't allow women make decisions; only men are allowed to make decisions. So the woman herself would not have behaved in that way. A second participant argued that he tolerated or understood his ex-girlfriend's behaviour because of his education and presence at the university; however, he thought that he would not have behaved similarly at home.

The first participant illustrated his viewpoint in the following extract:

Extract 37

Interviewee 2: *If I have to take you back home, there would not be a dilemma, because there decisions are made…by the man. But being here, my education has taught me to value women to a certain extent. But on the other hand, I still hold high the notion of, I am gonna call it male superiority, but I am just going to say male … but the male is the leader in the relationship.*

Further on in the interview the following transpired:

Interviewer: *OK, so your actions, like you said, for you it was a bit conflicting for someone to make that call. Was it in line with your family values, beliefs, your traditions, or your friends?*

Interviewee 2: *Traditions, family, yes, but friends … is different. In this university environment, you'll find a lot of diplomatic males, you'll find that the decision would be made by women in their relationships. But where I come from, that is a sign of weakness.*

Another participant illustrated the issue of time and space at various points in the interview, as may be seen below.

Extract 38

This participant faced a dilemma as he was dating two women simultaneously, he said that this was against his culture and religion back home and that he would never practice dating more than one woman at a time. He is a foreign student.

Interviewer 3:   *Definitely there was conflicting information in myself, and in a way in my subconscious I knew that those are the reasons, but I told myself you know what let me also experience it…so there was that thing that would tell me ok, in as much as you doing wrong it is not really, it's not about you to decide, it's actually the situation driving you to do that, at least I am far from home and family.*

Interviewer: *So is it yourself that says, ok, I am doing something wrong, or is it your beliefs or culture ?*

Interviewee 3:   *It is actually my beliefs, I was raised in a Roman Catholic environment, so we had very strong beliefs in terms of hmm…having sex before marriage and have sex, like that is the right channel. So in as much as I was doing that I knew that somehow I was contravening some rules…but I just decided to subtract my (laughing) common sense of things and look at the situation, so it was about me, and being here in another country, I put myself first and tried to put my culture and beliefs behind.*

This participant further elaborated about the environment, as follows:

Interviewee 3:   *you know…I realise that we are all molded by the environment that we live in, I realised that I was trying to adapt to another culture, that now the environment. So, I think my friends they were also influenced by the things that were happening in the environment, ok…right. But, also, how can I put it, if you look at my friends and culture, there was a conflicting situation between my culture and my friends and the environment that I was staying in, but what prevailed was actually the environment itself, so it, really shaped the kind of thing I was in.*

4.9 The meaning of manhood for young African men

The self-concept is an important consideration for this section, as it aims to understand how African men are oriented – how the independent or interdependent self-construal predisposes decision-making. Men vacillate, sometimes including the voices of others

within the perimeters of the self. They may make independent decisions when they don't allow external voices to dominate, and they demonstrate interdependence when they do allow external voices within the perimeters of the self. The definition of manhood describes the relational orientation of men. The question is whether they include others in their personal boundaries or whether they strive for autonomy and individualism. Men in this study expressed various views that indicated the dominance of the interdependent self, such as: being a man was to be in relation with others; being a man was as a result of socialisation; being a man was to protect and engage; being a man was to be responsible. It was clear that these young African men considered the external world in their definitions of manhood.

Extract 39

Interviewer: *What does it mean to be a man?*

Interviewee 4:   *Is to take care of my family and my partner and to make sure that with my partner we engage on issues. I won't be a dictator – no, no. Is to have a relationship. There is a word they use – 'open relationship' – which means something else according to my definition of open relationship to that one they use on Facebook, where you can see anyone can … Open in a manner that we open issues, we open one another's problems, to be … I don't know the word that I can use – to say you must unpack everything about how you feel and everything and myself. So to be a man, I have to tell her this is what I like, this is what I don't. And she has to tell me everything. To be a man you don't have to be a dictator, to say no things must be done like this, like that and that. No, no, no, because we are all equal. A man is a person who has to protect his family, love his family, engage with his family, children, wife, whatever.*

Another participant describes manhood as follows:

