Notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province.

by

Siweya Tryphosa

(Mini)-DISSERTATION

Submitted in (partial) fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

In the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
(School of Social Sciences)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: Prof. T Sodi

2017

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and friends who have supported me throughout my academic life.

DECLARATION

I declare that the **Notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo province** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of **Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

_____   _____

Siweya, T (Mr)   Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province. The study sought to describe what it means to be a man according to African boys in a rural community. The study also described critical routes through which African boys transit from boyhood to manhood.

The qualitative method was used. The sample consisted of 10 participants from Ngove Village, and was selected through purposive sampling. Data was collected through individual semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Data was analysed using interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA).

Common themes around what it means to be a man were clearly delineated. Findings of this study suggest that manhood is a status that is earned when a male person possesses specific qualities that one's community and culture consider to be in keeping with being a man. The findings of this study further suggested that from early childhood, African boys experience social pressure that compels them into channeling their behaviours into standards set by the community. Meanwhile it is maintained that the male gender is the primary element of manhood, it is strongly emphasised that the male person will need to display his manhood behaviourally.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS   **PAGE NO:**

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Most Western psychological theories on human development suggest that gender identity occurs during adolescence (Simon & Gagnon, 1998; Kroger, 2006). For example, according to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, the conflict between the achievement of identity and identity diffusion is the central developmental crisis to be dealt with during adolescence (Waterman, 1999; Kroger, 2006). On the other hand, Sigmund Freud's psychosexual theory holds that adolescence brings about a reawakening of Oedipal or Electra conflicts and a reworking of earlier childhood identifications, and that these identifications are carried from this point through life (Simon & Gagnon, 1998). The psychosexual theory of Sigmund Freud and the psychosocial theory of Erik Erikson are among the widely accepted theories of human development (Kroger, 2006). Because of their well-defined and accepted stages, these theories and other Western theories of human development have been presented as universal (Ramokgopa, 2001). However, these theories have been criticised as explaining adolescent identity in relation to behaviour of the modern Western human subject (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011; Vermuelen, 2011).

The study of gender identity and the corresponding roles of manhood and womanhood has been a subject of focus for a long time, with researchers exploring and describing gender roles as perceived in different societies (Shefer, Ratele, Strebel, Shabalala & Buikema, 2007; Chitando, 2011). Globally, the term gender has been regarded as speaking of the social representation of men and women, masculinities and femininities (Shefer et al., 2007). Men and women are socialised differently and assigned varied roles in communities (Dancy, 2011). Most societies mark the beginning of adolescence with puberty rites, or what is commonly referred to as rites of passage (Markstrom, 2011). These 'rites' are intended to celebrate an adolescent's attainment of the adult status, with its corresponding duties and responsibilities of being a man or a woman. It

is believed in many societies that adulthood, for both males and females, is a status earned and does not come naturally (Shefer et al., 2007; Vandello & Bosson, 2013).

Some studies have argued for the development of culturally appropriate theorisation of manhood and womanhood (Chitando, 2011; Gardiner, 2013). The cultural notions of manhood and womanhood pertain to distinctive behaviours which are categorised as being masculine or feminine, and which guide the social structure of a community or social group (Lidzy, 2005; Vermuelen, 2011). The present study sought to contribute towards these efforts aimed at developing culturally appropriate theories on gender by exploring notions of manhood among adolescent African boys in a rural community in Limpopo Province.

1.2 Research problem

The concept of manhood has been investigated by different researchers who have sought to explore and describe the behaviours considered appropriate for a man (Chitando, 2011). Manhood is a subject that has attracted scholarly attention in the past and presently. Although there appears to be a global concern with the conceptualisation of manhood, studies have revealed that there are always cross-cultural variations on gender roles and gender stereotypes (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Booth, 2012). For example, in the Western society, manhood centres on the normative male body image, behaviours associated with positive characteristics such as responsibility, financial independence, honour and sometimes negative characteristics such as arrogance, insensitivity, violence and selfishness related to social privilege (Booth, 2012). A study by Ho and Wong (2006) among male Canadians revealed that the hegemonic and precarious views of masculinity were considered important in the conceptualisation of manhood. While numerous studies have explored the nature of masculinity, scholars rarely seek to determine the meaning of manhood or to explore which types of individuals are culturally permitted to call themselves men (Booth, 2012).

While some studies have focused mainly on the conceptualisation of manhood in Western societies, not much has been written about African notions of manhood, particularly with reference to the African adolescent. It was, therefore, the rationale of this study to address this gap. Specifically the present study sought to address the following central question: What does it mean to be a man for an adolescent African boy in a rural community?

1.3 Operational definition of concepts

- **Notions:** This refers to a conception of or belief about something (Merriam-Webster, 2004). In the present study, notions will refer to conceptions about manhood among adolescent African men in a rural community in Limpopo Province.

- **African:** This refers to black individual of African descent sharing common aspects of black experiences as they relate to one another and relative to other racial groups (Merriam-Webster, 2004). In the present study, the word African will carry the same meaning and will specifically refer to black people living in South Africa.

- **Manhood:** The state of being a man and the qualities that are considered to be typical of a man (Wehmeier, 2005). In the present study, manhood will be understood to carry the same meaning.

- **Men:** According to Wehmeier (2005), 'men' refer to adult human males. In the context of the present study, the concept men will be used to denote male persons who are going through the stage of adolescent.

- **Adolescence:** A period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 11 to19 (Wehmeier, 2005). In the present study, the term adolescent will be used to denote an African male person who is in the adolescent stage.

- **Boy:** This refers to a male child (Merriam-Webster, 2004).

1.4 Purpose of the study

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to explore and describe the notions of manhood by adolescent boys in Ngove Village (Limpopo Province).

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were:

- To determine adolescent boys' understanding of what it means to be a man.
- To establish adolescent boys' understanding of the qualities and attributes that a man should have.
- To determine adolescent boys' understanding of the role that a man should play in society.

1.4.3 Research questions

The present study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What do adolescent boys understand by what it means to be a man?
- What is adolescent boys' understanding concerning the qualities and attributes that a man should have?
- What is adolescent boys' understanding concerning the role(s) that a man should play in society?

1.5 Significance of the study

While masculinity focuses on the actions that men perform, manhood looks at the notions and beliefs that motivate those actions (Dancy, 2011). Understanding how adolescent African boys conceptualise manhood shed light regarding the behaviours that this age group display in their quest to manhood. Consequently, the present study hopes to bring more insights into the general notions of manhood, particularly from an African perspective. The findings of this study could contribute to the body of knowledge in fields such as culture and human development, culture and identity and indigenous psychology. The present study may help define or redefine the position of men in rural communities in South Africa.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The following topics will be discussed in this chapter: a) the conceptualising gender, manhood and masculinity; b) African notions of manhood; c) traditional male circumcision as rite of passage; d) maturity as mark of manhood; e) manhood and sexual experience; f) manhood, violence and aggressiveness; and, g) the Afrocentric theoretical framework. This chapter is concluded by providing a summary of the reviewed topics.

2.2 Conceptualising gender, manhood and masculinity

According to Harcourt (2009), gender refers to the psycho-social and political-cultural reading of sexual differences that inform how people relate to each other. While biological sex is understood as the chromosomal, chemical or anatomical differences that make someone either male or female, gender is seen as the manifestation of social, economic, political and cultural elements, meanings or structures that are associated with being either male or female (Basow, 1992). Barker and Ricardo (2005) suggest that gender is not tangible; rather it refers to social, cultural and institutionally organised social practices that are informed by assumptions about individual bodies and their functions. Therefore, gender has more to do with the characteristics and behaviours that societies assign to the supposed bodily realities, or biological sexes, of men and women (Basow, 1992; Lwambo, 2011). Harcourt (2009) asserts that the role of biology is essential in forming human identity in particular gendered identity. Furthermore, biological sex is used to understand gender as the performance of one's biology to affirm to socio-cultural, biological and intrapersonal expectations (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Therefore, biological sex is the main identifier of gender and it can be regarded as a schema that assists individuals in performing as their masculine and feminine selves (Harcourt, 2009). Gender identity enables people to develop a concept of self, and this remains a lens through which they continually filter and analyse their life experiences (Basow, 1992).

According to Hunter and Davis (1992), gender construction may be understood as the way in which a person, a group of people or a whole society builds an understanding of what it means to be a man or a woman. Men and women are seen as enacting a general set of expectations which are attached to one's biological sex (Harcourt, 2009). The notions of manhood and womanhood can be understood as rational concepts to which meaning is attached for the performance of particular gendered identities that personify their masculine or feminine identities (Harcourt, 2009; Dancy, 2011). For this reason, studies on manhood have focused on describing ways through which men perform the social role of being male. With that said, gendered identities are essential in allocating roles and responsibilities within the human population.

Being a social construct, gender roles may be perceived and enacted differently depending on an individual's social context (Lwambo, 2011). Thus gender has no meaning without human participation in gender relations. Being subject to human interpretation, gender conceptions are not fixed and may change with time and with social changes (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). For example, most studies have described gender as being a social construct that depends on social, political, economic and cultural changes (Olawaye et al, 2004). It is, therefore, appropriate to regard gender as a social construct that is fluid and ever-changing, produced, negotiated and sustained to provide social inscription and interactions that are used to identify women and men (Lwambo, 2011). In most societies, gender stereotypes assist in classifying the characteristics that are generally believed to be typical either of women or of men (Courtenay, 2000). Both males and females in different societies experience some amount of social pressure to conform to the social elements determining gender (Olawaye et al., 2004). To resist one's socially prescribed position is to risk social disfavour which might affect one's position in the family, at work or religious groups, as well as in the community at large (Olawoye et al., 2004).

Throughout African history, gender roles within many societies have been defined and understood (Chitando, 2011). Tasks and roles were clearly divided along gender lines, and although there are some exceptions to the rules, most Africans have understood those rules within their specific community context and begun to identify them as norms

(Woodbury, 2002). From birth, people are encouraged to conform to stereotypic beliefs and behaviours, and dominant norms of femininity and masculinity (Courtenay, 2000). Research indicates that men and boys experience comparatively greater social pressure than women and girls to endorse gendered societal prescriptions (Courtenay, 2000). Although some generalities can be made about what manhood entails, it should be kept in mind that gender is intricately tied to the culture it resides within (Woodbury, 2002), and that gender stereotypes are not static. Even in traditional cultural settings, gender roles have witnessed changes (Olawoye et al, 2004).

Manhood is understood as being ideas and ideals about what it means to be a man (Hunter & Davis, 1992). Therefore, manhood is the endorsement of beliefs that men consider to be the cornerstone of who they are (Woodbury, 2002). Manhood is, however, not an inherent, biological manifestation or a right of birth, but rather socially constructed over time with affect from a wider historical and/or cultural context (Basow, 1992). For example, according to Bush (1999), 'a man' is a designation that is given after a boy possesses characteristics and qualities, other than biological, that a certain society or culture considers as being constructs of manhood. The notions of manhood become shaped and influenced through social interactions (Gardiner, 2013). Masculinity, on the other hand, is the socially constructed and influenced behaviours, demonstrations or performances of men (Dancy, 2011). Masculinities refer to the socio-cultural expectations and values that are performed to express masculine characteristics by men (Gardiner, 2013). In other words, men use their masculinity across societies, cultures and institutions to identify, respect, and make others aware of the definitions of manhood that they construct (Dancy, 2011). Masculinity has to do with behavioural patterns expressing explicit and implicit expectation of how men should act and represent themselves to others. Manhood and masculinities are constructed and reconstructed over time through processes of socially prescribed roles and responsibilities, and are always subjected to the process of negotiations in the context of existing power relations (Vincent, 2008).

While numerous studies have explored the nature of masculinity, scholars rarely seek to determine the meaning of manhood or to explore which types of individuals are

culturally permitted to call themselves men (Booth, 2012). Ratele (2008) suggests that notions of manhood are essential in understanding the gendering of the male subject. Therefore, the concept of manhood is a key feature in understanding processes that males undertake or perform to become men. Research has revealed that adolescence is a stage where boys are confronted with the psychosocial and physiological quest of becoming men (Waterman, 1999; Alberts, Mbalo & Ackermann, 2003; Kroger, 2006; Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011). It is, therefore, important to understand societal demands that have been put in place in order for these boys to earn the status of being called a man. The following section focuses on the dominant notions of manhood in the African context.

2.3 African notions of manhood

Research on manhood in African literature is gaining momentum, and special focus on young men is not an exception (Chitando, 2011). Versions of manhood in Africa are not individually defined, but socially constructed. Therefore, a gendered analysis of boys in Africa should take into account the plurality of manhood in Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). African manhood is primarily a socially-owned and operated construct (Black, 1993; Barker & Ricardo, 2005). What this implies is that males do not deem themselves men, regardless of their age or perceived worth, only the community (other men and women) possesses this right. Woodbury (2002) suggests that African manhood is strongly tied to the perceptions of the community, and almost usually by elders in the community. Thus, African manhood is not only earned through the actions of the individual, but requires the approval within the community's expectations (Olawoye et al., 2004; Barker & Ricardo, 2005). For this reason, young men in diverse social settings are observed and watched to see if they measure up to culturally relevant versions of manhood (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Ratele, 2008). Through both formal and informal means such as jokes, social ridicule and insinuations, a man is made aware of what society expects from him and to let him know when he is failing to be a man (Shefer et al, 2007; Ratele, 2008). Shefer et al. (2007) further suggest that in a wide variety of contexts, young African males experience inevitable social pressures to conduct themselves like older males.

African manhood is not a once-off status, but a status which requires constant validation (Chitando, 2011). It is a status which has to be maintained once attained. Manhood is regarded as something that boys must make happen, by passing certain social milestones (Nsamenang, 1998; Ramokgopa, 2001). However, according to Black (1993), manhood in modern Africa no longer has rigidly defined structured systems by which African boys acquire manhood. The following subsection discusses some prominent elements of manhood in the African context.

2.3.1 Traditional male circumcision as rite of passage

African culture is characterised by a variety of rituals (rites of passage) intended to integrate a child into the adult world (Ramokgopa, 2001; Vincent, 2008). For example, transition from boyhood to manhood involves a series of initiation rites through which boys (usually during adolescence) earn the status of men (Black, 1993; Nsamenang, 1998). Initiation practices still play a crucial role in the socialisation of boys and men in Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Ramokgopa, 2001). These initiation rites often include the seclusion of young men from their families (and from women and girls) into some camp where they receive some informal learning process during which older men pass on information and/or skills that are considered necessary to be a man in their societies (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Initiates are usually taught about conflict resolution, male-female relationships, family and community life, and adult roles (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Some African cultures may emphasise a specific set of skills tied to the main source of livelihood within that culture (Woodbury, 2002). Most initiation rites in African societies seem to focus on some method of provision and responsibility (Woodbury, 2002; Vincent, 2008). In some areas, the initiate is encouraged to get married as soon as possible and to begin childbearing shortly thereafter (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Vincent, 2008). Traditional circumcision symbolises a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood (Woodbury, 2002). The initiation process takes approximately a month; however, the exact period differs from one area to the other, and from time to time (Vincent, 2008).

During the initiation process, boys are circumcised by men in the communities (usually very old man) who have been trained by other men to carry out the process (Vincent, 2008). Although the operation is certainly painful, boys are encouraged to endure the circumcision trial without screaming or weeping. This is believed to teach a boy to demonstrate toughness (Barker, 1993). Toughness is thought to be a strong mark of manhood. Boys who get circumcised through medical operations in hospitals are usually not considered men because they did not endure the pain (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). Furthermore, they have not experienced the privilege of communing with other boys and get some lessons from older man (Vincent, 2008). Barker and Ricardo (2005) further state that these boys who undergo medical circumcision stay home as usual and may still interact with women. Therefore, their manhood is questioned. In contrast, boys who have gone to traditional male circumcision are expected to be rebellious, stubborn and to shun femininity (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Part of the initiation process includes cathartic moments of being out-of-control, or drunk. During such moments, initiates are given the freedom to use vulgar words and language which they could not use while they were still boys. However, this freedom is meant to confirm that they are truly men, and are responsible.

During the traditional circumcision process, boys are exposed to community traditions so that they can become active community participants (Ramokgopa, 2001; Langa, 2014). This is a very influential process and strongly affects what the initiates subsequently considers to be wrong or right (Woodbury, 2002; Langa, 2014). Traditional circumcision schools are a process through which young men learn the ways of being a man, which also extends to orientating young men into their multiple identities as sons, brothers, lovers and prospective fathers (Vincent, 2008). Ramokgopa (2001) considers traditional circumcision as possibly one of the most definitive processes during which boys are told about social expectations, about who they must be, and about what they are permitted to think, speak and experience.

A boy who has undergone a traditional circumcision process is believed to have successfully transited from being a boy to becoming a man (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). Circumcised men are expected to take on greater social responsibility in their

communities, acting as negotiators in family disputes, weighing decisions more carefully and cooperating with elders (Ramokgopa, 2001; Vincent, 2008). Most studies in the field of public health reveal that uncircumcised males may be psychologically traumatised as a result of the ridicule and harassment they experience at the hands of peers and elders who have already undergone circumcision (Ratele, 2008; Vincent, 2008). This pressure can be so intense that many boys secretly take themselves off to initiation schools without the knowledge or consent of their parents (Vincent, 2008). Vincent (2008) further states that the risk of isolation is experienced not only by the uncircumcised man himself, but also by his family who fears social exclusion if their son has not been to an initiation school. Social shunning of uncircumcised men is reinforced by other discriminatory practices, which serve as a constant reminder of difference and inferiority which take on an almost ritualised character (Woodbury, 2002).

While the age of 21 is regarded as the age of maturity in most Western societies, an individual is not regarded as a man in most African cultures until circumcised in the traditional way, no matter his age (Ramokgopa, 2001; Vincent, 2008). It is only once initiated that a male can achieve, in the eyes of the community, the status of a man, for the first time (Ramokgopa, 2001). The gifts that he receives after coming out of seclusion are symbolically important in that as a man, he is capable of receiving property and owning it in his personal capacity without control from parents (Vincent, 2008). Numerous studies have confirmed the cultural importance of these rites of passage as a means of political and social incorporation, notably of young men who are most likely to be influential members in any society (Black, 1993; Chitando, 2011).

While young men's education in the mountain involves important teachings about respect and non-violence, circumcision school is short-lived, and without follow-up, many boys clearly disregard what they learn there (Vincent, 2008). Studies have also revealed that boys often go for circumcision too early or for the wrong reasons, such as competition with peers, rather than for the purpose of real change into manhood (Vincent, 2008; Langa, 2012). On this note, Vincent (2008) further suggests that in contemporary circumcision schools, much of the traditional educational aspect of the initiation rite has fallen away. Studies have also revealed that the emphasis on the

acquisition of rights as a result of traditional circumcision, including the right to marriage, has become subverted into emphasis on the right to sex and other material resources (Vincent, 2008; Langa, 2014).

2.3.2 Maturity as a mark of manhood

Another key requirement to attaining manhood in most African communities is the achievement of some level of social responsibility, financial independence, employment or income, and subsequently starting a family (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Chaney, 2009). In a study of how perceptions of manhood influence romantic partnerships of black men, Chaney (2009) found that in 63% of the respondents, the word manhood was associated with being responsible for oneself and family. Establishing a family is considered one of the most important steps in the journey to manhood (Olawoye et al., 2004; Langa, 2014). According to Vincent (2008), for the Xhosa culture in South Africa, becoming a man signifies that one is now eligible to marry, to inherit land and to participate in the family court. Thus, an adult male who has attained marriageable age (beyond adolescence) but has not taken a wife may be regarded as an irresponsible person (Olawoye et al., 2004). These kind of males suffer social discrimination as they are often forbidden to participate in activities that are thought to be masculine (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Hunter and Davis (1992) assert that "Family is an extension of the male ego" (p. 31). Thus manhood is strongly linked to having a concern for family and the process of raising a family. The capacity to demonstrate concern for family, whether current family in which an individual was raised or a prospective family that he is about to make, is central to African men's definition of manhood (Hunter & Davis, 1992). Most African boys are taught about diverse forms of social responsibility during initiation processes, and as already said, those who do not undergo the traditional male circumcision may fall short of this privilege. Hence a developing male's failure to provide for his family can affect his self-perception as well as communal identity (Barker and Ricardo, 2005).

Work plays a crucial role in the conceptualisation of manhood in Africa. For example, Vandello et al. (2008) suggest that men's social recognition, and their sense of

manhood, suffers when they lack work. This is due to the roles that men are expected to perform, such a providing for a family, which is usually difficult when one is not working. Lwambo (2011) also concurs with this, arguing that chief among the characteristics that reoccur across African manhood research is the necessity for financial independence. Boys and young men in Africa often go around looking for piece jobs just to have some income as a way of confirming their manhood. However, most young men in South Africa find low-paying employment not adequate to achieve a socially recognised manhood and to form a family (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). It has also been noted that male refugees face a loss of status based on their inability to provide for wives and children (Lwambo, 2011). Therefore, manhood is an identity which comes with (or is meant to come with) greater responsibility (Hunter & Davis, 1992).

Acting as a breadwinner is closely tied to the role of household head and a sense of power, hence households where men are not necessarily main breadwinners any more pose a challenge to the traditional conceptions of manhood; hence, women's increasing ability to exert economic influence and make choices based on their own needs can be seen as an additional threat to masculinity (Hunter & Davis, 1992; Lwambo, 2011). Lwambo (2011) suggests that such embarrassments may often lead to a sense of failure, which may then result in unhealthy routes for asserting masculinity such as the use of alcohol, or aggressive behaviour as a marker of manhood. Studies have revealed that women's increased decision-making power can lead to increased violent behaviour by men (Lwambo, 2011). Nevertheless, more often than not, when females are given greater independence to make decisions, they are sometimes not willing to take advantage of the opportunity (Lwambo, 2011). For an African male, manhood is also seen when responsibility for his immediate family evolves to embrace his community (Chaney, 2009). African men are expected to participate in matters of the community, attending community meetings and bringing solutions to community problems (Black, 1993).

2.3.3 Manhood and sexual experience

Numerous studies on manhood and masculinities indicate that one of the essential markers of manhood is the performance of sex (Ratele, 2008). For young men in Africa, sexual experience has a strong association with initiation into adulthood and achieving a socially recognised manhood (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Chitando, 2011). Research illustrates that sexuality and the ability to function sexually are inherently interwoven with a man's experience of self-confidence, self-esteem and social value (Roets, 2014). This sexual experience is somehow linked to a boy's sense of self and his desire to achieve a socially recognised manhood (Ratele, 2008). During the initiation process, African boys are usually encouraged to make sexual relationships with girls, and to work towards having a family (Woodbury, 2002; Barker & Ricardo, 2005). It is, therefore, important to acknowledge the extent to which social pressures govern young men's sexual behaviours and choices. For example, in most African communities (rural), if a young man does not have sexual relationships with girls, his reputation may suffer among his male peers (Black & Ricardo, 2005). A study conducted by Barker & Ricardo (2005) among Zulu young men in South Africa suggests that a significant minority of young men would prefer abstinence from sexual activities before marriage. However, some of them feel obliged to have sex before marriage for fear of social rejection. For this reason, a mature but unmarried man is viewed with suspicion and often precluded from occupying certain social positions and participation from certain societal activities (Olawoye et al., 2004). This man is usually seen as an irresponsible person, and perhaps even a homosexual (Barker & Ricardo, 2005).

According to Langa (2014), the male identity tends to be strongly sexualised in most African culture. To a large extent, the male identity is constructed around sexual experiences and attitudes towards sex and women that shape, and are shaped, by men's conceptions about what it is to be (or not to be) a real man (Langa, 2014). From youth to adulthood, these men tend to place more value on sexual performance, which is commonly reduced to penetration and long lasting intercourse (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Langa, 2014). Furthermore, these males often refrain from engaging in expressions of sexuality that involve a strong component of communication, tenderness or any demonstration of emotion as this is not thought of as part of the male world

(Langa, 2014). To be sexually competent is believed to be rewarding to manhood (Langa, 2014). Langa (2012) also states that this competence comes from notions such as always being ready for a sexual adventure and engagement with several partners, including efforts to have sex without any emotional involvement. The notion of sexual experience as defining manhood is part of the most desirable and celebrated forms of manhood (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Ratele, 2008; Langa, 2014).

To a large extent, male power in society is thought to reside on a functional and active penis (Langa, 2014). Therefore, according to Langa (2014), African notions of manhood are generally phallocentric. This view explains, to a certain extent, why most African men seek to demonstrate the functionality of their penises in many problematic ways such as using their status to get sex or having many kids with different women (Langa, 2012). The notion around sexual experience has been widely discussed and is recognised as one of the main drivers of the HIV epidemic across Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Ratele, 2008; Langa, 2012). Many young men are still growing up believing that having several sex partners is an indicator of real manhood (Langa, 2014). In addition, the perception that the man is the one who has to take control and make decisions about a couple's sexual life is common among young people (Vincent, 2008; Langa, 2014).

Sexuality can also be used to compensate for the loss of social power in terms of employment. In this context, sexuality and violence are reactions to this 'crisis' in traditional masculinity (Langa, 2014). Ratele (2008) also asserts that violence against women is also an apparent alternative to not having economic power, particularly for young men who cannot provide their partners with gifts and money. The idea behind this trend is that if one is not economically successful, at least he can be successful in seducing women and can offer erotic experiences through good sexual performance and skills (Langa, 2014). Undoubtedly, the area of sex is one of the central focus of masculinity and male power in our societies (Dancy, 2011, Langa, 2014). The attempt by many men to behave according to predominant and strongly sexualised forms of masculinity explains a number of challenges faced today in the field of sexuality and human rights (Ratele, 2008). Existing values and beliefs in society as a whole, along

with specific expectations placed on male individuals create a favourable context for many men to engage in dangerous masculinities (Langa, 2014).

In Africa and other parts of the world, prevailing norms about sexuality and manhood suggest that young men are expected to be knowledgeable and experienced regarding sexuality and reproductive health issues (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Although peer and traditional norms regard sexual activity as a defining issue in achieving and maintaining a socially recognised manhood, pre-marital sexual relations are still generally viewed as taboo in most settings in Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Despite evidence of strong social and peer pressures to engage in sexual activity, Barker and Ricardo (2005) argue that young men do not seek sexual relationships solely to prove their manhood, but for companionship, intimacy and pleasure. Numerous researchers have affirmed that gender role norms are among the strongest underlying social factors that influence sexual behaviours (Barker & Ricardo, 2005).

2.3.4 Manhood, violence and aggressiveness

There is a large body of research that suggests that culturally defined versions of manhood in Africa do relate or contributes to violence. According to Woodbury (2002), African notions of manhood may often be tied to violence through various social constructs. For example, warrior attitudes of toughness and fearlessness taught in traditional circumcision schools may encourage violent behaviours among boys (Ratele, 2008). As already mentioned, the pressure to have sexual experience may also put these young men at risk of engaging in harmful sexual acts. This form of manhood that emphasises physical strength and dominance is called hegemonic manhood (Lwambo, 2011). Ratele (2008) observes that the concept of hegemonic manhood has influenced a lot of violent behaviours among African men, which turned to determine when and how males in South Africa die. Convinced by the ideas of what it means to be a man, young men then do things to others and to themselves under the influence of manhood (Ratele, 2008). Ratele (2008) further reports that these young men do things which include swearing at strangers, verbally and psychologically abusing intimate partners, fighting male familiars, joining gangs, raping, becoming involved in armed conflict, and

participating in mass killings. It can, therefore, be said that in most instances, conflict and violence are consistently perpetrated by males. This supports the assumption that conflict and violence are generally associated with manhood (Woodbury, 2002; Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Research reveals that men are generally perceived as primary initiators of warfare and violence across the African continent (Woodbury, 2002). African notions of manhood can easily be tied to the initiation of conflict through the valuing of struggle in a political sense, and through the male struggle for social power.

In many African societies, warriorhood is still used as a means to demonstrate physical strength (Woodbury, 2002). Hence, young boys are still celebrated for the valour, courage and physical strength that they exhibit as potential future men, and those who fall short of the standard are deemed cowards (Chitando, 2011). Critical to this is the idea that a real man is one who is physically strong and fearless (Woodbury, 2002). African boys are also hooked into media images that promote the idea that a 'real man' is one with rippling muscles and a well-toned body (Chitando, 2011). These boys, therefore, spend a lot of time channelling their bodies and character to achieve the socially expected standards of being a man. However, according to Black (1993), in most traditional West African societies, boys were trained in the tactics of warfare in order that they might be able to protect their families and communities from invasion by enemies. From this viewpoint, these boys would use their fearlessness and valour attitudes when protecting their society from abuse by outsiders. Foley (2012) also asserts that African men used their manhood to act collectively and resist oppression during the colonial periods in most parts of the world. Therefore, according to Black (1993), African boys would not compete so much against as with one another, as they attempted to convince others that they were fit to be embraced as men. In fact, it can be said that one becomes a man only after he has understood that he is, in fact, his brother's keeper (Black, 1993). Thus, the ultimate purpose of physical strength is the protection, not destruction, of one's people (Black, 1993; Chitando, 2011).

For the above reasons, scholars have suggested that post-conflict societies seeking sustainable peace and community healing should take steps to eradicate the normalised use of violence and disconnect violence from manhood (Woodbury, 2002).

Manhood should not only be redefined as nonviolent, but also within a new context that accounts for shifts in the roles of women, and that considers the socioeconomic realities of the time and location (Woodbury, 2002; Barker & Ricardo, 2005). However, Vincent (2008) suggests that the increase in violent sexual relations among South African youth could be explained from different perspectives, be it socio-economic or socio-cultural.

2.4 Theoretical framework: The Afrocentric paradigm

Although studies reveal that several models that can be used to explore people with colour have emerged, the cultural values of African people have not been fully appreciated as a theoretical base to develop new understandings (Schiele, 1996). For this reason, most African practices and/or experiences are still explored and described from the Westernised lens (Ramokgopa, 2001). Schiele (1996) asserts that this situation does not only prevent a culture-fair theoretical base in social science, but also reinforces the dominance of Eurocentric concepts for explaining and solving general human and societal problems. Some researchers have argued that any phenomenon is better studied (explored) in its context, as this is the right way of understanding it (Mazama, 2001). Bangura (2012) argues that the ability to call a thing by its precise name is the beginning of understanding it, and that how a thing is perceived determines how it is described. The term 'Afrocentric' has been used to describe the cultural values and experiences of people of African descent (Schiele, 1996; Mazama, 2001). Given the fact that the Afrocentric approach places much value on African worldviews, numerous researchers have come to view Afrocentricity as a social science theoretical framework on which qualitative research on Africans can be conducted (Schiele, 1996; Asante, 2007).

According to Bangura (2012), the first definition of Afrocentricity was given by Asante, who suggested that Afrocentricity (African-centred) has to do with the positioning of African ideals at the centre of any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour. The Afrocentric theory intends to provide a clear, coherent argument of the way Africans view and describe themselves (Asante, 2007). Rather than having to understand

Africans from alternative perspectives, the Afrocentric framework suggests that African people and their beliefs should be the source of understanding. Mazama (2001) concurs that the Afrocentric idea rests on the claim of the importance of the African experience for African people. This framework seeks to re-locate the African person as an agent in human history and strives to minimise the illusion of the outsiders (Asante, 2007). This approach places the African subject at the centre of analysis in the interpretation and manifestation of cultural activities (Mekoa, 2006; Mkhize, 2004). Therefore, the Afrocentric perspective emphasises the idea of understanding and describing African people and their experiences within their own cultural contexts (Asante, 2007).

As postulated by Molefi Kete Asante, Afrocentricity also contends that our main problems as African people is our usual unconscious adoption of Western worldviews and perspectives. This is more so because Western ideas and theories have invaded our lives as normal, natural and even infinite (Asante, 2007). As such, very few Africans would seriously pause to examine and challenge such ideas (Schiele, 1996). The Afrocentic paradigm is based on the idea that African people should re-assert a sense of agency in order to achieve sanity. Therefore, the Afrocentrist tries to figure out what black people would do if there were no white people. In other words, what natural responses would occur in the relationships and attitudes towards the environment, kinship patterns, and preferences for African people if there had not been any intervention of colonialism or enslavement (Asante, 2007).

Afrocentricity is, therefore, an approach that when applied to research can form the essential core of the whole research process. Thus Mkabela (2005) states:

> *In terms of research outcomes the issue of cultural location takes precedence over the topic or the data under consideration. The researcher must have some familiarity with history, language, philosophy, and myths of the people under study. This point takes on a normative and cultural dimension as research cannot be reduced to merely the collection and production of value-free scientific knowledge. The concept becomes a way of linking the purpose of research to the*

> *very discourse that emerges and is legitimised from within the African framework* (p. 179).

Studies have revealed that since colonial invasions, African indigenous culture has witnessed rapid change (Mkabela, 2005; Mekoa, 2006). Although many researchers have made attempts to get inside the African culture, there was a tendency to see culture in terms of the coloniser's precepts (Mkabela, 2005). For this reason, South Africa is now engaged in the unfolding process of bringing African indigenous knowledge systems into focus as a rightful field of academic enquiry (Mkabela, 2005).

This framework suggests that if research is to be Afrocentric, African indigenous people should participate in the entire research process, from beginning to end (Mkabela, 2005). Rather than just radically deviating from the European perspectives, the Afrocentric paradigm locates research from an African viewpoint, and creates Africa's own intellectual perspective (Mkabela, 2005). It focuses on Africa as the cultural centre for the study of African experiences, and interprets research data from an African perspective. The Afrocentric theoretical framework was, therefore, found to be the most appropriate paradigm for the present study, which focuses on what it means to be a man for adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, literature relevant to this study was reviewed. In the present chapter, the research methodology followed in conducting the study will be outlined. The chapter will specifically address the key methodological issues, namely: the research design, sampling issues, data collection and method of data analysis. The quality criteria that guided the researcher, as well as the ethical considerations, will also be presented.