Extract 40

Interviewee 2: *What does it mean for me to be a man? I will answer that question the way we were taught, to be important, the way we are socialised as boys. The way I was taught … and then you were taught that a man is a man, it's the most powerful human being you know. But, so I grew up knowing that as a man there's also things that I shouldn't be doing, I should be strong, show a*

strong character, and that kind of things. But really, being a man is being responsible. And also acknowledging the basics of the potential within the other people, especially women. So being a real man is to (substrate) yourself, your own ego, and accepting that even the other person might have something to say. Because if you do that, then you realise that you are going the right direction.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: *Your decisions are not held in that sort of cultural beliefs only, because cultural beliefs ... it's really mean, especially the way we are socialised to be boys. And that's what I consider to be a man – to be responsible, speak out if something's wrong, try to find common ground between the two.*

4.10 Summary and conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that African men experience moral dilemmas in relationships with women mainly because of conflicting ideas on decision-making powers. Most men in this study related stories where they experienced moral dilemmas, such when women decided when and when not to have sex, or the issue of deciding on the use of condoms. The moral dilemma for men was centered on the idea of who should make decisions in relationships; most men in this study did not agree that women should have extensive decision-making powers.

This reasoning emanates mainly from men's constructions of manhood. Most men defined manhood as being the provider, and a man was ultimately responsible for making important decisions in relationships with women.

Even though most men viewed manhood as a dominant construct, when asked to define what it means to be a man, ironically, all men in this study agreed that it was difficult to be a man in today's world. This difficulty was attributed to economic and social changes that have advanced women's empowerment, and the expectations of manhood instilled by culture and society.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to understand the moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by young African men in intimate relationships with women, and how various scripts of manhood/masculinities available in their social and cultural milieus shape these dilemmas.

The findings of this study indicate that young African men are influenced by the sociocultural constructs of manhood when faced with decisions in intimate relationships with partners. The findings demonstrate how culture and society – that is, family, friends, and community members – can impact the way men negotiate decisions in relationships with women. The results of this study further indicate that the moral dilemmas experienced by men emanate mainly from tensions created when choices have to be made between multiple voices – the voice of the self and that of society, family or friends.

Voices are central in African men's decision-making, as the collective voices of culture and society speak through the voice of the individual male person, making negotiations and decision-making a complex process for young African men. It is evident from the extracts shared that men are expected to live up to social expectations, such as showing levels of strength, power and sexual competence, which at times may be contrary to a particular man's individual beliefs. It is difficult for African men to abandon the voices of culture, as culture is intrinsic in the socialisation process. In other words, men are socialised according to cultural beliefs.

The findings of this study may be related to findings of previous studies (Amuchastegui & Aggleton, 2007; Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Idang, 2015; Nshindano & Maharaj 2008; Olawye, et al., n.d.) that investigated men in relationship to women.

5.2 Theoretical implications of the research

The findings of this study challenge traditional studies of the self that view the self as autonomous. The findings indicate that African men are influenced by a multiplicity of voices, being the voice of the self and the voices of 'others' or society, culture and peers. This is a view that differs from the traditional Western view of the self as independent and autonomous. For this reason, the study points to a need for more in-depth knowledge on non-Western populations, such as Africans and Asian populations that have not been well researched previously. The self-concept is important for this study, as it aimed to understand how African men are oriented, and how the independent and interdependent self interact in decision-making.

The self-concept is formed at an early age and influences cognitive processes such as moral reasoning, serving as a reference to guide individuals' decision-making processes and behaviour. The type of self-construal a man has shapes how he thinks, feels and reacts in particular situations (Markus & Kitayama (1991); Walker, Deng & Dieser, 2005). Hence this study suggests an increased focus on the body of knowledge on the subject of moral decision-making in non-Western populations, such as Africans and Asians. The research findings indicate an interplay between voices when men are faced with decisions; men vacillate between voices – the context-inclusive, interdependent voice and the independent, autonomous voice. This study recommends further research aimed at the development of a theory within the sphere of the dialogical self, which recognizes the interplay of different voices within an individual, and examines how individuals construct meaning out of this multiplicity of voices.