3.2 Research design

According to Creswell (2009), a research design is a plan or procedure for research that covers methods of data collection and data analysis, and involves the intersection of theoretical assumptions and strategies of inquiry. Considering that the aim of the current study is to explore the views, meanings and interpretations of participants, the qualitative approach was found suitable and most appropriate. Qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning (Ospina, 2004) with the aim of achieving an understanding of how people make sense of their experiences (Merriam, 2009). According to De Vos, Delport, Fouche and Strydom (2011), the qualitative approach is used for the purpose of describing and understanding a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. In particular, the present study made use of the phenomenological research design as it aims to examine the lived human experiences of the individuals themselves (Terre-Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

3.3 Sampling

A sample in qualitative research consists of cases or units of elements that will be examined, and are selected from a defined research population (Patton, 2002). In the present study, the researcher used purposive sampling to identify adolescent boys in Ngove Village aged from 12 to 18 years. Though a sample of 12 participants was considered, the researcher collected data until a point of saturation (that is, to a point

that new views were not adding to what had already been attained). Consequently only 10 participants were interviewed for the present study.

In purposive sampling, according to Silverman (2000), a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some feature or process that is of interest for a particular study. The research was conducted in Ngove Village which is located in the Greater Giyani Municipality, Limpopo Province. The area is predominantly occupied by Tsonga-speaking people (Vatsonga), who are believed to be continuing with some of their cultural and traditional African ways of living, despite the influence of Western civilisation in them (Khosa, 2009). The researcher specifically chose to conduct this study in Ngove Village because of his better understanding of the language and cultural practices in the area as he was born and bred there. The reason for choosing adolescent boys was that boys in this category are believed to be confronted with issues of identity as men and have just began their road to manhood (Waterman, 1999; Alberts, Mbalo & Ackermann, 2003; Kroger, 2006; Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011).

3.4 Data collection

For the purpose of data triangulation, two methods of data collection – individual interviews and focus group discussions – were used.

3.4.1 Individual interviews

Data was collected using individual semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1a: Interview guide – English version, and Appendix 1b: Interview guide - Xitsonga version). In addition to the individual interviews, the researcher also conducted two focus group interviews with the same group of participants to validate the individual interviews. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed with meticulous accuracy. Ten individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys at Ngove Village, Limpopo Province. The use of interviews provides a deeper understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative methods such as questionnaires (Terre-Blanche et al., 2006). Semi structured interviews have some explicit structure in terms of method. However, they

are not completely structured. The fundamental purpose of the research interviews was to listen attentively to what the respondents had to say in order to acquire more knowledge about the study topic. For each interview, several key questions that pointed to the objectives of the study were asked (see Appendix 1a: Interview guide – English version and Appendix 1b: Interview guide – Xitsonga version). The questions were open-ended, and required the participants to fully express themselves. Where necessary, the interviewer asked probing questions in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail.

3.4.2 Focus group interviews

In addition to the individual interviews, data was collected in two focus group interviews with the same participants. Each focus group interview consisted of 5 participants per group. Focus group interviews were used to generate information on collective views, and to understand the meanings that lie behind those views from a broad sense (Terre-Blanche et al., 2006). The structure of the focus group sessions included an introduction to the research, an explanation of the research ethics, and the obtainment of permission to audio-record each session. The researcher closed each focus group interview session by asking for any additional comments or remarks. The researcher continually ensured that all participants participated equally and freely.

3.5 Data analysis

The researcher used interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) to analyse the data based on the transcribed individual and focus group interviews. Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008) suggest that IPA allows for rigorous exploration of idiographic subjective experiences and, more specifically, social cognitions. IPA's theoretical underpinnings coincide well with Phenomenological research design. The following four steps of interpretive phenomenological analysis as recommended by Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008) were employed:

Step 1: Familiarisation and immersion

In the first step of data analysis, the researcher familiarised himself with the data by reading through the transcripts. The researcher read through the texts several times while attempting to suspend presumptions and judgments in order to focus on what was actually presented in the transcript data.

Step 2: Inducing themes

In the second step, the researcher moved on to re-read the text and identified themes that best captured the essential qualities of the interviews. The researcher identified themes from within each section of the transcripts, and sought for possible or likely connections between the themes. The researcher stayed relevant by focusing on the research goal.

Step 3: Coding

The third stage involved attempting to provide an overall structure to the analysis by relating the identified themes into 'clusters' or concepts. Each cluster was marked using text highlighting colours. The aim, at this stage, was to arrive at a group of themes and to identify categories that suggested hierarchical relationships between them.

Step 4: Elaboration

The fourth stage was to develop a 'master' list of themes. The themes were arranged in an ordered system that identified the main features and concerns identified by the research participants. Quotations of significant statements made by participants were made.

Step 5: Interpretation and checking

The last step involved comparing the obtained data with that obtained in the chapter on literature review. The interpretation phase involved interpreting the intended meaning of research participants in terms of their perceptions. In this step, the researcher drew attention to the main aim of qualitative research, which is interpreting subjective opinions of research participants from a contextual point of view. In summary, the IPA

data analysis is a cyclical process where the researcher proceeds through several iterative stages.

3.6 Quality criteria

Although qualitative approaches have been widely recommended for studies of this type, they have been criticised for not possessing accuracy and rigour. Therefore, for a qualitative study, trustworthiness becomes important. Shenton (2004) recommends that for a qualitative study to be trustworthy, it should satisfy the quality criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These qualities were observed to ensure the quality and validity of the current research process and findings.

3.6.1 Credibility

This is an alternative to internal validity, in which the goal is to demonstrate that the study was conducted in a manner as to ensure that the sample was accurately identified and described; and that no other factors explain the results except the inquiry itself (Terre-Blanche et al., 2006; De Vos et al., 2011). In the present study, the researcher has followed appropriate steps in data gathering, data analysis and reporting to ensure that the findings reflect the aims of the study.

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability is the provision of sufficient detail in accounts to allow readers to appreciate if insights from one setting can be transferred to other settings (Amis & Silk, 2008), and is the alternative to external validity or generalisability (De Vos et al., 2011). In the present study, the researcher has provided sufficient detail of the context of the study for a reader to be able to decide whether the prevailing environment is similar to another situation with which he or she is familiar.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability demands that the researcher indicates to the audience that repeating the inquiry with similar subjects in a similar context would yield similar results (Shenton,

2004). By clearly stating the steps followed in the present study, the researcher sought to provide a measure of dependability.

3.6.4 Confirmability

The final construct, confirmability, captures the traditional concept of objectivity (Shenton, 2004). It stresses the need to ask whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another. In the current study, the researcher has followed recommended steps in analysing and reporting the data. Furthermore, the results were analysed and reported against current existing literature.

3.7 Ethical considerations
3.7.1 Permission for the study

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo's Research and Ethics Committee before the study was conducted (See Appendix 6: Ethical clearance letter). The researcher also approached the Mabunda Traditional Council to obtain gatekeeper permission to interview the participants (see Appendix 3a: Permission letter from Mabunda Traditional Council and Appendix 7: Letter of permission from gatekeeper).

3.7.2 Informed consent

Before the interviews were conducted, the researcher sought and obtained informed consent from the participants. Given the fact that the participants were minors (below 18 years of age), the researcher also sought and obtained informed consent from the participants' guardians. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary, that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that there would be no negative implications for them were they to withdraw (See Appendix 4a: Informed consent – English version and Appendix 4b: Informed consent – Xitsonga version, and Appendix 5a: Guardian informed consent - English version and Appendix 5b: Guardian informed consent-Xitsonga version).

3.7.3 Confidentiality

The researcher ensured that all personal information and details of the participants were kept confidential. The identities of the participants were kept anonymous.

3.7.4 No harm and protection

All interviews were conducted in safe environments where participants could fully engage with the research and were protected from possible harm. There was no real harm to any participant owing to the nature of the explorative study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents the findings of the study, first by presenting the demographic information of participants, followed by a presentation of the main themes that emerged from the analysis. The following themes are presented: a) Participants' conceptualisation of manhood; b) Having a family as a mark of manhood (wife and children); c) A man as head of a family; d) The role of men in communities; e) Shunning womanhood as a mark of manhood; f) Fearlessness and aggression as a mark of manhood; g) Maturity as a mark of manhood; h) Independence as a mark of manhood; i) Traditional circumcision as a rite of passage; j) Heterosexual relationship as a rite of passage; and k) The importance of associating oneself with male figures. This chapter is concluded by providing a summary of the study findings.

4.2 Participants' demographic information

Table 4.1 Demographic information

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Age	16	15	17	13	17	17	14	16	17	15

Table 4.1 above illustrates the demographics of the study participants. They were all adolescent boys from Ngove Village in the Greater Giyani Municipality of Limpopo Province. Furthermore, all the participants in this study were secondary school learners and spoke Xitsonga as their home language.

4.3 Emerging themes

4.3.1 Conceptualisation of manhood

Although the male gender is the prime quality suggestive of a man, manhood is a status that is confirmed in specific behavioural qualities that are displayed in different contexts. When a male person displays these qualities, he then qualifies to be regarded as a

man. In contrast, when a male person fails to display these specific qualities, they cannot be regarded as a man, regardless of their age and/or physical appearance. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

> "*Gender is the important part, however, behaviour is something that we observe to see if someone is a man or not.*" **[Participant 3]**

> "*Manhood is both gender and behaviour, because a man cannot live like a woman. So it does not end up with gender, the actions should confirm it*" **[Participant 9]**

> "*So one may be male, but not man by conduct, such a person we say he is stupid and sluggish, acting as though he is a disabled person*" **[Participant 5]**

> "*It does happen that one may be male by nature, but feminine by conduct so your look does not make you a man*" **[Participant 2]**

The participants in this study pointed out that a man is not just an old male figure. They suggested that a man is someone with specific set of qualities that adhere to one's cultural notions of manhood. As such older male persons that cannot display these qualities are at a risk of social discrimination. For example, they could be regarded as women, and they could be thought of as being bewitched and/or fooled. Furthermore, these men may be denied certain privileges that other men may have in the community. For example, they may not be allowed to speak in community meetings. The following extracts support this point:

> "*If an old male figure does not have a wife, we can say that his manhood is weak, is lacking.*" **[Participant 1]**

> "*He is not a responsible person. He is not an authentic man, he is just a man by saying. A man must display his manhood, part of it includes having children.*" **[Participant 8]**

"Basically I would say, the community members do regard him as a person, but they would not want to involve such a person in most community activities because they know that he does not know how to solve matters." **[Participant 5]**

The qualities associated with being a man require practice and a degree of dedication from the male person. Therefore, men have to continuously demonstrate their manhood as reflected in the following extracts:

"He must be responsible and live a life that shows that he is committed and knows what it means to be a man. Secondly, he must be dedicated towards his manhood and take care of it." **[Participant 8]**

"Well I can say, actually to be a man requires that one must have associated with knowledgeable man in his community." **[Participant 3]**

"I mean that he must not spend much of his time with women, so that he does not lose his gender." **[Participant 7]**

Manhood is seen as something that is confirmed by other people in the area where one resides. Thus, it is a construct based on specific qualities supported and agreed on by one's community and culture, not an individual construct. Therefore, someone cannot declare themselves a man based on their own set qualities or based on foreign (external) principles. Some participants clarified this point as follows:

"You may think you are a man by doing what you think makes you a man, but only to find that that's only your version of manhood, no one supports what you do. So when we say one is a man, his manhood must be justified in the village and the community where he lives. So your manhood must not only be seen by you, others have to see it as well". **[Participant 9]**

"If grew up here at Ngove and move to another place, where people behave differently from here, you may find that the people in that village are all cowards and useless, so in such a place I will be forced to change and be like them, and lose the kind of man I was in Ngove". **[Participant 5]**

Manhood is something that is displayed in different contexts, and is evaluated in many areas of one's life. Other participants pointed out that evaluating one's manhood can be challenging as people behave differently in different contexts. This point can be reflected in the following extracts:

"Manhood is displayed and seen in different contexts, for example, in bravery and in the ability to provide". **[Participant 4]**

"Manhood is context specific. If a man goes to work or assist a friend in a nearby community, women of that community will regard him as a real man when they see his works. Yet the women of the community where he comes from will regard him as a foolish person and not being a real man if they realise that he is leaving his community to go take care of another community". **[Participant 10]**

To evaluate one's manhood requires more than a few encounters with them. Most participants indicated that it is for this reason that one cannot just comment about someone's gender orientation as they please. Furthermore, the study participants suggested that people who make these comments are usually those that are concerned about the person's failure to act either as a man or woman. Specifically, one's relatives and family are the ones that usually comment as to whether one is a behaving as a man or not. Some participants also suggested that older women in the community have more insight about gender appropriate behaviours, thus they usually make comments about it. The following extracts support this assertion:

"Older people are the ones that are able to tell, especially women. If for example you are working with them, they will be able to tell whether the way you work is in keeping with men or not. So they will say that if we talking of a man, we are referring to people like this guy." **[Participant 3]**

"Women confirm it in this way, she may say, 'as for me, I don't have a husband, I am not married but I have married myself', she will be implying that her husband is not a man enough, he does not take responsibility over the family'. If other men also see that you do fulfil your duties, they will realise that you are a man indeed." **[Participant 8]**

"The power lies around those that are close to him and those that are his relatives because those are the people most concerned about his manhood. If his manhood is lacking, the family is usually the one that is disappointed and at pain." **[Participant 10]**

Based on the above extracts, it appears that to become a man is one of adolescent African boys' main goals. In most African societies, it is expected that adolescent boys must continue to show dedication and seriousness about becoming future men. These extracts also suggest that manhood is not a status that come as a right of birth or owing to one's biological sex, but a status that comes as a result of dedication and commitment. Older people play an important role in preserving cultural versions of manhood in that they are able to notice when an adolescent boy's behaviour deviates from societies' expectations. Through jokes and insinuations, an adolescent boy is made aware of his shortfalls. Manhood is not something that males grant themselves. By contrast, it is something that society sanctions to the deserving person.

4.3.1.1 Having a family (wife and children) as a mark of manhood: In order to be regarded as a man, a person must have a family, a wife and children. When an older male person does not have a wife, he puts his manhood in question, resulting in other men and women in the community despising him. However, when one has a wife, it serves as an indication that he has moved from boyhood into manhood. The following extracts reflect this point:

"To display their manhood, one must ensure that he establishes a family. He may still be staying at his parents' house, but he must get a wife and have children." **[Participant 9]**

"A man is someone with specific qualities that speak for themselves. These qualities include being able to have a wife and bare children." **[Participant 5]**

"Being a man means someone that is able to look after a family, someone that has responsibility in a family. It is someone that is supposed to have a wife,

someone that must work for the family and oversee all matters of the family.”
[Participant 6]

“A man must have a wife, and not stay single. A man must have a wife, children and a family, and then he can be regarded as a man.” **[Participant 4]**

“When a man does not have a wife, he is not an authentic man; he is only a man by saying.” **[Participant 10]**

“If he does not have children, we say that his manhood is weak.” [Participant 1]

The consequences of not having a wife for men are very serious. For example, such a person is not recognised in community meetings, and thus cannot even raise his hand to say a word. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

“Basically I would say, the community members do regard him as a person, but they would not want to involve such a person in most activities because they know that he does not know how to solve matters. It is obvious that if one doesn’t have a wife, he does not know how to solve. He is usually lazy. So they know that if one has a wife, he will face different challenges in his family and to solve them. So with such a person they actually doubt his abilities to problem solve. So that is why they would not want to involve such a person.” **[Participant 2]**

“Men and women would not want to listen to his inputs as they understand that he is inexperienced.” **[Participant 5]**

“They see him as just a person who is just living, not informed, not taught and serious on his own.” **[Participant 8]**

The study participants understood that if someone does not have a wife, it could mean that he does not wish to have a family, and this is unacceptable in African culture. Such a person is seen as a disgrace to his family of birth, and members of the community may even think that he is bewitched. A real man is someone who understands that a wife is one with whom you should have children and family. The following extracts support this argument:

"A man must make children with his wife. Should it be that they both die, at least there should be children who will continue with life." **[Participant 3]**

"If he does not want to marry a wife it could mean that he does not wish to have a family, which is wrong." **[Participant 7]**

"We say that such a person knows nothing about his manhood; he does not take care of his manhood and does not know who a man is. We can say that his manhood is weak, and lacking. He is not a responsible person." **[Participant 5]**

"Such a person does not know his manhood, actually he is fearful. Or you find that he is just that he is careless and lazy." **[Participant 8]**

The importance of marriage can be seen in different areas of a man's life, which may include personal care. For example, some participants indicated that one may have a good job, but without a wife, they may end up losing control over their finances, not knowing how their money gets to be spent. However, if one has a wife, they may manage their finances properly. Furthermore, when a man has a wife, he does not stress about a number of things because she can be his primary source of support. Most participants also suggested that a man who has a wife is wiser and matured; and that this person is respected by men and women in the community. This theme is reflected in the following excerpts:

"When a man has a woman, he does not stress about a number of things, but if one does not have a wife he may stress to a point of attempting suicide." **[Participant 3]**

"If you have a wife, you will manage your finances properly." **[Participant 2]**

Family is one of the most powerful routes through which African manhood is displayed. For an adult male, the consequences of not having a family can be very serious as it can impact his sense of personal and public identity. This person is usually seen as being incomplete and a disgrace to his family. Thus the adult male who is not married may end up internalising how the community perceives himself, which might damage his self-esteem and self-image.

4.3.1.2 A man as head of a family: Men play important a role in different aspects of society. There was a strong consensus among the participants that a man is a head of a family. A man is understood as one that oversees all family matters and ensures that the family runs properly. This role of being head of the family gives men the right to assert their manhood. This idea is reflected in the following quotations:

> "A man is someone who has a word in the family and ensures that the family runs." **[Participant 1]**

> *"Being a man means someone that is able to lead a family, someone that has responsibility over a family."* **[Participant 10]**

As reflected below, a man leads a family and the wife follows. A man does not allow his wife to lead him. When a man takes instructions from his wife regarding how the family should be run, he is regarded as a fool. This finds support as follows:

> *"N'wanuna u ba nkatara ivi wansati a cina."* **[Participant 5]**

Loosely translated, this means a man is the one that decides what is, and what is not done in the family, and the wife supports him.

> *"There are some men; you may find that he is befooled, to a point where he does everything his wife says."* **[Participant 6]**

> "*I can say that he would have lost his manhood because he is being lead by a woman."* **[Participant 10]**

If a man allows a woman to run his family, he gives up his manhood. Some participants further suggested that such a man may have been bewitched by his wife, and that he may need to be prayed for.

Most participants indicated that being head of a family is a big responsibility that requires a brave man and not someone who is too soft. Thus, in order to properly lead a family, a man is expected to be matured, wise and informed about family matters. Furthermore, a family is seen an institution with the potential for conflicts that would need a man to be resolved. In order to do this, a man has to pay close attention to his

family in order to remain aware of the goings-on in the family. The following extracts are supportive:

> *"When a man gets money, he looks after family first, not just to waste his money on alcohol drinking while his family suffers."* **[Participant 4]**

> *"A man's responsibility is seen for example if there are conflicts in a family, as a head he is the one that should resolve such conflicts. Issues of his family must not be solved by others, not by neighbours, but by the man of the house."* **[Participant 5]**

> *"Even when things go wrong in the family, a man is able to stand for it"* **[Participant 4]**

> *"A family will not suffer as long as there a man, it does not matter whether he is educated or not, as long as he is a man."* **[Participant 1]**

A man plays the provider role in the family. He is expected to work for his wife and children and to ensure that family needs are met. For example, a man must make sure that there is food at home and that his wife and children are well taken care of. Even if he does not have a formal job, a real man will be able to support his family. This point is evidenced as follows:

> *"A family does not suffer when there is a man. He makes sure that the children go to school and that the wife is always clean."* **[Participant 7]**

> *"I would love to add that a man is someone that has a family and takes responsibility over that family, making sure that the family is functional. If there is no food, he must look for a job and some source of income."* **[Participant 9]**

> *"There are certain men that are working, but you cannot tell where their money ends, he is irresponsible and buys nothing for the family."* **[Participant 3]**

A family is also seen as an institution that is characterised by respect, honour and dignity. For these qualities to find fruition, it is important for a man to take leadership of the unit. When others realise that there is a man in a particular household, they begin to

36

respect that family. Although a man is understood as head of the family unit, there is a need for him to accommodate the views of his wife. This is not without evidence:

"*It would not be a society, because a house without a man will lack respect.*" **[Participant 3]**

"*You find that someone is not always at home, or he spends most of his time at Johannesburg, it will still be clear that such a household has a man because of dignity*" **[Participant 5]**

"*A man is someone whom even when his children has done something wrong, he will be able to stand for his kids and resolve the issue at hand.*" **[Participant 3]**

Under normal circumstances, a man is perceived to be someone who is not supposed to do household chores. These should either be done by his wife or his children. Most participants indicated that it would be wrong and shameful for neighbours to see a man doing household chores. There was a contention among the study participants as to how far this could go. For example, some participants indicated that a man can help his wife with household chores when she is sick, while others pointed out that in such circumstances, she must ask her younger sister to come and help her with the chores. The following are some of the participants' arguments:

Participant 3: *"I can say that when the wife is sick, a man must help him in the house especially is she is sick to a point where she cannot work."*

Participant 5: *"I agree with you, but it should not be every day, it should only be when she cannot, not that you find a man washing his wife's panties, which is very embarrassing."*

Participant 6: *Well i stand to differ, when she is critically ill to a point that she cannot take care of herself, she has to go to her family of origin where they can help her, rather than a man having to fulfil those roles."*

37

Participant 3: *"Not really man, you have paid lobola for the wife, so you must be willing to work with her in everything."*

Participant 6: *"If she is very sick, she must be taken to a hospital where the nurses can take care of her. It would be embarrassing if the neighbours can see a man doing the house choirs, they will start to wonder what is wrong with such a man."*

"There are certain men whom in Xitsonga idioms, we would say 'u dyisiwile' (he has been given charms that take away his manhood) by the wife. This is usually seen when a man is being troubled by the wife, she asks him to wash dishes, do laundry and other household chores while she sits. So a real man is not controlled by the wife, he is the one in control because he is the one who married the wife; it is not the other way round. So that does show where one's manhood lie. There are certain men who are just fooled by their wives and that is not proper." **[Participant 5]**

When the wife plays the role of the provider because she is the only one who is working, the man may be at a risk of compromising his manhood. In such a situation, most women will see themselves as the head of the family as she would be the one taking care of all that requires money. The unemployed husband will eventually lose his voice in the family and his manhood may vanish. Should a man find himself in this situation, he rather leaves the woman in order that he may keep his manhood. This argument is reflected in the following extracts:

"They lose their manhood because they plead for the money. So over time, he follows what the woman says, whereas the woman is actually supposed to follow the man's lead." **[Participant 1]**

"I would make sure that I leave that woman, and find someone who would treat me as their husband, as the head of the house even when I am not working." **[Participant 3]**

Only few participants disagreed with this notion. According to these participants, a man will remain the head of the family whether employed or not, and regardless of how much he earns relative to his wife. When a man fails to properly run a family, he is understood in this cultural context to be jeopardising his manhood. In such a case, he may be derogatorily regarded as a woman. The following extracts evidence this point:

> *"If someone has a family, but failing to run it properly, he jeopardises his manhood. We could still call him a man, but he is lacking somehow."* **[Participant 6]**

> *"When a man is befooled, he usually stops supporting his family; he may spend all the money in alcohol drinking or with other women, while his family starves."* **[Participant 4]**

Based on the above excerpts, it can be suggested that men play a crucial role in preserving the integrity of the family unit. As a result, the ability to properly lead a family is among the main areas through which manhood is evaluated. African men are expected to give high priority to family functioning. What this implies is that as a head of the family, a man has to ensure at all costs that the basic family needs are met. Thus most African societies place the responsibility to provide for family needs on a man. It is also suggested that when a man fails to head a family, his manhood becomes questionable.

4.3.1.3 Role of men in communities: Men are perceived to play an important role in communities. For example, most participants indicated that people feel safe in communities and in different places where there are men. Men are trusted agents in the community because they can get things done. Therefore, as reflected in the following extracts, a real man is one that is involved in matters of their community:

> *"And for example there is a funeral, a man should be able to attend, support and ensure that things run in order."* **[Participant 7]**

"If for example the community or a family is embarking in a project of drilling water, the man has to form part of the project, be involved in all that happens in the community." **[Participant 5]**

"They should also encourage other people to attend community meetings. For example in most meetings that involve water issues it is usually men who run such meetings." **[Participant 1]**

A man strives to keep abreast with matters of his community by regularly attending community meetings. The participants in this study pointed out that when a man offers help and suggestions in matters concerning his community, is an indication that one is no longer a boy but a man. This point finds expression below:

"He must be involved in all activities in the community and attend community meetings. He must not send someone on his behalf; if he is absent at least he must send his son." **[Participant 4]**

"A man should be able to participate in community meetings, and make necessary follow ups." **[Participant 3]**

"Another thing that indicates that one is no longer a boy but a man, is when he participates in community matters." **[Participant 1]**

Furthermore, through participation in community activities with other men, a man derives a sense of belonging. This sense is important for a person's psychological functioning.

When a community is embarking on a particular project, men usually volunteer their help and allocate each other responsibilities. This can be evidenced as follows:

"If maybe they say a water pipe is leaking, men will go and inspect as to how such a problem can be fixed. It is then that we can say that such a community has men." **[Participant 2]**

"If maybe the community has a water problem and not having money for the project, men can volunteer to assist with the work. So a man does not only think for himself." **[Participant 4]**

Most participants emphasised that a society without men lacks respect. The participants have this to say:

"Another indication that there are men in a community is when the families have respect and the live in peace with other people." **[Participant 3]**

"A community that has real men is when such men respect each other, able to greet each other when they meet, not pointing fingers at each other." **[Participant 5]**

"It would not be a society, because a house without a man will lack respect." **[Participant 9]**

The role of men in communities include being able to help other families. For example, if there is a funeral somewhere in the community, men would attend, support and ensure that things run smoothly. As a community member, a man ensures peace between community members. Furthermore, in the community context, a man is seen as someone who is reliable and easy to work with. The following extracts support this point:

"If any thieves break into the neighbours, a man should be able to go assist." **[Participant 2]**

"If other people fight, or maybe neighbours that may be fighting, a man is able to be a mediator and bring peace between the two." **[Participant 6]**

When a man does not show interest in community matters, he is seen as being foolish. Furthermore, if he fails to display characteristics that are in keeping with being a man, he can also be regarded as being bewitched, especially when it comes to community matters. The following extract is reflective:

"A man who does not show interest in community matters is useless. This kind of a person would wake up and lie around the yard the whole day or you find that he goes out to drink alcohol from morning to evening. This person lives as if there is nothing that he cares about, he only thinks of waking up and go for alcohol." **[Participant 5]**

Based on this extract, it can be suggested that African men are expected to be involved in community matters where they provide moral and physical support. It can also be suggested that men are seen as key role players in societies and that their presence is necessary for the well-being of communities. Thus, a man who does not show concern to community life is undervalued.

4.3.1.4 Being a man as a perpetual struggle to negate feminine qualities: When a grown up male's behaviour deviates from that which is considered to be in keeping with being a man, such a person is usually regarded as a woman. This is mostly used as a form of ridicule in the hope that he will be ashamed of himself, and will, therefore, behave more like a man. This technique of calling one a woman is mostly used whenever one deviates from those characteristics that are culturally in keeping with being a man, not just only when one displays feminine tendencies. This is what the participants had to say regarding the issue:

"When they say to a male person that he is a woman, actually it is someone who acts like a woman. He lives the kind of a life lived by woman. We see it in their speech and behaviour." **[Participant 1]**

"We do not know what to call him, so we call him a woman because he does not behave like a man. So when we say he is a woman we are trying to say that he is not a strong man, he does not qualify to hang about with us who know how to display our manhood." **[Participant 6]**

"By a woman we are not referring to an actual woman, it is just a saying that we use to imply that his behaviour is more feminine." **[Participant 5]**

"We also find certain man who can be able to work and provide; however being like a woman in terms of behavior and hanging up with women most of the time. So a man should not hang up with women." **[Participant 10]**

"If it happens that something may creep in where man are sitting, the one that will jump out of fear, such will be regarded a woman." **[Participant 9]**

It does appear from the above extracts that being a man implies that one has to try as much as possible to avoid feminine qualities. Thus, the avoidance of femininity is a crucial component of manhood. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

"So although he may be male, his deeds and how he dresses are suggestive of a woman. A man does not handle himself like woman." **[Participant 3]**

"By a woman we are referring to someone that behaves like a woman, he may put on tight trousers that would even expose his private parts. Shorts and tight pants are worn by women, not men. So seeing that, we just say that this is a woman." **[Participant 7]**

"Women don't mind accompanying each other to a toilet, whereby one would be inside and the other one by the door looking at her friend. But with man that is not possible, he cannot stand and watch another man defecate." **[Participant 5]**

As reflected below, feminine tendencies may also be seen in how a person relates to other people. For example, most participants indicated that a man who would be referred to as a woman has a tendency to shout, and would respond inappropriately when spoken to. Such a person is short tempered and may hold grudges against other people.

"By a woman we are referring to a guy wa swicele no xigela (that is negative and always complaining)." **[Participant 5]**

"A woman is someone that is always shouting, hating other people and so forth." **[Participant 1]**

"It may be the fact that he is too forward, someone who usually responds inappropriately when spoken to." **[Participant 9]**

The male figure that is called a woman is usually not able to do tough jobs as he is soft. One participant gave an example that such a person may not be able to engage in masculine activities that his peers normally engage in. These include using an axe to cut down trees. Such a person cannot be regarded as a man. Consequently, this person is seen as being useless and a disgrace to other men. Thus, other men avoid his company. Some of the participants point out the following:

"So when we say he is a woman we are trying to say that he is not a strong man; he is not fit to hang about with us who know how to display our manhood. So we regard such a person as being useless." **[Participant 5]**

"Such a person would not do masculine tasks, and he always sticks to feminine tasks. A man on the other hand enjoys hard work such as cutting fire woods." **[Participant 3]**

"When there is a funeral, as you have seen here at Ngove Village it is not the machines that would dig the pit, but men. Sometimes if you don't join other man when they go dig the pit, we will regard you as a woman, who remains with women when other men have gone out." **[Participant 2]**

One may also be regarded as a woman when he is seen to spend more time with women. Such a person is believed to know very little about manhood. Given the degree of his association with women, this person's interest on the feminine characteristics grows to a point where it manifests in his life. The following extracts reflect this point:

"Such a person would usually spend time with women, he does not like staying with men, that is the reason why they call him a woman." **[Participant 7]**

"Such a man does not hang up with other men; he rather stays alone or with women." **[Participant 10]**

"When we speak about a man we speak about someone who has a wife or in such a process. So the one who spends time with women, how can he have a wife whilst he spends his time with women? He cannot have a wife. In that way, his manhood gets lost little by little." **[Participant 6]**

As reflected above, when a man acts like a woman, his manhood disappears. If all men in the community were to display these feminine behaviours, one may think that all the men have died because they all act like women. The following extracts support this point:

"When someone spends most of their time with women, they end up behaving like a women, he may even do his nails and so forth. I that way, his manhood get lost little by little, not so long he will begin to behave just like a woman." **[Participant 2]**

"He loses his manhood, he no longer behaves like a man, he begins to live like a woman, he may engage in feminine tasks such as cleaning the house and washing his children's clothes." **[Participant 4]**

Most participants indicated that the display of feminine qualities by a male figure could be an indication of a wish to be a woman. This point is supported by the following extracts:

"In our days there are those men that wish to be women; unfortunately they were not born as females but as males. Actually they wish to be women, and that is the reason why we have gays, they begin to walk and dress like women." **[Participant 3]**

"If one behaves like a woman I would say that he is foolish because he rejects how God has made him. Actually, if he was staying around God he would have went to him and say I do not want to be a man; I want to be a woman. As to why he would be doing that, I do not know. He basically regrets that he is a man." **[Participant 5]**

Some participants also pointed out that some male persons may display feminine qualities because those behaviours could have been tolerated in their society as they were growing up. For example, one participant indicated that if one grew up in a family where parents did not have a problem with a man who walks or talks like a girl, he may end up like that as an adult. This is what the participants say:

"Of course, everyone would act out what he usually sees from his environment. The one who spends time with males will do what they do, will internalise it and grow up with it. While the females would do easy tasks, so the male person who grew up with them gets used to that." **[Participant 3]**

"It originates from the people that one spends time with when he is young. If he grows up with males he will grow up inclined to the masculine side and may only get involved on the feminine activities occasionally." **[Participant 9]**

It is suggested that manhood and womanhood are qualities that are learnt through association. For example, it is indicated that when a boy spends more time with females, he is likely to inherit their way of life and may, consequently, display feminine qualities in the future. By contrast, a boy who grows up spending more time with males will, likewise, learn their way of life.

When a male person displays feminine qualities, it is believed that his manhood is lost. In most cases, the community will discriminate against such a person, and men usually avoid his company.