5.3 Implications for policy and practice

The findings suggest that factors such as culture and socialization play an integral part in the way men negotiate and make decisions in intimate relationships with women. This suggests that culture should be considered in policymaking and in practice, particularly in the health care sector. Overarching this aspect stands hegemonic masculinity – a cultural construct or set of criteria against which certain cultures measure men and the qualities they possess or do not possess. The findings of this study indicate that men identify with hegemony or are complicit with it. Hegemonic masculinity is a notion of ideal masculinity which cultural groups construct. Hence this study recommends increased knowledge for policy makers,

especially in the health sector and the social protective services, in order to acknowledge hegemonic or dominant masculinities and their relationship with patriarchy, violence and the domination of women. This will help policy makers and practitioners to understand how men, particularly African men, negotiate and make decisions in intimate relationships with women. Having the knowledge would help policy makers to spread awareness of the consequences of making certain decisions in relationships, with regard to matters such as condom use, multiple partners or the frequency of sex. The findings of this research indicate that men have negative perceptions of women who make independent decisions with regard to the use of condoms, which seems to suggest to many men that the woman may be cheating on him or lack trust in him. These perceptions are dire in the health sector, as they influence whether or not people protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases.

In conclusion, there appears to be a need for policy makers to cultivate awareness and knowledge of the fact that some men find it difficult to be a man as a result of social and economic changes. Policy makers might be encouraged to investigate the impact of such vulnerability and its influence on men's behaviour in relation to health and violence in relationships.

5.4 Implications for future research

The study was conducted at one tertiary institution whose demographics are primarily Zulu. All participants, except for one foreign student, were Zulu. Therefore the research findings are not necessarily generalizable to all African men. The selection of samples was non-random, with participants selected for the information they possessed regarding the research topic. Further research could extend this sample by involving different tertiary institutions in different localities, and could include both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure a larger study. Although the sample was small, the open-ended, in-depth interviews allowed for rich data generation which could not all be discussed due to the small scale of the research. Therefore, an extension of this research is recommended to include and expand upon the findings.

The dialogical self is a concept that is not widely used. However, it is a useful tool to enhance understanding of moral decision-making processes or dilemmas, and is recommended for inclusion in future research to further understanding of the tensions experienced in the act of decision-making. The findings of this study indicate that some men find it difficult to be a

man because of social and economic changes. Hence researchers could explore the impact of such vulnerability and how it influences behaviours, negotiation and decision-making processes in relationships.

Hegemonic masculinity plays a significant role in the lives of men, especially younger men. Findings of this study have demonstrated that men identify with or are complicit in dominant masculinities, especially in their early adolescent years. Further studies might focus on the pressure caused by the need to identify with dominant masculinities, as many men follow such practices in the quest to belong to a group that they view as positive.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This was an explorative study; the scope of the study was broad, yet the size was fairly small. This meant that the researcher selected only the most relevant extracts in the data for presentation, and did not exhaust in full detail all data shared by the participants. The study therefore does not optimally represent all data. The sample contained mainly African Zulu students. A further study could consider including multicultural students or young men coming from a Western background. The current study was limited to African, mostly Zulu men; a comparative approach to men of different cultures might add great value. Expanding the sample selection by using a more randomized selection process would help to gain a bigger population that would certainly be more representative than the current study.

Although the men who participated in this study provided rich data and appeared to be comfortable and open during interviews, the objectivity of this research could be questioned, since the interviewer was female and the topic, sensitive. The researcher could perhaps have been seen as vulnerable when men expressed themselves openly regarding their experiences with women, or their views of women; had the researcher been male they might have expressed themselves more candidly or bluntly.

Lastly, the study could expand the sampling base to include not only in-depth interviews, but also quantitative tools such as surveys or questionnaires to increase the size of the study and strengthen both its objectivity and its generalizability. Qualitative studies rely on the researcher's interpretation of the data; in this study, the researcher engaged in both data collection and data interpretation, in the absence of any quantitative tools. This process

allowed for the researcher to immerse herself in the process, which had its advantages, yet may have resulted in less than objective interpretations at times.