4.3.1.5 Fearlessness and aggressiveness as a mark of manhood: Among other qualities, a man is expected to be strong, tough and ready to take risks. These qualities are perceived as essential for a man to allow him to fulfil other masculine roles such as protecting the family and working for the community. Most participants pointed out that the society would not be safe if men were weak and fearful. The following extracts support this point:

"A man must also be strong and tough so that if maybe thieves come, he may be able to defend himself and his family." **[Participant 8]**

"A man is someone who engages in tough and hard labour in order to provide for his family. A man must show his strength by doing tough job like other men." **[Participant 2]**

"A man is fearless; he can walk around the village at one o'clock midnight." **[Participant 6]**

"The family may be in trouble if the man of the house is fearful. He must be able to defend his family at all times." **[Participant 10]**

"A man is a person that is strong and able to display by his way of life that he is a man, this person is able to do masculine activities." **[Participant 3]**

Another quality that is expected of a man, as reflected in the following extracts, is perseverance:

"If the community has a water problem and not having money for the project, men would usually volunteer to assist with the work." **[Participant 2]**

"You may find that the person is not working and hears that there is a tough job somewhere, which a lot of people are scared of, but such a person will tell himself that he will handle the job in order that he may be able to take care of his family." **[Participant 8]**

"When it comes to daily tasks and activities, a man is seen by doing masculine jobs such as welding and cutting of fire woods which requires strength." **[Participant 7]**

Based on the above argument, it can be suggested that a man is someone that is able to make his point heard when he is with friends or other men lest they do as they please with him. Most participants indicated that if a man cannot stand for what he does, his manhood is not complete. For example, they suggested that when a man starts a fight, he must stand for it until the end, and that he has to show his strength when fighting

with other men. If he runs from a fight, other men may call him a fool and/or a woman. So he may have to stand the fight until/unless other people part them. The following extracts support this point:

"A man must not be too quiet, he must talk. He must not be simple. He must be clever, because if he is too soft others will make fun of him, they will say he is a woman. So he must wake up, even when they meet girls, he must be active." **[Participant 9]**

"The one that is not man enough may start a fight and run away. A man is someone that is able to stand for what he does. If he cannot stand for what he does, then his manhood is not complete. Most people would say he is stupid, but his understanding would be that he has respect. Others will say he is foolish and intimidated and other things related to that. For most of them seeing a fight is a nice thing because it does not always happen, it happens once in a while." **[Participant 3]**

"When a man starts a fight he must stand for it until it ends or until others stop the fight. That shows that he can stand for himself, that he is able to stand for whatever comes his way." **[Participant 5]**

"So being a man implies that you are tough, a man, and independent and being able to stand situations." **[Participant 7]**

Most participants shared the view that it is understandable for a man to engage in some risky behaviour in order that they may play the provider role in their families. The following extracts support this point:

"A man is a hustler, whether it is by stealing or whatever, but he does all he can to ensure that the family does not suffer." **[Participant 1]**

"Sometimes men still not because they enjoy stilling, they do so because of poverty." **[Participant 6]**

"Yes a man may be involved in theft because he may want to provide for the family." **[Participant 10]**

"Women know that as long as there is a man, there will be food in the family; they do not even want to know where the money is from." **[Participant 5]**

"The family may die if the man of the house is lazy." **[Participant 4]**

Because of his bravery, a man will be able to help vulnerable people when they are in trouble. For example, if a thief breaks in or if a snake creeps in, a man should be able to assist. Although it is normal to react out of fear, a man does not allow fear to control him. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

"A man is brave and not a coward, he will be able to help widowed women in case they are in trouble, for example, if a thief breaks in or if they see a snake." **[Participant 8]**

"If anything wrong happens in his neighbours or thieves break in, he should be able to go and assist." **[Participant 4]**

"When a guy is a coward he can still be called a man, but we know that he is not a real man. And actually there are very few men that are cowards. It is sometimes normal to be fearful and to react with fear, but a man always encourages himself to solve problems. If for instance you bump into a snake, he may jump and run out of fear, but he may go fetch a stick and come back for it. So that is what we mean by bravery." **[Participant 3]**

There was a significant number of participants who were not in support of the display of power and physical strength as a way of demonstrating one's manhood. Below are their arguments:

"Being a man does not refer to just being physically strong and fighting people, 'a man' refers to someone who knows who he is and someone that acts responsibly." **[Participant 8]**

"That would mean that if he has a family, he will likely want to display the same strength to his family, wife and children. So such a person cannot have a family and he cannot be regarded as a real man." **[Participant 3]**

"Furthermore, if a man is always tough and aggressive, he will not be able to stay well with his neighbours. Other people may not want to associate with someone that likes displaying his manhood by fighting or acting violently to others. When such a person is in trouble, others may not be willing to help such a person. A real man is one that is able to live in peace with other people so that they may be able to help him when he meets challenges." **[Participant 9]**

"If someone is interested in street fighting, he is regarded as a man only because he is wearing a trouser, or because of beards. But in an actual fact, he does not qualify to be called a man. A man is well mannered and respectable." **[Participant 6]**

"If for example they say there is something happening in a community, he must ensure that he be part of it, especially if its situations where man-power is of need. He has to be part of that." **[Participant 5]**

The above arguments indicate that a man should be able to use his physical strength and bravery properly. For example, his physical strength should be used in helping and protecting oneself and not in exploiting and destroying others. Therefore, men are expected to use their bravery and valour attitudes to promote their society and the well-being of their families.

4.3.2 Pathways into manhood

Most participants were of the view that a boy has to go through certain critical steps in order to become a man. Such steps are perceived as social maturity, financial independence, traditional male circumcision, heterosexual experience and associating themselves with other men.

50

4.3.2.1 Social maturity: According to most participants, a man has to show maturity and fitness to get married and have a family. He must be able to lead a family and raise children. He must also be someone who is grown enough to participate in matters of the community, who makes suggestions and one whose word is valued. In order to do this, he has to mature from boyhood into manhood. This point is reflected in the following quotations:

"So being a man implies that one has moved from certain stages into another stage, for example, from being a child into to being someone that is matured, responsible and accountable in his matters." **[Participant 2]**

"Suppose there is a funeral in the community, a man will feel the necessity to go and support whereas a boy may not have this urge. In contrast, a boy will not be able to carry tasks that are expected of a man. For example, a boy is not recognised in community meetings." **[Participant 3]**

"A real man is one whose mind is able to envisage things ahead and plans about them. Of course there those who are men but with childish mindset, I would not say they are not men, but he is not a real man in our culture, he is not a complete man." **[Participant 8]**

A man is someone with good social judgement. He is expected to recognise authoritative figures and to deal with different people in a proper manner. Another core characteristic of manhood that emerged from the narratives of the participants is respect for self and others. The following extracts support this point:

"A man is someone that is matured in their speech. A man is someone that is able to differentiate between people when he talks." **[Participant 9]**

"When a boy speaks most of the ideas are not taken into serious consideration because it is childish. So a man is one whom as an older person you can sit and converse with because his mind has developed. For example, if you talk about someone in the presence of a child, there are high chances that the child can tell

that person that you were talking about. On the other hand, a matured person is able to keep secrets." **[Participant 3]**

"For a man, if he is passing with friends by a place where older people are sitting and you find that at that time maybe they were talking about girls, the one whom we can call a man will be able to ask his friends to stop and would proceed with the matter when they passed the older people. So such a person is able to think and respects older people." **[Participant 2]**

"Someone without respect cannot not be regarded a man. Manhood goes with conduct and a person's behaviour. Right at the adolescent stage, it must be evident that he is someone with respect, especially to elders." **[Participant 10]**

For some participants, a man is someone who is self-controlled and disciplined. He has his priorities in order and takes actions based on set principles. He must be mindful of the future and not be easily influenced by friends with respect to how he handles his money matters. The participants have the following to say:

"A man is also someone that is disciplined in money matters. For example, when a man gets money, he looks after family first, not just to waste his money on alcohol drinking while his family suffers." **[Participant 4]**

"In order to be a man, one must move away from childishness, he must think about the future, if he is at school, he must continue with school and not quit, because these days without school you are doomed." **[Participant 1]**

Most participants also indicated that a real man limits his drinking habits so that he does not lose control of himself. For example, when he goes out to drink, he is expected to come back in a good state, where his family can easily relate with him. This point is mirrored in the following extracts:

"Drinking alcohol and smoking a lot may jeopardise his manhood, to such a point that he may not take good care of his family, alcohol will tamper with his ability to be a good father." **[Participant 7]**

"He must limit his alcohol drinking so that he may be respectable and not make noise when he is drunk. When he goes out to drink, he must come back in a good state, where his children can easily relate with his without being scared." **[Participant 5]**

"Yes, he must be respectable, not come back injured or smelling alcohol, his children must be able to look at him and like him when he comes back home." **[Participant 3]**

A man is someone who is faithful to his partner by staying committed to a relationship. The following extracts give evidence of this assertion:

"A man must make sure when it comes to marrying a wife that he goes for someone he truly vows to live with for the rest of his life." **[Participant 7]**

"When one has a family, then we can consider such a person to have matured into being a man and has to be able to look after his family. If this person does not have a wife, he must at least be in that process." **[Participant 2]**

"A man must respect his wife, and not beat her around. If a person has respect, he will be able to respect his wife and family, he will be afraid of wronging them." **[Participant 9]**

For some participants, a man is expected to be different from a boy in that he can look after himself and take ownership of his life. The following extracts support this argument:

"A man knows what he is doing, because in most instances you find that a boy does something without understanding what they doing. Even when someone else looks at such a person, they are able to see that this person is doing this with this and that aim." **[Participant 3]**

"Is it when he is independent of his parents, they no longer give him rules, he is able to look after himself." **[Participant 10]**

"When he was a child you find that sometimes he had to be told to go bath, they had to instruct him and he would at times refuse. So when he grows up he no longer has to be instructed to bath, he just pours water and bath." **[Participant 8]**

"Another example is that as a child, you would spend a week without taking a bath and you would not even have a problem with it, you would not even smell. But if now I can spend a day without bathing, even ladies will say that the guy who just passed by is truly a man. They would be implying that the smell suggest that I am a man and I have to take care of myself." **[Participant 5]**

Based on the above extracts, it can be suggested that a man is someone that is independent from their parents. Thus, a man is expected to make thoughtful decisions on their own. It is also suggested that a man is someone with sound moral judgement, someone who is able to self-regulate and behave appropriately in different contexts.

4.3.2.2 Financial independence: Judging by the narratives from most participants, it does appear that manhood is associated with the ability to earn income and have material means to provide for oneself and family. This suggests that manhood is associated with some kind of independence:

"While a boy is less responsible and under the care of his guardians, a man is a responsible person; he is independent and is ready to establish a family." **[Participant 1]**

"A man works for himself, when he need something he does not have to go consult somewhere else before he goes for it. That is a man." **[Participant 3]**

"A boy is less responsible and is under the care of his family. A man works for himself, financially he is also independent of his family." **[Participant 8]**

"If for example you always rely on your parents resources they may come to an end or vanish away or even get broken. If he has a family, he must ensure that

his children eat, that there is enough food in the family. He must be able to work in order to support his family." **[Participant 10]**

"A man is known by waking up in the morning and to go work, not just staying at home and do nothing." **[Participant 4]**

In other words, having a job or work is perceived as important for preserving one's manhood. What is implied here is that men who are not employed are likely to be seen as less significant in society. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

"Even women would not want to be married to an unemployed man as they believe that an unemployed man will not be able to take care of them." **[Participant 5]**

"It does happen sometimes that we find certain men who are not working but having a family. So you find that he just lies around the whole day, doing nothing. So I will consider such a person not a man, it is only the body. Even if they say there are jobs around the area, he does not think of being employed, he is someone who just wants to live under the care of his parents although he is old." **[Participant 3]**

"You are right they are not men; it is just that we do not know what to call them. A man is a responsible someone, when you look at his family you will realise that there is progress, there is life." **[Participant 10]**

For some of the participants, manhood is not derived from formal education. This is illustrated in the following extract:

"If you find someone who is from a poverty stricken family, such a person is able to go out and look for piece jobs. Such a person knows how to sustain themselves. To show that he is a man, he is able to think that there is no money at home, so I must unsure that I get some money to help my parents. The guy will then start to look for jobs. Even those that he asks jobs from, will be able to see that this guy is matured and understands what poverty means." **[Participant 3]**

The above extract suggests that men are expected to look for employment in order to provide for their families. It is understood that men from poverty-stricken families should take initiatives to find a source of income for themselves in their families.

4.3.2.3 Traditional male circumcision: Most participants were of the view that one will need to go through traditional male circumcision in order to be considered a man. This process usually takes place when boys reach adolescence. In the context of the rural community where the participants were drawn, the boys are expected to go to the mountain where they camp for weeks or months. The following extracts support this claim:

> *"Traditional circumcision leads to manhood because you learn hardship; you stay months without seeing your mother, so you become a man. The process also helps in terms of knowing man's customs and having to learn to relate with fellow man."* **[Participant 1]**

> *"It is important because in the mountain they are taught to follow traditional ways of being a man. We know that traditional practices are based on things that were and things that will continue to happen and which you won't escape."* **[Participant 8]**

> *"Traditional circumcision also teaches one about masculine activities. So what happens is that they spend much time talking about how a man should be and teach about matters related to that."* **[Participant 3]**

> *"When someone has gone through the traditional circumcision he is recognised as a man, so traditional circumcision is a good way to show that one is a man."* **[Participant 6]**

During initiation, the initiates suffer harsh conditions with others boys and men. This is a sign that they are men and men indeed. As a result of exposure to these hardships, these boys learn that roughness is a normal quality of manhood. For this reason, most participants pointed out that no one can be regarded as a man if they have not gone

through traditional circumcision. They further pointed out that there is an observable difference between the life of an adolescent boy that has gone through the traditional circumcision process and the one that was circumcised by medical practitioners. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

"The one that has gone through the traditional circumcision has stayed in the bush for days, he experienced the cold and discomfort, while the o ne that has went for the medical circumcision has just went in for a day. The one that went to the medical circumcision may get well within a week's time, whereas the one that went to the traditional circumcision may even take months before they get well." **[Participant 2]**

"Going for medical circumcision is not the same as going for traditional circumcision as those who go through the traditional circumcision gets to learn some laws and norms that are men-related." **[Participant 9]**

"The one that has went through the traditional circumcision will know more about life, more than the one that was circumcised by the doctors." **[Participant 5]**

Most participants indicated that a boy that did not go to a traditional male circumcision school will be considered a coward. By contrast, someone that has gone through the traditional male circumcision is expected to show bravery. The following extracts illustrate this:

"The one that was circumcised by the doctors for example, if it gets a little bit cold, he will put on a jersey because he is weak and never spent the winter on the mountain. As for the one that has went through the traditional circumcision, no matter how cold it becomes, he is strong enough to endure because he has learnt to bear pain." **[Participant 1]**

"Such a person does not prefer eating with other men, whereas the one that has gone through the traditional circumcision prefers eating in a group of man. The one that didn't go through the traditional circumcision prefers eating at his own time, alone." **[Participant 5]**

"Around that time when the initiates have just returned, the treatment differs. You find that the one who went to the initiation is treated with high regard. Some it is just the matter of them having spent some time not seeing the person who has gone to the initiation school, so when he returns he is treated special than the one who was at home." **[Participant 3]**

"Traditional circumcision is a good way to show that one is a man. The reason is that one has to suffer harsh conditions with other men, showing that they are men and men indeed." **[Participant 7]**

Some participants indicated that even though traditional circumcision plays a culturally significant role as a rite of passage to manhood, the practice is not strong in modern times. The following extracts support this point:

"Those that go to the traditional circumcision just suffer for nothing because they are trying to achieve the same thing that is done by the hospitals." **[Participant 4]**

"It is not a must to go for traditional circumcision, the issue is being circumcised. It does not matter whether in the traditional circumcision camps or at the doctor." **[Participant 8]**

"I think that traditional circumcision is just unnecessary suffering because you come back thin and malnourished; sometimes they hit you for no reason." **[Participant 10]**

"Going to the mountain is just traditional, but there are cases where a man would not have interest on such. Actually, lots of people are no longer following the traditional circumcision in our days, because most of the traditional activities are against their church principles or basis of faith. In most cases people would just go to the doctor to be circumcised rather than going to the mountain where there high chances of illness and death." **[Participant 7]**

"But in our days it is not so anymore, even if one didn't go through the traditional circumcision, we still call them a man as long as they live responsibly, being accountable, having a family and displaying his manhood." **[Participant 3]**

The decline in the significance of traditional male circumcision is further reflected in the following statements from the participants:

"Not really, because it doesn't really matter. For example, if one has gone through the traditional circumcision and one hasn't, yet these people conduct themselves almost similarly, it wouldn't make any difference. So they will not be able to say, this one can't do this because he was not traditionally circumcised. No one would be able to spot the difference." **[Participant 8]**

"You may be unfortunate to find that by the time you go for traditional circumcision, the supervisors are people who are generally not concerned about community's well-being, so of course you won't learn about that. However, in most cases you find that there are knowledgeable people who will teach you and equip you." **[Participant 10]**

It would appear that the decision whether or not to go for traditional male circumcision is becoming increasingly left to the individual or his family. This point is well articulated below:

"One can still fulfil other elements of manhood even if they have not gone through the traditional circumcision. It may happen for example in a family, that there one who didn't go through the traditional circumcision is wiser than the one that has gone. So his manhood may be more visible in that he is more involved in family matters, even though he didn't go to the traditional initiation. So of course the family and community is going to give high regard to such a person. They will be able to see that he has received lot better teaching in his life even though he did not go to the mountain." **[Participant 10]**

"You may find that I didn't go through the traditional circumcision, but I know that a man should approach this in this way. As long as you have a wife and a family, you can be regarded as a man." **[Participant 4]**

Other participants explained that at times it can be a good thing not to go through traditional circumcision. These participants felt that going through this process may violate one's moral principles as other adolescent boys who go there tend to be disrespectful on their return. The following extracts support this statement:

"You find that others are respectful. So they may swear but using words that are socially acceptable and less vulgarly. Although these people may think about vulgar words, you find that they are raised in a way that they are not comfortable saying it directly, they may rather make use of euphemisms. So they may lose respect, no longer differentiate between the young and older people when they speak." **[Participant 3]**

"It is not like they learn any special things at the traditional circumcision schools; sometimes it is even things that will not add value to one's life that they teach. In some cases, having not gone there may be a good thing because it may help one to be well behaved." **[Participant 4]**

"You find that you grew up in a strict and respectful family, where you were not allowed to use any vulgar words. So you grow up knowing that the use of vulgar words is a taboo and should be avoided. If such a person goes to the traditional circumcision schools, wherein they are free to use vulgar language and encouraged to sing swearing songs, such a person then begins to adopt something different from how he was raised." **[Participant 8]**

What is suggested in the above extracts is that boys who have gone for traditional male circumcision are expected by society to work harder and to be much stronger when compared to those who have never gone there. The following extracts support this idea:

"I also find that those who do not go through the traditional circumcision can still perform better than those who have gone through the traditional circumcision. So

this thing of traditional circumcision tends to put pressure on those that have gone in that they are expected to outperform those who didn't go." **[Participant 10]**

"In other cases, they may say that you cannot cry if you have gone through the traditional circumcision." **[Participant 3]**

There is usually pressure and social discrimination against adolescent boys who did not go through traditional male circumcision. These boys are called names such as '*xivuri*' (the uncircumcised) while the traditionally circumcised adolescent boy is praised and respected. The following extracts reflect this point:

"For example, if there is any traditional male circumcision school around ones area, those who have went through the traditional circumcision will always gather around together and the one that didn't go will usually stay alone at home." **[Participant 6]**

"They attribute every fault that one makes to the fact that he didn't go through the traditional circumcision. This discrimination is usually strong around the winter season, where most traditional circumcision takes place." **[Participant 4]**

"When someone has not gone through the traditional circumcision, we say that this guy is useless; he didn't even go to the traditional circumcision (ngomeni)." **[Participant 5]**

"In the present-day, traditional circumcision is not as popular as it was before. In the old days, if one didn't go through the traditional circumcision he would never be regarded as a man. But now because traditional circumcision is no longer as popular, even if one gets circumcised at a clinic, we will still regard them as a man as long as they live responsibly, being accountable, having a family and displaying his manhood. Although he may be ridiculed that he did not go to the mountain, he is still regarded as a man." **[Participant 3]**

The above statements suggest that there is social discrimination against adolescent boys who did not go through the circumcision ritual. These boys are usually despised as compared to their peers who have been traditionally circumcised.

4.3.2.4 Heterosexual experience: A significant number of participants suggested that the journey to manhood involves one having to show interest in people of the opposite sex. This point finds its support in the following extracts:

"It is also when someone begins to follow girls and make relationships with them that we can tell that he is on the way to becoming a man." **[Participant 7]**

"The adolescent stage is a stage where a boy begins to have his own family in mind. When a boy engages in heterosexual relationships with girls it shows that he is thinking about the future." **[Participant 6]**

Whilst indicating the need for a young man to engage in heterosexual relationships, most participants also expressed a need for responsible courtship. The following extracts support this point:

"Well it is good for a boy to have a sexual relationship with a girl, but he cannot be having this one today, and the following day another one. At least he must have one; if he has many he may have a problem if he impregnates all of them. A man must have one woman." **[Participant 7]**

"He may be able to approach girls but may not be able to ask them out, so we will say such a person is fearful. We still call him a man, but a fearful one in the area of woman." **[Participant 5]**

"If someone is focused and goal oriented, they may decide to put aside girls and be established in their career first, and then they can follow girls after. However, such a boy will be regarded as foolish. In most cases, a guy may be involved with girls out of peer pressure." **[Participant 3]**

In some cases, it would appear that some boys may experience an enormous amount of societal pressure that compels them to engage in heterosexual relationships once they reach adolescence. This point is backed up as follows:

"For example if he is a group of friends that all have girls, they may call him names. Women may also undermine your manhood if they know that you are not involved in any sexual relationship with girls. But if one can have a girlfriend, other girls will start to like him, they begin to see a man in him." **[Participant 2]**

"For other boys the desire may be there, but their conscience may be so strong that they be scared to approach women. So his friends may make fun of such a person, saying that he scared of women, or that he is not a man enough." **[Participant 10]**

"A male figure that has reached the adolescent stage but fails to engage on heterosexual relationships may be seen as being gay." **[Participant 6]**

"A boy must know when he engages in sexual intercourse that he desires to have children and a family." **[Participant 7]**

The above extracts are suggestive that adolescent boys experience strong social and peer pressures to engage in sexual activity. Furthermore, male figures that have reached the adolescent stage but are unable to engage in heterosexual relationships may be seen as homosexual.

4.3.2.5 Association with male figures: It would appear that the ability to associate oneself with other men is one of the critical goals as one becomes a man. For some of the participants, becoming a man was demonstrated by a quest to identify with some role models and to associate with knowledgeable men in their community. This appears to help the developing young man to develop a positive self-identity. This point is reflected in the following extracts:

"It is when one associates with other men that he can perform masculine tasks. If he is with fellow boys, he should display masculine behaviour as they also do. If fellow boys have girlfriends, he must also try to get one. In this way, he will grow up just like other boys in his community as far as being a man is concerned." **[Participant 3]**

"The guy that spends time with men also learns to do what other man in his community do, for example, if it is a custom that men help in digging the grave when there is a funeral, he will join them. If he does not join other men, he will be regarded as a woman who remains with women when other men have went out." **[Participant 5]**

The importance of associating oneself with other men as a crucial step towards manhood is also captured in the following extracts:

"If a boy grows up with males, he will grow up inclined to the masculine side and will internalise masculinity as he grows. Although a boy may be involved with feminine activities occasionally, it should not be to a degree where it threatens (compromises) his gender orientation." **[Participant 2]**

"It originates from the people that one spends time with when he is young. If he grows up with males he will grow up inclined to the masculine side and may only get involved on the feminine activities occasionally." **[Participant 3]**

"He can still do some feminine stuff because he is a normal human being, but he must be inclined to the masculine side." **[Participant 10]**

"One's gender orientation has to do with the people that one spends most time with as they grow. By the time one is an adolescent, he must have learnt to hang up with boys and be surrounded by older men (man) so that he can learn from them. A close father figure is of importance on this regard." **[Participant 6]**

The above extracts suggest that in order to attain a healthy manhood, it is necessary that a boy associates himself with male figures, beginning from their early childhood. In

order to preserve his masculinity, it is also indicated that a boy has to limit his association with female figures.

4.4 Summary of findings

The study comprised 10 adolescent boys from Ngove Village in the Greater Giyani Municipality, Limpopo Province. The participants were between the age of 13 and 18 years, and were all secondary school learners.

The findings of the study revealed that the participants understand manhood as a status that has to be earned and maintained by observing specific societal expectations. The study participants indicated that maleness is the primary quality for manhood. However, it is not the only feature indicative of manhood. It was pointed out that manhood has to be displayed through specific behavioural qualities. Furthermore, most participants indicated that adolescent boys experience an enormous amount of social pressure that compels them to behave in certain ways in order to keep abreast with cultural standards of manhood.

It was also discovered that community members play an important role in preserving cultural notions of manhood. The study found that there are specific ways that society uses to guide adolescent boys through manhood. The consequences of not keeping with cultural versions of manhood are serious as they may affect one's sense of personal and communal identity. A significant number of participants indicated that the cultural versions of manhood are not as rigid and binding in the modern-day as they were in the past. This makes it possible for other adolescent boys to become comfortable in their own behaviours, without having to suffer any considerable discrimination.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher discusses the themes that emerged in light of existing literature. Specifically, the following themes are discussed: a) Participants' conceptualisation of manhood; b) Having a family as a mark of manhood (wife and children); c) A man as the head of the family; d) The role of men in communities; e) Shunning womanhood as a mark of manhood; f) Fearlessness and aggression as a mark of manhood; g) Maturity as a mark of manhood; h) Independence as a mark of manhood; i) Traditional circumcision as a rite of passage; j) Heterosexual relationship as a rite of passage; and k) The importance of associating oneself with male figures. This chapter is concluded by providing a summary of the study findings.

5.2 Participants' conceptualisation of manhood

Participants of this study indicated that even though the male gender is the prime quality suggestive of a man, manhood is a status that has to be confirmed in specific behavioural qualities that are displayed in different contexts. They explained that it is when a male person displays these qualities that he can then be regarded as a man. This notion concurs with Bush's (1999), that 'a man' is a designation that is given when a male possesses characteristics and qualities, other than biological, that a certain society or culture considers as being constructs of manhood. This also concurs with Harcourt's (2009) view that notions of manhood and womanhood can be understood as rational concepts to which meaning is attached for the performance of particular gendered identities that personify masculine or feminine characters.

The present study revealed that a man is not just an old male figure. Instead, a man is perceived as someone with specific set of qualities that are consistent with one's cultural notions of manhood. According to a study conducted by Olawoye et al. (2004),

there is some amount of social pressure in most African societies that compels boys and/or men into channelling their behaviour into acceptable standards of manhood. When a male person fails to display these specific qualities, they cannot be regarded as man regardless of their age and physical appearance. The results of this study also suggest that older male persons that cannot display these qualities are at risk of social discrimination. For example, they may be regarded as women; they could be thought of as being bewitched and/or fooled. These men may be denied certain privileges that other men may have in the community. For example, they may not be allowed to speak in community gatherings.

The present study found that manhood requires practice and a degree of dedication from the male person. Therefore, men have to continuously demonstrate their manhood to themselves and to others. Vandello and Bosson (2013) also concur that manhood is a status that has a potential of being lost after being attained, it is not a once off thing.

The participants of this study understood manhood as being something that is confirmed by other people in the area where one resides. Thus, manhood is a construct based on qualities supported and agreed to by one's community and culture, not an individual construct. Therefore, someone cannot declare themselves a man based on their own set qualities or based on foreign (external) principles. This notion concurs with the results of a study by Barker and Ricardo (2005), who indicated that a large body of research supports that a gendered analysis of boys or men in Africa should take into account the plurality of manhood in Africa. Black (1993) also asserts that African manhood is primarily a social construct.

Manhood is something that is displayed in different contexts of one's life, and it is evaluated in many areas. Being a social construct, gender roles may be perceived and enacted differently depending on an individual's social context (Lwambo, 2011). Thus gender has no meaning without human participation in gender relations (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). This study also suggested that to evaluate one's manhood requires more than a few encounters with them. People who usually comment about one's gender orientation are usually relatives and family members. It was also suggested that older women in the community have more insight about gender appropriate behaviours,

thus they usually make comments about it. This concurs with Woodbury (2002) that only the community (older men and women) possesses the right to judge who should be considered a man.

5.2.1 Having a family (wife and children) as a mark of manhood

The present study revealed that a man is someone who has a wife and children, and that without a wife, one's manhood suffers. For example, when an older male person does not have a wife, he puts his manhood in question, resulting in other men and women in the community despising him. However, it is understood that having a wife and family serves as an indication that one has moved from boyhood into manhood. This notion concurs with Olawoye et al. (2004), that an adult male who has attained marriageable age (beyond adolescence) but has not wedded a wife may be regarded as an irresponsible person. The participants also indicated that this is the reason why marriage is highly celebrated in African culture as it plays a crucial role in the transition from being a boy to being a man.

This study has also revealed that a family is one important area through which a man asserts his manhood. Thus, in order to live as a happy man, it is necessary that one gets a wife. According to Hunter and Davis (1992), "family is an extension of the male ego" (p. 31). Most participants in this study have indicated that when a man does not have a wife, he is not an authentic man. To elaborate on this, one participant further said that a man without a wife is called '*ngwendha*', which is a word used to ridicule those that are without a wife. The consequences of not having a wife for men are very serious. For example, such a person is not recognised in community meetings as he is believed to be inexperienced. Barker and Ricardo (2005) also assert that males that are without wives suffer social discrimination as they are often forbidden to participate in activities that are thought to be masculine. As a result, these people keep to themselves out of fear of being ridiculed.

The participants further suggested that when an adult male does not have a wife, it could mean that he does not wish to have a family, which is unacceptable in the context

of the culture of this rural community. They also explained that societies consider family as a special institution, and would, therefore, be not accommodative of one that does not show any desire to have a family. Consequently such a person is seen as a disgrace to his family of birth, and the community members may even think that he is bewitched. The participants pointed out that manhood is strongly tied to the desire to establish a family. Therefore, the capacity to demonstrate concern for family, whether current family in which an individual was raised, or a prospective family that he is about to make, is central to African men's definition of manhood (Hunter & Davis, 1992).

The importance of having a wife can be seen in different areas of a man's life which may include, but not limited to, personal management. For example, some participants indicated that a man who has a wife is more able to keep a good track of how he spends his money. Most participants also suggested that a man who has a wife is wiser and matured; and that this person is respected by men and women in the community. For example, a wife can serve as a primary source of support. For an adult male, the consequences of not having a family can be very serious as it can impacts his sense of personal and public identity.

5.2.2 The man as the head of the family

Men are expected to play a crucial role in society. For example, this could include being the head of the family. A man is understood as one that oversees all family matters and ensures that the family runs properly. Most participants indicated that the role of being family providers gives men the right to assert their manhood. According to Lwambo (2011), male parents face a loss of status based on their inability to provide for wives and children.

According to the study participants, a man leads a family and the wife follows. The implication here is that the role of leading a family unit is strongly tied to African notions of manhood, such that when a man takes instructions from his wife regarding how the family should be run, his manhood is questioned. For example, one participant suggested that such a man may have been bewitched by his wife, and that he may

need to be prayed for. According to the study participants, a man has to have a final word in a family unit. They indicated that if a man allows a woman to run a family, he gives up his manhood. Although a man is understood as the head of the family unit, there is a need for him to accommodate the views of his wife.

Most participants indicated that being the head of the family is a big responsibility that requires someone brave. Furthermore, a family is seen as an institution that has to be characterised by respect, honour and dignity. For the above reasons, the participants indicated that it is necessary that a man takes leadership of the unit. They explained that when others realise that there is a man in a particular household, they begin to respect such a family. According to a study by Roets (2014), it was discovered that to become family providers and protectors was one of the socio-cultural expectations of manhood.

A man is expected to work for his wife and children and to ensure that family needs are met. For example, a man must make sure that there is food at home and that his wife and children are well taken care of. They indicated that a real man will be able to support his family even when he does not have a formal job. According to Barker and Ricardo (2005), a developing male's failure to provide for his family can affect his self-perception as well as communal identity. The study participants explained that in order to properly lead a family, a man has to pay close attention to his family so as to be aware of what is going on in his family. In order to lead a family properly, a man is expected to be matured, wise and informed about family matters.

Should it be that the wife plays the role of the provider, supposedly because she is the sole breadwinner, the man may be at risk of compromising his manhood (Roets, 2014). Most participants indicated that in such a situation, most women will see themselves as the head of the family as she would be the one taking care of the financial affairs of the family. The unemployed husband will eventually lose his voice in the family and his manhood may vanish in the long run. This is consistent with Lwambo's (2011) view that acting as a breadwinner is closely tied to the role of being the head of the household and a sense of power. In a study conducted by Roets (2014), it is reported that women's empowerment has a negative impact on men as it makes them feel like wrongdoers or

failures as they could no longer fulfil their socio-cultural role expectations of being dominant, providers and protectors of their families and communities.

Most participants pointed out that should a man find himself in this situation, he had rather leave the woman in order to keep his manhood. Nevertheless, Lwambo (2011) also asserts that more often than not, when wives are given greater independence to make decisions, they are sometimes not willing to take advantage of the opportunity. When a man fails to properly run a family, he is understood in this cultural context to be jeopardising his manhood. In such a case, he may be derogatorily regarded as a woman.

5.2.3 The role of men in communities

This study revealed that men play an important role in communities. Most participants pointed out that people feel safe in communities and in different places where there are men. Men are trusted agents in the community because they can get things done. For example, if anything goes wrong, it is men who would stand up to fix it. One participant gave an example that when a community is embarking on a particular project, men usually volunteer their help and allocate each other responsibilities. According to Roets (2014), men make a difference in addressing problems and in helping their communities and families by facilitating community conversations and devising actions to solve problems. Other studies suggest that African men use their manhood to act collectively and to resist oppression during the colonial periods in most parts of the world (Foley, 2012).

The participants suggested that a real man is one that displays his manhood through participation in matters concerning their community. They pointed out that a man strives to keep abreast with matters of his community by regularly attending community meetings. According to Roets (2014), men reclaim their role in communities and families in cities by becoming actively involved and participating in interventions to address social problems affecting their communities. The participants further pointed

out that this indicates that one is no longer a boy but a man, when he offers help and suggestions in matters concerning his community. According to Black (1993), African men are expected to participate in matters of the community, attending community meetings and bringing solutions to community problems.

The role of men in communities include being able to help other families. For example, another participant indicated that if there is a funeral somewhere in the community, men would attend, support and ensure that things run smoothly. According to Black (1993), it can be said about African communities that one becomes a man only after he has understood that he is, in fact, his brother's keeper. A man is able to act as a mediator when community members fight, and to bring peace between the two. When a man does not show interest in community matters, he is seen as being foolish. Furthermore, this person's manhood is despised as he fails to display characteristics that are in keeping with being a man, especially when it comes to community matters.

5.2.4 Being a man as a perpetual struggle to negate feminine qualities

When a grown up male's behaviour deviates from that which is considered to be in keeping with being a man, such a guy is usually regarded as a woman. Looking at a man as a woman plays a crucial role in preserving traditional versions of manhood. This is mostly used as a form of ridicule in the hope that he will be ashamed himself and will, therefore, behave more like a man. Calling a man a woman is mostly used whenever he deviates from those characteristics that are culturally in keeping with being a man, not just only when one displays feminine tendencies. Other studies reveal that through both formal and informal means such as jokes, social ridicule and insinuations, a man is made aware of what society expects of him and to let him know that he is failing to be a man (Ratele, 2008; Shefer et al., 2007).