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Appendix A

<u>Information Sheet</u>

Moral and ethical dilemmas of young African men in intimate heterosexual relationships: A dialogical perspective

Hello, I am Liesl Boois, a Clinical Psychology Master's student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. For my research proposal I am requesting young men to participate in interview discussions. I hope that the information generated will be of mutual benefit not just to the society of Pietermaritzburg and to men exclusively, but to the joint empowerment of both men and women on a wider global scale. Thank you very much for being willing to help me conduct this study. Before we can get started, I need to inform you about what we will be doing and how we will be doing it.

Please understand that your participation is voluntary and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, we would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with us. If you choose not to take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop at any time and discontinue your participation. If you refuse to participate or withdraw at any stage, there will be no penalties and you will not be prejudiced against in any way.

To tell you a bit more about the study. This study will explore the moral dilemmas faced by young African males in their relationships with women. We will look at issues that influence decisions young men make based how manhood is perceived in the context of your society, culture, and background.

Please note that I will not be recording your name anywhere during these discussions, and no one will be able to link you to the answers or viewpoints you give in the focus group discussion. I, the researcher and my supervisor will be the only people who will have access to the unlinked information you give. All individual information will remain confidential.

The in-depth interview session will last around an hour. I will be asking you a few questions and request that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. These questions will be of a personal and or sensitive nature. You may choose not to answer some of these questions. I will also be asking some questions that you may or may not have thought about before, and which also involve things about the past and future. When it comes to answering to these questions, there are no right or wrong questions, what is important is that you feel free to say what is on your mind in a genuine free manner.

If I ask you a question which makes you feel sad or upset, we can stop and talk about it. There are also people from the Student Counseling Centre who are willing to talk with you and assist you with those things that upset you, if you need any assistance at a later stage. If you need to speak to anyone after I have left, a professional person can be reached at the following number………

The information that is gained during the project will be stored in a locked cabinet in my supervisor's office (Professor Nhanhla Mkhize). Only my supervisor and I will have access to this information. After the study has been completed, any information that links your identity to the data will be destroyed.

The results of the study will be presented in a report that will be assessed by examiners, and be presented at the School of Psychology Postgraduate Conference. Please note that your identity will not be revealed at any stage. The findings will also inform the basis of future journal articles.

If you have a query or complaint about any aspect of this study, you may also contact the supervisor, Professor Mkhize at the School of Psychology, or the ethics Committee, at 033 260 5853.

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate,
Liesl Ilse Boois
0729044984

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

I hereby agree to participate in this research regarding factors that create dilemmas in young men's moral decision-making during sexual relationships with women. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

The purpose of the study has been explained to me, and I understand what is expected of my participation. I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone numbers of professional people to contact should I need to speak about any issues that may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the recording, and that my participation will remain confidential.

Signature of Participant   Date

(Consent to Audio recording of the focus group discussion)

In addition to the above, I hereby agree to the audio recording of this interview for the purposes of data capturing. I understand that no personally identifying information or recording concerning me will be released in any form. I understand that these recordings will be kept securely in a locked environment and will be destroyed or erased once data capture and analysis are complete.

Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix C

University of KwaZulu Natal
School of Psychology
Scottsville
3209

The Student Counseling Centre

<u>RE: Application for assistance</u>

My name is Liesl Boois and I am a Masters Clinical Psychology student here at the University of KwaZulu- Natal, Pietermaritzburg. As part of this program we are required to conduct a research study. My study is about the dilemmas young African men face in intimate relationships with women. The study will make use of students on campus.

Moreover, the study wants to explore and understand how these young men make meaning out of their moral decisions in sexual relationships with women. More specifically we will look at the factors that influence their decision- making processes, such as sociocultural relationships, family, community at large, power relations and masculinity constructs which might impact behaviour.

For these reasons, I think that my research might cause some distress in participants as the discussions can be sensitive to some, even to the extent of ethically questioning or regretting their own behaviours or actions. Those participants will thus need to go through professional counselling and that is where I would be mostly appreciative if the Counseling Centre will help those students that will be referred to them by the researcher.

Thank you for your time to read my letter and your kindest consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Liesl Ilse Boois