Being a man implies that one has to try as much as possible to avoid qualities that are perceived as feminine. Thus, the avoidance of femininity is a crucial component of manhood. The core characteristic of being a woman includes displaying feminine characteristics. This notion can also be seen in the 'antifemininity mandate' in the

theories of manhood and masculinity (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). Most of these theories strongly emphasise the shunning of womanhood as a core characteristic of manhood. This study also revealed that feminine qualities are seen as a threat in the preservation of manhood. Therefore, a boy must be careful how he associates himself with female figures. In light of this view, a healthy masculine identity can only develop if boys do not identify with feminine qualities.

A man may also be regarded as a woman when he is seen to spend more time with women. Such a person is believed to know very little about manhood. It is suggested that when a man acts like a woman, his manhood gradually disappears. Therefore, from a very young age, African boys are discouraged from enacting feminine behaviours (Shefer et al., 2007). When a male person displays feminine qualities, it is believed that his manhood is lost. In most cases, the community will discriminate against such a person, and men usually avoid his company.

Most participants indicated that the display of feminine qualities by a male figure could be an indication of an underlying wish to be a woman. Other participants pointed out that other male persons may display feminine qualities because those behaviours could have been tolerated in their society when they were growing up. They suggest that manhood and womanhood are qualities that are learnt through association. For example, it is indicated that when a boy spends more time with females, he is likely to inherit their ways of life and may, consequently, display feminine qualities in the future. In contrast, a boy who grows up spending more time with males will likewise learn their ways of life.

5.2.5 Fearlessness and aggression as a mark of manhood

Among other qualities, a man is expected to be strong, tough and ready to take risks. These qualities are perceived as essential for a man to allow him to fulfil other masculine roles such as protecting the family and working for the community. This view concurs with Woodbury's (2002), that a real man is one who is physically strong and

fearless. Qualities such as being lazy, soft and fearful are seen as feminine. Thus the physical strength that men have allows them to carry out masculine activities. According to Chitando (2011), boys are still celebrated for their valour, courage, and physical strength that they exhibit as potential future men, and those who fall short of this standard are deemed cowards.

It is expected that an adolescent boy must display his physical strength amongst his peers. For example, when a fight ensues, the boy is expected to stand for the fight until others bring to a stop. If he runs from a fight, other people may call him a fool and/or a woman. Thus, an adolescent boy's manhood may suffer due to his inability to display warrior attitudes and/or toughness. Because of his bravery, a man will be able to help vulnerable people when they are in trouble. For example, if a thief is sighted in the neighbours or if a snake creeps in, a real man should be able to go and assist. Although it is normal to react out of fear, a man does not allow fear to control him.

Most participants shared the view that it is understandable for a man to engage in some risky behaviour in order that they may play the provider role in their families. They explained that a family will not suffer as long as there is a man, and that it does not matter whether he is educated or not. For example, one participant indicated that a man is a hustler, who does whatever it takes to ensure that his family does not suffer. According to Roets (2014), young adult African men often engage in these activities to gain access to other socio-economic resources like material needs in order to provide for their girlfriends, wives or their families. Another key participant also pointed out that women know that as long as there is a man, there will be food in the family; they do not even want to know where the money to buy food comes from. According to Ratele (2008), the notion that manhood is seen in aggression has influenced a lot of violent behaviours among African men, which also determines when and how males in South Africa die.

There was a significant number of participants who did not support the display of power and physical strength as a way to demonstrate one's manhood. According to these participants, qualities such as physical strength and bravery are useful as far as they

assist a man to achieve his goals and to work for the community. Therefore, a man must be in control of his physical strength so that he can act appropriately. When a man fails to control his physical strength, he becomes destructive and may commit violent acts which may put him in trouble. They explained that men are expected to use their bravery and valour attitudes constructively to promote society and the well-being of their families. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of physical strength is the protection, not destruction, of one's people (Black, 1993; Chitando, 2011).

5.3 Pathways into African manhood

Most participants were of the view that a boy has to go through certain critical steps in order to become a man. Such steps are reflected in terms of social maturity, financial independence, traditional male circumcision, heterosexual experience and associating oneself with other men.

5.3.1 Social maturity

A man is seen as a mature being, and someone who is developed mentally to be fit to lead a family. This view concurs with Chaney's (2009), that a key requirement to the attainment of manhood in most African communities is the demonstration of some level of social maturity. Due to his sense of social maturity, a man is able to participate in community matters by giving suggestions and by assisting in solving social problems. They explained that in order for a man's word to be honoured, it is essential that he matures from boyhood into manhood. According to Vincent (2008), becoming a man in South Africa signifies that one is now eligible to marry, to inherit land and to participate in a family court.

A man is someone with good social judgement, who behaves appropriately in different contexts. According to Barker and Ricardo (2005), a boy's teaching during the traditional male circumcision includes male-female relationships, family and community life, and adult roles. For some participants, a man is someone who is self-controlled and disciplined. He has his priorities in order and his actions are based on set principles.

Another core characteristic of manhood that emerged from the study is respect for self and others. Most participants also indicated that a real man limits his drinking habits so that he does not lose control of himself. Furthermore, a man is someone who is faithful to his partner by staying committed to a relationship. For example, one participant indicated that a man does not stand in street corners with girls when he has a wife and children.

For some participants, a man is expected to be different from a boy in that he can look after himself and take ownership of his life. This view concurs with Hunter and Davis's (1992), that a man is expected to make thoughtful decisions on their own. It is also suggested that a man is someone who is able to self-regulate and behave appropriately in different contexts, making him different from a boy.

5.3.2 Financial independence

Being a man is linked to the ability to earn income and to have material means to provide for oneself and family. Therefore, financial independence is perceived as an essential factor for preserving one's manhood. A man is understood as someone that has established other means of sustaining himself without having to rely on his parents. According to Lwambo (2011, chief among the characteristics that reoccur across African manhood research is the necessity for financial independence.

The results of this study also suggest that men that are not employed are likely to be seen as less significant in society. For example, it is indicated that most women would not want to be married to an unemployed man. This person is usually seen as being lazy and irresponsible. Other participants pointed out that manhood is not derived from formal education. According to these participants, a man is able to look for whatever source of income in order to support his family.

Having a source of income is important in preserving one's manhood as it allows him to carry out other masculine functions. Vandello et al. (2008) suggest that men's social recognition, and their sense of manhood, suffers when they do not work.

5.3.3 Traditional male circumcision

The transition from boyhood to manhood involves a series of initiation rites that are intended to integrate African boys into men (Ramokgopa, 2001). Traditional male circumcision is one of the rites of passage through which African boys (usually during adolescence) earn the status of being men (Black, 1993; Woodbury, 2002). Therefore, most participants were of the view that one will need to go through traditional male circumcision in order to be considered a man. This type of circumcision is a process through which boys learn the ways of being a man, which also extends to orientating them into their multiple identities as sons, brothers, lovers and prospective fathers (Vincent, 2008). This process usually takes place when the boys reach adolescence. In the context of the rural community where the participants were drawn, the boys are expected to go to the mountain where they camp for weeks or months. Traditional male circumcision often include seclusion of young men from their families (and from women and girls) into some camp where they receive some informal learning process during which older men pass on information and/or skills that are considered necessary to be a man in their societies (Barker & Ricardo, 2005).

These boys are circumcised in the traditional way, and the process includes teachings and rituals that are necessary in a transition from boyhood to manhood. Although the operation is certainly painful, boys are encouraged to endure the circumcision trial without screaming or weeping; this is believed to teach a boy to demonstrate toughness (Black, 1993). The focus of traditional male circumcision is not only on the removal of the male organ foreskin than on building a man. Therefore, the initiates suffer harsh conditions with other boys and men, showing that they are men and men indeed. As a result of exposure to these hardships, these boys learn that roughness is a normal quality of manhood. It is also indicated that the ability to bear pain for an adolescent boy serves as an indication that he will be able to withstand difficulties in the future. Boys who get circumcised medically in hospitals are usually not considered men because they did not learn to endure pain (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). The study participants further explained that boys who are circumcised medically tend to have weak manhood. In contrast, "boys who have went to the mountain are expected to be rebellious,

stubborn and to refuse to take on tasks that are considered female" (Barker & Ricardo, 2005, p. 9).

Other studies have revealed that traditional circumcision plays a crucial role in the socialisation of boys and men in Africa (Ramokgopa (2001). During this process, boys are exposed to community traditions so that they can learn how to behave as men (Langa, 2014). Most participants indicated that there is a difference in the life of an adolescent who has gone through the traditional male circumcision and the one who has been circumcised by medical practitioners. For example, one participant mentioned that those who go through traditional circumcision get to learn laws and norms that are men-related. Barker and Ricardo (2005) also concur that the initiates receive teachings such as conflict resolution, male-female relationships, family and community life, and adult roles at the mountain.

The initiates are given special gifts when they return from the circumcision camps. According to Vincent (2008), these gifts symbolically imply that as a man, he is capable of receiving property and owning it in his personal capacity without control from parents. It is also indicated that when the initiates return from the mountain, they are treated with more respect in honour of their strength and perseverance. Furthermore, Vincent (2008) also concurs that traditionally, circumcised men are expected to take on greater social responsibilities in their communities, acting as negotiators in family disputes, being able to weigh decisions more carefully and to cooperate with elders. Boys who have gone through medical circumcision are usually despised because they have not experienced the privilege of communing with other boys and get lessons from older men (Vincent, 2008). Barker and Ricardo (2005) further state that these boys stay at home as usual, and may still interact with women, therefore their manhood is questioned. A variety of studies in the field of public health reveal that uncircumcised males may be psychologically traumatised as a result of the ridicule and harassment they experience at the hands of peers and elders who have already undergone traditional male circumcision (Ratele, 2008; Vincent, 2008).

Some participants indicated that even though traditional circumcision plays a culturally significant role as a rite of passage to manhood, the practice is not strong in modern

times. The results also revealed that a boy who has gone through the traditional circumcision and a boy that has gone through the medical circumcision do not differ much as far as their daily lives are concerned. Other participants pointed out that there is a decline on the focus given to teaching and equipping initiates. According to Vincent (2008), much of the traditional educational aspect of the initiation rite has fallen away in contemporary circumcision schools. While young men's education in the mountain involves important teachings about manhood, circumcision school is short-lived, and without follow-up, many boys clearly disregard what they learn there (Vincent, 2008). Other studies have also revealed that boys often go for circumcision too early, or for wrong reasons such as competition with peers, rather than for the purpose of real change into manhood (Vincent, 2008; Langa, 2014). Furthermore, Black (1993) asserts that manhood in modern Africa no longer has rigidly defined structured systems by which African boys acquire manhood. Therefore, in the present-day, other male figures may fall short of certain qualities of manhood and not suffer so much social ridicule or discrimination.

It appears that the decision whether or not to go for traditional male circumcision is becoming increasingly left to the individual or his family. For the participants in the present study, not having gone for traditional male circumcision does not prevent one from being a man. For example, not having gone for the traditional circumcision does suggest failure to properly lead a family nor mean failure to be matured and live independent of one's parents. Other participants indicated that at times it could be a good thing not to go through the traditional circumcision. They explained that going through the circumcision may violate one's moral principles because other adolescent boys who go to the mountain tend to be disrespectful on their return. According to Barker and Ricardo (2005), part of the initiation process includes cathartic moments of being out-of-control, or drunk. During such moments, initiates are given the freedom to use vulgar words and language.

The study findings suggest that there is some social discrimination against adolescent boys who did not go through the tradition of male circumcision. For example, the community may tend to attribute every mistake that one makes to the fact that he did

not go through the circumcision. According to Vincent (2008), this pressure can be so intense that many boys secretly take themselves off to initiation schools without knowledge or consent of their parents.

5.3.4 Heterosexual experience

In most African societies, manhood is regarded as something that boys must make happen, by passing certain social milestones (Nsamenang, 1998; Ramokgopa, 2001). Therefore, a significant number of participants suggested that the journey to manhood involves one having to show interest in people of the opposite sex. For young men in Africa, sexual experience has a strong association with initiation into adulthood and achieving a socially recognised manhood (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Chitando, 2011). Furthermore, most participants indicated that the adolescent stage is a stage where a boy should be having his own family in mind. Some studies have also reported that during the initiation process, African boys are usually encouraged to make sexual relationships with girls, and to work towards having a family (Woodbury, 2002). A study by Roets (2014) also revealed that there were many socio-economic pressures on African boys to engage in sex as early in their adult life as possible. Some of these pressures came from their families, the media, peers and public role-models.

Whilst indicating the need for a young man to engage in heterosexual relationships, most participants also expressed a need for responsible courtship. It is expected that a boy should be aware of possible consequences such as pregnancy and/or contracting illnesses. Other participants explained that it is better for one to first get established in their careers before engaging in heterosexual relationships so that one can be able to look after his prospective family should his partner falls pregnant. They further indicated that it could be challenging for an adolescent boy to not engage in heterosexual relationships because his peers will see him as a fool. A study conducted by Barker & Ricardo (2005) among Zulu young men in South Africa suggested that a significant minority of young men would prefer abstinence from sexual activities before marriage. However, some of them they feel obliged to have sex before marriage for fear of social

rejection. According to a study conducted by Roets (2014), young women often put additional pressure on young adult African men by expecting them to be sexually experienced. They often humiliate or mock the man if he appears to have no sexual experience or know how to please a woman.

The notion of sexual experience as defining manhood is part of the most desirable and celebrated forms of manhood in Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Ratele, 2008; Langa, 2014). Although there is evidence of strong social and peer pressures to engage in sexual activities, Barker and Ricardo (2005) argue that young men do not only seek sexual relationships to prove their manhood, but for companionship, intimacy and pleasure. Numerous researchers have affirmed that gender role norms are among the strongest underlying social factors that influence sexual behaviours for males (Barker & Ricardo, 2005).

5.3.5 Association with male figures

It would appear that associating oneself with other men is one of the critical goals for one to become a man. For some of the participants, becoming a man was demonstrated by a quest to identify with some role models and to associate himself with knowledgeable men in their community. This appears to help the developing young man to develop a positive self-identity. Psychological theories of human development indicate that identity is a central developmental process that takes place during adolescence (Kroger, 2006; Waterman, 1999). Therefore, for most participants, the association with male figures appears to help an adolescent boy to develop a sense of self-identity.

Manhood and womanhood are seen as qualities that are learnt through association. Thus, in order to attain a healthy manhood, it is necessary that a boy associates himself with male figures, beginning from their early childhood. Therefore, role modelling plays a crucial role in the development of gender identity. Other participants explained that early childhood experiences are most likely to be carried on to adulthood. Therefore, it was suggested that a boy has to limit his association with female figures in order to

preserve his masculinity. Other participants indicated that if a boy was to be raised by his mother alone, it could pose a challenge in terms his development as a man. The boy will not have male role-models to help him know what is right or what is wrong as he will only depend on his mother for everything. However, according to Roets (2014), the role of older men in African communities is to mentor boys and young men as most of them come from fatherless families in the cities.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

The aim of this study was to explore and describe the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village (Limpopo Province). The objectives of this study were:

- To determine adolescent boys' understanding of what it means to be a man.
- To establish adolescent boys' understanding of the qualities and attributes that a man should have.
- To determine adolescent boys' understanding of the role that a man plays society.

The sample of the study comprised ten adolescent boys who were all secondary school learners. The findings of the study suggest that manhood is a status that is earned when a male person possesses specific qualities that one's community and culture consider to be in keeping with being a man. It is maintained that the male gender is the primary element of manhood. However, it is strongly emphasised that the male person will need to display his manhood behaviourally. The participants of the study were able to discuss conditions under which one can be regarded as a man and the demands thereof. Furthermore, the psychological processes of attaining and losing one's manhood were described.

6.2 Limitations

The following are some of the limitations that could be associated with the present study:

- Translating the interview data from Xitsonga into English may have led to omissions or inappropriate transmission of the original message conveyed by the participants.

- This study depended on the participants' views of manhood. Since all the participants were minors, it is, therefore, possible that some of the participants did not respond appropriately to the research questions.
- The results of this study cannot be generalised to the larger South African population since the study was conducted on very small sample of individuals in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

- More studies should be done on African notions of manhood so as to use them in understanding the world of an African male.

- Other studies should be done to understand how African notions of manhood can be used in social science, specifically in psychology, to inform interventions that target African males.

REFERENCES

Adinkrah, M. (2012). Better dead than dishonored: Masculinity and male suicidal behavior in contemporary Ghana. *Social Science & Medicine, 74* (4): 474-481.

Amis, J. M., & Silk, M. L. (2008). The philosophy and politics of quality in qualitative organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods*, *11*: 456–465.

Alberts, C., Mbalo, N. F., & Ackermann, C. J. (2003). Adolescents' perceptions of the relevance of domains of identity formation: A South African cross-cultural study. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 32* (3): 169-184.

Asante, M. K. (2007). An Afrocentric manifesto: Toward an African renaissance. Polity.

Bamberg, M., De Fina, A., & Schiffrin, D. (2011). Discourse and identity construction. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 177-199). New York, NY: Springer.

Bangura, A. K. (2012). From Diop to Asante: Conceptualizing and contextualizing the Afrocentric paradigm. *The Journal of Pan African Studies, 5*(1): 103-125.

Barker, G., & Ricardo, C. (2005). *Young men and the construction of masculinity in sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for HIV/AIDS, conflict, and violence.* Washington, DC: World Bank.

Basow, S. A. (1992). *Gender: Stereotypes and roles.* Belmont, United States:Thomson, Brooks/Cole.

Biggerstaff, D., & Thompson, A. R. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A qualitative methodology of choice in healthcare research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 5*(3): 214-224.

Black, D. P. (1993). *The black male concept of manhood as seen in selected slave and free narratives* (Doctoral thesis, Temple University)

Boetjie, H. (2010). *Analysis in qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bosson, J. K., & Vandello, J. A. (2011). Precarious manhood and its links to action and aggression. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *20*(2): 82-86.

Booth, E. T. (2012). *A Search for Man's meaning: Examining Manhood from the margins of gender and orientation* (Doctoral thesis, Arizona State University, Phoenix).Retrieved from

http://repository.asu.edu/attachments/93662/content/tmp/package-
tXxqZK/Booth_asu_0010E_11823.pdf.

Bush, L. (1999). Am I a man?: A literature review engaging the socio-historical dynamics of black manhood in the United States. *Western Journal of Black Studies, 23* (1): 49-57.

Chaney, C. (2009). Boys to men: How Perceptions of manhood influence the romantic partnerships of black men. *Western Journal of Black Studies. 33* (2): 110-122.

Chitando, A. (2011). Upholding innovative models of manhood in Zimbabwean children's literature: An analysis of Kudakwashe Muzira's how Skinny became a hero. *Mousaion: Special Issue on Children's Literature and Reading*, *29*(3), 127-139.

Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity rethinking the concept*. Gender & Society, 19*(6): 829-859.
DOI: 10.1177/0891243205278639.

Courtenay, W. H. (2000). Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: a theory of gender and health. *Social Science & Medicine, 50* (10): 1385-1401.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative and mixed methods approaches.* (3rd. ed.). London: Sage publishers.

Dancy, T. E. (2011). Colleges in the making of manhood and masculinity: Gendered perspectives on African American males. *Gender and Education*, *23*(4): 477-495. DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2010.508454

De Vos, A. S., Delport, C. S. L., Fouché, C. B., & Strydom, H. (2011). *Research at grass roots: A primer for the social science and human professions.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Endacott, R. (2005). Clinical research 4: qualitative data collection and analysis. *Intensive and Critical Care Nursing*, *21*(2): 123-127. Doi:10.1016/j.iccn.2004.10.

Foley, E. K. (2012). *"To make him feel his manhood": Black male identity and the politics of gender in the post-emancipation South.* (Doctoral thesis, University of

South Carolina, Columbia). Retrieved from http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/1458.

Gardiner, J. K. (2013). Masculinity's interior: men, transmen, and theories of masculinity. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, *21*(2): 112-126. DOI: 10.3149/jms.2102.112.

Harcourt, W. (2009). *Body politics in development: Critical debates in gender and development.* London: Zed Books.

Ho, K. M., & Wong, Y. S. (2006). Searching for manhood: Reflecting growing up in a Chinese way. *Asian Journal of Counselling, 13*(2): 207-234.

Hunter, A. G., & Davis, J. E. (1992). Constructing gender: An exploration of Afro-American men's conceptualization of manhood. *Gender & Society, 6*(3): 464-479.

Khosa, M. A. (2009). *Symbolism in Xitsonga cultural ritual ceremonies* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Limpopo, South Africa).

Kroger, J. (2006). *Identity development: Adolescence through adulthood. London*: Sage.

Langa, J. (2014). Notions of sex, masculinity and manhood in African cultures. *A Journal on African Women's Experiences.*

Lidzy, S. D. (2005). Gender role expectations of students at a Christian University: Cultural notions of masculinity and femininity. *Christian Higher Education*, *4*(4): 317-332. DOI: 10.1080/15363750500182638.

Markstrom, C. A. (2011). Identity formation of American Indian adolescents: Local, national, and global considerations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *21*(2): 519-535. DOI: 10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00690.x.

Mazama, A. (2001). The Afrocentric paradigm: Contours and definitions. *Journal of Black Studies*, *31*(4): 387-405.

Mekoa, I. (2006). Introducing Afrocentric studies in the newly merged University of Kwazulu-Natal: Systematic and thematic principles for an African university. *Alternation, 13*(1): 246-278.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley and Sons.

Merriam-Webster Inc. (2004). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary.* (11th ed.). USA: Merriam-Webster.

Mkabela, Q. (2005). Using the Afrocentric method in researching indigenous African culture. *The Qualitative Report, 10*(1): 178-189.

Mkhize, N. (2004). Psychology: an African perspective. In K. Ratele, N. Duncan, D. Hook, N. Mkhize, P. Kigawu & A. Collins (Eds.), *Self, community and psychology* (pp. 4-1). Lansdowne, SA: UCT Press.

Nsamenang, A. B., & Dawes, A. (1998). Developmental psychology as political psychology in sub-Saharan Africa: The challenge of Africanisation. *Applied Psychology, 47*(1): 73-87. DOI: 10.1111/j.1464-0597.1998.tb00014.x.

Nsamenang, A. B., & Tchombe, T. M. S. (2011). *Handbook of African educational theories and practices. A generative teacher education curriculum.* Bamenda, Cameroon: HDRC.

Olawoye, J. E., Omololu, F. O., Aderinto, Y., Adeyefa, I., Adeyemo, D., & Osotimehin, B. (2004). Social construction of manhood in Nigeria: Implications for male responsibility in reproductive health. *African Population Studies, 19*(2): 4-20.

Ospina, S. (2004). *Qualitative research.* London: Sage

Patton, M. Q., (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods.* New Delhi, India: Sage.

Ramokgopa, I. M. (2001). *Developmental stages of an African child and their psychological implications: A comparative study* (Doctoral thesis, Rand Afrikaans University, Pretoria). Retrieved from https://ujdigispace.uj.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10210/1614/DevelopmentalStageso fanAfricanChild.pdf?sequence=1.

Ratele, K. (2008). Masculinity and male mortality in South Africa. *African Safety Promotion, 6*(2): 19-41.

Reardon, M. J. (2012). *The bonds of manhood: Public life, homosociality, and hegemonic masculinity in Massachusetts* (Doctoral thesis, University of Lowa, Lowa). Retrieved from http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/2969.

Roets, H. J. L. (2014). *Exploring the perceptions on pathways to manhood amongst urban young African men by HIV-prevention programme practitioners in Gauteng, South Africa* (Master's thesis, University of South Africa).

Schiele, J. H. (1996). Afrocentricity: An emerging paradigm in social work practice. *Social Work, 41* (3): 284-294.

Shefer, T., Ratele, K., Strebel, A., Shabalala, N., & Buikema, N. (Eds.). (2007). *From boys to men: Social constructions of masculinity in contemporary society.* Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information, 22*(2): 63-75.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook.* (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Simon, W., & Gagnon, J. (1998). Psychosexual development. *Society, 35*(2), 60-67.

Taylor, C. J. (2014). Physiological stress response to loss of social influence and threats to masculinity. *Social Science & Medicine*, *103*(2014):51-59. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.07.036.

Terre-Blanche, M. T., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. (2nd ed.). South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.

Vandello, J. A., Bosson, J. K., Cohen, D., Burnaford, R. M., & Weaver, J. R. (2008). Precarious manhood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *95*(6): 1325.

Vandello, J. A., & Bosson, J. K. (2013). Hard won and easily lost: A review and synthesis of theory and research on precarious manhood. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 14* (2): 101–113. DOI: 10.1037/a0029826.

Vargas, J. C. S. (2010). The Culture-bound hierarchy of manhood: An overview of hegemonic masculinity and subordinate male figures in shall we DANSU?. *Revista de Lenguas Modernas, 12*(5): 13-30.

Vermuelen, J. G. (2011). *Redefining psychology in a South African context: Facilitating epistemological curiosity* (Doctoral thesis, University of South Africa. Pretoria, South Africa). Retrieved from http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/5595.

Vincent, L. (2008). 'Boys will be boys': Traditional Xhosa male circumcision, HIV and sexual socialisation in contemporary South Africa. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 10*(5): 431-446.

Waterman, A. S. (1999). Identity, the identity statuses, and identity status development: A contemporary statement. *Developmental Review, 19*(4): 591-621.

Wehmeier, S. (2005). *Oxford advanced learners dictionary of current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woodbury, L. (2002). Reconstructing gender identity for child combatants in post-conflict African societies. *Politique Africaine, 88:* 49-62.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1a: Interview guide – English version

- Would you share with me your knowledge on what it means to be a man?
- What is your understanding of the qualities that a man should have?
- What is your understanding of the role that a man should play in society?

Appendix 1b: Interview guide - Xitsonga version

- U nga ndzi byela ku ya hi vutivi bya wena leswi swi vulaka swona ku va wanuna?
- Xana u twisisa yini hi swihlawulekisi leswi wanuna a faneleke ku va na swona?
- Xana u twisisa yini mayelana na xiave kumbe ntirho lowu wanuna a nga na wona etikweni.

Appendix 2a: Focus group interview guide – English version

- Would you discuss amongst yourselves your understanding of what it means to be a man?
- Would you discuss amongst yourselves your understanding of the qualities that a man should have.
- Would you discuss amongst yourselves your understanding of the role that a man should play in a society?

Appendix 2b: Focus group interview guide - Xitsonga version

- Tanihi ntlawa burisanani exikarhi ka n'wina matwisiselo ya n'wina mayelana na leswi swi vulaka swona ku va wanuna.

- Tanihi ntlawa burisanani exikarhi ka n'wina matwisiselo ya n'wina mayelana na swihlawulekisi leswi wanuna a faneleke ku va na swona.

- Tanihi ntlawa burisanani exikarhi ka n'wina matwisiselo ya n'wina mayelana na xiave lexi wanuna a faneleke ku va na xona etikweni.

Appendix 3a: Letter of permission to the Mabunda traditional council

Department of Psychology

University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus)

Private Bag X1106

Sovenga

0727

Mabunda Traditional Council

PO Box 3607

Giyani

0826

Dear sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT NGOVE VILLAGE

I am a Masters student in Clinical Psychology at the University of Limpopo. As part of the course, I am conducting a study entitled: **Notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in a rural community in Limpopo Province**. I wish to conduct a research by interviewing adolescent boys of Ngove Village about their understanding of manhood.

Based on the aim of the study, I hereby request permission to interview adolescent boys residing at Ngove Village. I am fully aware of the ethical issues pertaining to research involving human participants and will, therefore, ensure that I adhere to expected ethical standards of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours truly,

Siweya Tryphosa ………………...   Date........................

Appendix 4a: Informed consent letter and form – English version

Department of Psychology

University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus)

Private Bag X1106

Sovenga 0727

Date: _____

Dear participant

Thank you for demonstrating interest in this study, which focuses on the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province. The purpose of this study is to determine adolescent boys' knowledge of what it means to be a man. Your response to this individual and focus group interviews will remain strictly confidential. The researcher will not attempt to identify you with your responses to the interview questions or to disclose your name as a participant in the study. Please be advised that participating in this study is voluntary and that you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time.

Kindly answer all questions and reflect your true reaction. Your participation in this research is very important .Thank you for your time.

Yours faithfully

_____   _____

Siweya Tryphosa   Date

Masters Student

_____   _____

Prof T Sodi   Date

Supervisor

Consent form

I_____ hereby agree to participate in a master's research project which focuses on determining the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in a rural community in Limpopo Province.

The purpose of this study has been fully explained to me. Furthermore, I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can terminate my participation in this study at any point should I wish to do so, and that this decision will not affect me negatively in any way.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally. I understand that my details as they appear in this consent form will not be linked to the interview schedule and that my answers will remain confidential.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4b: Informed consent letter and form – Xitsonga version

Papila ra mpfumelelo

Department of Psychology

University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus)

Private Bag X1106

Sovenga 0727

Siku: _____

Eka Munghenelwa

Ndza khensa ku va mi kombisile ku tsakela ka n'wina eka ndzavisiso lowu kongomisiweke ku twisisa leswi ku va wanuna swi vulaka swona hi vafana lava nga eka malembe ya kondlo a ndzi dyi va vantima emugangeni wa ka Ngove, eXifundzeninkulu xa Limpopo. Xikongomelo xa ndzavisiso lowu i ku kumisisa vutivi bya vafana lava nga eka malembe ya kondlo a ndzi dyi mayelana ni leswi swi vulaka swona ku va wanuna.

Tinhlamulo na mavonelo ya wena eka nhlokisiso lowu ku katsa na ntlawa lowu hlokisisiweke swi ta tshama swi ri xihundla. Mulavisisi a nge pfuki a boxile vito ra wena tanihi un'wana wa vanghenelwa endzavisisweni lowu.

U komberiwa ku hlamula swivutiso hinkwaswo ni ku kombisa matwisiselo ya wena hi ku hetiseka. Ku hoxa ka n'wina xandla eka ndzavisiso lowu i swa nkoka swinene.

Ndza khensa swinene nkarhi wa wena.

Wa wena

_____   _____

Siweya Tryphosa   Siku

Masters Student

_____   _____

Prof T Sodi (Supervisor)   Sik**u**

Fomo ya mpfumelelo (Consent form**)**

Mina_____ ndzi pfumelelana n ku nghenela ndzavisiso lowu kongomisiweke ku twisisa leswi ku va wanuna swi vulaka swona hi vafana va vantima lava nga eka malembe ya kondlo a ndzi dyi emugangeni wa ka Ngove, eXifundzeninkulu xa Limpopo.

Swikongomelo swa ndzavisiso lowu ndzi hlamuseriwile hi vuenti, naswona ndzi ta hoxa xandla hi ku tinyikela ehandle ka nsusumeto. Ndza twisisa leswaku ndzi nga tintshuxa nkarhi wun'wani na wun'wani loko ndzi twa swi fanerile, naswona ku tintshuxa ka mina a swi nge vi na switandzhaku swo biha.

Ndza twisisa leswaku lowu i ndzavisiso, lowu xikongomelo xa wona ku nga riki ku vuyerisa mina. Ndzi twisisa leswaku mavonelo ya mina ya ta va ya xihundla, naswona mavito ya mina a ya nga paluxiwi helo.

Nsayino: _____

Siku: _____

Appendix 5a: Guardian consent form English version

Guardian consent form

I_____ guardian to_____ hereby agree to release my child to participate in a master's research project which focuses on determining the notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in a rural community in Limpopo Province.

The purpose of this study has been fully explained to me. Furthermore, I understand that his participation is voluntarily and without force. I also understand that he may terminate his participation in this study at any point and that this decision will not affect me negatively in any way.

I understand that this is a research project, whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit the participants personally. I understand that my details as they appear in this consent form will not be linked to the interview schedule and his responses will remain confidential.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5b: Guardian consent form Xitsonga version

Mina_____ Muhlayisi wa_____ndzi ntshuxa n'wana wa mina ku nghenela ndzavisiso lowu kongomisiweke ku twisisa leswi ku va wanuna swi vulaka swona hi vafana va vantima lava nga eka malembe ya kondlo a ndzi dyi emugangeni wa ka Ngove, eXifundzeninkulu xa Limpopo.

Swikongomelo swa ndzavisiso lowu ndzi hlamuseriwile swona hi vuenti, naswona ndza swi tiva leswaku nghenela ka yena eka ndzavisiso lowu ko va ku tinyiketela ehandle ka nsusumeto. Ndza swi tiva leswaku nkarhi wun'wana na wun'wana a nga ha tintshuxa loko a twa swi fanerile, naswona leswi a swi nge vi na switandzhaku swo biha.

Ndza swi tiva leswaku mavito ya hina ya nge paluxiwi helo, naswona mavonelo na tinhlamulo ta yena eka nhlokisiso lowu a nga ta wu nghenela swi ta tekiwa tanihi hi xihundla.

Nsayino:_____

Siku:_____

Appendix 6: Ethical clearance letter

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:noko.monene@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING:	05 November 2015
PROJECT NUMBER:	TREC/190/2015: PG

PROJECT:

Title:	Notions of manhood by adolescent African boys in Ngove Village, Limpopo Province
Researcher:	Mr T Siweya
Supervisor:	Prof T Sodi
Co-Supervisor:	N/A
Department:	Psychology
School:	Social Sciences
Degree:	Masters in Clinical Psychology

PROF TAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:
i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix 7: Letter of permission from gatekeeper

Limpopo
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

MABUNDA TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
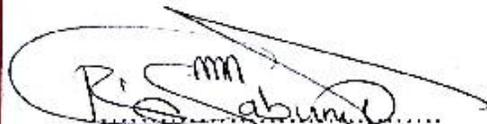P.O. BOX 3607 GIYANI 0826

Enq: Mabunda R.S
Cell: 083 744 2658

Date 03 December 2015

University of Limpopo
Department of Psychology
Private Bag X1106
SOVENGA
0727

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEACH PROJECT AT
NGOVE VILLAGE.: SIWEYA TRYPHOSA.

1. The above refers.
2. The Office of the Mabunda Traditional Authority is witting
   this minute to grant a permission to Tryphosa Siweya to
   conduct a research project within our community under the to
   the subject and topic **Notions of manhood by African boys
   at Ngove Village, Limpopo Province.**
3. Wishing him the best through the research.

SECRETARY: M.T.C

DEPARTMENT OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS & TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS
MABUNDA TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
2015 -12- 0 3
P.O BOX 3607 GIYANI 0826
MOPANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Scanned by CamScanner